

The contribution of communication design as a strategic constituent for the development of organizations - the input of digital media

Jorge Manuel Lopes Brandão Pereira

Tese de Doutoramento em Media Digitais apresentada à
Faculdade de Engenharia da Universidade do Porto

Orientador: Prof. Heitor Alvelos
PhD, Professor, Universidade do Porto

Porto, 2015

Acknowledgements

The development of investigation is a demanding process; but, above all, is very rewarding. It builds up strong emotions, moments, and puts us together with other people that make it an even more challenging.

I am specially grateful for the mentorship of Professor Heitor Alvelos, my supervisor. A revealing voice at all moments of research. His critical sense is always very accurate and ahead in time, and his vision is an irreplaceable part of what I am as researcher and teacher.

To Paula and our little treasures, Afonso and Maria. Your constant love and motivation will never be enough due. We organized ourselves, we talked, we lived, we had Maria(!), we loved, we fought, we played, we learned. And it was only worth it because, at the end of the day, we smiled to each other. Paula, you stood like a rock in leading us—you know, that particular rock we once decided to build our home.

To my loving parents, my sister Joaquina and Avó Júlia, for your permanent encouragement. Life goes by many bias but we will keep strong! To my in-laws, thank you for the concern and caring.

To all those involved, at some moment, with my fieldwork: Hugo Ribeiro, Pedro Regadas, Telmo Sá, Susana Marques, Ana Vieira, Henrique Praça, Cristiana Morais, Luísa Carvalho, Lino Teixeira, António Pedro Pereira, Cláudia Silva, Celso Ferreira, Gualter Morgado, Susana Azevedo, Teresa Franqueira, Vasco Branco. Thank you.

To all those little children from Paredes that played while drawing chairs, and their teachers. Those days were life-changing experiences. Thank you Margarida Cardoso, Anabela Gomes and Jorge Rodrigues, for the local interface.

To all FUTUREPLACES *family*, with whom I could truly understand what is a creative community. A special word for Luís Barbosa, Daniel Brandão, Marta Bernardes, Rita Sá, and Daniel Pires. And to all citizen labs participants, your creativity is part of this research.

And to all those who decided to share their story—you are my *stories of chairs*.

Abstract

This thesis aims at demonstrating communication design as a strategic constituent for the development of organizations. This is assessed in the municipality of Paredes, a traditional industrial region in Northern Portugal, with a symbolic deficit in its main industrial activity, the furniture industry.

To enhance this development, design is included in policies and upheld as a promoter of development. This research acknowledges design as an enhancer for the interpretation of organizational strategy, an innovation model that branches into the economic and creative spheres. It evolves to build the concept of creative economy, and is particularly associated with models for territorial development.

The research sustains that design and digital media are part of social, cultural and economic contemporaneity. The emergence and visibility of design—as methodology and strategy—is recognized in digital culture. Ascertain this as a strategic constituent for the development of organizations stimulates a new model for the territory.

Adopting an action research methodology, the fieldwork developed Stories of Chairs, an on-going case study interfacing design, digital media, local heritage and participatory culture, based in its territory. It is argued that participatory digital media is one of the strategic vectors for the socio-cultural citizen involvement with design and creativity.

The case study of the research is sustained on the potential to become a symbolic territory for all those involved in this story. It is intended a distancing of approaches of more hierarchical nature, moving closer to semantic and contextual approaches backed in a collective path that evolves strategy, communication and participation.

Keywords

Design; Digital media; Local heritage; Participatory culture; Furniture Industry

Resumo

A presente tese tem por objectivo demonstrar o design de comunicação como componente estratégico para o desenvolvimento das organizações. Esta hipótese é testada no município de Paredes, uma região industrial tradicional no Norte de Portugal, com um défice simbólico na sua principal actividade industrial, a indústria de mobiliário.

Para potenciar este desenvolvimento, o design é incluído nas políticas e apoiado como promotor do desenvolvimento. Esta investigação reconhece o design como um potenciador para a interpretação da estratégia organizacional, um modelo de inovação que se amplia para as esferas económica e criativa. Evolui para a construção do conceito de economia criativa, particularmente associada com modelos de desenvolvimento territorial.

A investigação argumenta que o design e os *media* digitais fazem parte da contemporaneidade social, cultural e económica. A emergência e visibilidade do design, como metodologia e estratégia, é reconhecida na cultura digital e verifica-lo como componente estratégico para o desenvolvimento das organizações estimula um novo modelo para o território.

Adoptando uma metodologia de investigação-acção, o trabalho de campo desenvolveu Stories of Chairs, estudo de caso de interface entre design, *media* digitais, património local e cultura participativa, com base no seu território. Argumentamos que os *media* digitais participativos são um dos vectores estratégicos para o envolvimento sócio-cultural dos cidadãos com o design e criatividade.

O estudo de caso da investigação é fundamentado no potencial para se tornar um território simbólico para todos os envolvidos nesta *estória*. Pretende-se um distanciamento de abordagens de carácter mais hierárquico, aproximando-se de abordagens semânticas e contextuais sustentadas num caminho colectivo que desenvolve estratégia, comunicação e participação.

Palavras-chave

Design; *Media* digitais; Património local; Cultura da participação; Indústria de Mobiliário

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	25
1.1. Framework	27
1.2. Research roadmap	29
1.3. Research aims	32
1.4. Thesis structure	33
2. The territory	35
2.1. A starting framework	37
2.2. Defining a local industry	40
2.3. An industrial asset	48
2.4. Paredes' governance strategy for design	56
2.5. Summary	67
3. Strategy	69
3.1. Introduction	71
3.2. Design methodology and design strategy	71
3.2.1. What is design, in 2014	72
3.2.2. Design Methods: an outline	74
3.2.2.1. The global territory of design	74
3.2.2.2. Design process on economic strategies	79
3.2.2.3. Design towards strategy	82
3.2.3. Strategy, from efficiency to creating value	88
3.2.4. Where are we now	90
3.3. Strategy for creativity	94
3.3.1. Design as a strategic constituent for development	95
3.3.2. Creativity	96
3.3.3. The <i>innovation</i> metaphor	97
3.3.4. The symbolic value of a practical based activity	100
3.4. Design, a sense of place and the creative economy	101
3.4.1. Focusing on design and place	103

3.4.2. Case study analysis	105
3.4.2.1. Westergasfabriek	107
3.4.2.2. CAOS Centro Arti Opificio Siri	108
3.4.2.3. Designregio Kortrijk	110
3.4.2.4. PROUD	111
3.4.2.5. Luxinnovation	113
3.4.2.6. Cité du Design	114
3.4.2.7. Oliva Creative Factory	116
3.4.2.8. Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó	117
3.5. Summary	119
4. Communication	121
4.1. Introduction	123
4.2. A definition	123
4.2.1. Communication as information	124
4.2.2. Design, communication and new technologies	126
4.2.3. Communication design and the construction of visual messages	128
4.3. Digital media and communication	130
4.3.1. The emergence of technology	131
4.3.2. The devaluation of technology	133
4.3.3. From analogue to digital, from digital to analogue	137
4.4. Summary	140
5. Participation	141
5.1. Introduction	143
5.2. Culture, a ground for participation	143
5.2.1. Participatory culture	144
5.2.2. A surplus	147
5.2.3. From individual to collective	148
5.2.4. Case study analysis	149
5.2.4.1. Matadero	152
5.2.4.2. Designing with a suburban Finnish community	154
5.2.4.3. connectingcities.net	157
5.2.4.4. Creative Citizens	159
5.2.4.5. Experience Project	161

5.2.4.6. Neighborland	163
5.2.4.7. Manobras no Porto	165
5.2.4.8. Museu do Resgate	168
5.2.4.9. FUTUREPLACES	170
5.3. Participatory design	172
5.3.1. Design as an integrative discipline	172
5.3.2. The participatory design path	173
5.3.3. The participatory design strategy	176
5.3.4. Engagement in and with design	178
5.4. Summary	180
6. Case Study: Stories of Chairs	181
6.1. Introduction	183
6.1.1. Contextual literature review	186
6.1.2. A new research context	187
6.2. Stories of Chairs	187
6.2.1. An outline	187
6.2.2. Action research methodology	189
6.2.3. A symbolical framework	191
6.2.3.1. storiesofchairs.org	193
6.2.3.2. Citizen labs at FUTUREPLACES festival	205
6.2.3.2.1. Citizen lab at FUTUREPLACES 2011	206
6.2.3.2.2. Citizen lab at FUTUREPLACES 2012	210
6.2.3.3. Chés	213
6.2.3.4. Art on Chairs exhibition	221
6.2.3.4.1. The exhibition	222
6.2.3.4.2. “Participate, aggregate, reveal”	223
6.3. Summary	229
7. Conclusion	231
7.1. Final considerations	233
7.2. Limitations to the study	236
7.3. Future work	239

References	241
List of Figures	253
List of Tables	256
Appendices	253
Appendix A	257
Appendix B	303
Appendix C	307
Appendix D	312

Fig.1 Sem título.

Jorge Pereira, 2012

Fig.2 The very first Chairs! #1.

Heitor Alvelos, 2011

*This chair washed up on the shores
of Northern Portugal in the Summer of 2012.
It became a monument and an object of study,
as it was impossible to move it.
Where did it come from?
Why was it so neatly placed?
What does it mean?
Send us any information you may have.*

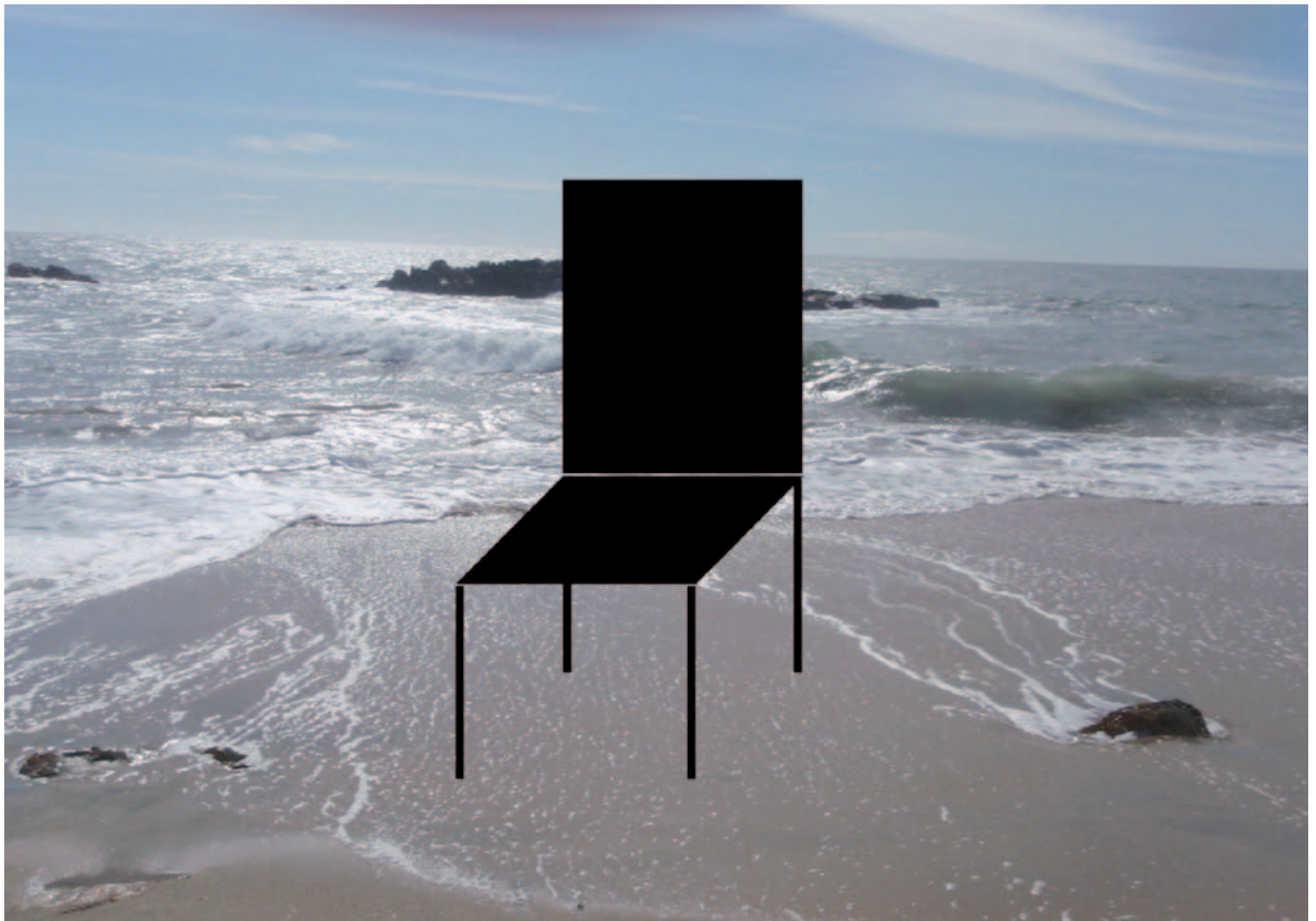
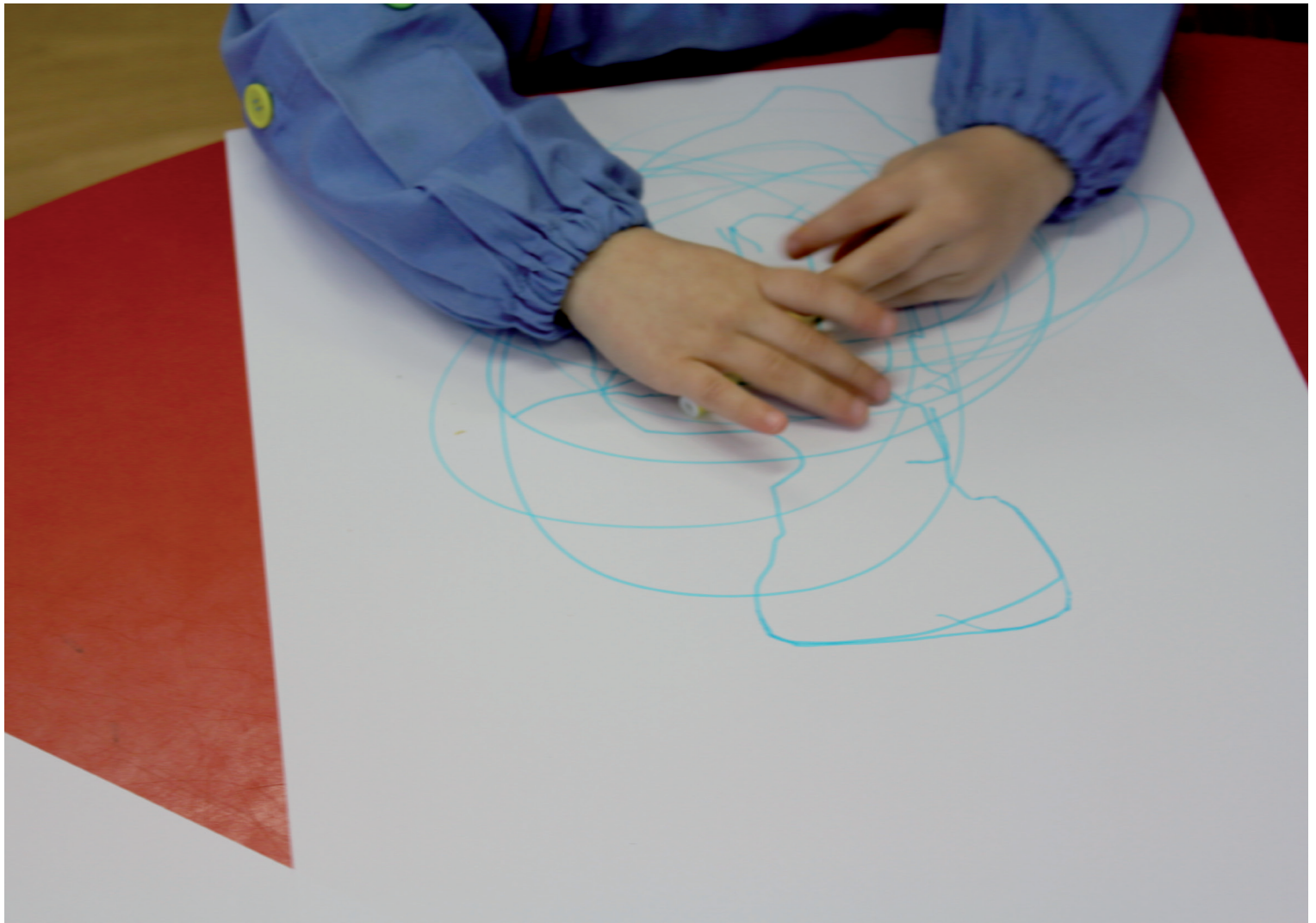


Fig.3 Constelações.
Nuno Ferreira, 2011

Fig.4 The Chairman
Rita Sá, 2011
(frame)

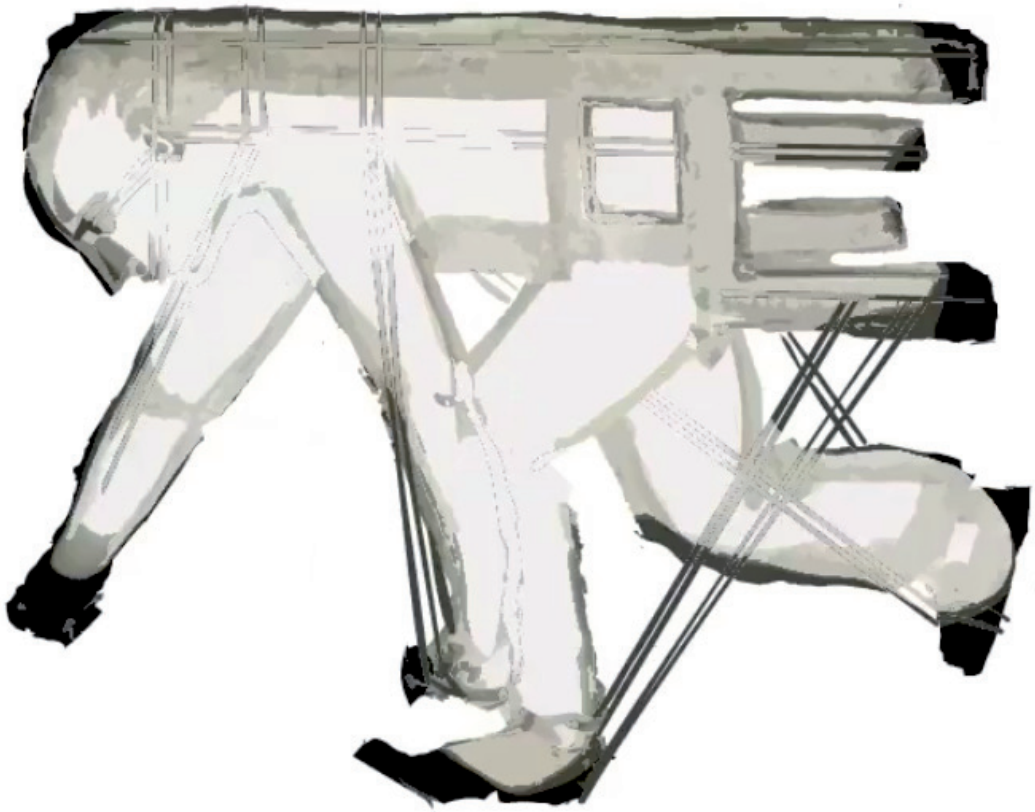


Fig.5 United Colours of Chairs.
Henrique Praça, 2011

Fig.6 Toilet seat, all the red chairs.
Sam54321, 2011



Fig.7 Requese.

João, 2011

Fig.8 Sem título.

Carlos Cidade, 2012



Fig.9 Sem título.
Luis Barbosa, 2012

Fig.10 Chairs in production line (in Paredes).
Jorge Pereira, 2012



CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1. Framework

There are changes occurring in the global economy driven by globalization, technological innovation and communication paradigm shifts by digital media. The new set up drive the adoption of development strategies by institutions and organizations for their general improvement.

Globalization of society promotes changes in citizens' social behaviors. For organizations, the achievement of greater competitiveness has become the key factor for their sustainability and growth, in a society that seeks differentiation and new products. In this context, design may have an important role to play.

An endeavor for development is observed in public and organizational policies, with reflection to what are the conditions for citizens. To enhance this development, strategy is based on technological innovation as an important vector, where product differentiation and the promotion of its image are competitiveness assets. Design is included in these policies and advocated as a promoter of development.

The *International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (Icsid)*¹ "strives to create a world where design enhances our social, cultural, economic and environmental quality of life" (Icsid, n.d.). The *International Council of Communication Design (Icograda)*² defines communication design as "an intellectual, technical and creative activity concerned not simply with the production of images but with the analysis, organization and methods of presentation of visual solutions to communication problems (Icograda, n.d.).

Design is promoted as an efficiency and differentiation tool, to create and deploy an organizational culture, integrating all stages of product development. It takes

1 Icsid "protects and promotes the interests of the profession of industrial design. Founded in 1957, Icsid serves as a unified voice of over 50 nations through which members can express their views and be heard on an international platform. Since its inception, Icsid has continued to develop its wide-reaching network of students and professionals devoted to the recognition, success and growth of the industrial design community. Together, professional associations, promotional societies, educational institutions, government bodies and corporations create a comprehensive and diverse system on the forefront of industrial design education and progress." (Icsid, n.d.)

2 Icograda "is a world body for professional design. It is a non-profit, non-partisan, member-based network of independent organisations and stakeholders working within the multidisciplinary scope of design. Founded in 1963, Icograda actively promotes the value of design practice, thinking, education, research and policy, representing more than 200 organisations in 67 countries and regions globally." (Icograda, n.d.)

up a narrative of optimism that is passed to organizations and to the collective discourse. Design strategy is configured in order to differentiate products, increase competitiveness, optimize processes: a designerly interpretation for Ritzer's McDonaldization (1993).

“We must look at McDonaldization as both “enabling” and “constraining.” McDonaldized systems enable us to do many things we were not able to do in the past; however, these systems also keep us from doing things we otherwise would do. McDonaldization is a “double-edged” phenomenon. We must not lose sight of that fact (...)” (Ritzer, 2004, p. 19)

Taking these dimensions, it is easy to compare competing products, which empowers the consumer. The concept of McDonaldization is gaining attention in different aspects, including culture and design. Interpreted in culture, McDonaldized systems offer comfort and stability in a rapidly changing world because innovation diffuses more rapidly, goods and services are more uniform and consistent and people are likely to be treated similarly (Ritzer, 2004, p. 22-23). Product development can be a reference to the interpretation of innovation processes, from the organization. Linked to this process are development variables, which influence many sectors. These variables require the integration of technology as well as economic, social and cultural requirements. It is in these cultural requirements that Ritzer takes criticism on the model, defined as the “irrationality of rationality” (Ritzer, 2004, p. 16). These requirements shift the discussion to the preservation of cultural identity, articulating global culture with local culture, while seeking to, simultaneously, universalize and localize.

This emphasis on the local is of particular relevance in Portuguese context, and in the present thesis, because is through its characteristics that the incorporation of design in industrial processes promotes local development. This happens by transferring economic development strategies to cultural aspects, in order to build—by design and with design—an aggregated collective heritage. This heritage is a cultural asset and a resource for the production of wealth.

We provide a contribution to the Portuguese context, particularly in the Northern region of the country. The emergence and visibility of design is increasingly noteworthy in digital culture. Thus, proposing it as a strategic tool, particularly

in the design and analysis of the discourse in digital media, is a methodological follow-up framework.

Branco and Alvelos (2009) propose a concrete contribution to research in order to reduce the symbolic deficit of Portuguese artifacts, including the role of communication and increasing importance of digital media as support or tool. “Design needs to be recognized as a legitimate agent, able to play a key role in the social, cultural and economic development.” (Branco and Alvelos, 2009, p. 70). Design participates in the construction of communication, using all the expressive resources of its ground. By its very nature, associated to technology, the convergence of communication design and digital culture opens a fieldwork for research, focusing on their methods and processes.

1.2. Research roadmap

The present thesis is contextualized in three thematic areas: *strategy*, *communication* and *participation*. This field of research seeks to put design as its framework, with ability to aggregate this triad into an intelligible construct.

The thematic construction identifies significant aspects of this relationship, focusing on the identification of its validity on a case study: Stories of Chairs. Through the case study, the empirical work that has been developed as fieldwork for research, we sought to acknowledge, understand and describe the role design plays in this threefold relationship.

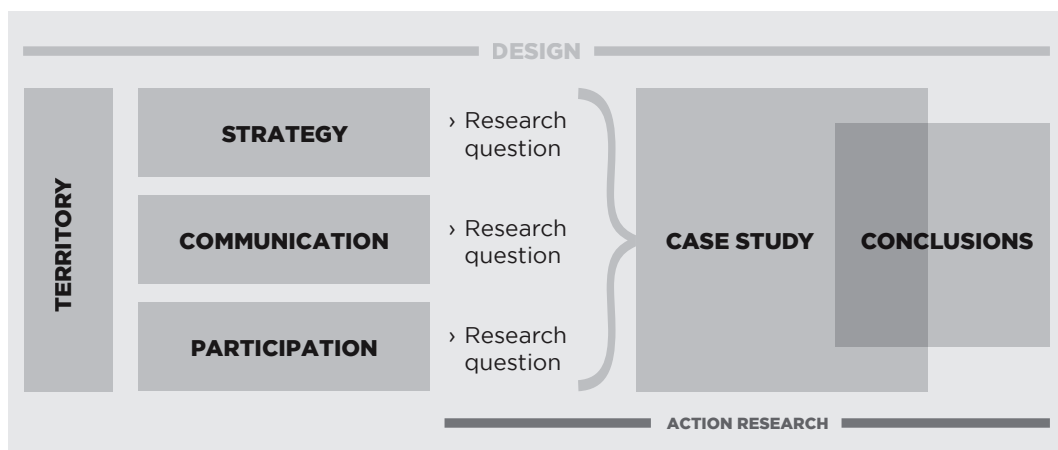


Fig.11 Research roadmap synthesis.

We observed the diffusion of the term “design” within publics, industries and markets, and the increasing ubiquity of digital media in many aspects of society. Notwithstanding these points, we found an area yet to be explored: the input of digital media in design as a competitive edge for companies.

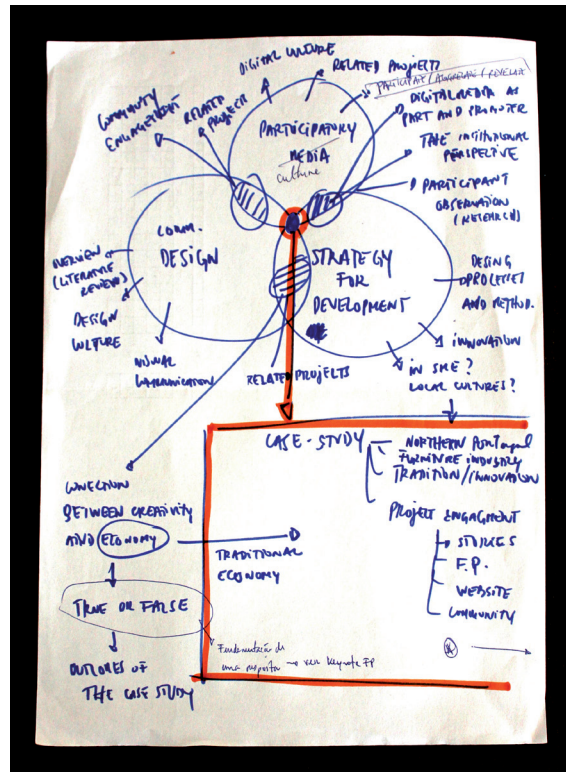


Fig.12 First draft of Research roadmap (work in progress).

Stories of Chairs is the result of a shared path, on the adoption of design in a local industry. Given the growing importance of design in the vocabulary of organizations—often quoted as a strong competitive differentiator (Archer, 1965; Jones, 1970; Broadbent, 1979; Cross, 1984; Nelson and Stolerman, 2003; Friis, 2006; Dziersk, 2007; Martin, 2009)—the fieldwork supports the relevance of the study. It adds the influence that design has on collective memory and intangible heritage, of a local industry and community, supporting the relevance of location.

The furniture industry of Paredes is justified as research object to the empirical study because it incorporates two key arguments:

- (i) it is an important industry to Portuguese industrial fabric and to local, regional and national economy;
- (ii) it is an industry where design is significant, and therefore it may assume a preponderant role.

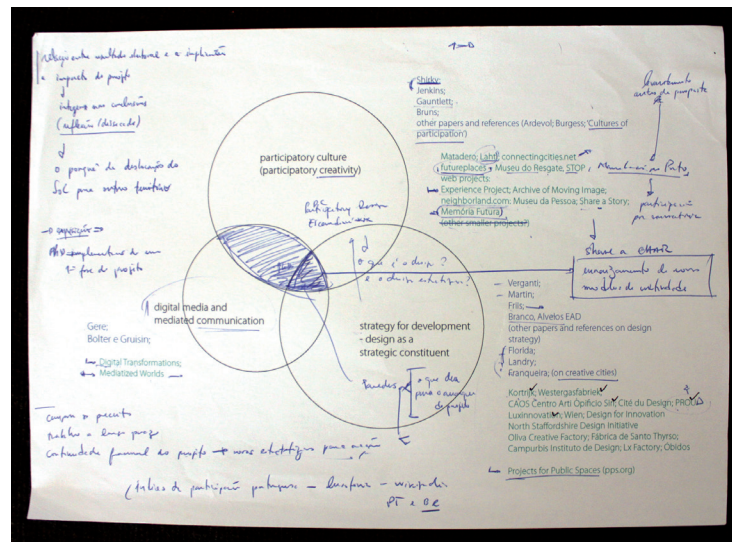


Fig.13 Second draft of Research roadmap (work in progress).

We understand the detailed study of the engagement process of design and design culture in local culture and industries as urgent, in Paredes with its citizens. There is room for the assessment of this relationship, which develops a field of research that bridges design, strategy, communication and participation as key factors of a contemporary relationship between citizens and their individual and collective assets.

The development of research happened in simultaneous tracks. Parallel to the practical based research and the development of case study Stories of Chairs—including interviews, workshops, project participation and talks—we have conducted literature studies within design, strategy, communication and participation, with focus the discussion about media practices.

This bias drew a diagonal track:

- (i) on the one hand, gratifying and rich in learning, impelling an urge to understand and answer the questions continuously formed;
- (ii) on the other hand, an inspiration for our professional life in design, a

genuine curiosity to understand how individuals act as participants in different parts of this overall process, to see if a shared process could be created. Here, we ought to highlight the engagement activities in Paredes, a surprising laboratory for our research aims³.

1.3. Research aims

This thesis aims at demonstrating communication design as a strategic constituent for the development of organizations. This is attempted in the municipality of Paredes, a traditional industrial region in Northern Portugal, with a *symbolic deficit*⁴ (Branco and Alvelos, 2009) in its main industrial activity, the furniture industry.

Design has expanded its traditional area, motivating the evaluation of communication processes in an organization's strategic vision. From here, we need to re-frame communication design's paradigm, analyzing its variables to create value and difference. The confrontation between global development models for design and the territorial renewal sought demands a reflection that enhances local culture and its citizens. The action model proposed in the research emphasizes participation and engagement of citizens as key assets for the developing processes of design. The industrial and productive context of Paredes, defined by hundreds of SMEs, mainly family structured, determines a hybrid condition in terms of production, which does not necessarily align with prescribed design strategies imported and determined by other international success experiences. Through research, we aim at constructing an integrated and global framework, enhanced by the participatory creative endeavor suggested by digital media.

Digital media is part and promoter of contemporary, social, cultural and economic paradigm shifts, producing deep semantic communication in social structures. Adding emotional, rehabilitative and recreational dimensions for the develop-

³ A defining moment of our research happened in September 14, 2012, during the Art on Chairs opening. In a walking tour of the guests between exhibition venues, Professor Alvelos invites a senior lady to take part in the event. The lady was observing the visitors at her door's house, and gently declines. She confesses her unawareness of what was going on with all those "men in suits". "This is not for us", she argued. From that moment, we understood the emergence of Stories of Chairs.

⁴ Branco and Alvelos define this as "one of the factors that contribute towards a generally low competitiveness of Portuguese artifacts in international markets" (Branco and Alvelos, 2009, p. 67).

ment that is intended, design performs these shifts. The findings from the conceptual model recognized design as a constituent for innovation, competitiveness and development of organizations. The intention then was to state those findings in the Portuguese context, focusing on the case study of Paredes, discussing about the challenges prompt to a region whose main productive factor suffers from a that deficit of competitiveness and symbolic value.

1.4. Thesis structure

The present thesis is organized in seven chapters:

- (i) Introduction;
- (ii) The territory
- (iii) Strategy
- (iv) Communication
- (v) Participation
- (vi) Case study: Stories of Chairs
- (vii) Conclusion

The first chapter introduces research and provides a starting framework of the research developed.

The second chapter develops research on the territory of intervention. The presentation of the municipality of Paredes is developed and the major milestones in the evolution of its Paredes' furniture industry are contextualized, and its relationship with design and design strategy.

The third chapter provides a literature review regarding design and strategy, identifying relevant theories and authors for the comprehension of this relationship. It consists of a theoretical construction about methodologies and methods of design, adapted to organizational environments and economy. This study includes a sense of place, namely the critical analysis about creative cities and the insight that is brought to our case study.

The fourth chapter presents a review that endorses communication as mediator for the theoretical relationship between design and digital media. It addresses is-

sues related to the current communication process with features and limitations that technology and creativity imply.

In the fifth chapter the paradigm that is brought by participation is analyzed. Here, the action of digital media is projected in communication—the participatory culture—and in design—participatory design—comprising points of convergence between them. This study includes a critical analysis about case studies of participation, and the insight that they brought to our case study.

The sixth chapter presents Stories of Chairs, the case study developed within the research. It presents the research methodologies and the conducted activities, with particular reflection on the outcomes of each one.

The seventh chapter sums up the final considerations about the thesis and organize conclusions about the research process, with the main contributions of the study. The limitations to the study are presented, as well as new tracks for future work.

CHAPTER 2

The territory

2.1. A starting framework

Paredes is located in Northern Portugal, within the Valley of the Sousa river, and occupies an area of about 157 square meters distributed over 24 parishes. Paredes is currently the 27th most populated region in Portugal and the 7th largest of district of Porto, with about 87,000 inhabitants (Pordata⁵, 2014). It is in the district of Porto, but is still predominantly rural. It has been part of the Metropolitan Area of Porto since 2013, following an administrative merger in this community of municipalities.⁶

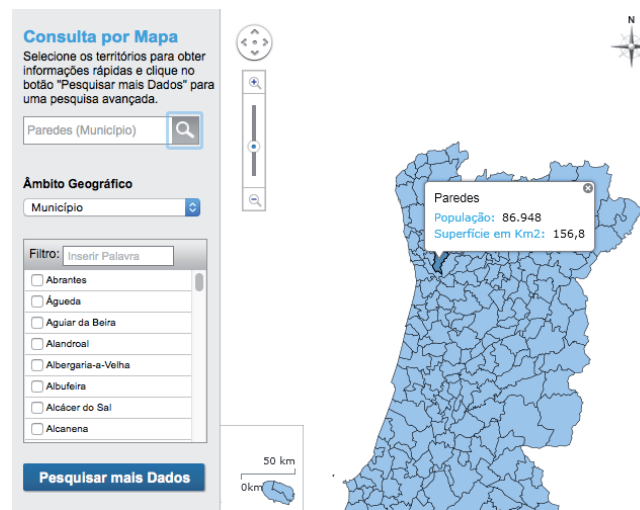


Fig.14 Paredes' presentation at Pordata.

It is one of the ten youngest regions of the country—over one third of its population is under 18 years of age, most of the population is within an active age range, strengthening the development capacity of the territory. Paredes maintains a demographic growth rate dynamic twice above the national average.

⁵ Pordata is an open-access database of contemporary Portugal, organized and developed by Francisco Manuel dos Santos Foundation. It reports statistics derive from over 60 official and certified sources, with data production skills in the respective areas. Available at www.pordata.pt.

⁶ Until 2013, Paredes was part of the “Intermunicipal Community of Tâmega and Sousa”, which included municipalities within the district of Porto. The change was part of a political agenda, led by the City Mayor: “The incorporation of Paredes into the Metropolitan Area of Porto (MAP) was a long-standing goal of Celso Ferreira. “Moving to MAP compels us to have a more competitive agenda, raising the demands on the municipality to make improvements”, the mayor argued, on the submission of the application in 2009” (Moreira, 2013). This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “A passagem de Paredes para a Área Metropolitana do Porto (AMP) é um desejo antigo de Celso Ferreira. “Passar para a AMP obrigar-nos-á a ter uma agenda mais competitiva, a elevar a exigência para o território, a sermos melhores”, defendeu o autarca aquando da apresentação da sua candidatura, em 2009” (Moreira, 2013).

“This factor, together with the fact that the city has a low aging index and an age structure of the population in which the highest proportion is of working age, is a strong point for the city’s development potential.” (Paredes Rota dos Móveis-SACIC, 2009, p. 9)⁷

In addition Paredes has connections with the surrounding territory, a competitive proximity to Porto, Braga and Aveiro—the main cities of Northern Portugal—and Vigo, Spain. It also holds a competitive proximity to infrastructures such as the Porto and Vigo airports and the Leixões harbor. It is also important to emphasize the density of highways in the Northern Region and the good street and railroad network around the Municipality.

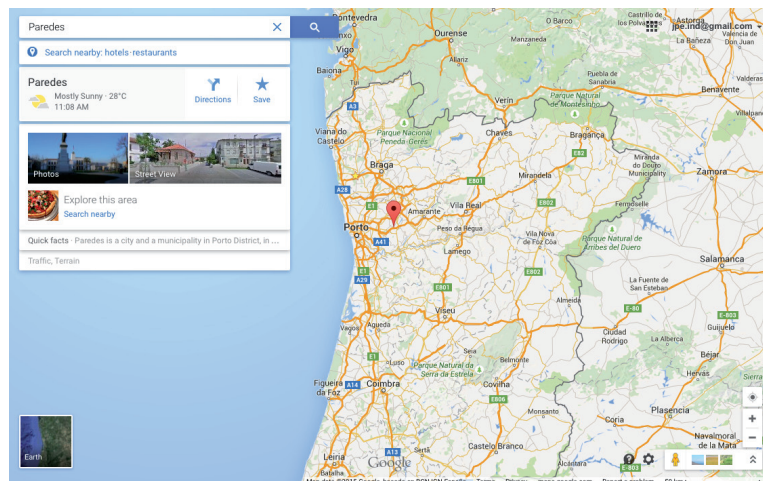


Fig.15 Paredes' geographical location, and relation to main cities in Northern Portugal.

The city is historically rooted in an entrepreneurial tradition, as it presents important competitive assets and a significant growth potential. It holds over 7.600 companies in several areas of activity, with an employability rate 20% higher than the national average (Art on Chairs, 2012a). The Municipality has a set of several endogenous actives, with a privileged geographic position and a strong industrial heritage associated to the furniture sector. Its main activity is the transforming industry, particularly where it holds over 700 companies, all of them small or medium enterprises.

⁷ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Este factor, que a par do concelho apresentar um baixo índice de envelhecimentos e uma estrutura etária da população em que a maior proporção se enquadra na idade activa, constitui um ponto forte para o potencial de desenvolvimento do concelho.” (Paredes Rota dos Móveis-SACIC, 2009, p. 9).

“It is the main sector of the region, for the moment, we are talking about 700 companies active in county and they represent in terms of turnover in furniture, upholstery and mattresses, about 60-65% of the national production of furniture.” (Morgado, personal communication, November 22, 2012)⁸

However, for all these positive assets, important weaknesses are present, such as low qualification by the population, low technological density of the furniture sector, reduced R&D effort by the industry, low levels of productivity and consequent low GDP *per capita* and municipal purchase reach (Selada and Cunha, 2010, p. 220).

The importance of diversity and the influx of new ways of life in this area can create an environment for the generation of ideas, the development of a critical mass and new opportunities for citizens and organizations. Nevertheless,

“The human capital of Paredes has low levels of education. A large section of the population has not completed compulsory schooling and the proportion of graduates is low. However, the evolution during the 1990s was positive, reflecting an overall trend towards training and/or the attraction of a workforce that tended to be more skilled than the existing traditional laborers.” (Paredes Rota dos Móveis-SACIC, 2009, p.10)⁹

Note that this is not just an evolution within the municipality, but an indication of a significant increase in literacy in recent decades.

It is a developing municipality, endowed with the essential infrastructure, which

⁸ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “É o principal sector da região, pois neste momento, estamos a falar de cerca de 700 empresas em actividade no concelho e que representam em termos de volume de negócios no mobiliário, estofos e colchões, cerca de 60 a 65% da produção nacional de mobiliário.” (Morgado, personal communication, November 22, 2012).

⁹ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “O capital humano de Paredes evidencia baixos níveis de escolaridade. A grande camada da população revela não ter pelo menos a escolaridade obrigatória e o peso da população licenciada é baixo. Contudo, a evolução durante a década de 90 foi positiva, reflectindo uma tendência global para formação e/ou atracção de mão-de-obra tendencialmente mais qualificada do que a tradicionalmente existente.” (Paredes Rota dos Móveis-SACIC, 2009, p.10)

has recorded a demographic change and an ability to become a more attractive area.

The furniture industry is one of the economic, strategic and social drivers of the region. It is the largest employer in the region, since “62% of its workforce is in the manufacturing sector, with the weight of furniture in this sector exceeding 60%” (Paredes Rota dos Móveis-SACIC, 2009, p. 10)¹⁰. The furniture sector is, in fact, over-represented in Paredes, hence the relevance the strategy has for this economic area.

2.2. Defining a local industry

There are records on the development of Paredes’ territory that date back to the third millennium BC, and a continuous human presence and vestiges over time, including the Roman period and the subsequent invasions up to various points in the constitution of Portugal, since the 12th century¹¹. There is clear chronological evidence of the action of man on the landscape in Paredes, in a diversified set of places, architecture and heritage (Pinto, 1996, p. 9-70).

It was elevated to town status in 1844 by Queen Maria II, an important date which highlighted an historical figure politically linked to the historic reality of Portugal at the time, that enabled Paredes to participate in promoting progress—as understood then—focused on accessibility, transport, communications and education. This figure was the Counselor José Guilherme, who incorporated a strategic vision for the region linked to the furniture industry.

¹⁰ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “(...) possui 62% do seu emprego na indústria transformadora, sendo que o peso do mobiliário nesta indústria superior a 60%.” (Paredes Rota dos Móveis-SACIC, p.10)

¹¹ Paredes is part of the “Route of the Romanesque”, an initiative by several municipalities in the North of Portugal. The Route of the Romanesque is presented on the website www.rotadoromanico.com: “In the land of the valleys of Sousa, Tâmega and Douro, in the heart of the North of Portugal, stands an important architectural heritage of Romanesque origin. Common traits that carry legends and stories born with the foundation of the Nationality and which witness the significant role that this territory formerly played in the history of the nobility and religious orders in Portugal. This heritage is structured in the Route of the Romanesque, germinated, in 1998, within the municipalities that comprise the *VALSOUSA - Associação de Municípios do Vale do Sousa* [Association of Municipalities of Vale do Sousa] and extended, in 2010, to the remaining municipalities of the NUT III - Tâmega, thus bringing together in a supramunicipal project a common historical and cultural legacy.”

“In the overall development of the municipality of Paredes in the second half of the 19th century (after the creation of the District Court, in particular), and in view of the existence of a bourgeoisie with the economic power to acquire furniture, the figure of José Guilherme is worth mentioning because he was greatly involved in the whole development of the municipality and the town, in terms of city planning, the road network, and “progress” in general.” (Alves, n.d., p. 4)¹²

The economic development of Paredes, from this time, was concentrated on agriculture, which was modernized, and this new industry of timber and furniture, which in turn boosted trade.

The origins of this “new” industry are in the tradition of woodworking, for which “there are indirect references that point to the existence of joiners, sculptors, woodcarvers, sawyers and other craftsmen (...)” (Alves, n.d., p. 2)¹³. Alves undertook some research, a review of literature and interviews with the population, and refers to the “near invisibility of the furniture industry in the works consulted” (Alves, n.d., p. 1)¹⁴.

These craftsmen underwent a gradual evolution from manual labor to industrialization, in the phenomenon of the Industrial Revolution that was witnessed throughout Europe. The descriptions by Vieira in “*O Minho Pittoresco*”, a monograph dated 1887, refer to the existence of “construction workshops (carpenters, bricklayers and plasterers), 136 workers. Pine sawmill: 3 manual laborers and 3 hydraulic saws” (Vieira, 1887, p. 583)¹⁵.

12 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “No desenvolvimento geral do concelho de Paredes, na segunda metade do século XIX (depois da criação da Comarca, nomeadamente, e a existência duma burguesia com poder económico para adquirir mobiliário, a figura do Conselheiro José Guilherme é aqui de referir, pois esteve grandemente ligado a todo o desenvolvimento do concelho e da vila, em termos de urbanismo, rede viária, “progresso” (ALVES, n.d., p. 4).

13 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “existem referências indirectas que apontam para a existência de marceneiros, imaginários, entalhadores, serradores e outros artificies da madeira (...)” (Alves, n.d., p. 4).

14 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “(...) quase invisibilidade da indústria do mobiliário nas obras consultadas” (Alves, n.d., p. 1).

15 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Construcções (carpinteiros, pedreiros e estucadores), 136 operários. Serração de pinho: 3 *braçoes* e 3 serras *hydraulicas*.” (Vieira, 1887, p. 583)

In an interview published in the newspaper “*O Progresso de Paredes*”¹⁶, Joaquim Moreira dos Santos is presented as one of the pioneers in the industrial manufacture of furniture in the municipality of Paredes. He identifies some hypotheses about the emergence and development of the furniture activity in the territory. According to the interviewed:

“the activity may have started with a Sicilian who have installed in town (...) and they may been the ones who developed from the mid-19th Century the industry of the chairs in the county and extending to Paços de Ferreira. In his words, this activity was an completely handmade “industry”, family-oriented, working father and children mostly in the production of chairs. “Around 1888/89 the industry was already highly developed. In Rebordosa parish, everyone had cadeireiros.” (Pereira, 2011, p. 51)¹⁷

Barreiro (1922) produced the monograph that today serves as a reference document for historical research on Paredes. In a lengthy, detailed description of the municipality, he updates this information with data that Alves confirms, referring to “joiners and carpenters in the municipality, the grandparents and great-grandparents of the people interviewed.” (Alves, n.d., p. 2)¹⁸

In particular, it relates to an initial sign of what would be the industry of the region: “In Vilela, there is a recent initiative, the first factory in the country that we know of, making wooden seats for chairs, expanded with the production of materials for other similar industries.” (Barreiro, 1922, p. 43)¹⁹

16 “*O Progresso de Paredes*”, July 30, 1993, No. 2811—year LXIV, quoted by Pereira (2011).

17 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “a actividade terá iniciado com um siciliano que se terá instalado na freguesia (...) e terão sido eles que desenvolveram a partir de meados do século XIX a indústria das cadeiras no concelho e estendendo-se até Paços de Ferreira. Nas suas palavras esta actividade era uma “indústria” totalmente artesanal, de cariz familiar, trabalhando pai e filhos sobretudo na produção de cadeiras. “Por volta de 1888/89 a indústria estava já muito desenvolvida. Em Rebordosa toda a gente tinha cadeireiros.” (Pereira, 2011, p. 51)

18 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “marceneiros e carpinteiros no concelho; os aves e bisavôs das pessoas entrevistadas” (Alves, n.d., p. 2).

19 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Em Vilela, existe, de iniciativa recente, a primeira fábrica do *paiz*, que nos conste, de assentos de madeira para cadeiras, ampliada com a produção de *materiaes* concernentes a outras industrias congêneres” (Barreiro, 1922, p. 43).

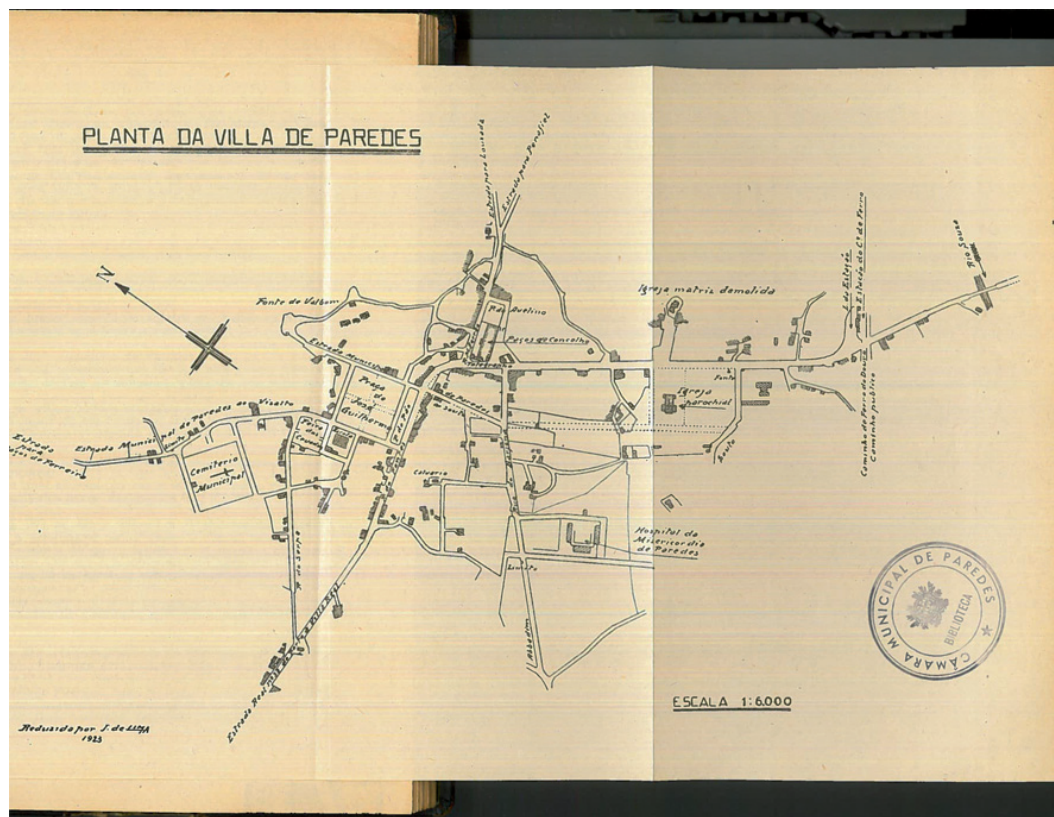


Fig.16 Map from Paredes central parish (Barreiro, 1922).

On top right we can observe the railway station reference (*Estação do Caminho-de-ferro*), with straight connection to *Praça José Guilherme*, the central square.

In his description of the central parish in the Municipality, Barreiro writes that “chickens and eggs are dispatched from Paredes station, along with wooden items, especially chairs, from Lordelo, Vilela and from other parts, as described below, going to Porto, Lisbon, Trás-os-Montes, etc.” (Barreiro, 1922, p. 308)²⁰. This topic is developed in the description of the parish of Lordelo, in the north of the municipality:

“Lordelo is very important in the woodworking industry, especially in the manufacture of chairs; there are about 240 woodworkers there. Valongo and Paredes railway stations are almost always cluttered with chairs that

²⁰ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “da estação de Paredes por onde se exportam galinhas e ovos, e artigos de marcenaria, principalmente cadeiras, de Lordelo, Vilela, e doutras partes, como *adeante* se diz, que vão para o Pôrto, Lisbôa, Traz-os-Montes, etc.” (Barreiro, 1922, p. 308).

have to go on the train south from Porto to Lisbon and to east of Paredes to Alto Douro and Trás-os-Montes. They are transported weekly to Porto, in bundles of sometimes more than a dozen on the heads of the women, who earn so much per chair.” (Barreiro, 1922, pp. 404-405)²¹.

Here is a specific mention to the women who carried the chairs to sell, the *cadeiras*. The man, the *cadeiros*, deal only with the woodworking and production. This activity had such a great impact that at the end of 19th century almost all families had *cadeiras*, women carrying chairs on their backs or head.

In the description of the parish of Rebordosa, also in Northern Paredes,

“the woodworkers just make chairs. There are more than 200 chair-makers and there were over 300 at one time. Chairs are mainly exported to Lisbon and Porto. They are carried to Porto on the women’s heads every week. The chair-makers all work in their homes and on their own. There are only two set-up workshops, with 5 to 7 workers. There are many in Lordelo.” (Barreiro, 1922, p. 508)²²

In Vilela, Barreiro (1922) also describes the activity of “Fábrica A Boa Nova”:

“In this parish, in Casães, there is an important steam factory making chair seats, which makes large-scale exports from Paredes station to Porto, Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve, etc., as well as to abroad. It makes perfect chair seats in the Austrian fashion, using thin wooden circular slats, engraved with beautiful designs. It also manufactures chairs, which are largely exported. The factory is the main one in the municipi-

21 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “É muito importante em Lordelo a industria de marcenaria, principalmente no fabrico de cadeiras; ha la cerca de 240 marceneiros. As estações de caminho de ferro de Valongo e de Paredes estão quasi sempre atravancadas com cadeiras que têm de seguir no comboio para o sul do Porto até Lisbôa e para o nascente de Parêdes, até Alto Douro e Traz-os-Montes. Para o Porto são elas transportadas semanalmente, aos feixes, às vezes de mais de duzia, à cabeça de mulheres, que ganham um tanto por cada cadeira.” (Barreiro, 1922, p. 404-405).

22 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “(...) os marceneiros limitam-se a fazer cadeiras. Há mais de 200 cadeiros e já houve mais de 300. As cadeiras são exportadas principalmente para Lisboa e Porto. Para esta cidade são transportadas à cabeça de mulheres todas as semanas. Os cadeiros trabalham cada um em sua casa e por sua conta. Oficinas montadas, com 5 até 7 ou 8 officias, ha só duas. Em Lordelo ha muitas”. (Barreiro, 1922, p. 508).

pality." (Barreiro, 1922, p. 554)²³

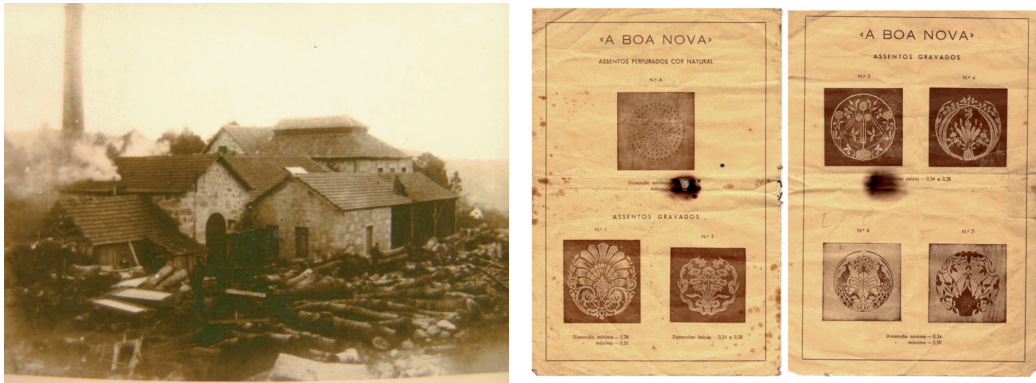


Fig.17 *Fábrica A Boa Nova*, the first furniture industry; Designs used on the seats of chairs produced (Pereira, 2011).

Barreiro (1922) reproduces a newspaper article from *Jornal de Notícias*, No. 214 of September 9, 1917 (Barreiro, 1922, pp. 554-557), which describes its intensive activity and influence on its workers and the local economy.

We thus conclude that the local industry was already one hundred years old and developed due to political strategy, economic development and the particular characteristics of important individuals, who played an active role in the development of the history and industry of Paredes. Alves describes these reasons as “a set of favorable factors at the turn of the 20th century” (Alves, n.d., p. 4)²⁴. We also note the reference to the *cadeireiras*, women from Paredes, an important piece on the Art on Chairs narrative.

The railway installed in Paredes allowed the distribution of joiner pieces and chairs throughout in the county, and that until then were transported by *carreteiros* or *cadeireiras*. These identities are very charismatic in the County and are part of popular imagery, but this research made possible to observe that it has

²³ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Nesta *freguezia*, no lugar de Casaes, ha uma importante fábrica a vapor de fundos de cadeiras, de que se faz exportação em larga escala, pela estação de Parêdes, para o Porto, Lisbôa, Alentejo, Algarve, etc., e para o estrangeiro. Fazem-se com perfeição os assentos de cadeiras segundo o tipo austríaco, de lâminas finas de madeira, circulares, com belos desenhos gravados. Também se fabricam cadeiras de que se faz grande exportação. A fábrica é a principal do concelho.” (Barreiro, 1922, p. 554)

²⁴ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “(...) um conjunto de factores favoráveis na viragem do século XIX-XX” (Alves, n.d., p. 4).

been losing some of its memory (Simão, 2007; Pereira, 2011). They marked a period of Paredes' History, connected mainly to an elder population.

“According to the elder citizens, the *cadeireiras* were women whose family members (parents, husbands) worked in carpentry and as usual for these times all contributed with their work within their abilities. These women hold the one of the toughest jobs because they had to carry the chairs at the back, or head, as if it were a beam.” (Pereira, 2011, p. 55-56)²⁵

Added to these factors was a natural disaster, the cyclone of February 15, 1941. “The strong winds that devastated the Portuguese territory on 15th February 1941 could be considered the most violent since there are collecting of weather records (late nineteenth century), causing a large number of human casualties and considerable property damages.” (Nunes *et al.*, 2011/12, p. 53)



Fig.18 Newspapers are privileged sources for the memory and inventory of damage caused. *O Século*, from February 16, 1941; and *Jornal de Notícias*, from February 18, 1941 (Nunes *et al.*, 2011/12).

This natural disaster caused a profound change in Paredes, at the time and for the future.

²⁵ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Segundo contam os mais antigos, as cadeireiras eram mulheres cujos familiares (pais, maridos) trabalhavam na marcenaria e como era habitual por estes tempos todos contribuían com o seu trabalho dentro das suas possibilidades. Estas mulheres seriam as que teriam um dos trabalhos mais difíceis porque tinham de transportar as cadeiras às costas, ou à cabeça, como se de um feixe se tratasse.” (Pereira, 2011, p. 55-56).

“The damage caused by the storm that night felled thousands of trees throughout the municipality (and the country), causing a great amount of good quality timber to be available at a low price. (...) To properly understand the importance of this event for the wood and furniture industry, it should be noted that in Lordelo, particularly, sawmills were built specifically to “cope with” the increase in timber work caused by tree felling.” (Alves, n.d., p. 5)²⁶

The excess of wood available for work, received from tree felling, contributed to the development of the furniture industry in the county. This is concluded by Pereira (2011), “as it is certified through the number of applications for licenses to install more sawmill devices, sawmills and carpentry workshops.” (Pereira, 2011, p. 68)²⁷



Fig.19 Paredes Railway Station, photo from middle 20th century.

²⁶ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Os estragos provocados pelo temporal dessa noite derrubaram milhares de árvores por todo o concelho (e país), tendo ocasionado uma grande disponibilidade de madeira, a preço baixo e de boa qualidade. (...) Para perceber bem a importância deste acontecimento para a indústria da madeira e do mobiliário, é de assinalar que em Lordelo, nomeadamente, foram construídos engenhos de serração para especificamente “dar vazão” ao aumento do trabalho de serragem provocado pelo derrube de árvores” (Alves, n.d., p. 5).

²⁷ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Conforme se certifica através do número de pedidos de licenças para instalação de mais engenhos de serração, serrações e oficinas de marcenaria.” (Pereira, 2011, p. 68)

2.3. An industrial asset

The decades following the 1941 cyclone, until 1980, are regarded as the “golden age of the furniture industry in Paredes” (Alves, n.d., p. 8)²⁸. At this stage, Paredes underwent a transformation from a rural district into an industrial area, boosted by an emerging consumer society and the political and social context of the country.

“The furniture industry became more complex and gained new markets and new competitors. This activity reached such importance that in most parishes there is not one family that is not linked to this sector, whose livelihood does not rely on these industries, that does not contribute to the status of Paredes in this field.” (Alves, n.d., p. 8)²⁹

From the sectorial point of view, it was also during this period that trade associations were created in Portugal, specifically:

- The *Association of Wood and Furniture Industries of Portugal* (AIMMP)³⁰, originally founded in 1957 under the name *Industrial Timber Guild of the districts of Porto and Aveiro*³¹ (AIMMP, 2007, p. 6);
- The *Portuguese Association of Furniture and Allied Industries* (APIMA)³², founded in 1984 (APIMA, n.d.).

During the transition into the 21st Century, the industry benefited from a favorable economic climate and several EU financial aid programs for technological development. “The ‘90s saw a great growth in domestic consumption of furniture, due to the growth of the construction market and consumer habits. At the same time, businesses were encouraged to invest in more and better technologies, in-

28 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “época áurea da indústria do mobiliário do concelho” (Alves, n.d., p. 5).

29 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “A indústria do mobiliário complexifica-se e ganha novos mercados e novos concorrentes. Esta actividade atingiu uma importância tal que na maioria das freguesias não há uma família que não esteja ligada a esta história, que não tire o seu sustento destas indústrias, que não contribua para a relevância do concelho de Paredes neste domínio” (Alves, n.d., p. 8).

30 *Associação das Indústrias de Madeira e Mobiliário de Portugal*, designation in Portuguese.

31 *Grémio dos Industriais de Madeira dos distritos do Porto e de Aveiro*, designation in Portuguese.

32 *Associação Portuguesa das Indústrias de Mobiliário e Afins*, designation in Portuguese.

creasing the installed production capacity” (EGP, 2007, p. 33)³³. Nationally, Paredes ranks in first place for production and sales in the furniture sector (Pinto, 1996, p. 53).

It is at this turn of the millennium, when Portugal's infrastructure has been modernized thanks to the support of the then European Economic Community, that design makes a consistent entry into business vocabulary. The Portuguese Design Centre (CPD)³⁴, was established in 1985 “to promote design in general and, in particular, industrial design and communication design, as the national body that represents the country in international design forums.” (CPD, 2013)^{35 36}

As a result of the implementation of support for industrial development from European Union programs, design began to be incorporated as a strategic segment in the development of organizations, particularly in the design of investment-oriented public policies.

“Indeed, the lack of creative design in the products offered and a new philosophy of business management in which design takes center stage within business strategies are among the most pressing needs recognized. (...) As industrial design is one of the priorities in our industrial policy, it is perfectly natural that the main financing instrument of this policy, PEDIP, provides support to industrial design.” (Mira Amaral,

³³ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Os anos 90 foram de grande crescimento do consumo interno de mobiliário, como consequência do crescimento do mercado da construção civil e dos hábitos de consumo. Simultaneamente, era incentivado o investimento das empresas em mais e melhores tecnologias, aumentando a capacidade produtora instalada” (EGP, 2007, p. 33).

³⁴ *Centro Português do Design*, designation in Portuguese.

³⁵ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “visando a promoção do design em geral e, em particular, do design industrial e do design de comunicação, sendo a entidade nacional que representa o país nas instâncias internacionais de design.” (CPD, 2013)

³⁶ CPD ended its activity and it was formally closed in May 31, 2013, by decision of all its stakeholders. This decision took place “(...) not only because its funding model has run out, but mainly because CPD have not been able to fulfill the objectives that guided its creation” (in *Diário de Notícias*, 2013). This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “(...) não só porque o respetivo modelo de financiamento seguido se esgotou, mas sobretudo pelo facto de o CPD não ter sido capaz de cumprir os objectivos que presidiram à sua criação” (in *Diário de Notícias*, 2013).

1992, pp. 54-55)³⁷

Design enters the agenda of economic and industrial policy, not just for this particular sector but for all economic activity, through the *Specific Program for the Development of Portuguese Industry (PEDIP)*³⁸ proposed by the Portuguese Government's Ministry of Industry and Energy in 1989.

“With the increase in productivity as an overall goal, PEDIP provides in almost all its operational programs measures oriented towards this goal—either through direct activities within the companies (Program 3) or indirectly by strengthening infrastructure (Program 1), and including other factors of growing importance such as vocational training (Program 2) and quality and design (Program 6).” (Diário da República, 1989, p. 1364)³⁹

The *Program for the Modernization of the Wooden Furniture Industry (PROMIM)*⁴⁰ was also established under PEDIP. This dealt with a structural change in an important relevant industrial sector in the country's economy, which at this time “shows signs of structural inadequacy at the corporate level, characterized by insufficient capital, poor business organization, outdated technology, lack

37 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Entre as necessidades mais sentidas, reconhece-se, de facto, a falta de design criativo nos produtos oferecidos e de uma nova filosofia de gestão empresarial em que o design assuma um lugar central numa estratégia empresarial. (...) Sendo o design industrial uma das prioridades da nossa política industrial, é perfeitamente natural que o principal instrumento de financiamento dessa política, o PEDIP, vá apoiar o design industrial” (Mira Amaral, 1992, pp. 54-55).

38 *Programa Específico de Desenvolvimento da Indústria Portuguesa*, designation in Portuguese. PEDIP emerged nationally as an important instrument in the modernization of Portuguese industry, creating conditions to bring the existing production base up to date and promote the emergence of new industries with high technological potential. This revitalization was urgent, and the program was devised as “an instrument for the adaptation of Portuguese industry to the double shock of the ending of the transitional period following accession to the European Community and the construction of the European internal market by 1992”. (Diário da República, 1989, p. 1364)

39 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Constituindo o incremento da produtividade um objectivo global, o PEDIP prevê em quase todos os seus programas operacionais medidas orientadas nesse sentido - quer através da actuação directa nas empresas (Programa 3) quer a nível indirecto através do reforço das infra-estruturas (Programa 1), passando por outros factores com importância crescente, como é o caso da formação profissional (Programa 2) e da qualidade e design (Programa 6).” (Diário da República, 1989, p. 1364)

40 *Programa de Modernização da Indústria de Mobiliário de Madeira*, designation in Portuguese.

of qualification of the workforce, shortcomings in the area of marketing, insensitivity to design and low levels of efficiency." (PROMIM, 1990, p. 10)⁴¹

Design was seen as an increasingly important factor, accompanying a global attention being paid to design culture, which was also observed in Portugal. What was sought in a structured way, and alongside various other programs, was the establishment of a more complex organizational model. This model positions design in two components:

- (i) the interpretation of design as commercial quality, fundamental "both for penetration and to maintain a competitive position in more competitive markets." (Valente, 2000, p. 53)⁴²
- (ii) the optimization of production processes, for "organizing and strengthening technical capacity in the area of product design and development (technical design and product design)." (Valente, 2000, p. 54)⁴³

Such support also enabled a noticeable industrial development in Paredes and in its furniture industry.

"The advent of the value chain that was beginning to be felt in Portugal in the late 1990s. And so in the late '90s, we were ending nearly a decade of PEDIP which had enabled a re-industrialization of the country. At the time the question arose that we basically created new factories, modernized technology in our businesses, and at the end of the decade had a boom in private consumption in Portugal. And we had to think of new

41 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: "(...) apresenta sinais de inadequação estrutural ao nível das empresas sinteticamente caracterizados por insuficiência de capitais, deficiente organização empresarial, tecnologias ultrapassadas, falta de qualificação da mão-de-obra, carências na área do marketing, insensibilidade ao design e baixos níveis de eficácia" (PROMIM, 1990, p. 10).

42 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: "quer para a penetração quer para a manutenção de uma posição concorrencial em mercados mais competitivos" (Valente, 2000, p. 53).

43 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: "(...) organização e reforço da capacitação técnica na área da concepção e desenvolvimento de produto (desenho técnico e design de produtos)" (Valente, 2000, p. 54).

challenges that would arise.” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013)⁴⁴

Paredes and its industry integrated and accompanied the national trend for industrial homogenization. The opening of Portuguese economy to international markets entailed structural changes relating to the necessary resources, training and corporate culture. In this sense of development, design was seen as a major factor for change (PROMIM, 1990), integrated with concepts of quality, productivity, competitiveness and marketing. The PROMIM proposal established objectives at three levels:

- Sectorial;
- Corporate;
- Infrastructural.

These three strands made up the entire value chain associated with the industry and its organizations, within a transversal emphasis that, if implemented correctly, would correspond to the intended development goals. The desired intervention of design fitted into the metaphor of innovation already described:

“The ‘competent’ and ‘enlightened’ designer could have a decisive intervention in the modernization of the production structures that are accessible to him or her, triggering renewal processes which not only focus on the articles produced, but especially on the way they are designed from the outset, according to well-defined requests (or detectable opportunities) and following the streamlining of production processes and marketing resources.” (PROMIM, 1990, p. 25)⁴⁵

44 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “O advento da cadeia de valor que se começava a sentir em Portugal no final da década de 1990. E portanto no final da década de 90, estávamos a terminar quase uma década de PEDIP que permitiu uma reindustrialização do país. Na altura colocava-se a questão, nós criámos basicamente fábricas novas, modernizamos a tecnologia das nossas empresas, ainda por cima no final da década tivemos um boom do consumo privado em Portugal. E tivemos que pensar nos novos desafios que surgiam” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013)

45 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “O designer “competente” e “esclarecido” pode ter uma intervenção decisiva na modernização das estruturas de produção a que tenha acesso, desencadeando processos de renovação, que não incidam apenas sobre o aspecto dos artigos produzidos, mas sobretudo no modo como eles são concebidos desde o início, em função de solicitações bem definidas (ou oportunidade detectáveis) e acompanhando a racionalização dos procedimentos de produção e dos recursos de comercialização” (PROMIM, 1990, p. 25).

It is interesting to see how design was interpreted as a discipline “honestly integrated into the production process” and that “requires a great deal of common sense, a strong approach to the immediate realities and a demystifying cultural attitude” (PROMIM, 1990, p. 26)⁴⁶. It anticipates structuring concepts related to participatory culture, not just within an emotional connection to local realities but above all in compliance with project methodology as a formal dimension.

This description portrays a new corporate structure, where the artisanal component gradually moves away from industry, and mass production is valued. It is an interpretation of design based on industrial efficiency, the use of technology in business, and with programs like *Program for Improving Competitiveness of Wood Industries* (COMPIFIM)⁴⁷, between 2002 and 2008, described as “the largest intervention program in the sector (...), the know-how gained from this project constitutes a key pillar for the definition of new aid programs to the sector” (AIMMP, 2009, p. 9)⁴⁸. More recently, under the National Strategic Reference Framework (QREN)⁴⁹ programs, the *Development Program for the Wood and Furniture Industries of Portugal* (PRODIMMP)⁵⁰, launched in 2007 in the 2007-2013 QREN, sought “to create competitive advantages in both domestic and international markets where firms are positioning themselves or intend to position themselves.” (AIMMP, 2007)⁵¹

The municipality of Paredes, recognizing this asset, develops in 2005 an industrial census. This census collected concrete data on the industrial activity of the county (Paredes Rota dos Móveis, 2005)⁵² and is the first large-scale survey ack-

46 These quotes were translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quotes in Portuguese are: “honestamente integrada no processo produtivo” and “exige uma grande dose de bom senso, uma forte aproximação às realidades imediatas e uma atitude cultural desmistificadora” (PROMIM, 1990, p. 26).

47 *Programa para a Melhoria da Competitividade das Indústrias da Madeira*, designation in Portuguese.

48 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “(...) o maior programa de intervenção no sector (...); o know-how adquirido com este projecto constitui-se num pilar fundamental para a definição dos novos programas de apoio ao sector” (AIMMP, 2009, p. 9).

49 *Quadro de Referência Estratégico Nacional – QREN* (designation in Portuguese.), provides the framework for the implementation of EU policy on economic and social cohesion in Portugal.

50 *Programa de Desenvolvimento das Indústrias de Madeira e Mobiliário de Portugal*, designation in Portuguese.

51 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “criar vantagens competitivas nos mercados nacional e internacional onde as empresas se posicionam ou pretendem vir a posicionar-se” (AIMMP, 2007).

52 *Apud* Pereira, 2011, pp. 96-111.

nowledged, including data collected in 1166 companies in the various parishes of the county. This study confirms, from an organizational perspective, an industrial asset in the region that perpetuates the involvement of its inhabitants and workers.

“By the analysis of collected data is shown that 8% of existing businesses in the county were created between 1940 and 1974, 17% between 1975 and 1984, 26% between 1985 and 1994 and 37% between 1995 and 2005. Based on data, we verify the existence of companies with nearly 70 years that somehow confirms the importance of this industry in the county, as well as a certain tradition.” (Pereira, 2011, p. 46)⁵³

The census presents other relevant data related to this chronology, which is an average creation of 18 new companies per year, in the 1940-2005 range. This is representative of the business dynamics of the region, its boldness and its organizational capacity for growth.

The emergence of this new industrial paradigm was clear, associated with new factors of competitiveness. These factors are associated with the cult of innovation and intangibility of an increasingly complex, more global and less material world. In the industrial ecosystem of Paredes, “there were companies that took the opportunity of these actions to change their attitude towards design and incorporate it as a business strategy, and there were others that considered that it would not be ideal for them and that, in most cases, it was of no use” (Morgado, personal communication, November 22, 2012)⁵⁴. This eventually constituted an opportunity for the incorporation of such intangible factors as design, communication and new forms of content distribution.

At the beginning of the 21st Century and with the escalation of the economic

53 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Pela análise dos dados recolhidos consta-se que 8% das empresas existentes no concelho foram criadas entre 1940 e 1974, 17% entre 1975 e 1984, 26% entre 1985 e 1994 e 37% entre 1995 e 2005. Com base nos dados verifica-se a existência de empresas com cerca de 70 anos o que de alguma forma confirma a importância desta indústria no concelho, bem como uma certa tradição”. (Pereira, 2011, p. 46)

54 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “(...) houve empresas que aproveitaram essas acções para alterarem a sua postura relativamente ao design e que as incorporaram enquanto estratégia da própria empresa, houve outras que entenderam que aquilo não seria o ideal para eles e que na maior parte dos casos não servia de nada” (Morgado, personal communication, November 22, 2012).

crisis, there is “a strong tendency for a significant number of companies to disappear, whether by foreclosure and discontinuation of the activity by businessmen or due to bankruptcy proceedings” (EGP, 2007, p. 34)⁵⁵. In this adverse economic environment, the political leadership of Paredes has identified the opportunity for action, again supported financially by EU investment promotion programs, but this time with design as a bridge between the industrial heritage of the region and the collective organizational development.

“We undertook a project that resulted in an application after we reached the conclusion that there was, here, a set of absolutely fundamental factors: Historical value and the traditional factor. This is because introducing design into traditional industries, whether in furniture, footwear, textiles or any other is complicated. Introducing innovation in these products, under normal conditions, to succeed in the medium term, is through design, and then design affects everything else, determines the production process, and determines the process of marketing, distribution and all that. I came to the conclusion that innovation in the furniture industry had to be done through design.” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013)⁵⁶

It is a hybrid context, a local industry that has simultaneously tradition and will to innovate, where micro, small and medium-sized enterprises coexist, that shapes the framework for the case study of this research. The outcomes can not be interpreted right away, but in face of creative economy challenges, Paredes aims at continuing its History: “what will come next to it are business strategies and the ambition of the companies in handling this “pot” of culture and turn it into scale. (...) Our goal is to transform Paredes into a center of expertise in the furniture

55 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “uma forte tendência para o desaparecimento de uma parte significativa das empresas, quer pelo encerramento e abandono da actividade por parte dos empresários, quer por processos de falência” (EGP, 2007, p. 34).

56 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Fizemos um projecto que se traduziu numa candidatura, depois de termos chegado à conclusão que havia aqui um conjunto de factores absolutamente fundamentais: o valor histórico e o factor tradicional. Isto porque introduzir design nas indústrias tradicionais, seja no mobiliário, no calçado ou têxtil ou outra qualquer é complicado. Introduzir inovação nestes produtos, em condições normais, para se ter sucesso num médio prazo é através do design e depois o design condiciona tudo mais, condiciona o processo produtivo, condiciona o processo de marketing, a distribuição e tudo isso. Eu cheguei à conclusão de que a inovação no sector industrial de mobiliário tinha que ser feito através do design” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013).

area in all its disciplines.” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013)⁵⁷

2.4. Paredes’ governance strategy for design

The project Paredes Center of Furniture Design emerges in a framework in which the concepts of creative cities and creative industries gain strength as strategic factors of competitiveness, differentiation and development. This outlook is reinforced by a framework that identifies the Northern region of the country as “a creative Region of Portugal.” (Fleming *et al.*, 2008)⁵⁸

“Globally, the map of relationships of Creative Industries in their process and ideal development and establishment in the Northern Region reveals four dimensions: Investments and Support; Technological Partnerships; Interaction with the Territory, and Management and Competencies. The growth of Regional Creative Economy takes place via the conquest of new national and international markets, and through a greater penetration in current markets. Therefore, one should not lose [sic] sight of the continuous bet in the inclusion of creative value in the businesses of the so called “traditional” sectors of this region such as textiles, shoe manufacturing, furniture, construction, tourism, jewelry, graphic industries, etc.” (Fleming *et al.*, 2008, p. 30)

The strategy of local governance for design and externalization of this strategy observed—over the period corresponding to this research—to different moments. These moments can be divided chronologically throughout the event Art on Chairs 2012, but this divide is not related with the governance strategy. We can identify different perceptions before, during and after Art on Chairs.

Beyond the promotion of a set of enterprise infrastructures of support such as

⁵⁷ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “o que virá a seguir a isso serão estratégias comerciais e a ambição das empresas em pegar neste “boião” de cultura e transformar isto em escala. (...) O nosso objectivo é transformar Paredes num centro de competências na área do mobiliário em todas as suas disciplinas” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013).

⁵⁸ This survey was developed acknowledging the current economic, social and cultural context of the North Region of Portugal in 2008, as well as sensitivity and critical mass that existed around the Creative Industries in Northern Portugal. The survey helped to define and constitute, later in 2008, *ADDICT – Agência para o Desenvolvimento das Indústrias Criativas* (Creative Industries Development Agency, English translation).

enterprise and business parks and training centers, the municipality launched in 1999 a strategic project associated to furniture designed as *Rota dos Móveis* (Furniture Route), in order to promote the image and prominence of Paredes as a business and touristic center for furniture. It consisted of an articulated touristic route in eight industrial areas (Pereira, 2006, p. 47). In the initial phase the slogan was merely created and after it was devised to allow a visual representation that illustrates this brand (Pereira, 2011, p. 11).

“Rota dos Móveis is a project of economic and touristic nature, which aims to enhance the heritage that exists in the municipality of Paredes, a logic-oriented promotion of the main economic activity of the municipality, which is the furniture.” (Ferreira, 2006, *apud* Pereira, 2011, p. 11)⁵⁹



Fig.20 *Rota dos Móveis* brand identity (original and rebranded).

This territorial branding is an acknowledged asset in public opinion, and immediately related with Paredes.

“Territorial marketing has much more to do with the provision that this territory has, or rather, the way it presents its offer and to what markets.

⁵⁹ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “A Rota dos Móveis é um projecto de natureza turística e económica, que visa valorizar o património que existe no concelho de Paredes, orientado numa lógica de promoção, da principal actividade económica do concelho, que é o mobiliário.” (Ferreira, 2006, *apud* Pereira, 2011, p. 11)

Therefore, the first step was to deconstruct a little of this matter “Paredes, Rota dos Móveis” because it is too short to leverage all that Paredes can offer and how they can position.” (Alves, personal communication, August 26, 2013)⁶⁰

The Rota dos Móveis brand is currently hybrid equity. On one hand, it refers to an industrial and commercial heritage of the region, appearing in all official communications, including the Municipality stationery, and fulfilling the bridge for disclosure of the region’s most important industry. On the other hand, is a brand that is naming a multitude of subjects, which are dispersed between the sports hall, sponsoring a Portuguese professional cycling team, a motorsports 4x4 team, a water polo team, a gourmet itinerary and avenues in the city, just to name some.

We observe an intention to render the brand ubiquitous, in all outcomes supported by the Municipality, either as promoter or as sponsor. Alves observes this strategy, and the difficulties to move to the following phase—the Art on Chairs 2012 and the launch of the Paredes Center of Furniture Design: “(...) there was an attitude, in this case the Municipality, not wanting to finish the brand “Paredes Rota dos Móveis”. This was indeed a very complicated situation.” (Alves, personal communication, August 26, 2013)⁶¹

Based on its political leadership, the Municipality defined a strategic vision to Paredes, settled in the articulation amongst their endogenous actives, the History and tradition of the municipality and the new factors of competitiveness, targeted in innovation and creativity, electing design as the development anchor.

This strategy’s main aim is to affirm Paredes as a creative center of furniture design and production, positioning itself as a renewed territorial centrality, not

60 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “O marketing territorial tem muito mais a ver com a oferta que este território apresenta, ou melhor, a forma como apresenta a sua oferta e a que mercados é que a apresenta. Logo, o primeiro passo foi desconstruir um pouco esta questão de “Paredes, Rota dos Móveis” porque isto é muito curto para potenciar tudo aquilo que Paredes pode oferecer e a forma como se pode posicionar” (Alves, personal communication, August 26, 2013).

61 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “(...) houve também uma postura, nesse caso do município, de não querer acabar com a marca “Paredes, a Rota dos Móveis”. Essa era, aliás, uma situação bastante complicada.” (Alves, personal communication, August 26, 2013).

only at a regional level—particularly in competitiveness with neighboring Paços de Ferreira—but also at national and international level. It concerns not only an economic revitalization strategy of the municipality, but also a regeneration of the city itself, allying creativity to urban and industrial life. “On the one hand, it is intended to introduce design as competitiveness factor of local furniture industry; secondly, to promote design interventions in places, buildings and public spaces in the city.” (Selada and Cunha, 2010, p. 221)⁶²

It thus moves into the second phase, Art on Chairs: a route that converges a set of ideas, from different individuals and organizations.

Art on Chairs is one of the vertices of the triangle Paredes Center of Furniture Design, promoted by the Municipality and coordinated by Setepés.

“We were in 2002, Creative Industries were still a phenomenon that was born in England, so far away from thinking of Portugal. You need to put all these steps in time. And the Art on Chair was the art of the chair, *i.e.*, was a work of art that could be done about memory. We chose the chair because at that time we did a research on the importance and memory of “cadeireiras”, of ponytail cod chairs, everything that had to do with the theme of the chair.” (Marques, Setepés, personal communication, May 8, 2012)⁶³

The initial proposal was not developed due to lack of political decision. However, Setepés continues consulting with the municipality of Paredes.

“In this consultancy, restructuring and development of a set of activities in Paredes, in 2009 it is published the agenda for Creative Industries and

⁶² This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Por um lado, pretende-se introduzir o design como factor de competitividade da indústria local de mobiliário, por outro, promover intervenções de design nos lugares, espaços públicos e edificado da cidade” (Selada and Cunha, 2010, p. 221)

⁶³ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Estávamos em 2002, as Indústrias Criativas ainda eram um fenómeno que estava a nascer em Inglaterra, portanto, muito longe de pensar em Portugal. É preciso colocar todos estes passos no tempo. E o Art on Chair era a arte da cadeira, ou seja, era um trabalho de arte que se podia fazer sobre a memória. Escolhemos a cadeira porque nessa altura fizemos uma investigação sobre a memória da importância das cadeireiras, das cadeiras de rabo-de-bacalhau, tudo aquilo que tinha a ver com a temática da cadeira” (Marques, Setepés, personal communication, May 8, 2012)

we begin to realize that there might be a place for this project. The agenda already mentioned the promotion of large events and we realized Art on Chair⁶⁴ [sic] had the potential to become a major event.” (Marques, Setepés, personal communication, May 8, 2012)⁶⁵

In another development, Ferreira mentions the organization of an event, promoted in the context of AIMMP, described as “embryo” of Paredes Center of Furniture Design. However, due to lack of consequence, Ferreira transfers it, his vision, to the Municipality of Paredes, where as President he has decision-making power.

“That is when we set up the Paredes Center of Furniture Design, with such an extensive and open program, in order to allow a engagement not only civil society but which is directed towards the new model of urban regeneration. And what did we then try to sell to businessmen and managed to do it? The idea that we will create a project to bring to Paredes all those who want to sell design to our businessmen.” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013)⁶⁶

Setepés is responsible for developing the application for Art on Chairs support to the *Support System for the Creative Industries Cluster – SACIC*⁶⁷ while the Paredes Center of Furniture Design is prepared by Inteli, and first appointment as Paredes Design Hub.

“Strategy induced by design—the Design Hub project. Based in a strong leadership, the Municipality defined a strategic vision to Paredes, settled

64 The event, in its first proposal and application for funding, and during part of the Project development, was designated as “Art on Chair”. Starting from November 16, 2011, it was renamed to “Art on Chairs”, after a review from Porto’s British Council (Vieira, Setepés, personal communication, November 16, 2011)

65 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “neste trabalho de consultoria, de reestruturação e de desenvolvimento de um conjunto de actividades em Paredes que, em 2009, é publicada a agenda das Indústrias Criativas e começamos a perceber que poderia haver lugar para esse projecto. A agenda já falava da promoção de grandes eventos e percebemos que o Art on Chair tinha potencial para se tornar um grande evento” (Marques, Setepés, personal communication, May 8, 2012)

66 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “E foi aí que nós montamos o Polo do Design Mobiliário com um programa tão extenso e tão aberto, de forma, a permitir uma envolvimento não apenas da sociedade civil mas que está direccionado para o novo modelo de regeneração urbana. E o que tentamos vender aos empresários e conseguimos? A ideia de que nós vamos criar um projecto para trazer para Paredes todos aqueles que queiram vender design aos empresários” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013)

67 *Sistema de Apoio ao Cluster das Indústrias Criativas – SACIC*, designation in Portuguese.

in the articulation among their endogenous actives, the History and tradition of the Municipality and new factors of competitiveness targeted in innovation and creativity, electing design as development anchor under the motto “design in everyday life”. This strategy has the main aim to affirm Paredes as a creative center of furniture design, positioning itself not only at a regional level but also at national and international level as a new territorial centrality. It is not about only an economic revitalization strategy of the Municipality but also of regenerating the city, ally-ing business creativity to urban creativity”. (Selada and Cunha, 2010, pp. 220-221)⁶⁸

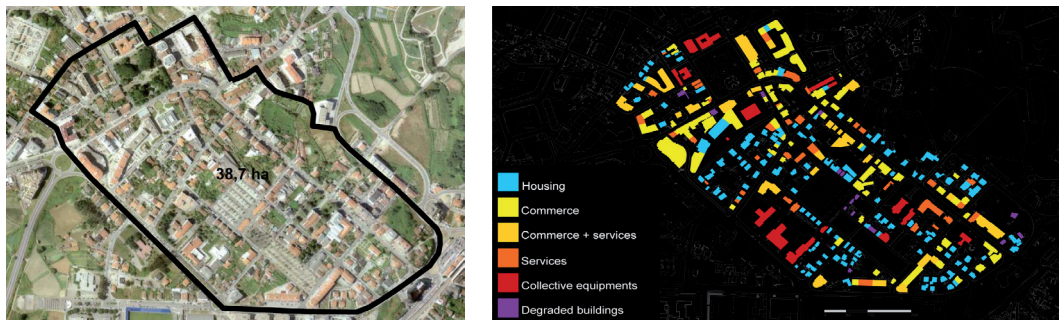


Fig.21 Design Hub – Center of the City of Paredes area of implementation and typologies, project coordinated by Inteli (Inteli, 2009).

At this time of coordination by Inteli, the governance strategy is divided into three lines of intervention:

- *Accessible Pole*;
- *Creative Pole* – Circuit “City Art and Art on Chair Event”;
- *Entrepreneur Pole* – Creative Workshops (live-work houses).

⁶⁸ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Estratégia induzida pelo Design—o Projecto Design Hub. Com base numa forte liderança. A autarquia definiu uma visão estratégica para Paredes assente na articulação entre os seus activos endógenos e a história e tradição do município e os novos factores de competitividade centrados na inovação e na criatividade, elegendo o design como âncora de desenvolvimento sob o lema ‘design in everyday life’. Esta estratégia tem como objectivo central afirmar Paredes como um pólo criativo do design mobiliário, posicionando-se regional, nacional e internacionalmente como uma nova centralidade territorial. Trata-se não só de uma estratégia de revitalização económica do município, mas também de regeneração da cidade, aliando a criatividade empresarial à criatividade urbana” (Selada and Cunha, 2010, pp. 220-221).

“The accessible hub refers to the connectivity of the project, either physical connected to the accessibilities, or digital. (...) The creative pole is based on the boost of an urban circuit, which is vibrant and distinctive, marked by creativity and innovation, and associated to furniture design. (...) Among others, it integrates operations as the creation of an urban art circuit and the event art-on-chair. The entrepreneur pole is oriented to the promotion of local entrepreneurship associated to the creative industries with focus in design and furniture (...).” (Selada and Cunha, 2010, pp. 223-224)⁶⁹

The proposal for a framework in Paredes focusing on design, creativity and innovation is now framed within an integrated project.

“What we did was to look at the existing projects and, depending on the content we were involved, we tried to reconfigure them, adapting to what were territorial projects. In other words, to regenerate the city, to create a public art circuit, to make a major international event and leave a great legacy equipment to this area of research design and interpretation.” (Marques, Setepés, personal communication, May 8, 2012)⁷⁰

And Marques comments the withdraw of Inteli and the changes Setepés decided to implement:

“Inteli left because they did not really add anything. What we did was to keep the projects but give them a new anchor. What Inteli had in mind was that the Center of Furniture Design was Paredes' city center, so when we read the Design Hub application it was a methodology. It

⁶⁹ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “O pólo acessível refere-se à conectividade do projecto, quer física, ligada às acessibilidades, quer digital. (...) O pólo criativo assenta na dinamização de um circuito urbano distintivo e vibrante, marcado pela criatividade e inovação, e associado ao design de mobiliário. (...) Entre outras, integra operações como a criação de um circuito de arte urbana e o evento art-on-chair. O pólo empreendedor orienta-se para a promoção do empreendedorismo local associado às indústrias criativas com foco no design e no mobiliário (...)” (Selada and Cunha, 2010, p. 223).

⁷⁰ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “O que fizemos foi olhar para os projectos existentes e em função do conteúdo em que já estávamos envolvidos e tratamos de reconfigurar adequando àquilo que eram os projectos de território. Ou seja, regenerar a cidade, criar um circuito de arte pública, fazer um grande evento internacional e deixar em legado um grande equipamento para a área de interpretação e investigação do design” (Marques, Setepés, personal communication, May 8, 2012).

has the Entrepreneur application, the Creative Pole, but all this that was going on is a lab project. We made small adjustments to content already developed and interpret it in a vision of the territory, and such a project is not locked into paper work, nor it can it be. It is a draft work of a development team, that grows and consolidates in action." (Marques, Setepés, personal communication, May 8, 2012)⁷¹

The concept for Paredes Center of Furniture Design begins to be drawn through preparatory work, in which the researcher participated with the involvement in Stories of Chairs, commissioned by Heitor Alvelos, from February 2011 onwards, managing the development of the particular case study and monitoring the project, through participation in meetings or presentations. This participation was welcomed by the coordination team and helped to create ties for the future work.



Fig.22 *Paredes Polo do Design de Mobiliário* visual identity.

The project was publicly presented in October 2011, as "a collective territorial reinvention project for a sustainable development, through design and creativity." (Paredes, 2011, p. 5). It settled four key strategies for the city's development model:

⁷¹ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: "A Inteli saiu porque realmente não acrescentava nada. Aquilo que fizemos foi manter os projectos mas dar-lhes uma nova ancoragem. O que a Inteli tinha em ideia era que o Pólo de Design Mobiliário era a cidade de Paredes, portanto, quando se lê a candidatura o Design Hub era uma metodologia. Tem o Pólo Empreendedor, o Pólo Criativo, tudo ali se passava, só que isso era projecto de laboratório. Nós fizemos pequenos ajustes nos conteúdos já desenvolvidos e pensamo-lo numa visão do território, sendo que um projecto destes não está fechado em papéis, nem pode estar. É um projecto de trabalho de uma equipa que se vai desenvolvendo, vai crescendo e vai-se sedimentando naquilo que é a acção" (Marques, Setepés, personal communication, May 8, 2012).

“To develop a new economic model for the region which joins traditional industries with creative industries and activities.

To implement an Urban Regeneration project for the city of Paredes aiming at the development of the Creative City.

To strengthen the components of creative industries and activities in their relationship with the culture, creativity, innovation and furniture industry of the region, the territory and the communities.

To contribute to the development of the creative industries cluster of the north [sic] region.” (Paredes, 2011, p. 5)

This presentation included the definition of the three initiatives: Art on Chairs, Creative City and Design Factory. “These projects include not only a series of events and initiatives within a certain period of time, but also the construction and boosting of definitive equipment and infrastructures which will transform the city into a center of creativity, competence and technology for furniture design” (Paredes, 2011, p. 1).

These initiatives are described as follows:

“*Art on Chairs* is an international exhibition taking place at Paredes, Portugal, with the purpose of being a world event of art and design associated to the chair. It will be an exhibition of art, design and contemporary creativity, translating the confluence between the cultural and creative activities and the furniture sector of Paredes.” (Paredes, 2011, p. 7).

“*Paredes Creative City for the Furniture Design* is a continuous project of renovation and revitalization of Paredes, for cultural, urban, economic and social development.” (Paredes, 2011, p. 21)

“*Design Factory*, a pioneer project at a national level in the approach to design and industry, will become a structuring element for the promotion and development of creativity in the region and its articulation with the local industry, especially that of furniture.” (Paredes, 2011, p. 31)

In order to perform this endeavor, its stakeholders—Paredes Municipality, industry entrepreneurs, and management actors—intended to introduce design as a factor of competitiveness in local furniture industry and as a strategic constituent for its organizations. Additionally, it intended to promote design as intervention in places, public spaces and structures. Beyond the creation of local conditions

to the attraction and setting of designers (individuals or companies) and other talents to the development of the creative business, the Municipality intends to potentiate and to maximize the use of endogenous local resources, including the city's History, industrial heritage and geography.



Fig.23 Visual identity of the sub-brands of Paredes Center of Furniture Design.

As one can infer from this description, many subjects are involved in this transformative narrative that wants to implement and communicate design. For this purpose, it was necessary to organize a communication strategy that would participate in this vision. The agency A Transformadora was responsible for developing the visual identity and communication system for Paredes Center of Furniture Design, with all its brands, including Stories of Chairs. The concept was emphasized in transformation, where “Paredes Center of Furniture Design will be the cyclone of Paredes in 2011/2012”⁷², an allusion to the 1941’s natural disaster that allowed the industrial development of Paredes.

The communication strategy addressed this multiplicity of initiatives and its consequences, but this was not fully achieved. This interpretation is reiterated in the conclusions to the Art on Chairs event, that resulted from a collective and participatory reflection, where it was recognized that “the communication seems not to have been broadly successful, it does not seem to have reached the agents and local people. Contents were not always the most appropriate (...) and some

⁷² This motto was presented by Luísa Carvalho and Pedro Regadas, from A Transformadora, in June 15, 2011, in a meeting with all the stakeholders involved in the organization of Art on Chairs, where the visual identity and branding draft for Paredes Center of Furniture Design was presented.

produced material was doubtful from formal standpoint and perhaps even useless.” (Art on Chairs, 2012a, p. 116)⁷³

A third moment can be identified, after the Art on Chairs event. The project lost scope and media visibility for their activities, as expected in its aftermath. And in this fading, at the launch of the second edition of Art on Chairs—held between 2014 and 2015—the project got a rebranding and is promoted as a new stand-alone. Art on Chairs is presented and communicated as an autonomous project, empowered from the previous endeavor and with no direct heritage with the previous structure of Paredes Center of Furniture Design.



Fig.24 Visual identity of *Art on Chairs 2014-2015* brand.

The Paredes Center of Furniture Design brand has faded, replaced by Art on Chairs. The global project was restructured around this brand and this specific project, apparently postponing or canceling all previous complexity. This shift is complete, including in media.

An important recognition that supports this change was the achievement of the RegioStars 2014 award in Smart Growth, by the European Commission. This acknowledgment as one of Europe’s most promising and innovative regional projects gave Paredes a wider visibility and enhanced its strategy in four key criteria: innovation, impact, sustainability and partnership (EU, 2014a).

“This fruitful cooperation between designers and the local SMEs has led to the production of top quality designer chairs, renewed pride in the work, boost of creativity in the manufacturing industry, enhanced productivity and an increase in international exports.” (EU, 2014b)

⁷³ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “A comunicação não parece ter sido globalmente bem-sucedida, não parece ter atingido os agentes e as gentes locais. Os conteúdos nem sempre foram os mais adequados (...) e algum material produzido era duvidoso do ponto de vista formal e porventura inútil” (Art on Chairs, 2012a, p. 116)

The application⁷⁴ was made under the Art on Chairs brand, and not by the original Paredes Center for Design project.

The evolution of Paredes' governance strategy has been a growing route, a historical tradition that should be recognized, and with a sense of timing in relation to its integration into national or European funding programs, facilitating the desired growth and commonwealth.

2.5. Summary

This chapter has described the evolution de Paredes as a developing territory, tied to the furniture and wood industry with more than a century of history. This research builds a systematized document that started from information collected from the relevant sources, otherwise scattered.

Based on this, we framed the territory of the research roadmap, that will be developed in the following chapters. At the start of the research roadmap, we have presented Paredes and defined it with relevant information about its industrial history, crossing its industrial timeline with its design strategy.

The industrial activity appears in a rudimentary way, predominantly within family businesses—a feature that is still predominant today. Also, natural and geographical characteristics of the territory contributed to this development. These assets shall be an identity in the municipality's activity and its leaders recognize it as such. This knowledge passed from parents to children and between generations, which reinforces the symbolic patrimony of this to the region.

Paredes now has a governance strategy that is endorsed by design, but that wanders through a series of decisions withdrawing its sustainability. Our research identifies this new path and described it in the present chapter, bridging to Chapter 6—case study—where we present our contribution to this territorial reflection and to its industrial and economic sustainability, based on its symbolic patrimony.

74 A presentation video, highlighting Art on Chairs, can be seen at http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/videos/regiostars-2014-art-on-chairs-portugal-s-innovative-chair-makers-gain-a-global-reputation

This symbolic heritage defines the narrative that is the argument of strategy by design.

CHAPTER 3

Strategy

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide insight into the field of design, assuming it as a global territory that deals with methods, strategies and creativity. Design copes with new, more complex challenges and work forms, so it is necessary to investigate the role of design in terms of *strategy*.

Design has a long history as a practice-based activity, and its practice is much longer than its theory. According to Deforge, design as a theoretical theme starts with the 20th Century modern movement (Deforge, 1995, p. 25), and its definitions vary from specific to general, focusing both on ideas, processes, outcomes and overall benefits: “No single definition of design, or branches of professionalized practice such as industrial or graphic design, adequately covers the diversity of ideas and methods gathered under the label” (Buchanan, 1995, p. 3). The development of design methodology has a close connection with knowledge and culture, developed within other fields.

Our research roadmap sustains the connection between design and strategy for organizations. This chapter develops a description of this emerging thematic within design—design as strategy. Understood as strategy, we build a counscious knowledge and theoretical ground of how design happens in practice and how it triggers its action at the strategic level.

This knowledge is based on a set of methods, processes, and authors that have been defining design as a social sciences topic. By its scope, it has multiple creative processes, outcomes, and is justified by many organizational needs, and in this organizational and corporate interpretation, it becomes a constituent for development.

3.2. Design methodology and design strategy

Design is transforming many aspects of our life and covering many different practices that evolve with new professional methodologies, the development of technologies and a reformulation of organizational culture.

“The past decade has ushered in a growth of interest on design, both

among scholars and practitioners. The consequence has been the development of a wealth of new theories on design, innovation, and design management.” (Verganti, 2011, p. 384)

3.2.1. What is design, in 2014

Design is generally characterized by being a multidisciplinary activity, that relates ideas and materials, knowledge of processes and management, involving the entire value chain.

1,440,000,000. By using the Google search engine, this was the approximate amount of search results we may get by typing “design”, retrieved in May 20, 2014. It is a popular term, used in numerous contexts with dramatically different meanings. Heskett (2002) illustrates the versatility of the definition: “...design, stripped to its essence, can be defined as the human capacity to shape and make our environment in ways without precedent in nature, to serve our needs and give meaning to our lives” (Heskett, 2002, p. 5). It is a human capacity, which involves creativity, and is not limited to a particular craftsmanship.

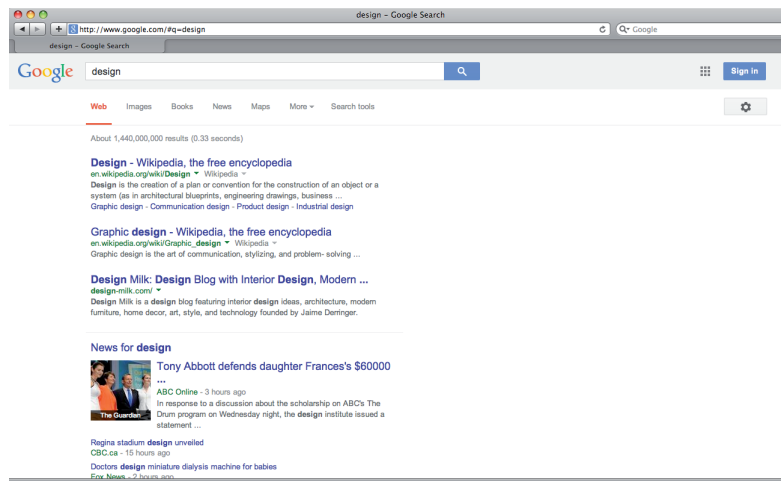


Fig.25 Google search results for “design”, retrieved May 20, 2014.

There are different ideas, meanings and roles that organizations give to design's mission and vision, as well as the purposes for which they are assigned—related to value addition, cost reduction, improved performance, aesthetics, and safety.

Trying to define design activity, as well as its processes and outcomes, is a task that has occupied the main authors in the field. Cross (1999) recognizes that “design has its own distinct intellectual culture; its own designerly ‘things to know, ways of knowing them, and ways of finding out about them’” (Cross, 1999, p. 7). No single definition is broadly accepted or covers the diversity of activities that the word “design” may refer to. Authors acknowledge a difficulty in arriving at a specific definition due to the wide variety of objects that it encompasses. Flusser (1999) proposes a definition whereby design emerges as a discipline that combines technology and technique in order to provide a material, visual or sensory shape into what is initially abstract: an idea or an intellectual concept.

“The words design, machine, technology, ars and art are closely related to one another (...) and they all derive from the same existential view of the world. (...) Modern bourgeois culture made a sharp division between the world of the arts and the one of technology. (...) In the gap, the word design formed a bridge between the two.” (Flusser, 1999, p. 18-19)

Design is understood as a problem solving and planning activity and its interpretation is close to its artifacts. Buchanan (1992) has defined four areas of design: symbolic and visual communications, material objects, activities and organized services, and complex systems or environments (Buchanan, 1992, p. 9-10). At first, this may look as an attempt to identify and limit specific design professions related with its specific design activities; however, according to Buchanan, these areas are not categories that merely refer to the results or outcomes. They are shared “places of invention”, “(...) places where one discovers the dimensions of design thinking by a reconsideration of problems and solutions” (Buchanan, 1992, p. 10). The author concludes by referring to the ubiquity of design, as “A common discipline of design thinking—more than the particular products created by that discipline today—is changing our culture, not only in its external manifestations but in its internal character.” (Buchanan, 1992, p. 21)

The act of designing and design itself are appropriated by different professional backgrounds, whom assume this wide definition to endorse it. It sits, according to Heskett, “uncomfortably” (Heskett, 2002b, p. 2); it has various levels of meaning and is interpreted as concept and activity:

“As a word it is common enough, but it is full of incongruities, has innu-

merable manifestations, and lacks boundaries that give clarity and definition. As a practice, design generates vast quantities of material, much of it ephemeral, only a small proportion of which has enduring quality.” (Heskett, 2002, p. 2)

In the present study, we employ the definition of design as a creative and problem solving process that searches for the most appropriate outcomes, considering variables such as production, technological economy, cultural, social and civic areas.

3.2.2. Design Methods: an outline

Traditionally, design is addressed as an overall discipline. As such, in its interpretation as a strategic constituent of development, the focus is primarily on its ability or application to industrial methodological levels, namely the optimization of production processes. Cross (2007) argues that “design practice does indeed have its own strong and appropriate intellectual culture... we must avoid swamping our design research with different cultures imported either from the sciences or the arts.” (Cross, 2007, p. 55)

3.2.2.1. The global territory of design

Contributions from Archer (1965), Jones (1970) and Cross (1984) are pioneer studies framing a global territory for design. Archer was one of the first scholars in design practice, claiming the need for method and rigor, and for decisions to be explained so they could be sustained.

Design and the methodology related to its establishment as a scientific activity fostered the practice of theorizing about the specific “making” of design, giving all stages their own meaning, resulting from the aims set at an initial and exploratory phase.

Archer argues for the specificity of the field of design as a dimension of human action in general and not just a professional dimension. This demonstrates the reach of his theoretical proposition which led to the implementation of the

systematic teaching of design in basic education in England, introduced by the Council of Industrial Design, later the Design Council.

Archer's contribution is particularly relevant for establishing Design as a field of "communicable knowledge" (Archer, 1995, p. 6), whose issues can be researched, analyzed and construed as mechanisms in the search for knowledge. Archer was instrumental in leading designers of his generation to regard the subject of design as a discipline with its specific demands for methodological accuracy and systematized inquiry, placing it at the core of a strict scientific and academic dialogue, with creative freedom and intuition.

The practice of design goes from the establishment of a program, through the synthesis of the solution found for the problem, and finally its communication. Archer encouraged the use of analyses of system levels within a design process based on evidence and assessment through experimentation. The point of departure will always be on the expression of a need on which the rationale and the importance of determining the reasons for creating a design process and managing the expectations about its extent and even its relationship with the artifact developed are based.

For this development, Archer (1995) organizes his proposition according to a 3-stage Model, in which the design process would comprise this creative mix, the limitations of the objectives and the systematic analyses, always with the creative act as a structure:

1. *Analytical stage*: where information is collected, organized and evaluated, constraints are defined and the hierarchy is structured, to detect the problem, plan and obtain information.
2. *Creative stage*: where the analysis, synthesis and creative development are applied.
3. *Executive stage*: where a critical valuation of the previous stages is made, ideas are adjusted and the design process and the interaction with other participants are developed, to define the proposal and the solution. Communication also becomes a part of the aims in developing the outcome.

This was a pioneering proposition since it defined Design as an activity that combines intuitive and cognitive spheres, thus contributing to making design pro-

cess analogous to science (Archer, 1995). “His method was based on critical path analysis, a model of operations research, and gave design research examples.” (Bayazit, 2004, p. 18)

Jones (1970) criticizes traditional definitions for failing to portray the full gamut of design activity, proposing a new definition that allows not only technical drawing but also the planning of the whole life cycle of a product to be included in the design process. The balanced use of intuition and reason is necessary for the development of any design project, phenomenon or strategy. Confronted by the project, the designer seeks to combine intuitive and rational methods.

The author proposes a methodology under three different categories, which do not mean isolated steps or a sequence of the design work, but rather a support tool for methodological study aiming at achieving its assigned goals. The breakdown of the methodology is useful to enable any change to the method to be proposed, to then reintegrate it into the process. These categories are:

- Divergence, involving rational and intuitive methods to intentionally increase the degree of uncertainty in the problem and its proposed solution, in order to extend the space of research and inquiry.
In the divergence category, the designer must feel for the sensitivity of the client, the market, the producers and the users for shifts in the aims and boundaries of the project. The core concept is that this category must broaden the understanding of the problem that Jones calls “pre-design.” (Jones, 1970, p. 64);
- Transformation, used to find and define a pattern for the building of the solution, from a relevant set of collected information. The problem is mapped, the resources and boundaries are recognized and the decisions are made to define the objectives. In transformation, the constraints are determined, the problem boundaries are defined and the most important variables are identified (Jones, 1970, p. 66);
- Convergence, a predominantly rational category. This convergence is sought in order to reduce uncertainties until only one alternative is left, that is suitable and implementable. The ability to focus and rationality is crucial, and the alternatives that can truly be developed should be pursued. Under convergence, the process becomes less abstract and more detailed (Jones, 1970, p. 68).

Design methods are as diverse as the descriptions of design made by their proponents. For this reason, since methodological descriptions are based on the specific conditions of each project, rather than on a magnified and broad perspective, Jones suggests that the process outcomes may be observed. Such a definition accommodates the growing field of application of design and its related universe. That is, as a project is completed, whether successfully or not, reality has been altered in some way, there was necessarily some change in the process. And this applies to activities in other fields of knowledge traditionally associated with design. In this way design is given the ability to deal with complex problems (Jones, 1992). It will develop its methods and critique to deal with problems at system level, generated by the use of man-made artifacts.

Today, design faces a complexity that prevents it from maintaining its focus exclusively on the product and the means for its production. These complexities are internal and external to the product. (Jones, 1970)

The internal complexities to the product involve the high cost of launching a new product and the resulting decrease in the tolerance of error, as well as the difficulty of predicting suitable processes for planning the required solutions in completely new situations.

The external complexities to the product involve the anticipation of collateral effects for each new product, international standardization in terms of technologies, and the impossibility of avoiding incompatibility between products.

To look on design from this perspective will enable not only the artifact, but its full life cycle to be grasped, as well as any changes that it will generate in the system in which it is inserted. This perspective requires the use of process methods and models capable of being applied in defiance of these “complex” situations.

Jones' proposition of a broad view of design methodology implies that, before the specific development of the creative proposal, the designer should be involved or aware of his or her influence on the whole system. The notion that the designer should make decisions with a view to success and its repercussions makes the design process increasingly public and participated, so that everyone concerned with the decisions can anticipate what can be done and influence choices.

“Such a change would mean that the public effects of designing become the subjects of political debate and also that some of the principles and methods that are the subject of this book become part of general education.” (Jones, 1970, p. 9)

Cross develops a descriptive method, based on key activities usually associated with design. In this process, the problem is broken down so that the best solutions found in each stage are explored in the next, to achieve a ripple effect in which the result is the consequence of a constant achievement of solutions: the aim of research.

The author uses a rational thought-building process, based on a schematic description of a procedure divided into stages, which may essentially point to the same process outcomes. Design methodology “characterised by one of its leading figures, Nigel Cross, as ‘the study of principles, practices and procedures of design’, aims at improving design practice and is strongly process oriented.” (Kroes, 2002, p. 288). Cross attempts to put this complex issue into perspective in a rather personal way, by using a wide systemic approach rather than accepting a formula or a strict method to address it. In a strategic way of thinking design, he recognizes the path that has been covered: “A desire to ‘scientise’ design can be traced back to the 20th-Century Modern Movement in design. Protagonists for the movement espoused a desire to produce works of art and design based on objectivity and rationality, that is, on the values of science.” (Cross, 2002)

Analyzing the parallels between scientific methodology and a methodology for design, the author recognizes its development, acknowledging “collaboration” as one of the most significant features of this evolutionary process: “Perhaps the most obvious example of a shift towards a new design paradigm is offered by the experiments in design participation. (...) The participatory design techniques are growing into a generally-accepted new approach to design (...)” (Cross, 1981, p. 6)

Such collaboration is clearly about the involvement of people who are not linked to design research or process and this aspect will define the positioning that design should take, since it was its absence that generated the lack of humanization in the processes and organic methodologies.

This is what Cross defines as “post-industrial” (Cross, 1981). Papanek (1985) borrows a broader notion of the term, where he adds that “Design is the conscious and intuitive effort to impose meaningful order.” (Papanek, 1985, p. 4)

This definition broadens the role of the designer. Although the expectation that “professional” designers have highly developed skills is a natural one, it recognizes that “non-designers” have abilities, even at a low level, for some aspects related with design methodology and activity.

“All men are designers. All that we do, almost all the time, is design, for design is a basic to all human activity. The planning and patterning of any act towards a desired, foreseeable end constitutes the design process and attempting to separate design to make it a thing by itself works counter to the fact that design is the primary underlying matrix of life.” (Papanek, 1985, p. 3)

Cross addresses design as a robust discipline, independent of science and the arts, following Archer’s proposition: its legitimacy relies on the articulation between the nature of the design activity, the behavior of design and the cognition of design. He cites Archer’s arguments, “in which he outlined arguments for a ‘third area’ of education–design” (Cross, 2007, p. 11). Cross contends that this occurs concurrently with the introduction of design as a subject area into schools in the United Kingdom: design could be part of general education.

3.2.2.2. Design process on economic strategies

Authors referred in the previous section interpret design in a holistic manner. Since designing indicates an activity, this may be the focus—the activity and its impact for economic outputs, after the holistic analysis. Communicating the value of design and how designers can contribute to any organization is a continuous challenge. Heskett (2008) develops the relation between design and economy, concerning about creating economic value by design, offering a window to business activity that enables designers to communicate the value of their work. By the description of theoretical positions on Economy, Heskett endorses that is

“possible to construct an extension of them that specifically addresses what the economic contribution of design can be in terms that business managers can understand.” (Heskett, 2009, p. 73)

Martin (2009), a proponent of the use of design as a metaphor for business and economics, proposes a model of value creation in businesses that reconciles two existing models:

- one model based on rigorous quantitative analyses, which organizes itself and searches for truths and certainties about the world. This model is based on inductive and deductive logic;
- a second model centered on creativity and innovation, as a reaction to the growth of the analytical model of management. This model promotes entrepreneurial creativity, while conditioned by the previous model, which relies excessively on quantitative analyses.

In Martin’s view, these two models are antagonistic. The analytical model creates resistant structures, scale and size. However, they are businesses that have difficulty reinventing themselves as they are constructed to maintain the status quo. In organizations where the intuitive model prevails, innovation happens faster and more intensely. The author argues that the two models are essential for the development of organizations, and posits a third way, capable of uniting the two models. For the author, design thinking facilitates the movement along the “knowledge funnel” (Martin, 2009, p. 4), it is a model for practice. Martin shapes this concept to “How discovery takes shape” (Martin, 2009, p. 1), advancing understanding and creating opportunities.

The knowledge funnel begins with a “mystery”, a problem, which then triggers the need for a solution. The second phase, called “heuristic”, is the stage in which the solutions are proposed. The last phase is the systematization of the solution, which Martin refers to as the “algorithm”, that is how to move to the next solution, making it a systematic practice.

This proposal has parallels with other “problem-solving” models, in particular in design methodology. The interest in Martin’s proposal lies in the identification of abductive logic at the model’s core, this “design of business”. The logic of the design process is based on the proposal of solutions that must be tested, evaluated,

until a suitable solution is reached. In this proposal, the relationship between business, organizations and design is interpreted, the abduction characteristic of Peirce's model of communication⁷⁵, reinterpreted in this new configuration.

“(…) at the heart of design thinking is abductive logic, a concept originated by turn-of-the-century philosopher Charles Sander Peirce. His important insight was that it is not possible to prove any new thought, concept or idea in advance: all new ideas can be validated only through the unfolding of future events. To advance knowledge, we must turn away from our standard definitions of proof (...) and instead share a mystery to ask what could be. The answer, Peirce said, would come through making a ‘logical leap of mind’ or an ‘inference to the best explanation’ to imagine a heuristic for understanding the mystery.” (Martin, 2009, p. 25)

The concept of abduction, as set forth by Peirce, is that which proposes the origin of the hypothesis. The abduction thus relates to creativity.

The model of design thinking gains prominence in itself, in the activity that takes place along the way. Martin cites examples of organizations and innovators that make use of design but interpreted from a management perspective. The author states that

“Design isn't just about making things beautiful; it's also about making things work beautifully. Design is about moving knowledge along the funnel, starting from mystery of how to enable and enhance communication in a mobile age.” (Martin, 2009, p. 58)

This relationship does not develop a new perspective in regards to design. On the contrary, design has been incorporating it. This provides a proper balance between “reliability” and “validity”, a “50/50 mix.” (Martin, 2009, p. 53). Economies and markets develop and pass through distinct phases, and in current times design is a strategic tool.

75 Charles Sander Peirce, American philosopher, created the abduction concept—in complement to deduction and induction concepts—as the process of forming explanatory hypotheses. “His own classification is interesting because it includes a novel type of argument (called abduction’) in addition to the two traditionally recognized types (induction and deduction) (...) and treated as a method of discovering new ideas rather than as a mode of argument” (Burks, 2008, 301-302).

Kretzschmar (2003) is more categorical when describing the analysis conducted in Danish companies about the economic effects of design: “analysis indicate a very clear correlation between the employment of design and the economic success businesses achieve, which in turn benefits society as a whole. The correlation is so marked that it cannot be disregarded or questioned.” (Kretzschmar, 2003, p. 35) The survey showed that design makes a difference in business and that adopting a comprehensive and systematic approach to design enhances the value of the organization. It should be regarded “as the first step towards developing a method base with which to assess the economic benefits of design” (Kretzschmar, 2003, p. 6), since no other analysis has been carried out before.

This survey, conducted by the Danish Design Center, analyzed the design investment by Danish companies and their performance in relation to design. It constitutes as an important case study, as it draws quantitative conclusions that justify, in clear figures, the surplus design brought to Danish economy at the time.

3.2.2.3. Design towards strategy

Mozota (2003), Clark and Smith (2008), Neumeier (2008) and Verganti (2009) expand design to a global strategic methodology, investigating the construction of knowledge concerning the act of designing and how this designing happens.

Design constitutes itself as an advantage and competitive source both to enterprises and territories, considered by the European Community as a key connection between creativity and innovation (EU, 2009; EU, 2013). This connection demands a restructured perspective that turns innovation into a process that demands proximity and cooperation and depends from the historical background and heritage and from the cultural, political, and institutional specificities.

If design is associated with originality, creativity and innovation, to interpret it as a set of management tools brings it closer to control and planning of this creativity, then verifying that together with management relates to strategic models and policies that comprise a process of decision making. Mozota (2003) argues the role and importance of design in itself within the organization, close to management, because both are creative, coordination and problem solving activities, which follow a systematic, logical and orderly process. “Design is a management

tool that creates differentiation (...). Design is no longer seen as the output of design-form, but as a creative and management process that can be integrated into other organization processes." (Mozota, 2003, p. 114)

The author presents design as differentiator, integrator, and transformer, developing the concept of the four powers of design, in the context of management science: "design as differentiator, design as integrator, design as transformer and design as good business" (Mozota, 2006, p. 45). The author maintains that, despite the apparent discrepancy between areas of design and management according to different professionals, training and even cultural approaches, similarities can be found.

Mozota describes the mix between design and strategy in two relevant milestones:

- transformation through design, a "third level of design management [that] establishes links between design, corporate communications, and top management" (Mozota, 2003, p. 142);
- design as a competitive advantage, because "design participates in strategy formulation and ideation because strategy is produced by a creative tension between the available resources in the company and its long-term aspirations." (Mozota, 2003, p. 159)

Creative and design innovation spirit influences management methods, which move towards investigation and experimentation, looking to increase earnings to the organization as a whole.

"Strategic planning is compelling for strategic design management because of its systemic reconstruction of the mental patterns of the company, its focus on "sense making" and strategic intent, and its generation of scenarios and assumptions. Today, the keywords of strategic design management are knowledge, conversation, interaction, and network." (Mozota, 2003, p. 159)

Clarck and Smith note that the divide between business executives and designers is a historical fact. However, design is moving towards joint work with the organizational strategy. This rapprochement is evident at a time when there is an inter-

est in innovation and the promotion of new forms of leadership, requiring from the designer more than just the job of designing. Gradually, design methodology becomes relevant to business strategy.

According to this proposition, designers are invited to take leadership in areas not traditionally associated with the profession:

“Designers can be trusted advisors in helping shape business decision-making, contributing to business strategy with a seat at the table, and cultivating design patrons who will embrace and invest in design to drive competitive advantage. We can help these design patrons innovate and create opportunities for the businesses and organizations we want to see thrive. (...) We believe it’s time to unleash the power of design thinking in every professional endeavor, not just design itself.” (Clarck and Smith, 2008, p. 14)

The authors use their own organization, IBM, as an example of this strategy. At the India branch office, the integration between human resources and communication areas is enhanced by the use of design tools and methods, enabling the experience of employees to be understood from their application to join the company, their engagement and their integration into the organization.

IBM has a long history related to design and communication, particularly with the historic involvement of Robert Noyes, Charles and Ray Eames, Eero Saarinen, Isamu Noguchi and Paul Rand. Rand developed one of the most important visual identity and integrated communication systems for IBM⁷⁶.

Based on their own example, Clarck and Smith explain the degree of importance that design can achieve within the organization and describe the peak of this scale as “design-minded organization”. In this framework, the organization brings design on board in an integrated and holistic manner: “Design methods are or-

76 “IBM’s philosophy of design has influenced many other enterprises and institutions in the decades since Noyes. Design is now seen as essential for organizations to express their brands and their values—from Apple’s iPhone, to Starbucks’ in-store experience, to Disney’s entertainment venues. Indeed, in recent years, companies have employed the principles of so-called “design thinking,”—including observation of how humans interact with new things, rapid prototyping and collaboration across multidisciplinary teams—to create everything from consumer services to business strategy. At IBM, such methods are being applied to the design of its client briefing centers, and to the recruitment and onboarding of new employees.” (IBM, n.d.)

derly. Design methods are inclusive. Design methods are innovative.” (Clarck and Smith, 2008, p. 9)

A criticism of previous models, centered around themselves, on design for design’s sake, is perceptible. However, multidisciplinary teamwork and training in broad design skills can be observed, for example, since the Bauhaus in the 1920s. The authors argument is pertinent if we refer, within an interpretation of multidisciplinary as a collective component, to the involvement of other design-related functions which were not previously part of its process, such as co-creation and participatory design, involving users and clients in the creative process of design. They do not just use design-supporting strategies, but rather develop such strategies through design.

Neumeier develops Jones’ proposal, describing the shift from “posters and toasters” to processes, systems and organizations. He argues for a vision of design as a strategic component in business, no longer regarded as the creator of artifacts or styles, but rather interpreted as performance. The author states that the organizational context increasingly incorporates companies that manage to create their own strategies and paths, not just applying a pre-designed management model.

“So if innovation drives differentiation, what drives innovation? The answer, hidden in plain sight, is design. Design contains the skills to identify possible futures, invent exciting products, build bridges to customers, crack wicked problems, and more. The fact is, if you wanna innovate, you gotta design.” (Neumeier, 2008, p. 12)

In today’s world, organizations need differentiation, and this is achieved through innovation. Design is touted as an engine of innovation, stressing that creativity, in its many manifestations, is a driver of economic growth. “The ballooning demand for design is shaped by a profound shift in how the First World makes its living. Creativity in its various forms has become the number-one engine of economic growth.” (Neumeier, 2008, p. 12)

The author describes a series of “levers for change” (Neumeier, 2009, p. 83), that should be an attribute of everyone involved in an organization. In total, sixteen are presented and he explains the methodology as adaptable to the specifications inherent in each particular organization. We give particular relevance to “weave

a rich story”, as it relates design with storytelling to an effective impact of the organization’s value.

Neumeier devotes part of his analysis to the value of the brand as an argument for innovation, and that is exactly where design comes in. The model that brought us to the current stage of development is not able to move us forward from here. The structure bound by the assembly line is being replaced by the network structure. And it is in this process that the designer is the professional who has the necessary attributes to revolutionize the way the model is established.

Verganti proposes design-driven innovation as the innovation of “meaning”: “A design-driven innovation, by definition, differs substantially from the dominant meaning in the industry” (Verganti, 2009, p. 11). Meaning is described as a finding in management literature, that “(...) people do not buy products but meanings. People use things for profound emotional, psychological, and sociocultural reasons as well as utilitarian ones.” (Verganti, 2009, p. 4)

This approach opens up an important contribution to a radical innovation, connected to people and the particular interpretation given by each of them to their needs, desires and the products and services they acquire.

The cultural capital of each individual—their personality, their culture, the environment in which they operate, the uses they make of artifacts—is the fuel for innovation, *i.e.* what is central and is a motivator for change is the meaning that these products have for each individual.

This innovation complements a more traditional view based on technology. Starting with the Latin etymology of the word “design”, Verganti retrieves Krippendorff’s definition (1989)⁷⁷ that proposes the use of a sign to designate something, to assign meaning, thus designating the relationship with artifacts, developers and users.

“(…) design is not solely about form and styling (...). Not does it support a generic interpretation of design as creativity at large. Instead, it is

⁷⁷ *Apud* VERGANTI, 2009, p. 27.

about a particular type of innovation: the innovation of meanings. Klaus Krippendorff offered a masterly definition of this unique aspect of design in *Design Issues* in 1989: "The etymology of design goes back to the latin *de + signare* and means making something, distinguishing it by a sign, giving it significance, designating its relation to other things, owners, users or gods. Based on this original meaning, one could say: design is making sense [of things]." (Verganti, 2009, p. 27)

When the emphasis is on technology, the thinking is on how to solve a problem; when thinking about meaning, we think of "why", anticipating a need and suggesting a vision. The author subscribes to Krippendorff (1989), who argues that meaning is a collectively constructed relationship.

Within this context, design influences the strategy and the organization themselves, as much as it is influenced by them. A movement is begun to transform the corporate culture, with systemic thinking, teamwork, user-centered solutions.

The model proposed by Verganti is characterized by continuous dialogue between the organization and its "network of interpreters":

"A company willing to propose breakthroughs can leverage the efforts of these noncompeting interpreters who are also investigating and influencing future meanings. (...) Companies that produce design-driven innovations value highly their interactions with this network of interpreters." (Verganti, 2009, p. 119)

The success of these processes depends on the proper way to enhance innovation, developing particular skills in these same interpreters, to understand, anticipate and influence the new meanings of products and services.

The proper establishment of this network may not, however, guarantee success in innovation processes. This design-driven innovation should be an unstructured process of research and development, where tasks are shared by different team members and where the input of design is critical to the connection of these parts, an active role that is based on three actions: listening to the design discourse; Interpreting; addressing the design discourse (Verganti, 2009, p. 133).

New concepts emerge from multi-disciplinary and multidimensional research. This enhances the validity of a collaborative and systematic dialogue with the people involved, in defining the problem and the solution. Design-driven innovation is an innovation strategy based on networks:

“(…) Innovation of meanings is incremental when a product adopts a design language and delivers a message that is in line with the current evolution of sociocultural models. (...) However, innovation of meanings may also be radical, which happens when a product has a language and delivers a message that implies a significant reinterpretation of meanings.” (Verganti, 2008, p. 441)

3.2.3. Strategy, from efficiency to creating value

Originally, the definition of strategy meant the general plan of a military campaign, distinct from the concept of tactics—the achievement of short-term goals (such as winning a particular battle). In an economic and business environment, increasingly competitive, strategy becomes a relevant methodological tool.

Business strategy has been defined in different ways. In general, strategy is understood as the ways organizations behave in order to achieve long-term objectives, including competitive advantage. Determination of vision, mission and long-term objectives, as well as the development of policies and programs to achieve these objectives, are the elements needed to develop a strategy. In a dynamic context, the strategy has to be constantly adapted to ever-changing situations. Gluck *et al.* (1980) endorse strategy as competitive advantage, in order to evaluate and improve corporate planning systems:

“All this may have blurred the concept of strategy, but it has also helped to shift the attention of managers from the technicalities of the planning process to substantive issues affecting the long-term well-being of their enterprises.” (Gluck *et al.*, 1980, p. 145)

A designed strategy, devised in order to create value, is vital for organizations in face of competitive markets, where the differentiation of companies involves

offering innovative products and services geared to the needs of consumers. However, despite these efforts and as a counterpoint to initiatives fostering the dissemination of design and innovation, an organizational culture based on the repetition of products and ideas, of those “success stories”, remains.

“As the economic system becomes more complex and the integration of single business units into multi-national, diverse organization continue, ways must be found to restore the entrepreneurial vigor of a simpler, more individually oriented company structure. Strategic management, linking the rigor of formal planning to vigorous operation execution, may prove to be the answer.” (Gluck *et al.*, 1980, p. 161)

Design may link strategy's asset of efficiency to a creation of value asset. Lockwood (2008) comprises case studies that present the role of design. In the author's line of thought—where design is integrated in strategies—innovation appears as an economic keyword, attributing its success to organizational knowledge, experience and technological capabilities, in order to generate new processes, products and services.

“Our challenge in building design strategy is to bring these two disparate worlds into alignment. They share a common ground in the desire to accomplish business objectives. So the strategist and the designer, each with a clear understanding of business goals and objectives, can be a powerful force by working together.” (Lockwood, 2008, xii)

The history of implementing specific policies and programs for design that involve public and private actors in their promotion already has a considerable body of research. The study of these policies finds that design is a tool that operates in two complementary dimensions:

- (i) it adds value to the product;
- (ii) it contributes to the improvement of productivity in organizations.

However, these findings are often the confirmation of assumptions, validated by an empirical analysis of contexts and outcomes. The greatest difficulties currently observed derive from obtaining indicators to quantitatively evaluate the relevance of the design component in the development of organizations. This

analysis is often cross-referenced—and even confused—with technological innovation and the results of economic growth *per se*.

Design policies are inserted into macroeconomic strategies with a view to global competitiveness. This is an acknowledged need for an integrated, balanced development, with the breadth to liaise with organizations of varying scale. Invested with a broader meaning, design captures expectations relating to strategic planning, vision and market positioning. In this, the challenge consists in turning it into communicable knowledge, as Archer stated, so that design and design management as knowledge first have to be learned by enterprises. Acklin *et al.* (2013) describe this as a “challenge”, the introduction of new design and design management knowledge into innovation activities:

“On one hand, designers will need an accurate understanding of absorption as multi-level and multi-stakeholder processes including ambivalence from the side of SMEs. On the other hand, SMEs with little or no design experience will have to learn to use design management as a mediator between prior and complementary knowledge, before a productive interaction with design’s divergent characteristics in innovation projects can occur.” (Acklin *et al.*, 2013, p. 12)

3.2.4. Where are we now⁷⁸

Design, in its contemporary setting, becomes involved in issues beyond its traditional configuration and territory; it is not confined to its traditional roles. It extends towards other areas, using its integrative profile in order to promote interdisciplinarity and interaction with different stakeholders.

Revisiting existing thinking in the historical development of design (such as reflection and methodology), emphasizes a set of theoretical propositions that need to build bridges with its applicability. Jones recognizes this difficulty very early:

“Is there any general theory, or set of principles, to which one can refer

78 This expression is the title of a David Bowie's song, deconstructed by Heitor Alvelos and presented at Personal Views conference, in January 2013 (www.esad.pt/en/feeds/personal-views).

in selecting and combining design methods? The plain answer is 'no'. Nothing like enough is yet known about the behavior of designers, or about design problems, to attempt an explanation that could be verified by observation and experiment. All we can do at present is to classify, and to speculate, in the hope of making it easier to understand what is that makes the construction of an effective design strategy." (Jones, 1970, p. 63)

We consider that this response will remain relevant, especially when enhanced by the diversity of frameworks that have been attributed to design. Mapping various authors, who seek to understand how design structures itself as method and discipline, we interpret these distinct perspectives.

Design continues to be consensually understood as a "problem-solving" activity. The search for legitimacy, basically through the "scientization" of its methodologies, means understanding the nature of its problems and how designers seek to solve them.

Design emerges as a concept linked to project-oriented thinking, an epistemological shift that will guarantee the revenue for the organization. Design, or related concepts such as creativity, acts as a credo for current society. Its theory, practice and implementation is a argument in Ritzer's McDonaldization process, as it formats commercial strategies, distribution of content and consumption. This triad endorses the dimensions Ritzer originally described, as design is required to be:

- efficient, discovering the best possible means to whatever end is desired;
- calculable, which emphasizes quantity, reducing the consumption of time, one of the essences of current times;
- predictable, as is it expected that design products and services will be the same in a global scale, and this is part of the McDonaldization experience;
- controlled, as it turns to technology the interaction between designers, organizations and consumers.

The completion of this process is the homogenization, a McDonaldization of content. Although McDonaldization is "rational," it has also created irrationalities that lead to inefficiency, unpredictability, incalculability, and loss of control, par-

ticularly if it regards to design, communication and culture. As a socially constructed phenomenon, it differs according to its function, mission and involved individuals. For design and creativity, the more rationalized society becomes, the more disenchanting it may also turn. So the value of investing in design has a direct relation with benchmarking areas in which design adds value.

In reaction to the McDonaldized view of content, and with a close link to design culture and society, the concept of IKEAization is presented. IKEA has become part of our social and cultural fabric, and disseminates “democratic design” as part of their strategy:

“Good design should be available for the many, not the few. That’s why all IKEA designers design every IKEA product starting with a functional need and a price. Then they use their creativity and knowledge and use low-cost raw materials and manufacturing processes to create functional products.” (IKEA, 2013)

IKEAization is presented by Blackshaw (2013) as a more sophisticated drive for the consumers. It is embodied in the idea of family and neighborhood, creating an illusion of community, in which we take part, by having the same experience in using and interacting with design—it becomes neat and savvy:

“The IKEA brand is a good example of what Rojek (2010) refers as neat capitalism. Through this term Rojek identifies the knowing, deliberate attempts by entrepreneurs such as Ingvar Kamprad⁷⁹ to offer clever but cool solutions to pressing social, cultural and economic questions. His use of the term ‘neat’ is promulgated and practised, especially the way in which it sells itself as offering ‘savvy stateless solutions’ to the problems of society and the world by drawing the sentiments of popular imagination.” (Blackshaw, 2013, p. 367)

This approach to design gathers supporters at the same historical moment of the emergence of a networked information economy that opens new forms of distributed collaboration and collaborative creation of artifacts. The interaction

⁷⁹ Ingvar Kamprad is the founder of IKEA. It was founded in 1943. The acronym IKEA is made up of the initials of his name (Ingvar Kamprad) plus those of Elmtaryd, the location where he was born, and the nearby village Agunnaryd (both in Sweden).

with design and design products is predominately located in the subject but in a symbolical way, as it is a necessary condition. It is Ritzer's rubber cage, for people who dislike some aspects of McDonaldization, but at the same time like other aspects of it⁸⁰.

“An IKEAized existence is a compelling one. How it works with the ideas of home, community and coolness, and how it makes people feel about themselves, borders on the sublime: it is ordinary and special, within the reach of everybody but somehow, at the same time, out of reach, of some other world.” (Blackshaw, 2013, p. 140)

McDonaldization and IKEAization share the resemblance consumption and the homogenization of format. The first assumes a precise set of dimensions and standards, which act as guarantee for performance. The second assumes a set of dimensions apparently fluid and flexible, that is its own standard and is barely noticeable.

The continuous expansion of the IKEA phenomenon becomes an economic model, both in terms of consumption and production. The Swedish powerhouse not only exports furniture-concepts and lifestyle but represents strategy and design methodologies⁸¹. A consolidated industry in Paredes, observing a rapid growth of this phenomenon, gradually begins to endorse its model. This is a template that does not necessarily connects to patrimony and industrial heritage, but rather stands alongside successful design products. The strategic vision proposed for Paredes' industry might have corrected the knowledge of its history and economic model:

“Looking at the municipality of Paredes you might ask: but why Paredes came to have in 2009 a total of 1268 new plants? (...) It happened because there was a centuries-old tradition that allowed factories to appear and because in the decade, mainly 60/70s, technology was very basic and allowed any good carpenter or good furniture professional, with minimal organizational commercial capacity, could easily assemble a

⁸⁰ Yeganeh (2011) described the three cages people may fall into when dealing with McDonaldization, in Ritzer's “The McDonaldization of Society” review.

⁸¹ For example, IKEA Portugal has a growth strategy by 2020 of 1,100 million euros (Diário Económico, January 23, 2013)

plant because the technology was very basic.” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013)⁸²

Paredes looks for a repositioning allied to design, trying to gain scale and align its manufacturing capacity under a seal of Center for Furniture Design. We now have an optimistic unified territory by idea and consumption. The contact with the territory detaches from the process, which shall comply with the worldwide efficiency criteria, ready to replicate successful products in productive simplifications, where design is not infrastructure but crust.

“The industry (of Paredes) is not prepared at all for designers, I hope that 20 years from now it is already. (...) It is a painful process. For any designer it is very difficult to work and to make a project with the industry of Paredes.” (Afonso, personal communication, May 21, 2013)⁸³

That said, we need to show that cornerstone design concepts such as experimentation and creativity are not recent discoveries of other domains of knowledge linked to the management of organizations. The ability to draw analogies with design methodology facilitates the transfer of knowledge to all concerned parties.

3.3. Strategy for creativity

Creativity, as a socially constructed phenomenon, conceives a new theoretical space for organizations. When reframed with strategy, creativity is a communicative action.

⁸² This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Se olhar para o concelho de Paredes poderá perguntar: mas por que é que Paredes chegou a ter em 2009 um total de 1268 fábricas novas? (...) Aconteceu porque houve uma tradição secular que permitiu que as fábricas fossem aparecendo e porque na década, principalmente de 60/70 a tecnologia era muito básica e permitiu que qualquer bom marceneiro ou qualquer bom profissional do mobiliário, com o mínimo de capacidade organizativa comercial pudesse com facilidade montar uma unidade industrial porque a tecnologia era muito básica.” (Ferreira, personal communication, January 15, 2013)

⁸³ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “A indústria (de Paredes) não está preparada de todo para designers, espero que daqui a 20 anos já esteja. (...) é um processo penoso. Para qualquer designer é muito difícil trabalhar e conseguir fazer um trabalho com a indústria de Paredes” (Afonso, personal communication, May 21, 2013).

If strategy is linked to creativity, it informs by business goals and audience perceptions, *i.e.* creative thinking may help drive strategy and provide competitive advantages.

3.3.1. Design as a strategic constituent for development

In recent years interest has increased in how design can contribute to the development and growth in organizations, businesses and society, bridging new boundaries between theory and practice.

Design is at the center of economy and culture or, in a more tangible way, of creative economy. Design's definition ought to be understood in a holistic perspective, both strategic and integrated: traversing economic development, social cohesion and urban culture. Design aims at contributing to business development, as a strategic constituent acting in management processes and changes. Thus, in search for a shared vision, creative processes aim at optimizing corporate performance. This performance envelops innovation, quality, product appearance, environments, communication and brands, involving industries, publics and markets. The materialization of ideas is the result of the focus on developing the right solution for each project, reinforcing the message, linking codes and languages, enhancing affections and considering the needs and desires of the audience.

According to Bell and Jayne (2003), “design is all around us (...) people, things, ideas, images and places—together they constitute the culture of design” and “the culture of design lives in the city, in and with its citizens”⁸⁴. In this context, a territorial development policy induced by design should foresee interventions in several areas of the economic, social and cultural life from the urban areas, and therefore only a strategic articulation among these practices and processes will lead to a true “design culture”. The case study of Paredes, an industrial district of furniture that elected design as a development strategy, through the boost of a design hub in the city center, is an example where a traditional industry tries to project itself in new economic challenges based in a design strategy and is the case study of the present thesis.

84 *Apud* Selada and Cunha, 2013, p. 215-216.

3.3.2. Creativity

Creativity is intrinsic to human existence and understood as the ability to produce something that is both novel and useful. It relates to imagination and originality, with focus on problem solving or fulfilling a specific need.

It comes to vision from various combinations of individual and cultural capabilities, *i.e.* from the relationship between individual and collective. Runco and Jaeger (2012) synthesize a standard definition of creativity from an extensive literature review:

“The standard definition is bipartite: Creativity requires both originality and effectiveness. Are two criteria really necessary? Originality is undoubtedly required. It is often labeled novelty, but whatever the label, if something is not unusual, novel, or unique, it is commonplace, mundane, or conventional. It is not original, and therefore not creative. Originality is vital for creativity but is not sufficient. (...) Original things must be effective to be creative. Like originality, effectiveness takes various forms. It may take the form of (and be labeled as) usefulness, fit, or appropriateness.” (Runco and Jaeger, 2012, p. 92)

Creativity is thus considered as an asset or resource that must be managed and strategically developed, then valid to be incorporated in design strategy. It relates to a symbolic and emotional side to communication, breaking with conventional expectations and developing new visions, ideas and results.

Parkurst (1999) acknowledges a confusion and lack of consensus in the definition of creativity. The author states it as a construct and proposes the following definition: “The ability or quality displayed when solving hitherto unsolved problems, when developing novel solutions to problems others have solved differently, or when developing original and novel (at least to the originator) products.” (Parkurst, 1999, p. 18)

In this approach, creativity also becomes a process of innovation, combined with multiple dimensions: ideas, skills, technology and management. In the present study, we understand its relevance projected in areas with which it defines itself as argument. It becomes the expression of territorial, social, individual and sym-

bolic values as cause and effect for the desired shifts. We assume that creativity is a criterion of interest examining thinking skills, motives, and dispositional characteristics, among other variables.

“To truly describe creativity, we must understand how creativity affects our world in a multilayered social system. (...) Creativity should be viewed as a cause as well as an effect. Careful examination of these causal relationships, especially the reciprocal causal relationships that emerge as creative people both act on and are influenced by their world should, over time, lead to a far more robust understanding of creativity as a force shaping our daily lives.” (Mumford, 2003, p. 117)

3.3.3. The *innovation metaphor*

Innovation, in current scenario, emerges as a central area in the strategic discussion of organizations, but innovation as the driving force for the creation of new solutions is a phenomenon that evolves in parallel with History itself.

“‘Innovation’ is one of those words that suddenly seem to be on everybody’s lips. Firms care about their ability to innovate, on which their future allegedly depends (Christensen, 1997; Christensen and Raynor, 2003), and hoards of consultants are busy persuading companies about the usefulness of their advice in this regard. Politicians care about innovation too, how to design policies that stimulate innovation has become a hot topic at various levels of government.” (Fagerberg and Verspagen, 2009, p. 218)

Schumpeter, acknowledged as one of the initial authors confirming innovation as an organizational application of something new—product, process, production method or organization type—argued that organizations should innovate in order to renew the value of their asset endowment. “His major theoretical treatise on the subject,

“The theory of economic development”, published in German in 1912 and in English translation in 1934, focused in particular on the interaction between innovative individuals, what he called ‘entrepreneurs’, and

their inert social surroundings, while later works extended the approach to also take into account organized R&D (Research and Development) activities in large firms (Schumpeter, 1934, 1942).” (Fagerberg and Verspagen, 2009, p. 220)

In an economic environment that values the outcome, the concept of innovation comes up associated with design, because design gives, by its activities, a creative vision for the implementation of the strategy. Innovation can be understood in a more extended sense, as a process of generating new opportunities and solutions, closely linked to creativity and idea generation, applied to something to which it recognizes usefulness.

“Innovation is tightly coupled to change, as organizations use innovation as a tool in order to influence an environment or due to their changing environments (internal and external) (Damanpour, 1991). However, innovation may involve a wide range of different types of change depending on the organization’s resources, capabilities, strategies, and requirements.” (Baregheh *et al.*, 2009, p. 1324)

Innovation is promoted as a key factor for the development and sustainability of organizations in contemporary society. It is enhanced by the overall competitive environment of economy. It is visible the movement towards innovation, at corporate, academic and individual levels. “Innovation is the multi-stage process whereby organizations transform ideas into new/improved products, service or processes, in order to advance, compete and differentiate themselves successfully in their marketplace.” (Baregheh *et al.*, 2009, p. 1334)⁸⁵

This definition extends the concept into a multidisciplinary approach. It comprises the innovation process as a set of strategically related actions that can occur simultaneously, and bridging to three necessary elements: knowledge, strategy and partnerships. These elements constitute the metaphor of innovation, interpreted as warranted for the proposed strategic development of organizations. Design is interpreted as a dimension for assessing the capacity for innovation, in

⁸⁵ The authors developed, in their research, a definition “based on 60 definitions from different disciplinary traditions and paradigms, thus providing a first attempt to capture the “essence” and produce an integrative, cross-disciplinary definition of innovation” (Baresh *et al.*, 2009, p. 1325).

what Laestadius *et al.* (2005) define as design intensity⁸⁶. “As regards design intensity we may include a broad design concept including parts of what hitherto has been included in the design of R&D.” (Laestadius *et al.*, 2005, p. 10-11)

Design starts to be interpreted as a central discipline in the definition and development of this organizational innovation, and a broader view, summarized as “design innovation”. In current scenario of technological development and economic internationalization, design has been playing an active role in creating an identity and adding value to the specific product of a local industry. In the global—and therefore highly competitive market—design is presented as a tool that will enable differentiation, both in terms of processes and outcomes. Mutlu and Er (2003) discuss this relationship, presenting design as “the core function of innovation, and innovation as the main driving force in the economy” (Mutlu and Er, 2003, p. 2) and conclude that “design innovations’ comprise (a) the incremental novelties in the design of an existing product or service, or (b) radically new products or services obtained by design effort with no or minimal technical novelty” (Mutlu and Er, 2003, p. 18). Nevertheless, the authors stress the difficulty to arrive at a concise definition, which reinforces the need to find practical-based case studies to reaffirm the relevance and appropriateness of such convergence.

Design is thus incorporated in the structure and organization. It is a relevant constituent of organizations in defining the level of knowledge, strategy and partnerships. In this field, Junginger and Christensen (2013) refocus the research and discourse on design and innovation around organizational culture.

“Design has the aim and the potential to change society as well as the organization (Simon 1969; Pilditch 1976; Mau & Leonard 2004; Junginger 2008; Brown 2009). In doing so designing is an act of creative destruction and will thus be disruptive to the dominating values and practices residing within established organizations, and carry with it elements of an emerging culture. (...) This puts the burden on researchers on organizational culture to reassess the role of design in innovation in a pluralistic and dynamic cultural environment, where design as a culture of

⁸⁶ Design intensity is one out of five dimensions which measure the variety of innovativeness within and between sectors. Laestadius *et al.* (2005) argue five dimensions which can be measured according to their: R&D intensity; Design intensity; Technological intensity; Skill intensity (Human capital orientation); and Innovation intensity (Laestadius *et al.*, 2005, p. 10).

making is seen to have a role in the making of culture.” (Junginger and Christensen, 2013, p. 10)

This understanding is achieved; for example, with the action plan “Design for Europe”, which relates design to innovation as “Design drives innovation by putting people first, helping businesses and public services to create solutions with real value for the user.” (Design for Europe, n.d.)

These viewpoints endorse an institutional role for design, interpreted as an innovation metaphor. The meaning of the word has been trivialized, taking part of public discourse, in strict relationship with other buzzwords such as creativity and innovation. The development models that are successful tend to be replicated in different locations, industries or markets—a consequent interpretation of McDonaldization, in terms of design strategy.

A different development model is the reconstruction and enhancement of heritage and local culture, which inspire political and methodological decisions, that will lead to a collective memory. This memory is material and symbolic, and incorporated into the local stakeholders, citizens, businesses and institutions. The proposal developed in the context of our research lines for this purpose.

3.3.4. The symbolic value of a practical based activity

Using visual strategies associated with communication, design has developed a language, for which a visually literate audience reads not just a literal message, but also how it is woven within their cultural contexts. The act of communicating among individuals is a built and acquired process. This individual is a communicator, and has used throughout its evolution the most varied media—languages, forms, signs, seduction, rational and unconscious processes, use of hypermedia devices—to transmit messages.

The *praxis* of communication design is made of all these in order to produce messages in useful and understandable codes. In order to simulate the diversity of contexts of knowledge construction, and confront and share multiple interpretations—theoretical, artistic or technological—arising along the historical path that can be observed, it allows the analysis of the relation of human communication

with the information and communication technologies as “technologies of intelligence” (Lévy, 1994), insofar as expansion systems of thinking and collaborative making of meaning.

This understanding has profound implications for design theory and design practice. It shifts the concept of design as an organizer of facts, towards design as a generator of facts. In other words, design can no longer be regarded as something “objective” or “neutral”, and should instead be viewed as the “sediment of interpretations” (Bruinsma, 2005b, p. 42). Design releases itself from the set of operational methodologies and will incorporate an important social control. It finds itself moving towards the territory of organizational strategy, since it is through action that messages will be present. It shifts the focus of analysis and understanding of communication messages as unique expressions, towards reading them as a convergence of multiple sources. The formulation reflects the context—the message is an interpretation, not a fact.

The focus of design, in this sense, is in communication, in creating conditions so that an “audience” understands and incorporates the message and feels its benefits. In doing so, the expressive resources are strategically structured and reasoned after studies of meanings, benefits and risks. This process has, now more than ever, a multidisciplinary feature, meshing areas such as communication, marketing, psychology, sociology, management and technology.

3.4. Design, a sense of place and the creative economy

Creative economy is an important and growing part of contemporary times, bridging the creative and economic dimension of culture and discussing the contribution of creativity to the transformation of the societies’ structure.

Grodach (2013) develops an understanding of how municipalities conceptualize and plan for cultural economy. The author identifies “five approaches to cultural economy development: the conventional model, the creative city model, the cultural industries model, the cultural occupations model and the cultural planning model.” (Grodach, 2013, p. 1748)

Creativity in contemporary societies is even more of a main link in the innova-

tion process: if technology, work and organizations are the main competitive factors in the traditional models, the competitiveness of globalized societies assume as essential the talent and the tolerance allied to technology. Landry and Bianchini (1995) introduce creativity as strategy for novelty:

“What we describe as creative thinking is a way of getting rid of rigid preconception and of opening ourselves to complex phenomena which cannot always be dealt with in a strictly logical manner. It is also a way of discovering previously unseen possibilities.” (Landry and Bianchini, 1995, p. 17)

This new approach happens in various dimensions of life: economic, social and cultural, in diverse scales and consequences. Culture, creativity, and also design may take part in development and governance policies, an intervention described by Heinze and Hoose (2013):

“Culture and creative economy will play an important and increasing role in the future, especially for cluster strategies in selected fields of expertise, all the more so as some segments of the creative industries rank among the “knowledge services” that have been on the rise in recent years. On the one hand, networking and cross-company communication seem to be particularly prominent and frequent here; therefore, the economic sector “culture” can serve as a role model for other sectors. On the other hand, the cooperation of traditional commercial enterprises with creative companies can give rise to new networks and alliances.” (Heinze and Hoose, 2013, p. 531)

In the Portuguese context, an increasingly dynamic regarding investment and innovation in research and development is under way (Mateus, 2013; Vitorino, 2014). Santos (2010) cites the 2009 European Year of Creativity and Innovation as a turning point:

“In Portugal the European year of Innovation and Creativity was coordinated at the most high level in political terms and directly stimulated the development of about 250 initiatives, boost by several identities – public and private – involving thousands of participants both presential and online. The generated dynamic during 2009 will continue in the public

initiatives that stimulate the entrepreneurship and innovation inside the own civic society, even more alert and aware of the importance of these areas to a more sustainable development.” (Santos, 2010, p. 48)⁸⁷

This political strategy is in line with Florida’s (2003) recognition of “creative class”, a key driving force for economic development: “The distinguishing characteristic of the creative class is that its members engage in work whose function is to “create meaningful new forms.” This perspective stresses a necessary relation between citizens and territories:

“(…) Creative people power regional economic growth and these people prefer places that are innovative, diverse, and tolerant. My theory thus differs from the human capital theory in two respects: (1) it identifies a type of human capital, creative people, as being key to economic growth; and (2) it identifies the underlying factors that shape the location decisions of these people, instead of merely saying that regions are blessed with certain endowments of them.” (Florida, 2003, p. 8)

3.4.1. Focusing on design and place

Cities urge themselves as territorial arenas of competitiveness and the creative city “is not just an idea or theory, but has become a symbolic marker of a now defunct era of economic optimism” (Vickery, 2011, p. 2). This movement has been intensified with the emergence of the knowledge society and later with the creativity paradigm.

Florida (2005) defines it as the model of the three “t”:

- (i) Talent, because the more qualified a population of a territory is, the higher their contribution to the economic development will be—on the

⁸⁷ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “Em Portugal, o Ano Europeu da Criatividade e Inovação foi coordenado ao mais alto nível em termos políticos e estimulou directamente o desenvolvimento de cerca de 250 iniciativas, dinamizadas por diversas identidades – públicas e privadas – envolvendo milhares de participantes presenciais e online. A dinâmica gerada durante 2009 terá, continuidade nas iniciativas públicas de estímulo ao empreendedorismo e à inovação e na própria sociedade civil, cada vez mais alerta e ciente da importância destas áreas para um desenvolvimento mais sustentável” (Santos, 2010, p. 48).

- importance of as highly talented, educated and skilled local population;
- (ii) Tolerance, because the more open and tolerant a region or nation is, the easier it is to attract talent—resulting in a diverse community;
 - (iii) Technology, once it stimulates innovation and economic growth at long-term—interpreted as the technological infrastructure necessary to fuel an entrepreneurial culture.

In this context, the policies induced by design should foresee interventions in various areas of economic, social and cultural life from urban areas, and therefore only a strategic articulation among these practices and processes will lead to a true “design culture”. Adopting a strategy based in design, integrated in governance decisions, several cities have been called design cities, in the scope of a more global concept of “creative city”. According to Landry (2000), the notion is based on “the idea that culture as values, insight, a way of life and form of creative expression, represents the soil from within which creativity emerges and grows and therefore provides momentum for development.” (Landry, 2000, p. 173)

This creative city seeks to regenerate urban, economic and social narratives, attracting talent and creativity, and considering them as key agents for economic, social and territorial development.

The design dimension in city planning is traditionally associated with physical and iconic interventions—a hardware perspective. These urban regeneration strategies are also connected to the abundance of “gourmet culture”⁸⁸—often bundled with design—and to the launch of ephemeral events, such as festivals or exhibitions, as inducers of the creation of diverse environments highlighted by social practices, particular consumption behaviors and lifestyles. These are linked to symbolic capital and to a new intended identity of places, sometimes in a controversial transformation, generating new experiences and ways of interaction among locals, tourists and entrepreneurs. “Considering creativity as key driver of both business and local development means in some way to put people at the core.” (Rivas, 2011, p. 133)

The *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* – UNESCO, has taken a lead in the regulation of this policies, and there are currently 41

⁸⁸ The cultural idea of gourmet is traditionally associated with food, especially in involving or purporting to involve high-quality or exotic ingredients and skilled preparation. The adjective is used with this interpretation.

member cities around the world that are recognized as “creative cities”, in seven creative industry fields: literature, cinema, music, craft and folk arts, media arts, gastronomy and design. These cities constitute the network, “working together towards a common mission for cultural diversity and sustainable urban development” (UNESCO, 2014). It not only contributes to economic revitalization but also to the urban regeneration of cities and regions, and therefore simultaneously, to social, cultural and environmental development.

The “Design Network” includes Buenos Aires (Argentina), Berlin (Germany), Montreal (Canada), Nagoya and Kobe (Japan), Shenzhen, Shanghai and Beijing (China), Seoul (South Korea), Saint-Étienne (France) and Graz (Austria). These recognitions are normally associated with metropolis; however, small and medium-sized cities are also looking for a restructuring and diversification of the economy allied to the quality of the urban area that could benefit from strategies targeted in design.

We may say, at present, design emerges as a discipline that intersects economic, sociocultural and environmental aspects, with a key role in both conceptual and organizational terms. Knowing that the challenge is in the intangible factors in improving their competitiveness, quality or technology, in themselves, are not sufficient for the differentiation, and growth intended and endorsed by design. The economy depends increasingly on innovative and creative skills, based on the belief that culture can play an important role in urban renewal. Governance actors are increasingly taking account of the role of creativity when planning economic strategies, not only enhancing a city’s social fabric and cultural diversity but also strengthening its sense of community. This helps and defines a shared identity. Being a multidisciplinary activity, with numerous activities within each organization, the design process’ knowledge involves the entire value chain of a city or territory.

3.4.2. Case study analysis

This section presents a series of examples that embody particular features, concepts or insights that connect those theoretical models and authors to the practical case study developed in this research. These case studies demonstrate the previous theoretical framework.

The selection is based on a set of dimensions that provided comprehensive and diverse interpretations on the relation between design, creativity and places—as developed in the present chapter—and bridging to theoretical grounding of the following ones.

Table 1 is a synthesis of the selected case studies presented in this section, to string together their models and practices, and to identify their relevance to the developed case study: Stories of Chairs.

Table 1 Case study analysis

<i>Case Study</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Equities</i>	<i>Enhancers</i>	<i>Relevance for Paredes</i>
Westergasfabriek	Rehabilitation of an industrial area of the city, causing reverting to use of citizens	Historical building. Dynamic tenants, culture-related. Active society Became permanent	Public and private organizations. Municipality	Municipality engagement “Open Call for Ideas” Citizen engagement
CAOS	Rehabilitation of an industrial area Case study in a small city	Culture-related environment Design is a constituent of the strategy	Public and private organizations Municipality	Municipality engagement Citizen engagement, in a small city with no prior heritage related to design
Kortrijk	Rehabilitation of an industrial region Focus on a particular industrial heritage and a new interpretation for it by design Design as a strategic constituent Organization of design-related event	Organization joint-venture A local industry with engagement to citizens collective heritage A community website, a wall for communication among stakeholders	Public and private organizations Municipality Higher Education Schools	Relation between a new project, endorsed by design, and local industrial tradition Global transformation of citizen's perception of their main local industrial activity
PROUD	Design as a strategic constituent Collaborative processes Regional network	Sharing of organizational experiences Design related with a very diverse regional fabric	Public and private organizations European Government institutions Higher Education Schools	Sharing of organizational experiences Experience of design in organizations, from SMEs to larger ones

<i>Case Study</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Equities</i>	<i>Enhancers</i>	<i>Relevance for Paredes</i>
Luxinnovation	Design as a strategic constituent	Convergence of diverse design strategies among the country	National government	Action Plan Concentration of effort
Cité du Design	Rehabilitation of an industrial region. Organization of a design-related event.	Convergence of diverse design strategies in a holistic project Biennial of design as outreach event, to mobilize organizations, citizens and policies	National and regional government Public organizations Municipality Higher Education Schools	Process to become a creative city Process to become a UNESCO's design city Biennial of design
Oliva	Rehabilitation of an industrial Portuguese city Network	A local industry with engagement to citizens collective heritage Active political leadership	Public and private organizations Municipality Higher Education Schools	Network with Paredes Experience in bottom-up strategies, like participatory workshops
Fábrica de Santo Thyroso	Rehabilitation of an industrial Portuguese city/region Focus on a particular industrial heritage and a new interpretation for it by design	A local industry with engagement to citizens collective heritage Active political leadership	Public and private organizations Municipality Higher Education Schools	Network with Paredes Global transformation of citizen's perception of their main local industrial activity

3.4.2.1. Westergasfabriek

Westergasfabriek is a former industrial quarter, a gasworks, and has become one of Amsterdam's main cultural venues since its requalification in 2003, branded as the new "Westergasfabriek Culture Park".

The original industrial building was built at the end of the 19th Century by the Imperial Continental Gas Association, with two coal gas factory complexes, and latter on in 1885 it was completed, strategically located near waterways, the rail network and access roads.

The initial success of the Westergasfabriek was due to the availability for tem-



Fig.26 Westergasfabriek cultural quarter.

porary cultural uses, a solution that was born as necessity and opportunity —as after the departure of the gas and electricity company in 1967, followed by the departure of the municipal energy company in the beginning of the 1990’—it was feared that the empty buildings would be squatted. At the end of 1991, the district council issued a ‘call for ideas’ for the Westergasfabriek. Four plans were chosen from over 300 submissions, showing a wide participation. This call for ideas was the first crucial moment in the creative process needed to arrive at a vision of the future of the Westergasfabriek (Westergasfabriek, 2014).

In 1993, Liesbeth Jansen, an expert on advising and programming cultural festivals, programmed the cultural endeavour for the Westergasfabriek and it was initially commissioned for a year. The strategy was very successful; the temporary projects worked so well that there was no need for a major user or support to keep the venue active. From 1993 to 2001, hundreds of events took place in Westergasfabriek and there were over one hundred temporary tenants. In 2001 the Park’s temporary use turned to permanent, combining permanent tenants such as cultural organizations with temporary rentals for festivals and events.

3.4.2.2. CAOS Centro Arti Opificio Siri

Centro Arti Opificio Siri (CAOS) is a space dedicated to culture, created by the conversion of the former chemical factory Siri in Terni, Italy. It is owned by the



Fig.27 CAOS Centro Arti Opificio Siri.

municipality of Terni, and is currently managed by Arte Cultura Terni, a consortium of companies that manage collectively the center to meet the needs of this network.

The construction of its industrial complex dates back to 1793, and in the 20th Century was used in diverse industrial activities—foundry, metalworking and chemistry. In 1925, it formally emerges under the designation Siri (*Società Italiana Ricerche Industriali*, Italian Society of Industrial Research), whose main activity was related to the chemical industry, and has been in a gradual productive decline up to its closure in 1983. In order to convert it to its current public usage, the Municipality of Terni collected the property and buildings in several stages from 1997 to 2002. The goal was the creation of a new urban center, integrated with the city center and characterized by the preservation of its industrial architecture.

This former industrial area now consists of a quarter of multiple functions and formats, with a wide area, housed in these restored buildings, including a theater, center for contemporary arts, galleries and multipurpose spaces for exhibitions, residencies and several cultural activities. Design is part of this process, in its aim to redefine the city of Terni under the sign of contemporaneity. CAOS brings to completion the restoration work of a former industrial space, in a specific urban transformation that is still transforming the profile of the city in innovative ways.

3.4.2.3. Designregio Kortrijk

Designregio Kortrijk is a partnership that aims to position the Kortrijk region as a region that uses design to leverage its development. Its stated mission is to network with other cities and regions in Europe, endorsing design as a strategic constituent.

The industrial and economic foundations of the city of Kortrijk and the surrounding Flanders region have gone through an exceptional process of renewals and creative turns. The city is historically connected with the flax and textile industries to this day, and the textile industry remains important in the region. Since the early 20th Century, the economic fabric in the region has become increasingly dedicated to more upstream industrial activities, by moving into interior design and productive activities that require technology and design solutions.

In order to give further momentum to the dynamics in and around Kortrijk, the city and regional stakeholders in design created the “Design Region Kortrijk” in 2005. Since it was established, Designregio Kortrijk is a joint venture between the City of Kortrijk, the Interieur Foundation, the Industrial University Howest, the Intercommunale Leiedal and Voka – West-Flanders’ Chamber of Commerce. Designregio coordinates the interest from public and private organizations, en-

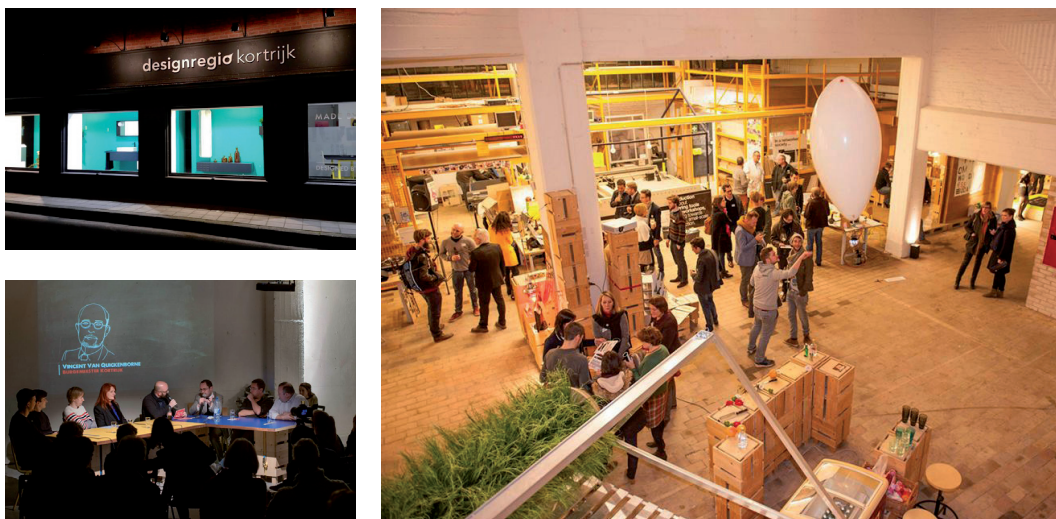


Fig.28 Designregio Kortrijk.

sureing that the design culture is embraced in the region's industrial activity, its education infrastructure and the public sector. By this, it contributes to the design dynamics and reveals it as a key factor for the intended development. "The forging of effective relationships between business and institutional stakeholders in innovation is an important mission for the City of Kortrijk in order to come to joint actions in the region." (De Clerck, 2011, p. 2)

Participation is a structural vector for this organization, inviting creative professionals and organizations that want to expand their network to collectively build. "To further sensitize the public to design, also highlighted the benefits for innovation and design of widening consumer input and contributions at the early stages of product development" (De Clerck, 2011, p. 2). One output of this strategy is the Designregio community website, where everyone can create a free profile and share their work, project, or call for creative people with the widest possible audience.

3.4.2.4. PROUD

PROUD—People Researchers Organizations Using Design for innovation and co-creation—is an initiative of European organizations based in various sectors but all characterized by design and innovation in their process. It is a project under INTERREG IVB NWE program, a Program of the European Union to promote the economic, environmental, social and territorial future of North-Western Europe, founding activities based on the cooperation of partners from eight countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

This specific initiative is developed by eight partners in strong design regions and cities: Eindhoven (Municipality of Eindhoven), Kortrijk (Designregio Kortrijk), Paris (APCI), Essen (DZNRW), Helsinki (Culminatum Innovation), Lancaster (ImaginationLancaster) and Luxembourg (Luxinnovation). Either City council, academic research, design or innovation center or association, they all have in common the assumption that design is fundamental when creating answers for today's societal, ecological and economical challenges.

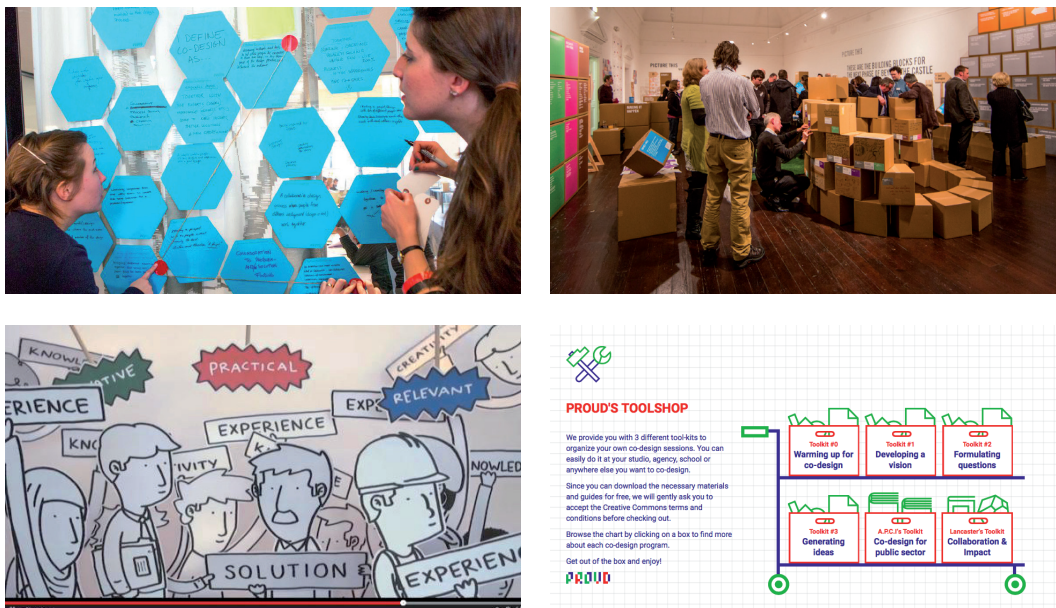


Fig.29 PROUD Europe presentations (offline and online).

In its aims, PROUD brings designers together with public and private organizations and user communities, bridging different needs to experience the added value of design. The wide experience of the partners sustains the conclusion that it is worth to disseminating new design approaches through learning by doing—while at the same time supporting design studios that are mostly micro-organizations lacking resources to keep pace with material innovation, legal and economical regulamentation, and other developments that concern their profession.

This European project sustains that design and designers may participate with a relevant contribution in “innovating, improving and consolidating people’s lives, businesses and public services across Europe.” (PROUD Eutope, 2014)

It is a case study on how design can connect with public authorities, SMEs, organizations and citizens, on a specific context, reflecting on its local organizational fabric.

3.4.2.5. Luxinnovation

Luxinnovation is the National Agency for Innovation and Research of Luxembourg, established in 1984 and constituted as an Economic Interest Grouping in 1998, with the objective to unify national initiatives promoting innovation and research.

Luxembourg political and geographical status enables the country and its economy to become an attractive, dynamic location for research and innovation. Due to a cultural tradition and acknowledgment of the specific value of design, Luxinnovation proposes design as part of a triad with innovation, management, and creativity, taking into account economic, technological, aesthetic and societal factors. When design is “strategically integrated into a company, it contributes significantly to generating innovative ideas and to systematically transform them into marketable and viable products and services which correspond to user expectations.” (Luxinnovation, n.d.)

For an organized strategy and in order to boost the design culture among organizations and citizens, Luxinnovation established the National Action Plan for Design in 2009, turning available a range of services to clients who wish to launch innovation activities through design. From a governmental point of view, there is a driving mission for the design activity, on a wide variety of strategies, such as the improvement of the functionalities of a product or the creation of new markets.

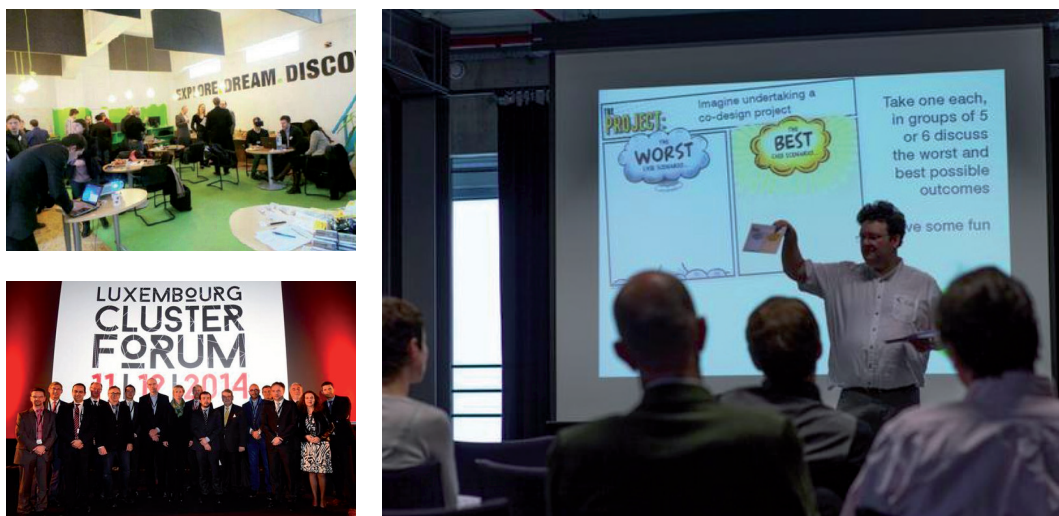


Fig.30 Luxinnovation activities.

3.4.2.6. Cité du Design

The Cité du Design in Saint-Étienne, France, launched in January 2010, is an institution for research, education, communication and media, and design related services. It addresses diverse groups, combining urban and social activities with industrial and artistic expertise. It is supported by a co-operation between the Municipality of Saint-Étienne, the Saint-Étienne Metropole, the Rhone-Alps Region, and the French State (Ministry of Culture). It is an example of a public investment to create a platform of higher education, research, economic development and promotion of art and design, open to all types of audiences. Under this statement (Cité du design, n.d.), the main tasks of the Cité du Design are:

- raising of public awareness of design;
- development of innovation through design;
- design research;
- the organization of major events such as the International Biennial of Design of Saint-Étienne, or annual exhibitions both in Saint-Étienne and abroad.

The city has its History linked to industrial modernity, driven by a dynamic combining art and industry. Thanks to concrete initiatives such as the creation of the Cité du design and the International Design Biennial, Saint-Étienne has adopted design as an agent for urban transformation and a constituent for economic, social and organizational development. It was endorsed as UNESCO City of Design in the first year of its activity (UNESCO, n.d), and this is an important recognition of the validity of its mission, based on the six missions (Cité du Design-a, n.d.):

- (i) Design focused on the person: it structures its activities around the major transversal themes which contribute to the democratization of design. (...) the Cité du design demonstrates how design can contribute to the emergence of new dynamics within contemporary domains; social, economic, touristic or cultural.
- (ii) Raising public awareness: it functions by offering a large choice of actions in collaboration with a network of institutional, cultural and economic partners catering to all types of public: exhibitions for the general public



Fig.31 Cité du Design.

(including the Saint-Étienne International Design Biennial), workshops for children, teacher training, publications and raising awareness in the business sector.

- (iii) Developing higher education in design in the Rhone-Alps Region.
- (iv) Develop the use of design by economic and social actors: it seeks initially to enhance a better integration of design in local authority structures and the communication of best use practices. Also practices an approach of diffusion to stimulate a growing demand from companies and businesses, and by means of its network, puts into place actions to highlight exemplary examples of the design approach.
- (v) Developing research and innovation through design: it puts into place programmes and methods leading to the creation of objects and services which correspond to uses and new needs.
- (vi) Experimenting with new concepts in the Saint-Étienne region.

Cité du Design is a territorial project, a site of education, research and experimentation in design, which finds its outreach in Saint-Étienne International Design Biennial. By concentrating in particular on design as a constituent of innovation in the face of social transformations, it has been able to develop methods of research and experimentation through design, which confirm its role on the international scene, and as a relevant case study.

3.4.2.7. Oliva Creative Factory

Oliva Creative Factory is a business project located in the city of São João da Madeira, in Northern Portugal, opened in 2013. It is based in the former industrial complex of Oliva, a metallurgical company originally founded in 1925. Oliva Factory is an icon in Portuguese industrial history and led the affirmation and social-economic development of São João da Madeira, a small city, for a long period of time.

São João da Madeira, a small city with around 21,000 inhabitants⁸⁹, wages in a policy of economic development, integrated in the creative economy trend that is based on the qualification of the value chain of traditional activities as well as an increase in emerging sectors, namely the creative industries. Oliva Creative Factory's purpose is to become a hub for businesses in creative industries. In its manifest, they state:

“More than a Creative Industry Hub, Oliva Creative Factory will be a hub that attracts talent. A hub for ideas to grow alongside other more mature projects, already recognized by the market.” (Oliva, n.d.)

This project was conceived in an abandoned industrial site, and its initial developments were conducted between an enhanced participation between designers, visual artists and politicians. “A strategic plan that could support the ambitions for remaking much of the city, taking in account the region needs and potentials, and at the same time not being obsessed with the geographic, economic and social frame imposed by the limits of the municipality.” (Mota *et al.*, 2006, p. 3) This plan was discussed in the international workshop “Dealing with Ugliness – Proposals for the reevaluation of an industrial site” (Jung, n.d.). The results were “a jump start for the municipality to be sensitive to attitudes in planning that are able to balance bottom up and top down approaches in planning” (Mota *et al.*, 2007, p. 5). From this workshop, a major concern was stated as recommendation to the Municipality: bottom-up strategies, to dynamically engage local citizens.

“In practice, São João da Madeira has to deal with a past full of collective memories but where at the same time the sense of public is much more

89 Retrieved from Pordata. Available at www.pordata.pt.



Fig.32 Oliva Creative Factory activities.

associated with ancestral rural practices, than with production of space, enhancing disconnections between public space and public sphere. In fact during the workshop very few or almost none features showed us social or cultural practices related with societies that are simultaneously rural and industrial. On this respect, decisions in terms of functional programs, should be a bottom-to-up action which can be contradictory with up-to-bottom real estate's strategies." (Mota *et al.*, 2006, p. 17)

Oliva Creative Factory brings together work and leisure, combining in the same complex different areas for companies and visitors, intersecting economy with culture. "It aims for a competitive and diverse economy, which brings together the traditional sectors with new activities based on knowledge, innovation, technology and creativity" (Almeida, n.d.), according to the best practices presented about creative cities.

3.4.2.8. Fábrica de Santo Thyurso

Fábrica de Santo Thyurso is a cultural and creative Quarter in the City of Santo Tirso, in Northern Portugal, installed in a former textile factory quarter. "Created in 1898, Fábrica de Santo Thyurso was one of the most representative factories in the Vale do Ave region—the site of the Portuguese textile and clothing industry." (Fábrica, n.d.)

The project, opened in 2012, is governed in policies and strategies of urban development, aiming at a harmonic combination of urban renovation and the incentive to local cultural and creative entrepreneurial initiatives. Due to this heritage with the textile industry, the Municipality identified the area of design and fashion as leverages for the region.

The Quarter presents itself as a multipurpose complex, including businesses, innovation, culture, entertainment and leisure, keeping fashion and design as the common theme. “Fashion and design, like all creative businesses, include fields of applied research, capable of integrating technology and values, conceptual innovation and business strategies, local solutions and global perspectives into their projects.” (Fábrica, n.d.)

An important feature of this case study, designed for a small town with a reduced number of inhabitants—like Paredes—lies in the fact that it identified as primary value associated with the design, and its expected development and growth, the main industrial patrimony and local culture. The region of Santo Tirso is historically a center for implementation of the textile industry in Portugal, such as Paredes concerning to the furniture industry. “Today Fábrica de Santo Thyrso is a symbol for the town’s traditional ties with the textile industry, as well as a remnant from a noble past when this activity stood for progress, economic growth and social development.” (Fábrica, n.d.)



Fig.33 Fábrica de Santo Thyrso.

Due to its location, heritage and industrial identity, Santo Tirso has proper characteristics to be quoted as an example of creative town.

3.5. Summary

The development of new organizational methods and processes demands a wide interpretation of design. In the current chapter, we identified relevant theories and authors for the comprehension of design and strategy.

The rationale developed a theoretical construction about the methodologies and methods of design, adapted to organizational environments and endorsed in a strategic view, directly connected with economic growth. Also, it was necessary to balance this construction with contemporaneity, where design is a visible asset to promotion, bringing a broader perspective than the immediate focus.

We have also researched design as a sense of place. In today's world, technology, society, culture and environment are presenting changes in the constant flow of opportunities. For this purpose, we have expanded strategy to regeneration of cities, directly connected with definitions such as "creative city". Starting from local governance strategies, hence we analyzed a set of case studies comparable to Paredes, and from whom we identified different strategies for development.

From here, with relevance to our research and case study development, we express the following research question:

Recognizing design as a constituent for innovation, competitiveness and development of organizations, which challenges are prompt to a region whose main productive factor suffers from a deficit of competitiveness and symbolic value?

From the specific case study—whose framework is global and relates to a large amount of stakeholders—is it possible to infer a model for implementation?

In a competitive economy, design is understood as a global territory for action. It is capable of adding value to corporate strategy, performing as strategic tool

for innovation, competitiveness and development of organizations. This chapter followed this formulation, enhancing it by its capacity to intervene as integrative and comprehensive mediator.

CHAPTER 4

Communication

4.1. Introduction

This chapter situates the definition of *communication* in their relationship with digital media, and recognizes the ubiquity of communication in the network society. This ubiquity interests to design and organizations that incorporate dialogue with its stakeholders as a condition for its development.

It is developed on the interpretation of communication as a territory and its redefinition in the context of digital media. This interpretation brings to the discussion of the thesis its organizational dimension into society and culture.

As part of the research map proposed for the development of research, communication is the territory of mediation. Technology comes as its visible dimension as it sets up communication through digitalization. By this change, communication builds a society system that reconfigures and that impacts on that same society.

As mediation element, and with reference to the case studies analyzed in the previous chapter, we assume that this social and technological system also involves organizations and institutions. Here, digital media is at its core and is a pitch for transformation, acting as facilitator and accelerator of processes, which is a necessary condition for the development of the new organizational model.

4.2. A definition

Communication is “one of those human activities that we all recognize, but few know how to define satisfactorily” (Fiske, 2002, p. 13). Adding to these difficulties is a digital factor that technologies confer to the multidisciplinary of communication. Designing for the unraveling of cultural complexity is a key issue.

It is described in Oxford Dictionary as “the imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium”⁹⁰. Thus, it is a practice with which we exercise our influence, bring out changes in our and others’ atti-

⁹⁰ Retrieved in November 21, 2014. Available at www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/communication.

tudes, and establish relationships with them. It makes a major part of our active life and it is a social activity constructed through that interaction.

4.2.1. Communication as information

Communication is based on one of today's most highly valued capitals: information (Castells, 1996, 1997, 1998)⁹¹. Accessing information with quality, accuracy and speed has become an increasingly poignant need. More than technology, the Internet may be regarded as "a multifaceted mass medium, that is, it contains many different configurations of communication." (Morris and Ogan, 1996, p. 42). A medium of communication, interaction and social organization. By the same token, we can say that social networks are created thanks to the flows of information and connections/communications. The production of information, its processing and transmission have also become the main sources of networked communication.

We can observe transformations in different areas of society, whose impact is significant, representing social changes and influencing the social fabric. As stated by Castells (1996), we faced alterations in some of the axes that characterize modernity, especially at the economic level, passing from an *industrial development* to an *informational development*. The salient feature of informational society is the globalization of economic activities and organizational flexibility. This restructuring is possible and facilitated by the awareness of usage of information technologies, based on a digital media structure, which was appropriated by the economic fabric with the aim of promoting an easing of organizational and spatial relations. This framework becomes autonomous from space and geographic constraints.

The circulation of information does not follow the "tree" hierarchy (one to all) but rather the multiplicity of the rhizome⁹² (all to all), since digital communication opens up the possibility for the transmitter and the receiver to become content

⁹¹ The references relate with Manuel Castells' trilogy *The Information Age: "The Rise of the Network Society"* (1996), *"The Power of Identity"* (1997), and *"End of Millennium"* (1998). Guy (2000) provides a comprehensive review, summarizing it in a relevant text.

⁹² As the concept developed by Deleuze and Guattari: "(...) unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature; it brings into play very different regimes of signs, and even nonsign states" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 21, *apud* Hoskin, n.d.).

transmitting poles, spreading information in a multidirectional, dynamic way and taking on different roles. By this, we mean wider access, the requirement of a structure, the modes of production and distribution of media products by organizations, enabled by the democratization of digital goods and the network connectivity afforded by the internet, giving the receiver the opportunity to interact and participate.

Following up on Castells (1996), the author talks about a new organizational logic that depends only on the flow space that characterizes information networks: "In the new informational mode of development the source of productivity lies in the technology of knowledge generation, information processing and symbolic (...) what is specific to the informational mode of development is the action of knowledge upon knowledge itself as the main source of productivity" (Castells, 1996, p. 16-17). The culture of a society is where mediation gains ground.

This informational society has a network infrastructure. The concept of network, as organizational model, has accompanied human societies throughout History. But the development of information technologies, and its appropriation by the structures of individual and organizational communication, made the dissemination of a networked communication model possible. This decentralized and flexible model defines a dynamic social structure that is open to innovation. Castells refers to social and organizational relationships on the networked communication, highlighting their uniqueness and unpredictability. He argues that technology is particularly malleable, capable of being deeply modified by its social practice, and leading to potential social outcomes. These results are discovered by experience and are not predetermined or proclaimed.

This formulation comprehends three sociological dimensions—production, power, and experience—stressing that the organization of economy and institutions, and the ways people create meaning in their lives through collective action, are irreducible sources of social dynamics enhanced by technologies.

In the 1980s, new networks emerge, as interest in networking communication grew and its applications were developed, such as TCP protocols and networking infrastructures. Even if they were not linked between them, the emergence of new technologies resulted in a continued development of the Internet. In the late 1990s, as more people had access to the digital communication network, it was

possible to start a social practice from its widespread use: it has become a tool of information sharing. Despite its recent chronological existence, today it has great importance in multiple areas of society—social, economic, political, cultural and artistic activities are structured by it.

“(…) the Internet helps complete McLuhan's metaphor, to the point of making it a reality. The online villager⁹³ (…) can live anywhere in the world with a personal computer, a telephone line and a web browser.”
(Levinson, 2001, p. 7)

Communication design always defined itself by a series of disciplines that concerned the study, analysis and creation of visual artifacts and that have gradually added more methodological complexity and new communication values, presenting a wide creative process that performs in the construction of these messages. In today's information society, structuring visual messages is a key subject for organizations (individual, corporate, governmental) in which communication design takes a leading role. In the context of digital culture and technological progress, communication design has extended this scope and became a tool and a discipline with an active role in the interrelationship between different technologies. It encourages the evaluation of communication processes and helps define objectives.

4.2.2. Design, communication and new technologies

Communication has gone through a long history of technological artifacts that have changed the concepts of time, space, personal relationships, languages, or human activities. We now live in a technological shift—with the advent of information and communication technologies—and new ways of dealing with messages (as units of communication), to distribute and to communicate them, foresee the need to rethink its impact.

Researching the dynamic triad between design, communication and technologies, the present study carries out an overview of communication changes and

93 The *villager* is the citizen of the Global Village, a term closely associated with Marshall McLuhan media theory. McLuhan described how the globe has been contracted into a village by electric technology (McLuhan, 1964, p. 6)—that include communication networks.

the opportunities for engagement with the Internet and digital media. Employing a specific theoretical framework, the analysis reflects on how technology has enhanced communication and design, due to the changes in the way it promotes information consumption, providing a network of knowledge exchange that caters to diverse audiences.

Digital media communication is a mediated construction of messages, in a collaborative and participatory approach to knowledge. In order to participate in the collaborative construction of the communication experience, we emphasize the importance of the dynamics of the participatory process of communication. In a society such as the one in which we communicate, through images and visual artifacts, a key role is proposed for the modeler of these visual messages. As Bruinsma (2005a) states,

“all communication—and consequently the entire communication design—is based on an embedded writing that on the surface intends to seduce us to believe on the communicated messages. On a deeper level, aims to inform us, and ultimately entice them to participate in the message and the contexts and causes it serves.” (Bruinsma, 2005a, p. 8)

Platforms that now progressively integrate our daily routines define a new paradigm in media communication: this matters in this context, and to different players involved with communication, technology and culture, conferring a greater visibility to design and understanding of audiences not normally associated therewith. The deployment of digital media, increased access to content and wide range for creative expressiveness undertake a review to traditional communicative structures. This is an essential part of these developments and has determined its shape.

The study of communication and its constructed value with new technologies and digital media results in a particular interest in design, given its scope and capacity to bridge research and investigation fields. However, the relationship has never been a primary concern in the business of design, which has always emphasized its interest in the resolution of practical functions, *i.e.* the functional and technical capabilities of their products, or issues of use and need.

Design, a territory of human creativity, demands methodology and critical think-

ing, given the fact that, in itself, continues to be a general concept, reflected in many dimensions—objects, actions, representations. It relates to a specific culture and assigned value. In other words, we assign a symbolic value to the design “product”, a capacity for meaning, providing an additional value to the communicated message.

The activity involves the structuring of sign systems in a way that turns communication intelligible and successful, as a form of social interaction, within a global cultural environment, continuously identified as artificial.

4.2.3. Communication design and the construction of visual messages

Designers act as “cultural catalysts” (Bruinsma, 2005a, p.8) in a culture that writes in visual forms. They are actively engaged in shaping culture. The messages they perform are not neutral, so design practice is not a neutral activity. Using design has developed specific vocabularies. A visually literate audience reads, in fact, not only the literal message, but also how it is embedded in their cultural contexts. This reservoir is the ground of any communication design—the visual lexicon where it comes from and to which it returns. This is a universal paradigm that elements and signs refer to.

The cultural references may be contained in the actual design but work in terms of cultural connectivity, as catalysts, in the deepest sense of the word: they can trigger an awareness level of cultural significance of the message and context, establishing links between different levels of information: cultural references that designers deploy in their artwork organize data into meaningful information.

This understanding has profound implications for design theory and design practice; it shifts the concept of design as an organizer of facts towards design as a generator of facts. “Design cannot longer be seen anymore as ‘objective’ or ‘neutral’, but must be understood as ‘the sediment of interpretations’” (Bruinsma, 2005b, p. 42). Design releases itself from the set of operational methodologies incorporating a social statement, since it is through action that messages will be present. It moves the focus of analysis and understanding of communication messages as unique expressions, to read them as sediment from multiple sources.

es: "The wording reflects context—the message is an interpretation, not a fact." (Bruinsma, 2005b, p.42)

Design won't, however, disconnect itself from its original habitat. All communication design is intended to answer specific questions, but it must go beyond. At its best, design actively demonstrates to what extent it is embedded in the way people experience life, how they communicate and express themselves. It acts as a catalyst for cultural connectivity and becomes an active force in visual culture. This perspective magnifies Nadin's proposition: "the design process, in its close relation to design products and their use, implies design intelligence, cultural sensitivity, and a critical attitude—semiotic components of many other forms of human activity" (Nadin, 1990). This occurs since it is a predominantly visual activity but, in the digital media context, it is not reduced to this model. The interdisciplinary of design and digital media is a consequence of the fact that the associated sign processes are heterogeneous in its constitution—in its "design" and hence the subsequent interpretation of this representation can take on three categories:

- (i) symbolic, based on conventions.
- (ii) iconic, based on the similarity or resemblance
- (iii) indexed, deliberately influenced

These three categories arose within Peirce's triadic model of the sign. This model produces three categories of signs; each of them featured a different relationship between the sign and the object, or what it refers. On an icon, the sign resembles, somehow, to the subject matter: it looks or sounds like it. On an index there is a direct link between the sign and its object: the two are actually connected. In a symbol there is no relationship or similarity between sign and object: a symbol communicates only because people agree with what it should represent what is.

"The three forms of relationship between signifier and signified are listed here in decreasing order of conventionality. Symbolic signs such as language are (at least) highly conventional; iconic signs always involve some degree of conventionality; indexical signs 'direct the attention to their objects by blind compulsion' (Peirce, 1931)." (Chandler, 2007, pp. 37-38)

Thus, the construction of a “design” message is the construction of a language with identifiable units that contains its own meaning in a given (cultural) context, where the challenge is to know that the interpreter is both collective and individual: it is used and interpreted by various individuals, yet each one is private, building their own message.

Design should be judged by how it is woven onto in the context to which it was intended and the impacts it causes. It becomes, as Bacelar (1999) stated, self-expressive.

“Design should not be too simple in any of its stages: from conception, development and implementation until the final moment of usage by the consumer, questioning is the watchword. (...) The aim is to involve the audience (...) emphasizing the construction of meaning.” (Bacelar, 1999)⁹⁴

This *designarcissism* (Bacelar, 1999) breaks down the manipulative mechanisms of visual language, as well as several levels of meaning hidden in the plot of the message. Design and the designer wish to visually stimulate the receiver, rendering him an active participant in the message. The role of exchange or interaction is crucial for any incidence of meaning. This understanding has become an important argument in the analysis of communication: the meaning is established interactively, and is no longer unilaterally defined. This converges with the prior statement in which one cannot speak without taking “the other” into consideration, *i.e.* without context

In the mesh of digital media and communication, design participates in the development of the discourse, using expressive resources at its disposal.

4.3. Digital media and communication

The act of communicating between individuals is a built and ontological process. Besides transforming messages into useful and comprehensible codes, multime-

⁹⁴ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “O design não deverá ser demasiado simples em nenhuma das suas fases: desde a sua concepção, desenvolvimento e realização até ao momento final do uso pelo consumidor, *problematizar* é a palavra de ordem. (...) O objectivo é envolver a audiência (...) enfatizando a construção do significado” (Bacelar, 1999).

dia is, in essence, communication, and the resulting interactions of this process reinvent the communication model, turning it into a field of collective creation.

4.3.1. The emergence of technology

In cyberculture, the network henceforth connects users and their objects, thus changing information production and consumption modes. Digitally-based culture has a loose range of computer tools which, together with human potential, creates a network of sharing, participation and collaboration. Anyone may interact with other users over it, freely and in real time, and exchange knowledge and experience, regardless of their geographical situation.

Digital media provides interaction platforms, open spaces that enable anyone to “consume” and produce content. Communication structures changed to the point that the term Web 2.0 (O’Reilly, 2005) began to be used to mean this point of departure. The possibility of producing, posting and distributing messages simply and quickly, regardless of technical dexterity, the active participation of users and the possibility of interaction between subjects, is the participatory and collaborative culture which arises within such a cultural and technological context. Jenkins (2006b) summarizes it by describing participatory culture as one of the facets of this new digital paradigm. If Web 1.0⁹⁵ was related to information—in which the term “information superhighway” prevailed (O’Reilly, 2005)—the current concept refers to collaboration and the notion of community (O’Reilly, 2005). The user driven nature of Web 2.0 practices provide opportunities towards the creation of value for citizenry. By co-creation, it enables the citizen to move beyond the status of final user and become an active gear in the process.

Technology organizes a communication system that is based on the expressive capacity of its meaning units, encompassing media able to participate in the communication action. It is an interrelated system of visual, audio and verbal signs.

“(…) We call the representation of one medium in another remediation, and we will argue that remediation is a defining characteristic of the new

95 The exact definition of Web 1.0 is not a completed discussion. It is generally referred to the Web defined by a set of static websites that didn't provide interactive content, and where applications were generally proprietary. The definition of Web 1.0 depends upon the definition of Web 2.0 (O’Reilly, 2005).

digital media. What might seem at first to be an esoteric practice is so widespread that we can identify a spectrum of different ways in which digital media remediate their predecessors, a spectrum depending on the degree of perceived competition or rivalry between the new media and the old.” (Bolter and Grusin, 2002, p. 45)

The progressive implementation of digital media, the eased access users have to content and the wide range of possibilities that is presented reconfigure traditional communicative structures. In this, we seek the concept proposed by Bolter and Grusin (2002) of “*remediation*”: a new communication medium offers and requires, simultaneously, new possibilities of expansion of the message. But it does not step down the media that preceded it: new media is “doing exactly what their predecessors have done: presenting themselves as refashioned and improved versions of other media. (...) What is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media.” (Bolter and Grusin, 2002, p. 15)

Organizing different actions, this communication is managed depending on the receiver, defined as “user”. The message becomes interacted, rather than received. This role is amplified in a networked context.

“Bruinsma refers to the tendency of information to become an ‘hypertext’ of cultural references, but has just been conceived. The idea that, when read, any design will “unwrap”, turning into something like a hypertext of cultural references, reveals something fundamental about the changing roles of designers and the changing nature of their work.” (van Weelden, 2005, p. 29)

The progressive deployment of media culture, with an incidence of visual representations, creates new forms for communication. These forms interfere in how we communicate and interpret.

A new identity is created, combining fixed data with non-fixed data, linking means to create various interpretations, in a non-linear and hierarchical structure. For this to succeed, elements are articulated in a language of interaction. A tension between the interaction takes place, what is its meaning and how it is

presented consists in the attraction that will determine the effectiveness of the communication. We are not just mixing the system of visual, acoustic and verbal signs: we are experimenting how and under what circumstances they value or replace each other. They are validated when they participate in the construction of new realities, and this also turns the user into a communication agent. It recovers McLuhan's aphorism (1964) "*the medium is the message*". The apparatus of the expressive medium itself gains more impact than the communicative content, but in a feature enhanced by new media interpretation:

"(...) a medium is that which remediates. It is that which appropriates the techniques, forms, and social significance of other media and attempts to rival or refashion them in the name of the real. A medium in our culture can never operate in isolation, because it must enter into relationships of respect and rivalry with other media." (Bolter and Grusin, 2002, p. 65)

4.3.2. The devaluation of technology

Originally, the web as a communication platform was about one-way exposure and delivery of content, while the Web 2.0 came to change this linearity by creating a paradigm leveraging this content exposure and delivery to combine it with other services, in the most diverse forms and always within the assumption of interactivity. The receivers of communication, the users, participate in, and complete this communication, sharing, discussing and cooperating on the basis of their mutual interests.

O'Reilly (2005) refers to this new paradigm as an "attitude, not a technology". Because it is a space where social connections are more important than technology. The author argues that the applications of this web are implicitly part of architecture of participation, in which the collaboration between users is key. This model does not represent an epistemological break with the past, but rather a development from it, and the term can be regarded as a landmark heralding a shift in the user's attitude towards digital communication as a generator of information (O'Reilly, 2005).

We can see a shift, in this communication structure, towards a network as a plat-

form, an area shared by all. The receiver now acts in a collective way, using various simultaneous expressions: the main one is by producing unique and diversified content through participatory platforms. According to Jenkins (2006), the possibility of participation is also related to the possibility of learning and using creativity when, for example, a user recreates content. There is a reality in which knowledge is accessed, built and shared. It becomes a means of communication that meets the needs of the contemporary world that, in this context, is seamlessly incorporated into the social environment as an instrument, which informs, organizes, entertains and communicates all at once.

The way consumers use media and perceive its usefulness in this technological scenario rely on the conceptual framework of “uses and gratifications”. The model was originally established by Herzog (1944) to describe and classify the behavior of the audience. The author identified three types of gratifications:

- emotional: gratification as a means of emotional release;
- wishful thinking: gratification as opportunities of wishful thinking;
- learning: gratification as the advice obtained from listening to daytime radio program.

The rationale of uses and gratifications model can be updated. The obtained gratification is viewed as the consequence of a specific behavior that ensures satisfaction. In the evolution of communication theories, this represents a significant turning point for what are the prospects of participatory audiences in the construction of such media. The idea of communication as creating only an immediate effect is supplanted by a research on the contexts and social considerations of the receivers. It is increased to a perspective that investigates and attempts to measure “what people do with media”, instead of the “what do media do to people”?

Katz *et al.* (1972) anticipate this thinking and stress that audiences are aware of their own media use and that value judgments, linking to the need of specific media content, should be suspended. This means people can use the same content in very different ways and thus the same content can have very different consequences. It began to understand what were “the satisfactions of the users” by experiencing the media, noting how they “satisfy a variety of needs arising from social roles and psychological dispositions” (Katz *et al.*, 1972, p. 179). The

theoretical model of “uses and gratifications” is presented as an attempt to produce a range of compelling evidence of the effects that media have on the public, exposed and formed by it.

This study provides an important contribution to the analysis of user satisfaction⁹⁶. But the main input was the systematic identification of psychological (individual) and sociological (collective) functions undertaken by the use of media. The interaction between the public and media is justified by the uses assigned to the perception of media content, as well as the satisfaction effects, which they could provide. Thus, the receiver is responsible for the media content that he selects and interprets: in other words, its use of media is determined by their social roles and their own psychological characteristics. In fact, the thirty-five “needs” identified in the study are interdisciplinary in nature, addressing behaviors related to politics, family, religion, education and personal identity: precisely the parameters that define us, as users, while creating a profile in contemporary Web 2.0 platforms, where we are invited to share socially our individual characteristics.

The authors conclude that “the aim is to explore the relationships between the attributes of the media and the functions they serve” (Katz *et al.*, 1974, p. 179) in the context of old media, the updated model in today’s communication technologies has similar goals, but with more communication channels available to be considered to it. Web 2.0 is now seen as the platform of communication in which everything is easily accessible and responds within our uses, the most diverse gratification we may desire. The decoding is then linked to the implications of these and these depend on how different cultures construct the role of the receiver.

This is due to the rapid diffusion of the Internet and World Wide Web. The dissemination and ubiquity of this network, as well as the way it immerses its users, provide it with features that are no longer strictly related with technological evolution. These features emphasize users, their interactions, and the outcomes that this connection generates. Digital media and communication generate a dynamic model, based on three characteristics of new media (Williams *et al.*, 1988):

96 Katz *et al.* conclusions are valid to the period in which the study was conducted, but might be reinterpreted in the new technological communication scenario.

- (i) interactivity: the degree to which participants in the communication process have control over, and can change roles in their mutual discourse. This culturally dominant emphasis on technology opened up models of participation.

“The degree to which “actual interactivity” (Williams, Rice, and Rogers 1988, p. 174) is fulfilled depends largely on the perceiver. In other words, whether and to what extent, such higher potential for interaction in interactive media can be realized to benefit both interaction participants is largely determined by how interactions are perceived. Hence, perceived interactivity appears to play an important role in shaping actual interactivity’s influence on interaction participants.” (Wu, 2005)

It blurs the position between the sender and receiver of mediated messages.

- (ii) de-massification: ability of individuals to select from a wide range of media and tailor messages to their needs. This relocates the individual, providing him with control over the medium, in its usage, configuration or content creation. Ruggiero (2000) argues this feature is a key area, critical in the uses and gratifications theory: an active audience “is important because in some cases the audience actually initiates activity” (Ruggiero, 2000, p. 8). Activity can take place at any point in the communication process. The audience will be affected at different points and the audience may choose to participate at various points, providing selectivity characteristics that will allow users to tailor messages to their needs.
- (iii) asynchronicity: the exchange of communication at different times and at the convenience of the user. This offers greater control. Messages may be staggered in time and the sender/receiver relations occur at different times—and still interact at their convenience—because contents are digitized. The manipulation is infinite, allowing users much more control than traditional media.

This explains why digital media supplanted old media, but opens the way to other questions, regarding the impact of media usage among audiences and participants. This will be discussed around the definition of *Participation*, insofar as more participation promotes more value for all users (including owners).

Despite this optimistic approach, there are constraints to freedom of choice, related with time, money and competence, observed in the lack of resources and cognitive skills due to low education. This is the moment when technology is devalued, replaced by a humanistic and user-centered approach to look at media and communication. It takes out the possibility that media can have an unconscious influence over our lives, and that we accept them passively.

The participatory attitude is directly associated with another feature of our current social and digital environment: emergence. Communication is about ease of transmission and publication as well as quick storage, with the main objective of making it a social environment accessible to all users—a collectively shared symbolic territory. This sharing enables countless expressions, which incorporate technology as their fabric and enhance the effects of networked communication and collective intelligence to be developed.

4.3.3. From analogue to digital, from digital to analogue

As we observe the implications of digital culture, the scenario that defines it is not simply technological, but above all cultural and social. Through the conception of audience and media uses and gratifications theory, it can be refocused for the 21st Century by digital media. There are some main trends that reconfigure the implications of media and digital media in the receivers.

Digital media audiences are no longer masses—"anonymous and passive aggregates of people without identity" (Ang, 1995, p. 165). Increasing activity in digital environments creates an extension of individuality.

"Media audiences are active in the ways in which they use, interpret, and take pleasure in media products. Furthermore, the media have come to play a central role in the shaping and arrangement of our everyday lives and social relationships. Why and how people engage with different media are issues that remain to be explored further." (Ang, 1995, p. 165)

Audiences as producers of meaning, a definition Verganti (2009) explored to connect with design-driven innovation. They don't just consume media material as isolated and solitary individuals, but in social settings and cultural frameworks.

This is the ground for networked culture, creating a layered media existence. The identity of an individual is constructed, maintained, developed, upgraded and updated simultaneously in several socially and culturally orientated environments, from analogue to digital and from digital to analogue.

The convergence of digital and analogue signals a cultural shift, occurring in user behavior, action and engagement. Technology begins to fade into the background, and users focus in its usage—relationships and communications that are created by the technologies, not the technologies themselves. This implies an expansion of theoretical models of communication, discussing mediated communication in a more holistic methodology. “Content is readily observable, recorded, and copied. Participant demography and behaviors of consumption, choice, attention, reaction, and learning afford extraordinary research opportunities” (Ruggiero, 2010, p. 28). There is a different use of media, communicated and produced, that demands for different gratifications. They are not just “extensions of man” (McLuhan, 1964), they become the whole framework where man communicates.

“The emerging future simulation consists of interconnected interactive micro-future scenarios that depict an individual’s future, focusing on her daily activities, decisions and choices. Educational simulations provide additional context-sensitive information, alternative future paths and recommendations based on an individual’s personal circumstances and environment. The creation of comprehensible micro-future scenarios is based on an effective analysis and processing of the personal data deriving from the versatile networked digital environments and personal digital applications.” (Koponen, 2010, p. 992)

Cyberculture and the conditions that it affords are fundamental in a mediatization process of society. Mediatization is a relevant concept in order to understand the importance of media to culture and society. Hjarvard (2008) introduces it as

“a double-sided process of high modernity in which the media on the one hand emerge as an independent institution with a logic of its own that other institutions have to accommodate to. On the other hand, media simultaneously become an integrated part of other institutions like politics, work, family, and religion and more and more of these insti-

tutional activities are performed through interactive and mass media.” (Hjarvard, 2008, p. 105)

In the current context, we have communication processes that cut across the everyday practices of people and organizations and widen into consumption, working, economic and cultural relationships. Hjarvard develops his definition to society.

“By mediatization of society, we understand the process whereby society to an increasing degree is submitted to, or becomes dependent on, the media and their logic. This process is characterized by a duality in that the media have become integrated into the operations of other social institutions, while they also have acquired the status of social institutions in their own right. As a consequence, social interaction (...) take place via the media.” (Hjarvard, 2008, p. 113)

Hence, the understanding of this cultural and social versatility is a key factor for understanding today's society which devalues technology per se to value communication processes instead. It bridges “for empirical research in various fields and contexts of present media cultures and societies.” (Krotz and Hepp, 2011, p. 137), comprising a set of technologies and processes that trigger social, cultural and organizational change, so much so that they establish new relationships that shape contemporary society.

“Media should be seen as a set of communicative practices, which refer to a technology and construct the media as a social institution and a cultural form. This is because technologies become media, if they are used by the people and institutionalized in culture and society as a frame for communicative practices. Thus, Mediatization consists of a technological development that is caused by the changing needs and interests of the people, as media come into life by their communicative actions.” (Krotz, 2011, p. 2)

The relationship between digital media and communication is no longer regarded as a phenomenon linked only to online technology, but was reinterpreted for the techniques, practices, attitudes and creativity which are developed from those connections.

4.4. Summary

This chapter was developed towards the comprehension of communicative practice, performed within digital media technologies and promoter of a new model of communication. Ultimately, it is promoting a new form of society. Mediated communication promotes a new form of communicative interaction, in which design is an structural asset. It is therefore essential to discuss this model of creativity and how to build its practices. This is necessary to understand and re-define the background of contemporary digital culture, analyzing the main variables to evaluate and generate difference and notoriety, with publics, industries and markets.

We sought to characterize the complex global context of communicative phenomena and how it applies human experience in a new model. This triggers changes in organization, political, economic, social, cultural and educational levels. Design, as a mediated construction of messages (Pereira, 2007), assumes a relevant role in the construction and deconstruction of this, and in the current paradigm digital becomes an increasingly internalized presence in daily lives and activities.

From here, with relevance to our research and case study development, we propose the following research question:

What processes does communication and digital media need to motivate, mobilize and inspire, as it connects creative practices with traditional economic and industrial activities?

This is following step in the research roadmap. We complete this communication framework understanding the strategies that define media visual literacy from a citizens's perspective, of new knowledge design culture and symbolic value in a media world, how it structures and develops its action to trigger participation.

The interaction between users and messages validates the opening of a new public space that will be interpreted in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Participation

5.1. Introduction

The trajectory of this research evolves towards *participation*. The participatory model results from the involvement of multiple actors in the development path for the case study Stories of Chairs. Participation is interpreted as a multiple expression, directly linked to a notion of community and purposeful transformation.

Design's relation with participation forms part of the acknowledgment of the validation of cultural knowledge that goes beyond experts or academia. This approach poses significant challenges, namely a mediation work that constitutes a borderline that is fundamentally cultural. The intervention that is proposed—one of participatory features—enhances mobilization processes, since it proposes a ground for dialogue and interaction. This opens an opportunity for creative citizenship, for its culture, action, experience or narrative.

This argument conveys design as integrative discipline, an effective constituent for development. By participation, this development happens as a bottom-up process: one can position it as a strategic mediation level, revealing a new perspective on realities.

This chapter completes the first part of the research roadmap, identifying participatory culture as a phenomenon that has developed in close relationship with communication and digital media. The traditional message flow changes and digital media communication and interaction are magnified. This context influences the diversification participation, according to the interests and motivations of citizens and communities.

5.2. Culture, a ground for participation

Contemporary communication, marked by interactivity and the possibility for all parties concerned to be simultaneously producers, distributors and consumers of communication, reshapes communication practices at the level of processes, media and content.

The consolidation of the Internet as tool for communication and interaction has paved the way for creativity in which design has a role to play. It is based on

various technology-supported systems that foster a closer relationship between organizations, consumers and other stakeholders connected to this network. The development of the internet, digital media and social networks facilitates the global exchange of information and experiences from physical or virtual platforms, opening up further space for cooperation and the sharing of ideas.

The growing accessibility of technology strengthens interaction and the way in which people combine different media devices. The methods of appropriation of media by individuals to create a network, support the re-fashioning of communication practices and media. The proliferation of production, collaboration and content distribution leads Shirky (2008) to identify a culture of participation, from which we may infer that its emergence is one of the consequences of cyber culture and mediatization.

5.2.1. Participatory culture

The moment when the culture of participation comes into the limelight is also the moment when individuals interact with technology and digital media in a ubiquitous way, spelling the relevance of the bridge between these two realms. However, it is not this technology that is interesting but its intended use to establish contacts and be present on the network. Participatory culture's concept is developed in reference to consumer culture: individuals do not only act as consumers, but also as contributors or producers, being active participants in defining its structure.

For Jenkins, "the web provides a powerful new distribution channel for amateur cultural production" (Jenkins, 2006, p. 131). The ease of access to technologies and tools, that enables content to be created and distributed by amateurs⁹⁷, gives rise to what the author calls participatory culture—as opposed to mass culture. In participatory culture, the cult of the amateur is a warning that digital culture is

97 Internet and digital culture shaped the phenomenon of the amateur culture, in terms of collective creativity, collaboration, discussion, and learning for the amateur individuals who create, share and participate. Blau (2005), *apud* Jenkins (2009) states that this "bottom-up energy of media created by amateurs and hobbyists as a matter of course. This bottom-up energy will generate enormous creativity, but it will also tear apart some of the categories that organize the lives and work of media makers... A new generation of media-makers and viewers are emerging which could lead to a sea change in how media is made and consumed" (Jenkins, 2009, p. 11).

erasing the boundaries between experts and non-experts, allowing individuals to take part of communication and creation processes, with their available technologies and skills. Due to this mass amateurization, amateurs collaborate without interference from the inherent obstacles associated with institutions or hierarchy.

“‘Digital culture’, viewed through Western lenses, at least, has become strongly linked with postmodern characteristics including collage, non-linear narrative, spatial navigation of cultural ‘texts’, remixing, cut and paste sampling, fragmentation and a disruption of traditional conceptions of ‘authorship’ in favor of ‘distributed’ creative practice (...)” (Goode, 2010, p. 537)

The way information is shared, the engagement in collective projects and the relationship with organizations show that each individual has achieved a broader scope of action, having taken on a leading role in the process. In participatory culture, the members of the social fabric believe that their contributions matter, and they feel some degree of social connection with one another and care about what other people think about the content that they produce and share. Keen (2007) agrees that the Internet is changing culture, but is critical with merely enthusiastic approaches this collaborative amateur production, stressing that user-generated material will result in making it harder for consumers to “distinguish the good from the bad” (Keen, 2007, p. 31). This is a relevant issue in terms of participatory culture discussion, namely in relation with creative expression and design as part of collective assets for civic engagement.

Jenkins (2009) also stresses that expression, engagement, amateur creation, sharing, socializing and peer opinions are core values of this participatory era.

“A participatory culture is a culture with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby experienced participants pass along knowledge to novices. In a participatory culture, members also believe their contributions matter and feel some degree of social connection with one another.” (Jenkins, 2009, p. xi)

A scenario thus arises where participatory culture is subsumed into institutional communication.

Jenkins (2006) considers that the activities of producing consumers today no longer focus only on a critical or resistant discursive approach to the type of content, notably commercial content, but rather on the creation of alternatives that demonstrate the advantages of the collaborative networks provided by digital tools. What one sees is a rich diversity of unprecedented creative discourses which create and recreate traditional media.

With regard to today's motivation and desire for participation, every member of the social interaction structure should believe that they are free to contribute and participate, that this participation opens up in a democratic fashion in the form of a right. For Jenkins, this awareness must take place from early childhood education so as to ensure that future generations are media producers aware of their ethical responsibility.

From the above, it may be concluded that technology does not bring participation or sociability as a novelty, but rather enables and boosts their development. The motivation to interact with other social actors, to participate in new networks and to share content is the key factor, and technology is only a facilitator (Shirky, 2010). Technology, interchangeable digital media, is the platform that enables interaction between its users to emerge; it does not give rise to it, as Shirky's proposition emphasizes:

“Pure consumption of media was never a sacred tradition; it was just a set of accumulated accidents, accidents that are being undone as people start hiring new communications tools to do jobs older media can't do.”
(Shirky, 2010, p. 21)

The author talks about the intense connectivity between different users and the consequences of this interaction, which has a great deal to do with new technologies. More than consuming, these users gradually discovered that media provide two approaches—production and sharing—and that these could be forms of action for anyone. Such diverse possibilities encompass countless cultures and change existing forms of sociability, “major new possibilities always create some restructuring of society, because both the arrival of a new way to communicate and the end of old constraints alter our connective tissue” (Shirky, 2010, p. 183). Technological and social knowledge becomes essential for engaging in the era of participatory culture, and this is acquired while actively participating in it. How-

ever, in addition to entailing the revitalization of the public, social and symbolic sphere for the participants in this culture, the growing production of content also impacts on different economies, media and forms of entertainment, changing the structures of communication. Minor changes in individual participation could even generate major changes in outcomes. Shirky analyzes the understanding of the culture of participation in light of a significant cultural disruption in the context of technology and society. But the major issue is how to take advantage of the “cognitive surplus” (Shirky, 2010) to produce real civic value, transformed through active engagement towards the greater public good.

5.2.2. A surplus

Collective performance thus proves to be innovative. Projects and actions gain importance, impact and consequence for the potential created collectively, where the whole is greater and more relevant than the sum of individual, single contributions.

The digital media contribute to the dematerialization of knowledge as a collective, participated product. The culture of participation allows each participant to interact independently from the geographical, temporal and even motivational moment. The origin of this change is related to the expression “cognitive surplus” coined by Shirky (2010).

This surplus—free time and individual efforts to participate in collaborative activities—is enhanced by digital media and the way in which people use them, making up the basis of the culture of participation. Each individual has a large amount of accumulated knowledge, which was acquired during his or her education and practical experience. We only share a part of this accumulated knowledge and use even less of our potential.

When the cognitive surplus is applied in a generous, public and social way, therefore, it can foster the collective creation of projects, including those involving citizens, individually or at group or community level. Also, digital media were amongst the facilitators of this new paradigm, which set a global sharing process into motion, relatively independent of the time issue, with a negligible need for resources.

However, this surplus can be a raw material for entertainment, free from any social, political or cultural purpose. An example are LOLcats, which are an attractive for people to have fun and try new media features.

“LOLCats (or ‘cat macros’) are, at their simplest, pictures of cats with misspelled captions on them, but they have sparked an enormous cultural reaction and become the most recognizable example of ‘internet-borne cultural iconography’ (Stryker, 2011: 21).” (Miltner, 2011, p. 8)

This seeming irrelevance—in terms of impact on the community—does not prefer such phenomena as LOLcats as less relevant. On the contrary, they reveal a will to participate, a sense of belonging to a community and a network, while empowering individuals for greater participation in communicational processes. Projects, actions and events become greater for the potential that is created collectively, rather than the time each participant devotes to them individually.

Throughout the history of communication up to the present time of digital culture and digital communication, media and the participation of individuals in messaging have undergone major changes. The consumption and production of communication is increasingly suitable for every individual’s specificities and interests.

5.2.3. From individual to collective

The introduction of computers, digitization and Internet networking into communication processes marks a new moment in the relationship between organizations and their target audiences. The proliferation of information has enabled consumers to research, compare, ask and interact, in a phenomenon that organizations have also interpreted, generally, as being in their interest.

The introduction of these digital technologies and the establishment of Web 2.0 reshaped the performance possibilities of the public. This public, individually, communicates by interacting not only with other individuals but also with brands and companies.

Toffler (1980) refers to “prosumers”, individuals who no longer access products and services exclusively from the professionals who produce them, and start making the products and providing the services themselves. According to the author, this convergence between producer and consumer is not a recent phenomenon: it has resurfaced.

The concept has also been reinterpreted and reformulated by Bruns (2006), who proposed the notion of “produser”, a mixture of producer and user.

Jenkins (2006) proposes to analyze the forms of content consumption and production, taking into account both individual and collective participation. It means being able to understand how new forms of participation and collaboration, enabled by convergence, have an impact on the relationship between audiences, producers and content.

From the perspective of organizations, Jenkins (2006) relates them to this orientation towards convergence. Organizations must rethink their assumptions about what media relations with the public means, given that the practices of consumers are no longer the same. This new scenario implies a culture of participation, a continuity that is suitable for the new, simultaneously individual and collective communicational practices. There is a promising strategy in this area, based on an emotional relationship, different from the traditional relationship of selling products and services to a particular audience. It differs from ordinary commercial relationships for the proximity and interaction between individuals and the presence of the “credibility” element.

We research into what drives people to participate and collaborate. This issue becomes even more relevant when the participation refers to organizations’ proposals or projects. It is important to analyze their motivation, because that is what will determine the degree of involvement and belonging.

5.2.4. Case study analysis

We have adopted in the present section an equal research strategy as in Section 4.2, based on the analysis of relevant case studies in terms of participation. This section presents a series of examples that embody features, concepts or insights

that connect those theoretical models and authors to the practical case study developed in this research.

Table 2 is a synthesis of the selected case studies presented in this section, to string together their models and practices, and to identify their relevance to the developed case study: Stories of Chairs.

Table 2 Case study analysis

<i>Case Study</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Equities</i>	<i>Enhancers</i>	<i>Relevance for Stories of Chairs</i>
Matadero	Creativity hub, multidisciplinary areas of intervention Mix project between a local building rehabilitation and social intervention Design as a key area	Dynamic audience Awareness of the symbolic value of design Awareness of the social value of design	Madrid City Hall Public organizations, including DIMAD Corporate organizations Citizens	Management model (participatory) Design as part of a symbolical regeneration process Leadership's vision
Designing with a suburban Finish community	Community engagement project Collective reflection about design on a region with tradition in furniture industry Bridge between academia, industry, government and citizens	A local industry with engagement to citizens collective heritage. Historical awareness about design Multidisciplinary research team	Lahti City Hall Aalto ARTS (academia) Lahti Institute of Design Community	Community engagement project, in a region with history and symbolical patrimony related with furniture industry Citizen's perception of their main local industrial activity A structured action research plan
connectingcities.net	Digital media creative showcase Citizen's engagement by digital media	Creative use of digital media Usage of digital media in public space	European Union 22 international partners in 20 countries	Citizen's engagement by digital media Global networking Reflection about digital citizenship Activities' naming (<i>Networked, Participatory, Visible</i>)

<i>Case Study</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Equities</i>	<i>Enhancers</i>	<i>Relevance for Stories of Chairs</i>
Creative Citizens	Creative citizenship evaluation New forms of media engagement Participatory design	Sustainable research project Research outcomes publicly presented	AHRC EPSRC Researchers Citizens	Research methodology Particular interest in "Community-led design" Bridge between traditional and new media practices Theoretical validation of practice-based research projects
Experience Project	Sharing of personal stories or experiences Valuation on content Messages as digital communication experience	Volunteer participation Community building	Users Online communities	Web-based project Messages (stories) as digital communication experience
Neighborland	Digital media as tool to improve local daily-live Collaboration, participation and engagement Sharing of ideas at local level	Volunteer participation Public discussion on common local concerns	Community Local promoters or organizers Local agencies	Online and offline bridging Participatory dialogue
Manobras no Porto	Territorial intervention project Great amount of documentary heritage Participation and engagement as strategies to revive an urban landscape	Multidisciplinary activity Awareness of symbolical heritage as a enhancer Great amount of documentary heritage	Research team Cultural programmers Local inhabitants and visitors Audiences	Network with organizing team Community involvement Creative outcomes
Museu do Resgate	Participatory video Territorial intervention project New museum model	Awareness of symbolical heritage as a enhancer Usage of digital media technologies in a non-complex way	Research team Citizens Visitors	Fieldwork action research Network with organizing team Community involvement Creative outcomes Brand tone (online communication)

<i>Case Study</i>	<i>Focus</i>	<i>Equities</i>	<i>Enhancers</i>	<i>Relevance for Stories of Chairs</i>
FUTUREPLACES	Media lab for citizenship Digital media and local cultures	A fertile experience Citizen labs Community	Research teams Academia (U.Porto and UT-Austin Portugal program) FUTUREPLACES community Participants	Synergy with the project Common research team Testing of research methodologies

5.2.4.1. Matadero

Matadero *Centro de Creación Contemporánea*⁹⁸ is a hub of creativity in Madrid, Spain, organized in collaboration with public and private entities. All within a rehabilitated public space, it offers a multidisciplinary vision for creativity, connecting areas such as visual arts, music, theater, film and design.

“Matadero Madrid is a living and changing space at the service of creative processes, participatory artistic formation and dialogue between the arts. It developed from its will to contribute to a reflection about contemporary socio-cultural environment, as well as from its vocation to help the cultural construction of today and tomorrow.” (Matadero, n.d.)

This multidisciplinary approach is embodied in its model of management, which is characterized by an institutional cooperation between public and private organizations, which also includes the participation of the general public in the project. This strategy aims to make the space an example of plurality, independence and viability.

The original building, dating from 1911, was Madrid’s municipal slaughterhouse, which closed in 1996. It was a large-scale municipal building that was obsolete and had nothing to do with the surrounding space or the local people. On the initiative of Madrid City Council, and capable of mobilizing the major financial resources that it involved, it was possible in 2011, one hundred years after the original opening, to return the building to the city of Madrid.

⁹⁸ Center of Contemporary Creation, English translation.

“The complex, which will feature a new entrance from the Legazpi plaza, at the level of the old water tower, now assumes a new challenge, according to its promoters: to be a meeting point for citizens. Far from the traditional museum concept, focusing on start-ups and local talent, Matadero now needs to fill its 46,685 square meters with activities and audiences.” (Lafont and Dolz, 2011)

As part of its operation, the institution boosts its activity through invitations (“Convocatorias”, in Spanish), in which it offers its various thematic spaces for collective activities and free expression. These participatory spaces are a feature of its identity, constantly renewed by the voluntary participations of new individuals and communities.

“Central de Diseño” is one of the key areas. It has been operating since 2007, and is a collaborative project between the Fundación Diseño Madrid (DIMAD) and Madrid City Council. It is an important example for studying the relationship between design and collective participation processes, not only because of how it evolved from its origins to the present day, but also due to the visibility of the space and the activities it promotes, such as the “Ibero-American Design Biennial”, the competition for new authors (“Producto Fresco”) and the “di_open” program. The Matadero has become a focal point for promoting design, due to the structure that it makes available, and its strategic interpretation of design and



Fig.34 Matadero and Central de Diseño activity.

its social role.

“Its goal is to disseminate, promote and develop the culture of design in its various forms and make Madrid a key city in the field of international design. Its three main areas of activity are: exhibitions and events; training; and services to designers and companies. It currently has an average of 20,000 visitors/month, which is steadily increasing. DIMAD is working towards the Design Center being a place of communication between design and the city.” (DI_MAD, 2014)

With its recognized importance, it is a case study to take into consideration, interpreted as an initiative of Madrid City Council management, which refurbished and returned to its citizens a dynamic space that contributes to participative artistic training, and the dialogue between culture and the people. In the words of Pablo Berástegui, General Coordinator of the Matadero, this mission is, simultaneously, the challenge.

“This is the challenge. We have to make the walls that surround us transparent and for this we must promote participation and open up the spaces, either with calls for artists to use them seasonally or with a mailbox in which people can leave their suggestions. We are already working on all that.” (Berástegui, *apud* Lafont and Dolz, 2011)

The results validate the strategy, and in 2014 it was the third most valued organization or cultural event in Spain, according to professionals in the area (El País, 2014).

5.2.4.2. Designing with a suburban Finnish community

“Designing with a suburban Finnish community” is a MA student module from School of Arts, Design and Architecture at Aalto University, as part of the 365 wellbeing program as Aalto's contribution to the World Design Capital Helsinki in 2012.

This module included a community engagement project in the city of Lahti, near Helsinki. The aim of the module is “to revitalize 1970s suburbs by activating and enabling people by design to rethink their community and livelihoods as a col-

laboration between Aalto ARTS, Lahti City planning department, Lahti Institute of Design and the community of Tonttila, Lahti.” (Moebus *et al.*, 2012)

Lahti is a Finnish center of industrial design. Design is an important competitive factor for the businesses in the region

“The local design competence is proof of the region’s long-standing industrial traditions, of the integration of education, research and business in Finland, and of the international presence of young designers from the area. The Institute of Design at Lahti University of Applied Sciences is one of Finland’s leading design schools.” (WDC Helsinki, 2012)

During the 2012 event, Lahti hosted events and activities connected to design and related phenomena, putting designers, students and local community in the spotlight. The module was one of these, conducted by Alastair Fuad-Luke, Sandra Vina and Katharina Moebus, researchers from Aalto University. Fuad-Luke *et al.* (2012) presented Lahti as a ‘design city’ that can involve different stakeholders, “generating ideas and creating stories by joyful and active co-designing while recognizing the importance of life cycles and real needs in our local environment and bio-region” (Fuad-Luke *et al.*, 2012, p. 29). Design was sustained as a co-creative approach and attitude towards engagement, and the research team (students and professors) conducted fieldwork with local citizens and organiza-



Fig.35 “Designing with a suburban Finnish community” activity with Tontilla community.

tions, which gave a better understanding of the real needs and problems (Moebus *et al.*, 2012).

The region of Lahti has a long tradition in manufacturing industries, in which the furniture industry is one of its main assets. The city's tradition is currently communicated as “a forerunner in industrial design”, where

“companies in the Lahti region have relied on design to improve their competitiveness. In Lahti, design is in the genes—not only of product development professionals and designers, but also the users of products and services. Design brings new business, even better public services, and pleasant living environments to the Lahti region – creating jobs and a better quality of life.” (Salokannel, n.d.)

The region's competitiveness and business strategy is been discussed in “Lahti Industrial Design Strategy to Benefit Business” for 2013-2015, and according to the it, the Lahti region will specialize in the design of sustainable industrial products and services that benefit business life.

In this industrial territory, the “Designing with a suburban Finnish community” module developed open collaboration between residents, design students and Lahti city, mixing design detail, design management & operations and design strategy as seeding and capacity building strategies. People understand their needs, acknowledge their local assets and the practice-based activities meant to demonstrate what design can bring to people and communities. These activities were organized in four moments:

PHASE I: Familiarization with communities & Tonttila

PHASE II: Activating yourself & the community

PHASE III: Framing your context and problem space, finding your brief

PHASE IV: Prototyping & Implementation

This open feature is presented in the module's blog, with reflections and progress all throughout the design process. This is a relevant case study of an industrial region with common tradition in the furniture industry. Like Paredes, which incorporates design and strategy from an endemic perspective, as a present heritage of the region on which Lahti wants to reinvent, at national and international level.

5.2.4.3. connectingcities.net

European Urban Media Network for Connecting Cities is an ongoing European project, funded by the Culture Programme 2007-13 of the European Union. This creative network focuses on urban screens “as a medium to establish a translocal infrastructure for the citizens to encounter the public space across a coextensive dimension that connects online and offline layers, local neighborhoods and cosmopolitan European clusters.” (connectingcities.net, 2013)

The initiative aims at creating conditions for producing, presenting and circulating artistic and social content on media facades in urban public space. It was initiated by Public Art Lab Berlin and currently involves 22 international partners in 20 cities, not only in Europe but also in America, Asian and Australia. These partners include Medialab-Prado (Madrid), iMal – Center for Digital Cultures and Technology (Brussels), Ars Electronica Festival (Linz), Verve Cultural (São Paulo), Media Arts Lab (Sapporo) and The Concourse (Sydney).

The usage of public space in relation with digital media and digital citizenship is one of the main questions concerning the project: “Digital Citizenship: How can citizen shape their digital urban environment and find new strategies for active/critical data collection processes and citizen’s engagement?” (connectingcities.net, 2013).

Although the specific focus on the presentation channels, this is an input to creative cities discussion, proposing it through audiences and citizens. The research programme combines workshops and conferences with creative production of digital artworks, showcased in yearly events.

“The Connecting Cities Events follow three curatorial topics that are also of social relevance:

Networked City 2013 opens urban media facades as real-time windows between the cities and connects local neighborhoods beyond national borders.

Participatory City 2014 engages the citizens in the collaborative creation of their urban environment and encourages them to use urban media facades as a digital stage to directly communicate and debate in the public space.

Visible City 2015 visualizes open data generated through sensor and data networks on urban media facades and creates awareness of the environment.” (connectingcities.net, 2013).

The 2014 edition thematic is relevant to the present study, because it enabled citizens to participate directly, thus they play an active role in urban environment, developing creative work that explored new forms of urban participation.

In 2014, with the topic of Participatory City, the Connecting Cities Network is discussing “the question of how urban media facades as a temporary field of interaction can become a catalyst for shared.

Connecting Cities is a proper example of the dynamics of urban creativity that finds its territory in digital devices showcased in public spaces. Although it is still a recent project, it captured a relevant visibility from the creative community



Fig.36 connectioncities.net projects (selection, from top left to bottom right): *Binoculars to... Binoculars from...*, by Varvara Guljajeva and Mar Canet Sola; *Entangled Sparks (LinzerSchnitte)*, by Ars Electronica; *Dancing in the Rain*, by Pfadfinderei + The Constitute; *The SMSlingshot*, by VR/Urban.

and the citizens of the cities it has been implemented. The projects are presented in the web platform and gather the summarized information, necessary for their interpretation, creating a twofold communication: online (the Internet) and of-line (the Cities). The way they are described makes them accessible and understandable to everyone, regardless of their level of technological expertise.

5.2.4.4. Creative Citizens

Media, Community and the Creative Citizen is a project exploring the value of creative citizenship. It is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) of UK, and its core research deals with how creative citizenship can generate value for communities within a changing media.

The project's research questions are stated in the Research Plan:

- (i) How does creative citizenship generate value for communities within a changing media landscape and
- (ii) how can this pursuit of value be intensified, propagated and sustained?"
(Creative Citizens, 2012, p. 1)

These questions refer to different forms of value popping from new interactions of mediation and civic activity, namely that which can be considered creative: "Our definition of creative refers to any act which involves the creative powers of the individual, from artistic or cultural expression to innovative ways of collaborating in, for example, community-led design and the production of local news." (Creative Citizens, 2012, p. 2).

A new attribute of citizenship is identified, as a result of new forms of media engagement. This creative citizenship is examined in three strands, to discover whether the emergence of new forms of social media are having the effect of increasing the scale and potential of creative citizenship and if so how these effects may be further embedded and magnified. The three strands examine three manifestations of creative citizenship: hyperlocal publishing groups, community-led design and creative practitioner communities.

“Hyperlocal publishing groups, writing neighborhood news most often as a blog site, have started to emerge in scores of communities around the UK, sometimes in response to the scaling back of traditional media;”
 “Community-led design, which is increasingly deployed as a means of ensuring that new buildings and other products reflect the needs, creativity and aspirations of the people who will use them;”
 “Creative networks, which take many forms: here we explore the value-creation that arises between relatively formal communities of this kind and the growing highly informal networks of individual creative citizens, many built around online communications platforms.” (Creative Citizens, n.d.)

The community-led design is of particular interest to the present study, because it takes creative engagement as a presupposition, meaning to embrace acts of individual creativity and expression. “Community-led design is a particular practice which aims to engage people directly in decision-making throughout the design process, from visioning to implementation. The idea comes from a long-standing tradition related to participatory design, collaborative design and co-design” (Creative Citizens, 2012, p. 19). This creative engagement is enhanced by communication, participation in collective activities and collective creation of new spaces, services and businesses. It is proposed as a practice-based action where individual citizens—from specific communities related to the project—are given the opportunity to engage directly and creatively in the formulation of so-



Fig.37 Creative Citizens project—photos from the Research methods workshop.

lutions for their own environment, whether these are physical spaces, buildings, neighborhoods or services. This action is intended to offer new opportunities for community-led design, ultimately transforming the ways in which people take part in the process and their ability to make an impact.

Creative citizens' research is concerned with understanding how traditional and new media practices, physical and digital media, can be used together to create new ways to facilitate community-led design.

“Our research aims to understand how individuals and communities involved in community-led design represent themselves in and through media and use these engagements to enhance their creativity and so the value of their civic contribution.” (Creative Citizens, 2012, p. 20)

5.2.4.5. Experience Project

Experience Project, online at experienceproject.com, is a web-based social network consisting of various online communities. The interaction among registered members is developed from the initial sharing of an experience: personal stories, confessions, blogs, groups, photos, and videos.

“As the world’s largest living collection of shared experiences and the premier passions-based network, experience project is a comfortable and supportive place for individuals to share and connect with others around the things that matter to them most.” (experienceproject, 2015)

The user wants to share experiences, writing about them. The basis of the contents settles a network with other users with similar experiences. This enhances a greater degree of affectionate connection to the story, and not necessarily to its author. The site features members sharing stories about their life experiences, which are grouped in categories. As members share experiences, they are linked with others who have those experiences in common. In this organization, communities are based on their experiences and interests, and interact with other members with shared experiences.

This social network was started by Armen Berjikly in 2007. The original project

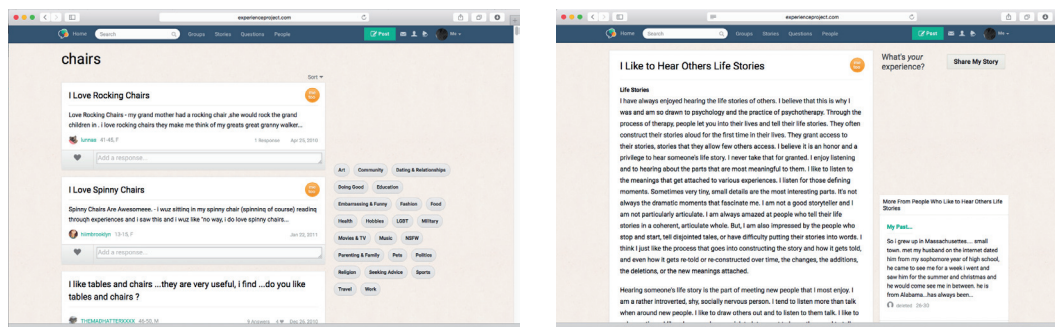


Fig.38 Experience Project website interface.

that guided Experience Project started in 2004, after first creating a support on-line community for multiple sclerosis patients, ThisIsMS⁹⁹.

“Inspired by a friend’s diagnosis with the debilitating illness, Armen built a positive community chartered on empowering patients through knowledge. Along the way, the forum portion of the site became the most powerful tool of all. It gave voice to a group of people known to suffer in silence, and the opportunity to be among new friends, those who truly understood each other’s challenges.” (experienceproject, 2015)

With this first online community, based on an Internet forum¹⁰⁰, it was revealed the significance of relationships formed between people through the shared experience.

Experience Project extended the ability to connect with people who understood each other to all experiences, and thus, all people. Users create their profiles based around experiences, which are transformed into groups where other members experiencing the same thing can share stories and feelings about that issue. This engagement is always enhanced by the story and experience itself, and emphasizes the anonymity of authors, which conveys a sense

⁹⁹ Online at www.thisisms.com.

¹⁰⁰ An Internet forum, or message board, is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. They differ from chat rooms in that messages are often longer than one line of text, and are at least temporarily archived. Also, depending on the access level of a user or the forum set-up, a posted message might need to be approved by a moderator before it becomes visible (Definition retrieved from *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*).

of intellectual freedom detachment from social inhibitions like fear, shame or embarrassment.

“Where Experience Project really shows potential, though, is (...) the site’s ability to set up virtual, anonymous support groups for a range of serious issues. The I Experienced Racism group, for example, has 136 people talking about racism, sharing stories, and discussing how to deal with it. This is powerful stuff and I suspect that the promise of anonymity makes a lot of people feel more comfortable about opening up regarding these serious and potentially sensitive issues.” (Catone, 2007)

Experience Project is identified as case study because of its valuation of messages, not senders or receivers. Messages are the experience of digital communication, getting users to a background level—their interaction is promoted by shared content and meanings, a different socializing from sites like Facebook or Twitter.

5.2.4.6. Neighborland

Neighborland is an online and offline participatory project, multiplied in numerous cities in USA. It aims at promoting changes in the relationship between residents and their cities by simplifying collaboration, participation, and engagement. People know what their neighborhood needs, and organizations and place-makers need this participation outcomes.

The online feature is a web-based platform that empowers organizations to collaborate with residents on local issues. The offline feature consists of engagement activities, conducted in loco, using design tools to engage residents in public space in participatory planning.

“Our mission is to empower people to take action on local issues. We founded Neighborland on a simple question: ‘How can we help people improve their neighborhoods?’ First, we built tools for residents to sketch their own ideas and share insights with their neighbors. Then we launched Questions, enabling organizers to engage with residents. We recently released Projects to enable citizens, community leaders, and

municipal officials to share resources, plan events, and work together to make great ideas happen.” (Parham, 2013)

The goal of this media mix project is to provide the online tools to easily share ideas for what people want in their neighborhoods, at a local level and very close to them. It empowers citizens to participate on local issues, sharing insights and motivations, identifying local human and material resources, and connecting with decision makers to make ideas happen. It is a simple platform to engage with people both online and on the neighborhood, but very engaging and effective. Schwartz (2012) describes one example:

“When an idea gains enough traction, Neighborland tries to make sure that the appropriate local agencies see it. In one example, a Neighborland idea to bring the new downriver streetcar in New Orleans to Poland Ave. was so popular that Transport for NOLA and Neighborland teamed up to ensure that the request was added to the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority’s request for federal funding. After an online petition garnered over 2,200 signatures, Neighborland held an event with local residents and community leaders to bolster support even more.” (Schwartz, 2012)

Neighborland started as an offline art project called “I Wish This Was”, from Candy Chang, one of the project founders. This project “received great response from the residents of New Orleans and the press, and (we) realized there was potential



Fig.39 Neighborland offline and online activities and discussion.

for a new type of civic input tool to collect the same kind of conversation from the city's residents." (Fretwell, 2011)

Neighborland works in a three-step basic model:

“1. Share ideas: Organizations ask questions that neighbors answer. What do you want in your neighborhood? Write a short description and upload a video or image to pitch your idea. We give you a free and open way to share ideas that matter to you.

2. Gather support: Our community is made up of passionate people in cities all across the America. We provide tools to help you find supporters and invite stakeholders in your city. Want to spread the word even more? We also make it easy to share updates on your Facebook and Twitter profiles.

3. Take action: Action matters. We believe in experiential learning, or learning by doing. Neighborland enables likeminded people to make things happen through fundraisers, petitions, events and other actions.” (Parham, 2013)

This tool involves citizens throughout the discussion process, and the reason for this discussion involves issues that are also reflected on these citizens. It is a way of making cities better places, according to the dynamics and intents of its citizens, who discuss and decide about it in a participatory way. Users connect with other users, who share their neighborhood or city, engage local government, and gather support for their ideas.

5.2.4.7. Manobras no Porto

Manobras no Porto is an intervention project, with an integrated and cross-action, developed between 2011 and 2012 in the historic center of Porto, supported by the National Strategic Reference Framework (QREN) program. It was the outcome of the application “PORTO 2.0 – Festival of the Moving City”, submitted as first draft to *Support System for the Creative Industries Cluster – SACIC*¹⁰¹.

¹⁰¹ Paredes Center for Furniture Design was also an application project to SACIC program funding, as described in Section 2.4.

“The project stemmed from the belief that the inhabitants and visitors to the Historical Centre are themselves social, cultural and creative agents – and could thus lead the discovery and the rooting of new models for living, regenerating and connecting with the City’s multiple quotidian.” (Alvelos and Romeiro, 2013, p. 46)

This involvement initiative is a relevant case study, because of its demonstrated mobilizing capacity. This mobilization is worthwhile on two levels: on the one hand, the significant reply to the call for proposals, by the artists, creative agents, performers, among others; on the other hand, the participation of the local citizens, in multiple activities and of different typologies.

In this description we analyze the event by its general configuration, as a multi-disciplinary activity, not opting for review of specific activities. The overarching focus is community involvement.



Fig.40 Manobras no Porto engagement activities (selection).

The event intervened in the territory to contribute to the sustainable regeneration of the city in economical and social perspective. The strengthening of its culture, based on the interaction between the existing culture and the emerging one, occurred in the city's public space through the encounter between trans-disciplinary creativity, knowledge and economy. Above all, this was performed involving the community.

“Development is, simultaneously, a process woven onto narrative, anthropological, geographical and emotional fields. And it is from within these fields that a proposition of a cultural nature may grow effective roots beyond its immediate resonance in space and time. While it is true that the most varied cultural events have managed to project the cities that host them and therefore generate economic impact, studies on viability have systematically forewarned a weak impact throughout and beyond the length of these events.” (Alvelos and Romeiro, 2013, p. 46)

The documentary heritage that *Manobras no Porto* generated is also very significant feature. This heritage, diversified and collectively built by many, registered for future memory this determined moment of city life. This memory is a favorable argument to think participation and engagement as strategies to revive territories—in this case an urban landscape—and think how can this landscape be a privileged stage for cultural affirmation and authenticity.

“(Manobras no Porto) converted Porto's historical center in a territory of transformation, by experimentation, introducing values of virtuality and of possibilities for many who were unaware of it or resigned. *Manobras* had the ability to alter narratives, and with them, new possibilities for daily lives and relationships.” (Romeiro, 2013, p. 55)¹⁰²

Culture economy and creative cities prove to be revelatory strategies to boost economic value to cities, as discussed in Section 3.4.2.¹⁰³ *Manobras no Porto* case

¹⁰² This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: “O MnP converteu o CHP num território de transformação, pela experimentação, introduzindo os valores da virtualidade e da possibilidade para muitos dos que o desconheciam ou nele se resignavam. O *Manobras* teve a capacidade de alterar narrativas e, com elas, novas possibilidades de quotidianos e de relações.” (Romeiro, 2013, p. 55)

¹⁰³ Although with emphasis on strategy related to design.

study adds to this strategy the ability to create cohesion and identity among its agents, strengthening the sense of belonging and citizenship. “Without precedent, Manobras became a case on the possibility of a dynamic community transcending itself, freeing itself up from daily stigma and inter-subjective relationships imposed by the City.” (Rangel, Canha and Pedrosa, 2013, p. 307)

5.2.4.8. Museu do Resgate

Museu de Resgate is a creative intervention project focusing on participatory video, in the historic center of Porto, coordinated by researcher Daniel Brandão. The project was developed as outcome of his doctoral thesis in Digital Media, at the University of Porto, and part of the UT Austin | Portugal program.

The project aims at constructing a collective memory through audiovisual documentation of the research territory, the historic center of Porto. Given the convergence of research, action objectives and territory, Museu do Resgate was associated with Manobras no Porto.

“Given this chance in the territory of research, an opportunity to propose a practical framework became necessary in order to work within this research project. In July 2011, the program for cultural development (...) Manobras no Porto was chosen as a framework for the implementation of a participatory project.” (Brandão, 2014, p. 128)

This is a participatory platform, built by digital media and by that, it also becomes intelligible¹⁰⁴. Thereby, participants can—in an intuitive and non-complex way—interact and submit available content. Thus, Museu do Resgate can aggregate and structure creative content in a new museum model. Its visitors and users collectively build this museum and can also take part in the construction of communicated messages.

This model promotes the usage of digital technology and devices, taking advantage of citizen’s surplus. This promotes “the tie between cultural resources and territory, and empower the active and constructive role of local communities,

104 Available online at www.museudoresgate.org.

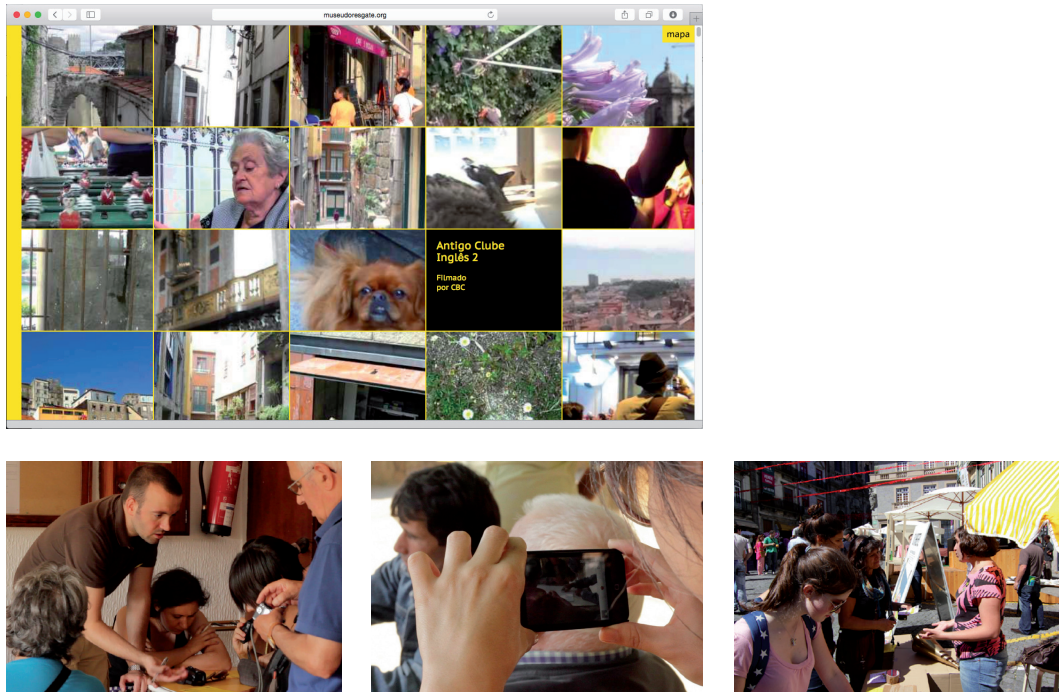


Fig.41 Museu do Resgate online archive and engagement activities (selection).

their mutual relationship with institutional stakeholders, and their link to cultural artifacts.” (Giacardi, 2004)

There is a close relationship between the project developed by Brandão and the case study of the current thesis. The research path was mutually discussed and there was a shared territory of intervention, such as FUTUREPLACES festival. We had the privilege of accompanying the development of his research and practice, part of Museu do Resgate, and notice shared conceptual and research aims, integrating digital media with local patrimony and its citizens.

The concatenate around the practice-based project reveals itself online, at museudoresgate.org. It “made use of a website as a mechanism to aggregate multiple visions (...), and this turned out to be possible through an intense planning of participatory actions on the ground. These actions became important to disseminate the project, to promote and collect (...), and to present results” (Brandão, 2014, p. 202). Like Stories of Chairs aimed at.

This project clearly demonstrates, by theoretical argumentation and fieldwork action research, that Digital media can be a constituent for enhancing participatory creativity. It proves the cultural validity of amateurization as patrimonial value.

5.2.4.9. FUTUREPLACES

FUTUREPLACES is a media lab for citizenship. It is curated by Heitor Alvelos and Karen Gustafson and it has been addressing the dynamics between digital media and the socio-cultural fabric.

“Developed within the framework of the UTAustin-Portugal Program for Digital Media, FUTUREPLACES has served as a meeting point, incubator, facilitator, showcase and launchpad for numerous creative endeavours (...). Poised between creative research, constructive activism and trans-utopian discourse, FUTUREPLACES is and will remain free – on the premise that all attending find active ways of engaging with what we call “social fertility.” (Alvelos *et al.*, 2012)

The first edition of the festival was held in 2008, and ever since it has been a yearly event in Porto focused on the discussion between digital media and local cultures.

The event is an opportunity for discussion and presentation of creative possibilities that rely on the participation of citizens, and communities in the construction of shared experience. These possibilities are connected with the creative will of many of its participants. Throughout its activities, conferences, and workshops we observe the impact of digital media to provide new avenues for cultural production, community-building, and participation.

“Digital media can play a role, but for that, it needs to look beyond the allure of simulation. We are invited to make full use of what digital media can accomplish, way beyond the narrow constraints of what we are offered on a more immediate level. Digital media not announcing a brave new world, but attempting to unravel a healthier world.” (Alvelos *et al.*, 2012)



Fig.42 FUTUREPLACES activities (selection from various editions).

Stories of Chairs is an outcome of this *fertile*¹⁰⁵ experience, a case study that consolidates FUTUREPLACES' mission of social involvement via digital media". FUTUREPLACES is the milestone where the conducted action research in the project began to be designed. Both are part of the same framework, with a shared vision of how digital media is reframing this communication and creative environment.

105 Alvelos *et al.* (2012) synthesized FUTUREPLACES as "social fertility".

The event has been constructing its path and taking itself as a relevant case-study. In Section 6.2.3.2. we explore furthermore the relevance of this case study for Stories of Chairs, through analysis of it as a practice-based fieldwork, helping to consolidate creative engagement by citizens, and merge its particular industrial heritage with a shared narrative.

5.3. Participatory design

There is a growing interest in the participatory aspects of design activity. To collaborate in order to achieve greater affinity between production and consumption, bringing more satisfaction to those who consume and more assertiveness to those who produce it is a common intention.

In participatory design, individuals are invited to cooperate with designers, researchers and developers within the creative process. This participation and engagement happens throughout the various stages of the process.

Consumer interest in design process participation comes from the possibility of getting a product or solution that is better suited for the situation. From the producer's point of view, it is a way to ensure success to the developing products and services, as they are part of a collaborative relationship that various stakeholders take part in.

5.3.1. Design as an integrative discipline

Design as a strategy for solving complex problems, at a system level, needs to be analyzed and criticized in an integrated way. Martin argues for this kind of thinking as “integrative thinking (...) this discipline of consideration and synthesis.” (Martin, 2007)

The identification of design as an integrative discipline has meant it has become more important in recent decades. This recognition as a pathway to innovation and development in organizations has altered the way design is perceived and

interpreted, making it a strategic tool for industry, the public and the markets. And participation enhances this integrative feature.

The possibility of collaboration is the result of applying engagement design processes in various activities of daily life. The possibility of alteration and customization is even more present in digital culture, and in the usage of digital media artifacts. As the number of devices based on digital technology increases, this customized media artifacts also increase. And by this, do it does the power to determine how technology serves each one of us individually. The predisposition to interfere with the design artifact becomes the common feature.

Interest is growing in participatory ways of thinking and doing design. The purpose of collective collaboration to achieve a greater affinity between production and consumption is mutual, bringing a higher level of satisfaction to those who consume and of assertiveness to those who produce.

Consumers/end users are interested in participating in the design process because of the belief and the possibility that a product better suited to their needs and interests will be obtained. A sense of belonging is thus developed that becomes a relevant identity factor. For those who produce—whether they be companies, designers or an industry—there is a belief that this is a way to ensure responsiveness to their products and services.

The possibility of collaboration, in its current forms, is the result of the integration of digital media in the most varied activities in our daily lives. With the growing influence that artifacts using digital technologies have acquired, so has the possibility of participation increased. The predisposition to act, to adapt and to interfere with the workings of artifacts has become common as a new cultural basis emerges from a society permeated by digital technology.

5.3.2. The participatory design path

Participatory design is an approach that seeks to bring people served by design into the heart of the creative process. The designer and the end user share design, and this is the major difference when compared to approaches that focus on the end user as a consumer.

The origin of participatory design can be traced to the experimental projects conducted in Scandinavia during the 1970s and 1980s, by academic and industry partnerships, with the agreement of the unions, that aimed to increase the power of workers and encourage democracy in the workplace, enabling workers to define new technologies that would be applied in factories: “This early Scandinavian work was motivated by a Marxist commitment to democratically empowering workers and fostering democracy in the workplace. (Spinuzzi, 2005, p. 164)

These initial participatory projects emerged in response to the implementation of automation systems that were replacing the worker-creator way of doing things with processes defined by the management. During these experimental activities, various methods were tested for dealing with projects that would allow technology to be applied without suppressing the craft skills of the workers or their control over the process.

“Since they did not know how to design computer technologies themselves, workers were put into the position of accepting these disempowering technologies or simply rejecting them. Some Scandinavian researchers set out to develop a third way (...) that would allow software developers and workers to collaboratively develop and refine new technologies—allowing workers to retain control over their work. These researchers turned to action research, in which ethnographic methods are linked to positive change for the research participants.” (Spinuzzi, 2005, p. 164)

These projects start from the principle that people are always involved, even if informally, because the adaptations and reconfigurations that they make to use the artifacts are also creative actions, *i.e.* their use is not mere consumption.

The strategy of engagement for participation originated in projects to democratize technology comes from two strands: one in Britain, the “socio-technical systems” approach; and one in Scandinavia, the “collective resources” approach (Asaro, 2000, p. 260). The Scandinavian approach involved researchers, industry and trade unions in the 1960s and 1970s, and in the early 1980s these strains subsequently “grew back together.” (Asaro, 2000, p. 260)

The independent development ultimately converged “on a set of shared concerns and very similar practices. From a closer practical perspective, each design tradition recognized a set of problems surrounding the position of the “user” (...). From a broader cultural and political vantage, (...) it is thus surprising that they should find as much common ground as they do.” (Asaro, 2000, p. 260)

From the 1990s, participatory design became an acknowledged strategy in many organizations. It invested in research and participatory development. Participatory Design has been challenged by more recent research that addresses the use of technologies in different settings and means of participation of users, also in non-work settings (Bødker and Pekkola, 2010).

From this initial experience related to the development of industrial automation software, participatory design began to involve other applications and objectives, particularly in the area of information technologies, and was later adopted and applied in areas such as product design and service design (Sanders, 2002).

As it evolved and found new applications and engagement strategies, participatory design has been committed to the initial proposition facilitating a bottom-up approach to design, allowing solutions to come from those who best understand the problem, the actual end users of the built artifact.

In participatory design, technology emerges from its own users, rather than being delivered to them. It is an opposite position to the traditional approach to design, which gives the designer the role of specialist and owner of knowledge. The participatory approach is not limited to allowing the involvement of the stakeholders, and actually proposes that they are the owners and the most knowledgeable about the “complex problem” for which a response is required, and that it is therefore they who should respond to project issues.

Participatory design chooses to believe in the creative potential of the end user and guarantees power over the development of the project. The designer acts in this process as an interested party, as the facilitator in the creative design process, guiding that process. One of the key challenges for the designer, as the interface in this process, is the ability to motivate people to become engaged in the conception of the future proposal from their past and present experience. As individual interests and motivations are different, there is an ongoing need for

convergence and mediation. Designers (as social scientists) cannot have a monolithic view to bring conclusions and outputs to coincide with their own beliefs.

A participatory design project is based on the valuation of the tacit knowledge of its participants, because “participation must be framed as an ongoing engagement that supports learning and development of a wide range of knowledge and transferable skills.” (Dearden and Rizvi, 2008, p. 84)

The interaction that takes place between end users and designers tries to express this knowledge and use it as the basis of creativity and to evaluate possible solutions: “(...) designers could move from a role as the advocate or interpreter of user needs, to one of an empathic and inspirational facilitator, providing tools and strategies for users to realise their own needs.” (Weightman and McDonagh, 2003, p. 35)

5.3.3. The participatory design strategy

In participatory design the project emerges from users, rather than being delivered to them. Participatory design methodology proposes that users are owners and the connoisseur agents for the project's intentions—and from whom the output of the project should emerge.

The principles and values of participatory design are connected to its Scandinavian origin, and linked to the initial proposal of valuing the tacit knowledge of those who are served by design. Since the Scandinavian experiences, several practices have been tested and applied in academic and commercial environments.

Spinuzzi unifies a methodology based on the identification of a process model consisting of three stages normally present in participatory design projects. The author acknowledges that “participatory design is still developing and consequently its research design tends to be quite flexible.”, but “three basic stages are present in almost all participatory design research”:

- “1. Exploration: a first approach to the user, getting familiar with their way of working. The use of ethnographic research methods such as observation and interview.

2. Discovery: Designers and end users come together to understand and define the expected outcomes of the project. This step uses methods like organizational games, storyboards and process models.
3. Prototyping: End users and designers repeatedly use lo-fi technological artifacts to try to meet the requirements identified." (Spinuzzi, 2005, p. 167)

At the end of these three stages, the results achieved are disseminated among all those who will benefit from them in a language that permits understanding and the sharing of insights. This is a dynamic process, where "the stages can be (and usually should be) iterated several times. Together, they provide an iterative co-exploration by designers and users." (Spinuzzi, 2005, p. 167)

Sanders (2002) propose that, for the designer to empathize with the user, they must grasp what they communicate in explicit, observable, tacit and latent levels. Empathy arises from the perception of the desires and needs expressed in these different levels, each one expressed and perceived in a specific way:

"There is a shift in perspective occurring today at the collaborative edge of design and social science. It is a change from a user-centered design process to that of participatory experiences. It is a shift in attitude from designing for users to one of designing with users." (Sanders, 2002)

What makes it an attractive feature is its ability to generate new ideas, driven by processes and methods as tools for creativity.

Empathy comes from the perception of the desires and needs expressed on these different levels, each of which can be perceived in a specific way. What the individual expresses verbally shows only what is intentional and eloquent. Observing what a person does, and how he or she does it, gives an insight at a deeper level, and this is their tacit knowledge. And only by understanding their dreams and goals can you have a perception of how that person's future might be, and what latent desires he or she has. To achieve this level of empathy, Sanders proposes the use of expressive tools that allow people to express their emotions visually, in the form of mind maps, compositions, and other expressive means.

While evolved and applied, participatory design has been allowing solutions to

come from those who might better understand the initial problem: the users themselves. In the development of the case study *Stories of Chairs*, this participatory strategy was applied during the workshops (*citizen labs*) at FUTUREPLACES festival, where emotions needed to be engaged and tied to meanings with the “product” chair and its use.

5.3.4. Engagement in and with design

Participatory initiatives thus establish a close dialogue with a community of people, in a process of engagement that for Asaro (2000) is close to social sciences, whose research adds a relevant contribution to our society. It is a pathway to explore engagement in a range of substantive topics that affects people's everyday lives.

“It is (...) helpful to consider the case of a social science which has struggled a great deal with issues of representation—cultural anthropology and ethnography. Systems designers themselves have recognized the relevance of ethnographic techniques to their work.” (Asaro, 2000, p. 282)

Creativity and design transform the social structure of contemporary societies that are increasingly interconnected. As a socially constructed environment and in the framework of digital culture, this creative development generates a border area, relevant for the construction and interpretation of communication processes.

Participatory design, as a practice, emerges in field studies that broaden the understanding and interpretation for a comprehensive analysis of the impact on the actual end user, not just focusing on the development of the solution. Crabtree (2003)¹⁰⁶ develops this relationship to fieldwork, the ethnographic engagement with a different reality. In these participatory strategies, people are invited to describe their activities, their goals and their environment. The expanding participation of the end user is directly linked to his or her ability to mediate:

106 Despite Crabtree's book being specifically related to system design, it is a relevant addition for the participatory design engaging feature.

“to introduce potential users of ethnography to the study of cooperative work and, for the more familiar, to articulate practical ways in which studies of work may be employed in the design process to analyze the social characteristics of the design space.” (Crabtree, 2003)

Participation in design is more strategic and no longer just methodological. If designing requires understanding the use of products by users (the individuals), an emotional and affective meaning ought to be engaged, in a twofold view:

- with the creative content itself, whether it is an object, a message or a interaction—this may be considered the engagement *in* design. The participatory design pathway previously described endorses this fold, an approach to design attempting to actively involve all stakeholders in co-design processes.
- with its use, what Battarbee and Mattelmäki (2002) described as “meaningful product relationships”. By understanding the existing meaningful relationships with products—this may be considered the engagement *with* design. This pathway promotes not just the co-design and co-creation of creative content; it puts its narratives in the fore front of organizational strategy. The narrative itself may become a *story*, meaningful and with an emotional relationship to the involved ones (Battarbee and Mattelmäki, 2002; Sanders and Dandavate, 1999; Dandavate *et al.*, 1996).

It is within this symbolic dimension of story and narrative that lies the focal point of the motivated strategy for design. It is necessary to contrast the idealization of Shirky and Jenkins, mythicized as American pop culture, with long-lasting difficulties for a participatory culture in Portugal. Design is a process, not an output: “increasingly we find that the most value is added by influencing the experience that people have of a product or service” (Scottt, 2008, p. 5). The social, cultural and technological context is different enough to force a conceptual and practical reframing of what can be an institutional point of view to strengthen design dimensions in strategy, communication and participation.

5.4. Summary

Participation in the various possibilities for its interpretation, is presented as a relevant tool for the development of a design culture.

Digital media allows an acceleration in organizational processes. Promoting the engagement ability and the active participation of individuals, we conclude that this constituent is enhanced and stimulated by participatory digital media. Within interaction and in experiencing, that takes place in this process, the symbolic universe of individuals is then increase.

We observed a paradigm shift, brought by participation, where individuals are communication agents that are, simultaneously, producers, consumers, and distributors. Digital media acts as mediator of this shift. In this context, reflecting the research of the thesis, we have developed a rationale that bridges participatory culture and participatory design, comprising the points of convergence between them, with theoretical relevance for social sciences research. The analysis of case studies developed this discussion furthermore, adding relevant enlightenments about the application of this rationale in practice-based research.

From here, with relevance to our research and case study development, we propose the following research question:

What relevance may digital media have in the mobilization and participation to an event about design and creativity?; what conditions are in its development?

More than tools, through participatory culture “lens” we observe new environments, a new ecosystem, where the strategic development of organizations happens. The modeling of messages—the communication of strategy towards development—regards issues such as interactivity, collaboration, collective construction and, above all, the development of different citizenship model.

CHAPTER 6

Case Study: Stories of Chairs

6.1. Introduction

The previous chapters have elaborated on theoretical and empirical basis, addressing structural elements that develop argumentation and rationale to justify the proposed construction: *strategy*, *communication* and *participation*.

This research project seeks to validate the relationship between strategy, communication and participation with design through the case study Stories of Chairs. This is an engagement project between citizens, design, local industries and academia, where digital media is the gathering agent and facilitator for this engagement.

The project is developed in the context of the 2012 edition of Art on Chairs, as one of nine exhibitions around the grounding proposal to promote Paredes furniture industry, as part of the Paredes Center for Furniture Design¹⁰⁷.

Art on Chairs is an event of contemporary art, creativity and design, intersecting artistic, creative and cultural activities within the furniture industry of the Municipality of Paredes. The event held its first edition in 2012, from September 14 to November 18, and it was translated as a collective exhibition with creative and productive dimensions. The chair, namely the produced in wood, was the thematic object chosen for the event.

The event was aimed at achieving the objectives of Paredes Center of Furniture Design, particularly in the enrichment and promotion of artistic and creative activities on a national and international scale. The motto was "*an idea for the world on a chair*", showing the intention and challenge that an event like this may affirm. "The intention is both ontological and mobilizing, that is to say, believing in the power of man as creator of ideas and an agent of transformation, and therefore a motivator of action." (Art on Chairs, 2012b, p. 5)

The quoted enthusiastic presentation of the event is aligned with the institutional discourse of promoters of initiatives such as Art on Chairs¹⁰⁸, relating design

¹⁰⁷ As previously analyzed in Section 2.4.

¹⁰⁸ As previously analyzed in Section 3.4.2.

and creativity. The institutional presentation points to optimism, in economic, cultural and social dimensions.

Ample in its meaning, the event was held in three spaces in Paredes, that received nine exhibitions:

- *Art on Chairs International Design Competition; Duets; More Design More Industry; Meo Chair; Cadeira Parade*—hosted in Paredes Sports Pavillion;
- *Mass Design; 10 Stories to read while seated; DME Award*—hosted in Paredes Cultural Center;
- *Stories of Chairs*—hosted in Paredes railway station.

In its 2012 edition, Art on Chairs “privileged experimentation around the chair as the synthesis of design culture” (Art on Chairs, 2014). It was anchored in committed partnerships that included *ID+: Research Institute for Design, Media and Culture*. ID+ is a multidisciplinary research structure anchored in the University of Aveiro (Department of Communication and Art) and the University of Porto (School of Fine Arts) and its proposed mission is described as following:

- “(1) To provide a symbolic qualification of artefacts in their several contextual scope (local, regional, European, lusophone, worldwide). This will be accomplished by enhancing the nature of cultural and technological mediation that characteristics Design, while maintaining the social questioning and poetic innovation that art provokes;
- (2) To root Design and Art at a structural level in the multidisciplinary definition of credible scenarios for sustainable growth and prosperity;
- (3) To legitimize Design and Art as ethical premises of a demanding, critical and participating citizenship, fostering its appropriation and translatability at social, cultural and economic levels;
- (4) To enquire and vouch for the contemporaneity of cultural heritage, overcoming the paradigm of a georeferenced identity in favour of a map of distinctive virtues.” (ID+, n.d)

Stories of Chairs is one of the activities that ID+ is responsible for curating in Art on Chairs. It is it was conceived/curated by Professor Heitor Alvelos, Director of ID+ for the University of Porto, with PhD research student Jorge Brandão Pereira as executive project coordinator. As a knowledge transfer case study between

academia, industry and society, it endorses ID+'s strategy of "mediation of local needs, narratives and heritage, in order to rescue and enhance the intrinsic and potential value that is present in these contexts." (ID+, n.d)

When approaching to practice-based research work, we observed a synergy that converged in Stories of Chairs. The team involved and shared interests between Stories of Chairs and FUTUREPLACES festival leveraged this link. Thus, the research is part of the development of the *Doctoral Program in Digital Media* at the University of Porto, under the *UT Austin | Portugal program*, and meets FUTUREPLACES festival as fundamental place for the definition of what this project is and has been.

UT Austin | Portugal program, also known as the International Collaboratory for Emerging Technologies (CoLab), began in 2007 and "seeks to enhance Portuguese scientific and technological capacity and to reinforce the international reach of leading Portuguese universities and scientific institutions. From the program's beginnings UT Austin | Portugal's Colab program has named Digital Media as its technological pivot." (UT Austin | Portugal, 2015)

The research was carried out in order to understand the moment explained in Chapter II, from the territory, to its local industry and its governance strategy in contemporary economy. For this realization, previous chapters converged to the case study. Its identification and understanding has become necessary, using the characteristics of a practice-based research that included exploratory visits to Paredes for regular observation of local reality, where we observed the communicative dysfunction between local reality and its citizens and the proposal of Paredes Center for Furniture Design.

The territory of Paredes is defined by a diverse industrial fabric, with family, traditional and small-scale industries on the one hand, and industries with internationalization capacity, deriving its position based on contemporary design approaches, on the other hand. The strategy of the municipality of Paredes is based on the intention to revitalize local economy through Art on Chairs. Stories of Chairs is a constituent of the event, working to define itself as involvement and citizenship project.

This chapter describes the practical work carried out: the context of its structuration, the engagement activities developed in the empirical study, and verified

conclusions. Thus, concepts were designed, constructed and analyzed based on the researcher's participant observation in the construction process of Stories of Chairs.

6.1.1. Contextual literature review

We have identified investigations about furniture industry taking on the region of Paredes and Paços de Ferreira, neighboring councils, as an industrial block, at local or regional level. We may refer to this review as a brief contextual review, as it is in close relationship with the case-study and is focused on local heritage and industry.

Carvalho (2004) makes a historic investigation into the school furniture industry, particularized in the factory "Albino de Matos, Pereiras e Barros, Lda.", in Paços de Ferreira. The author presents a monograph on the company, its development and what impacts this industry triggered on local people, who integrate professionally in this industry for generations, and what kind of historical rooting generates in the region's economy. This factory is contemporary some other factories from Paredes, reported by Barreiro (1922). Although not coincidentally with the territory in which we worked, this investigation is a relevant example in research on industrial heritage associated with the furniture industry and witness to their materiality.

Simão (2007) dissertates about design and innovation in traditional industries, taking the furniture industry of Paredes and Paços de Ferreira as case study. One of the aims was "to assess to what extent, for furniture companies located in Paços de Ferreira and Paredes, design is an important determinant of their performances, specifically in productivity" (Simão, 2007, p. 39)¹⁰⁹. The author focuses in investigating productivity levels and the contribution that design brings to them, bringing innovation to a local industry. This study validated design as a constituent for economic growth—in a particular region and in a defined period

109 This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: "avaliar em que medida, para as empresas de mobiliário localizadas em Paços de Ferreira e Paredes, o design constitui um determinante importante das respectivas performances, no concreto da produtividade" (Simão, 2007, p. 39).

of time—justifying by financial revenues and figures the perception that design can contribute to this development.

Last, Pereira (2011) developed a relevant study about Paredes' cultural heritage associated with the local furniture industry, particularly on its historical origins. This thesis has provided relevant information about Paredes industrial history, particularly its timeline, which clarified doubts and objectives that were originally positioned and were not clarified by the management team of Paredes Center for Furniture Design.

6.1.2. A new research context

The present thesis differs from the above review, as it is the first study that articulates the local industry of Paredes with applied research in design and digital media as constituents for the development of organizations. The opportunity to develop the practical case study in a public investment project such as the one provided by the Municipality of Paredes provided the necessary momentum to make it significant to all parties engaged.

The main focus of the research is to develop a contribution to the contemporary discussion of how organizations interpret design and digital media in a strategic path, and how they carry out its activities with particular attention to its methods and processes.

The interest in how design can contribute and become a constituent for development strategies has grown and it has been bridging new boundaries between theory and practice. In the Portuguese context, we can observe an academic dynamic regarding research in design and creative economy.

6.2. Stories of Chairs

6.2.1. An outline

The project is sustained by the belief in establishing an “affectionate playground” (Alvelos, 2011, personal communication) to all potential agents in this narrative.

It encourages the sharing of ideas, concepts, testimonials, stories and musings about the universe of the Chair, itself a universal object in a particular context—the Art on Chairs event. It responds to a common purpose—to revitalize the narratives of the furniture industry in the region of Paredes. The chair is a familiar object in day-to-day living and a recurring icon throughout stories in the most diverse circumstances. In the municipality of Paredes, it is the symbol of its most representative industry.

STORIES OF CHAIRS

Fig.43 Stories of Chairs typographic identity, original version
(within Paredes Center for Furniture Design brand program).

Available at storiesofchairs.org, “Stories of Chairs” is an online participatory digital platform for narratives about chairs and to highlight the aforementioned creative potential of Paredes. The ongoing challenge is to reveal polysemic representations of chairs, from a particular historical perspective or an intention of representation, drawing from all possible languages of creativity and communication in and by digital media. Drawing, photographing chairs, storytelling involving chairs (own or from others), asking questions, composing, writing, making an actual chair: creativity is the mobilizing factor for the primary melting pot, where anything is possible when introduced by “there once was a chair...”

With the ubiquity of the digital, we find a general process of dematerialization that proposes new socio-cultural models and disruptions in established paradigms. To map and to identify emerging paradigms is part of the strategy to analyze, conceive and propose ways of action capable of a permanent re-contextualization of design processes and enhancing a narrative rooting in local population. On the basis of our practical research conducted in Paredes, we were able to show how creativity—as interpretation to a design definition—can be found in everyday activities and by all. This is noticeable in the interaction with digital media, because all result from *real* creativity.

By decision of its municipality leaders, Paredes aims to be recognized as a creative city, grounded by its traditional industry, enhanced by creative industries, and partly enhanced by design and digital media dialectics. This is the starting point for Paredes Center of Furniture Design and Art on Chairs, in which one of

the strategic constituents towards the involvement of local community and attainment of an international audience is participatory digital media.

6.2.2. Action research methodology

The research issues that guided the theoretical argumentation and the degree of involvement of the author in the design and implementation of Stories of Chairs, in its multiple fronts and stages, led to the choice of an approach of a qualitative and interpretive nature, not only to the results but also the process.

An action research methodology was followed. The aim process was not to generalize the outcomes. This option is described by Avison *et al.* (1999):

“Action research combines theory and practice (and outside researchers and practitioners) through change and reflection in an immediate problematic situation within a mutually acceptable ethical framework. Action research is an iterative process involving outside researchers and practitioners acting together on a particular cycle of activities, including problem diagnosis, action intervention, and reflective learning.” (Avison *et al.*, 1999, p. 94)

In accordance with the study’s research issues, an approach of an interpretative and qualitative nature was developed, in which the author observed and participated in the design of the strategy and implementation of the practical project. The methodological approach employed helped to identify, describe, understand and reflect on a specific phenomenon seen in a complex context.

At times, the research was adapted in the way that Rappaport (2008) describes as “collaborative ethnography”¹¹⁰, where the conceptualization of the project, the field work and the process of reflection and writing are organized in a dynamic way.

¹¹⁰ Collaborative ethnography is defined by Lassiter as “an approach to ethnography that deliberately and explicitly emphasizes collaboration at every point in the ethnographic process, without veiling it—from project conceptualization, to fieldwork, and, especially, through the writing process. Collaborative ethnography invites commentary from our consultants and seeks to make that commentary overtly part of the ethnographic text as it develops. In turn, this negotiation is reintegrated back into the fieldwork process itself.” (*apud* Rappaport, 2008, p. 1.)

The involvement of the researcher manifested itself in various activities between 2011 and 2013:

- participation and promotion of regular meetings with the teams working on Stories of Chairs, in the preparation, development and ongoing evaluation of the project and its mission;
- liaison with the personnel involved in coordinating the Art on Chairs event: coordination team, executive team, communication and production staff;
- liaison with professionals working in Paredes, including designers, employees of the Municipality and teachers, in the form of interviews;
- liaison with the team working on FUTUREPLACES festival, in the 2011 and 2012 events, in which Stories of Chairs was presented and creative activities were developed in citizen lab format;
- involvement with workshop participants, particularly in the FUTUREPLACES citizen labs and the almost 500 children who participated in Chés workshops;
- communication with media and press coverage.

This participatory observation facilitated a holistic view and continuous reflection, providing a conceptual framework based on both theory and practice.

Table 3 Action research developed in Stories of Chairs (2011-2013)

<i>Action</i>	<i>Features</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Team involved</i>	<i>Timeline (including preparatory work, activity and reflection)</i>
storiesofchairs.org	Presentation of the project Awareness of Paredes Content production	online, Porto, Paredes	Curating team Setepés Webdesigners	Since 2011, in continuum
Citizen lab at FUTUREPLACES 2011	Engagement Presentation of the project Content production	Porto	Curating team Participants FUTUREPLACES team	2011-2012 Citizen lab: Session 1: October 19, 2011 Session 2: October 20, 2011

<i>Action</i>	<i>Features</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Team involved</i>	<i>Timeline (including preparatory work, activity and reflection)</i>
Chés	Local citizens engagement Presentation of the project Content production	Paredes (Paredes, Vilela, Sobrosa)	Curating team Participants (children, professors, families) Schools Municipality Setepés	November 2011 to November 2012 (activities) Chés: Session 1: February 8, 2012 Session 2: October 23, 2012 Session 3: November 13, 2012 2013
Citizen lab at FUTUREPLACES 2012	Engagement Content production Reflection on digital media and local culture	Porto	Curating team Participants FUTUREPLACES team	2012-2013
Art on Chairs	Local citizens engagement Presentation of the project and local heritage content Participation in Art on Chairs exhibition	Paredes	Curating team Setepés (management and production) Municipality Art on Chairs' volunteers	2012-2013 Exhibition: September 14 to November 18, 2012

The ability to communicate the process of evolution of the research was also an important element of analysis. This strategy allowed us to identify problems, to improve our research and action strategies, and to identify interactions between the various players involved. The present study has been conducted in a co-creation process, a dialogue between the research team and all active participants in the engagement activities and online platform. This is aligned with the action research working definition by Reason and Bradbury (2006), described as “action research is a participatory, democratic, process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview” (Reason and Bradbury, 2006, p. 1), working towards practical outcomes, and creating new understanding for the research subjects.

6.2.3. A symbolical framework

Along with the setting up of an online participatory platform, community involvement activities were conducted—in and out of the direct context of Art

on Chairs—to foster engagement ties with the metaphor of the chair and to generate and aggregate content (and subsequent online archive). The overall activities that have taken place examine and encourage the participation of citizens through online media. This participation enabled social, cultural and economic benefits. While rendering the narratives of daily life and History of this region and local industry accessible to a global audience, we also foster opportunities at a playful, emotional and heritage level. The global informs the local, and in turn Paredes responds to a global scale, acknowledging its creative characteristics.

The potential of Stories of Chairs has grown in participation workshops held in multiple contexts. This open feature ensured the interaction between creative content and citizens. From the outset, the research embraced the belief that participation is one of the engines to the bridge that connects design, digital media and the development strategy that was proposed in Art on Chairs:

“It is recognized with this project that digital media are an integral part and a development agent of social, economic and cultural contemporaneity—the simultaneously global and local narratives that derive from social networks and wiki platforms produce today profound changes of semantic paradigms, of communication and of social structure. It is likewise noted that the production of media objects has undergone an exponential expansion, precisely in these collaborative platforms, whose most paradigmatic cases are YouTube and Flickr; the traditional division between artists/creators and consumers has now given way to a permanent formulation of creativity as an eminently human activity.”
(Alvelos, personal communication, February 8, 2011)

It was, for this reason, necessary to provide two main components:

- to create the necessary participation infrastructure and online archive.
- to include local citizens from Paredes in equal standing with global participants, providing means for such participation to happen, regardless of the degree of skill and familiarity with design and/or digital media.

Through this process of online and offline interaction, Stories of Chairs aims to continue its mission as gateway to the Art on Chairs project and strategy of nar-

rative and symbolic regeneration of the region, made possible through participation and mobilization.

6.2.3.1. storiesofchairs.org

The website of Stories of Chairs is the frontrow of the project. The development of this online presence was a relevant outcome, since the first discussions defined the relevance of this digital communication.

Its main purpose is to collect creative content around the motto *stories of chairs* and Paredes, and aggregate all the information and outcomes about the engagement activities that have been conducted—the main concern was always centered on the relevance of its content.

Following this basis, the website structure was thoroughly discussed during the preparatory fieldwork, between the curating team, Art on Chairs management team and webdesigners that assisted in the web development of the project. The webdesigners were Hugo Ribeiro, who developed the first and second versions in 2011/2012, and Pedro Regadas and Telmo Sá, from O Departamento, who developed the third version, in 2012, prepared for Art on Chairs exhibition.

The project started in 2011, one year before Art on Chairs. At the time, like all FUTUREPLACES citizen labs, Stories of Chairs first web address was directly linked to the festival at www.futureplaces.org/storiesofchairs. The discussions about its development with Hugo Ribeiro and other workshop monitors settled a common basis for the development and programming of all websites.

Interpreting the festival's assumptions and advised by its webmaster, the decision was to build the website as an open-access platform, collectively constructed, where all users could submit their own participations. Adding to this feature is the decision to use open source technologies for programming, namely WordPress. WordPress is a *libre*, open source publishing software that can be installed locally on a web server and viewed on a proprietary web site or hosted in the cloud and viewed on the WordPress website. Using this, we could have a front page, a visual presentation of what the website would be; and a backoffice dashboard, accessible for content management after a previous login or registration.

The first version of the website, developed for FUTUREPLACES 2011 (in October), had a simple navigation structure, with a random display of participations, where contribution typologies were displayed with tags, to allow targeting viewed content. On the top, it could be found practical information about how to participate (“*Como participar*”, in Portuguese) and the project (“*Sobre o projecto*”, in Portuguese). The information was presented in Portuguese and English, as follows:

Como participar (how to participate)

In 4 steps:

1. Create a “User” – only available online at www.storiesofchairs.org.
2. Check the password sent to your email.
3. Enter your “user” and “password” (you may change this password at any time).
4. Select the type of content and send!

We invite everyone to join this “melting pot”, drawing chairs, taking pictures with or without chairs, placing chairs in these pictures, telling their stories that involve chairs, writing, composing a song about chairs, making chairs, whatever creativity may encourage. Chairs, real or imagined, possible or impossible.

Any questions?

storiesofchairs@gmail.com

Sobre o projeto (about the project)

The chair is a universal object and simultaneously a universe of stories. It's also a substantial part of the production of the furniture industry of northern Portugal, particularly in the municipality of Paredes. Symbolically taking the part for the whole, we want to involve, starting from the chair. Stories of Chairs wants to be creative in its content and contributive in its purpose. Simple in its premise, diverse in its outcomes. Serious in its mission, fun in its process.

Stories of Chairs is a multimedia project that invites you to share ideas, stories and reveries about the chair, this object that accompanies us every day of our lives, through images and words. It's an online ground for participation, a museum of individual and collective heritages.

Stories of Chairs wants to participate in the reinvention and promotion

of narratives around the chair and the furniture industry of Paredes and northern Portugal, sharing stories and life histories and, above all, uniting the community (both local and global) through their creativity and participatory communication. It's the alliance between the municipality's history and tradition and creativity and innovation, as new competitive constituents, enhancers for the reinvention of a territory, not only geographical but mostly symbolic.

At www.futureplaces.org/storiesofchairs all these stories will meet.

Who?

You and all.

Chairs by all.

Chairs for one, for two, for everyone.

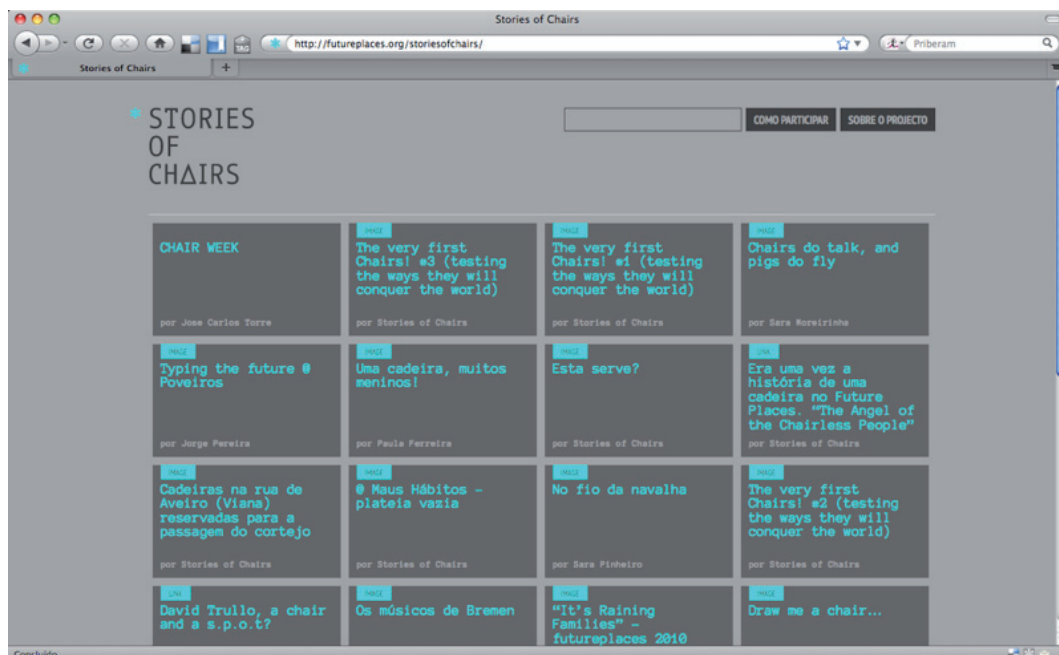


Fig.44 Stories of Chairs homepage, first version (2011).

Regarding the overall interface, each “square” identified a project by its title and linked to the specific web address, with the presentation of the creative work, including its author nickname, tags and browsable archive.

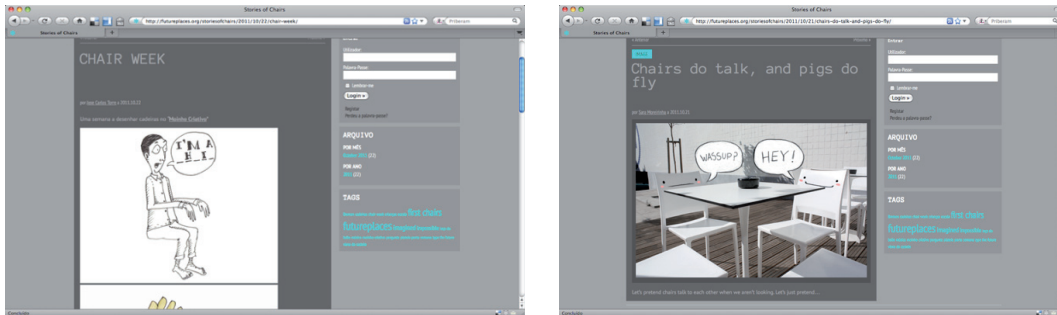


Fig.45 Stories of Chairs homepage, first version, *projects* (selection).

The backoffice was (and still is) the dashboard interface from Wordpress, organized in categories (article, image, link, audio, video, quote). This is a common interface for Wordpress, intuitive and familiar to many users.

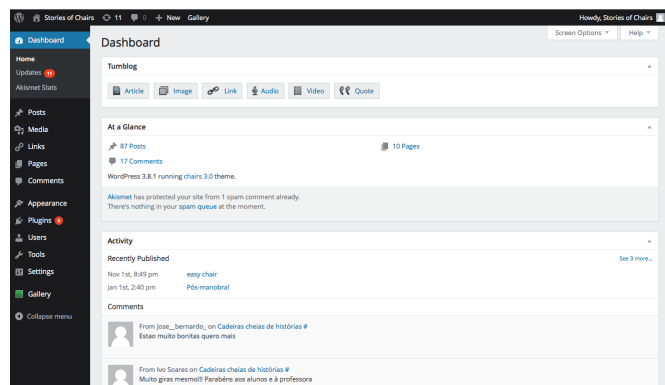


Fig.46 Stories of Chairs homepage, first version, *dashboard*.

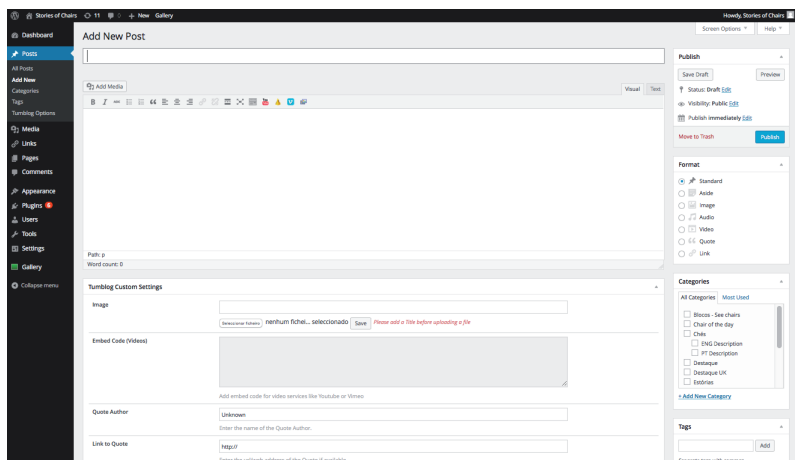


Fig.47 Stories of Chairs homepage, first version, *dashboard—new post submission*.

This option turned out to be valid, because participants got the chance to submit their *stories* using an interface that was widely spread.

The website was filled and increased in the last phase of the citizen lab, by the participants themselves, with support from the workshop instructor and Hugo Ribeiro, when necessary. With this activity, we collectively constructed a shared experience,

The second version of the website was discussed immediately after FUTURE-PLACES 2011. This was necessary due to some reasons:

- we identified limitations on the first version, in user interface interaction, graphic design, and creative content presentation;
- after FUTUREPLACES, there was a considerable number of participations and it was necessary to organize and prioritize them;
- the first edition of Chés, to be held in February 2012, would bring new visual content for the website that needed to be organized. Alias, this brought to discussion the need to create specific galleries that regarded to engagement activities;
- we acknowledged Stories of Chairs as an aggregation platform, where very relevant content that was disperse or lost could be presented. In particular, a collection of mini-docs, produced in 2007 about Paredes' industrial patrimony, that was archived.

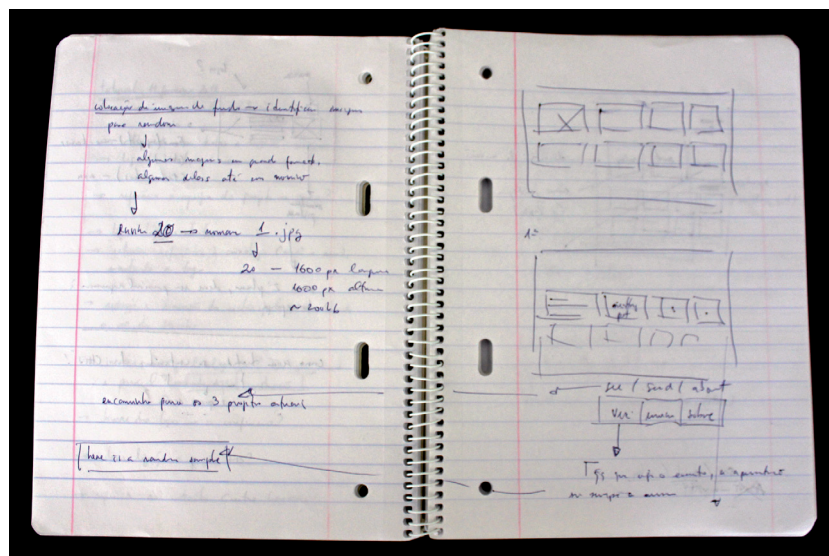


Fig. 48 Stories of Chairs interface—framing scheme for second version of the website.

The web development was again in charge of Hugo Ribeiro, continuing the project and enhancing the mutual knowledge we already have.

The new structure included a main central area, divided in three sections that explained the project in a very direct way:

- WHY CHAIRS presented information about the project, from the previous version;
- SEE CHAIRS presented galleries, as now content was organized;
- SEND CHAIRS presented information about how to participate, from the previous version.

This speech tone was a call for action, based on the case study analysis we performed. Participatory projects present themselves in a very user-friendly speech, easy and quickly understood how to interact with them. Also, we decided to use pictures as background, presented randomly, and this changed very much the visual presentation of the website.

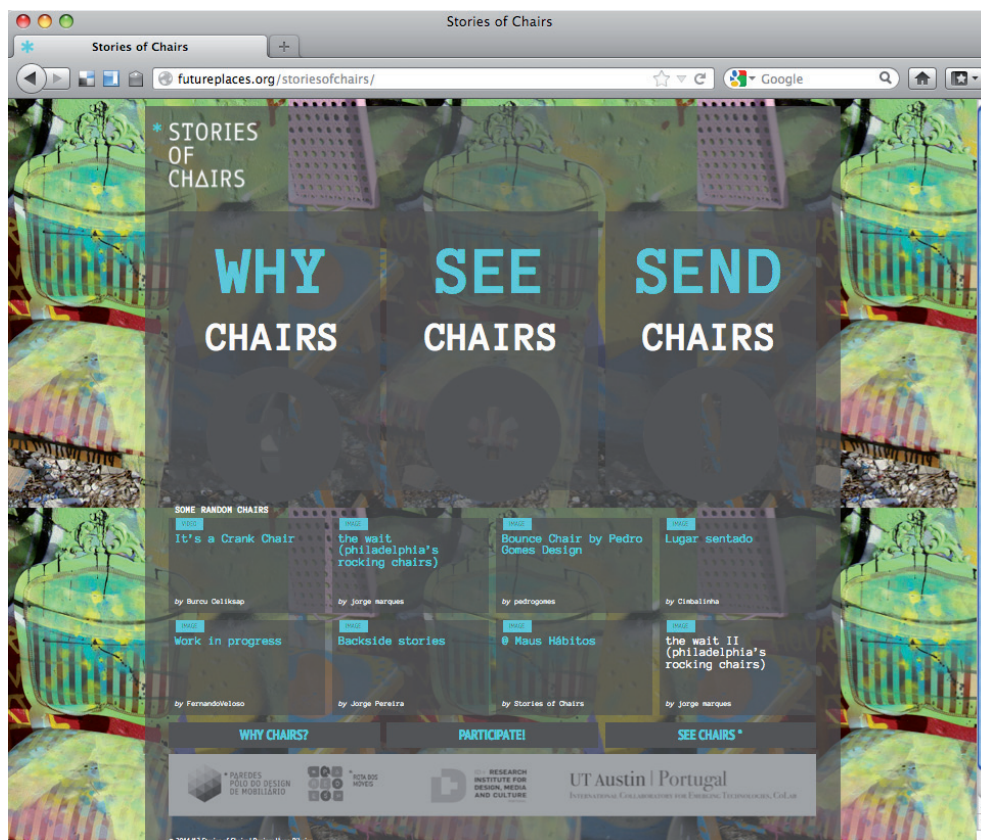


Fig.49 Stories of Chairs homepage, second version (2011/2012).

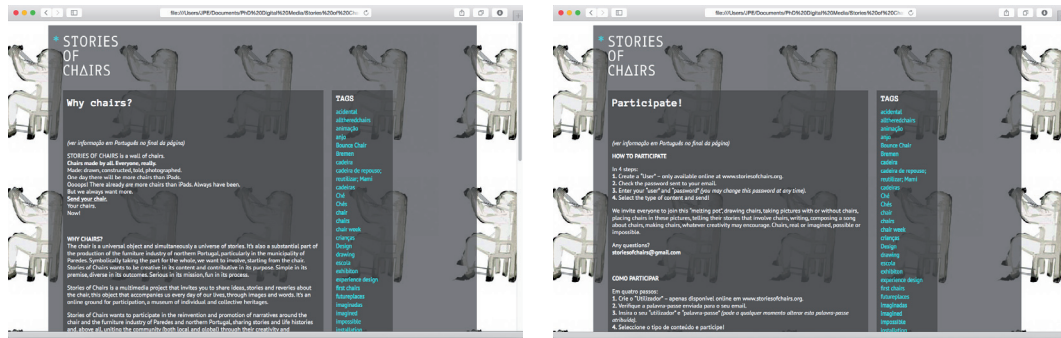


Fig.50 Stories of Chairs homepage, second version, *Why Chairs* and *Participate*.

SEE CHAIRS was now organized in thematic areas, three at this version: *A Soup of Chairs*, *Chés* and *Estórias*.



Fig.51 Stories of Chairs homepage, second version, *SEE CHAIRS* gallery.

- *A Soup of Chairs*: this is the open access feature of the website, available through WordPress' dashboard. Users maintained their private areas, with their editable posts. The layout design and visualization was similar to the first version of the website.

The naming *A Soup of Chairs* comes from the notion that this was our *primordial soup*¹¹¹, where it all began.

111 “Primordial soup” is a term introduced by the Soviet biologist Alexander Oparin. In 1924, he proposed a theory of the origin of life on Earth through the transformation, during the gradual chemical evolution of molecules that contain carbon in the primordial soup (Definition retrieved from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

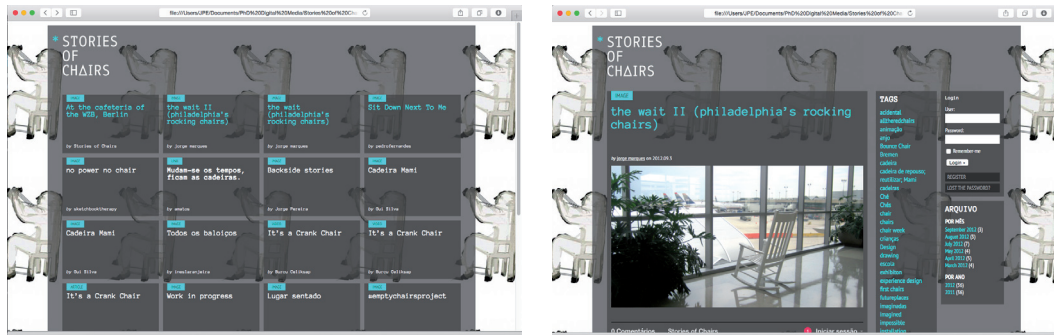


Fig.52 Stories of Chairs homepage, second version, *A Soup of Chairs* gallery.

- *Chés*: photo gallery from the drawing engagement activity with children in Paredes;
- *Estórias*: set of six mini-docs conducted in protocol between the Municipality of Paredes and the Polytechnic Institute of Porto / Audiovisual Communication Technology, in 2007, produced Maria João Cortesão and José Quinta Ferreira. These docs were archived in cds, in a box in Setepés office, and we identified them as a true example of the possibility for Stories of Chairs to become the mediator of disperse visual or digital media content, with profound symbolic value to the citizens of Paredes. These mini-docs include: an interview with *D. Laura*, the last *cadeireira* alive, that—at a very old age—shared her life experience and story; and an interview with *Albino Ferreira Carvalho*, that shared his *story* about his sawmill, originally founded by his father in 1931.

The videos were uploaded to Stories of Chairs Vimeo account¹¹², and embedded in website programming.

The title of the set was designed by us, making a direct relation with the English word *story*. *Estória*, in Portuguese, is a word used to describe a traditional narrative from popular culture, in opposite to *História*, that relates to historical facts.

This particular gallery was treated very carefully by the research team, due to its value. It is the convergence—in digital media—of the municipality's history and tradition with contemporary creativity and innovation. As new competitive constituents, digital media mediates and enhances the reinvention of a territory, not only geographically but mostly symbolically.

112 Available online at <http://vimeo.com/user9025733>.



Fig.53 Frames from mini-docs *Estórias* (from top left to bottom right): *D. Laura, cadeira e carreteira*; *Albino Ferreira Carvalho*; *Os Motosserristas*; *Marceneiro de Rebordosa*; *O Imaginário*; *A Serração*.

The second version of the website continued at futurereplaces.com, maintaining an obvious connection with the festival. With this option, on the one hand, we were able to access the webserver directly, as it is part of the festival's and UT-Austin | Portugal program domain; and on the other hand, we could benefit from the anchorage at FUTUREPLACES, providing Stories of Chairs with its institutional support from ID+ and UT-Austin | Portugal program.

The third version of the website was prepared for the Art on Chairs exhibition, in September 2012. The webdesign was developed by Pedro Regadas and Telmo Sá. To the development of this new version we did not identified limitations, as from the first version, but rather acknowledge the following:

- a redesign was necessary to continue to trigger participation and to aggregate new content;
- the new edition of the citizen lab at FUTUREPLACES 2012 was a good opportunity to present an evolution of the fieldwork;
- it was necessary to create a common visual communication with Stories of Chairs exhibition in Paredes, as part of Art on Chairs.

Also, from this third version the website started to be presented by its own web address at www.storiesofchairs.org.

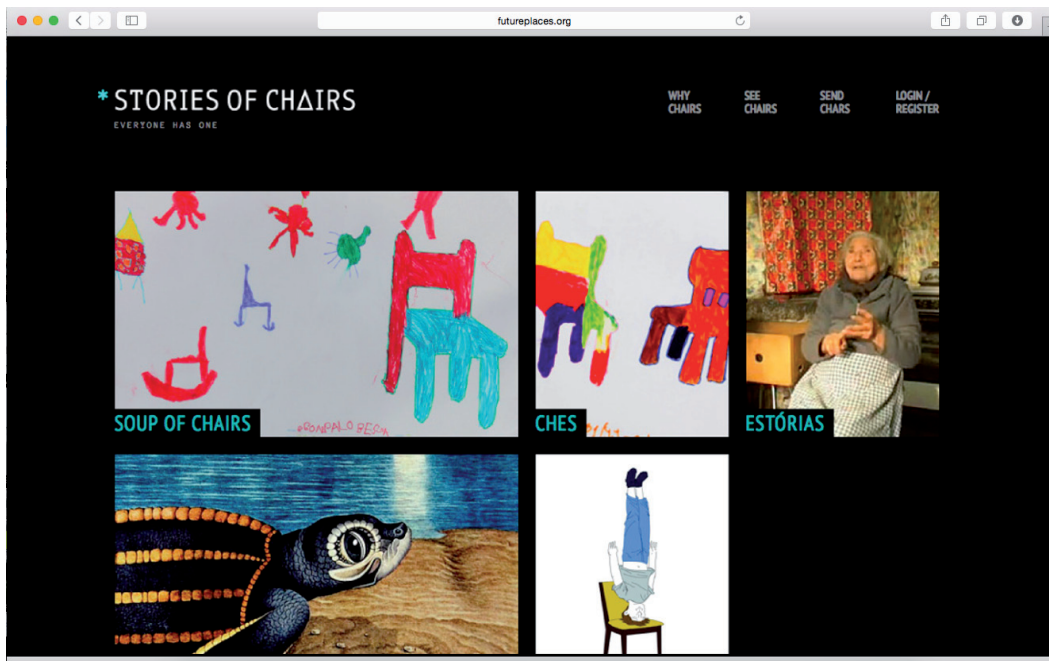


Fig.54 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version (2012).

For this, the navigation system continued similar, upgrading the user's interface. This design was discussed in several meetings with the development team. Also, the dashboard and user's personal area maintains the same interface.

The text presentation about the project and how to participate was also maintained, but a brief call was added, as it follows:

Stories of Chairs is a wall of chairs. Chairs made by all. Everyone, really. Made: drawn, constructed, told, photographed. One day there will be more chairs than ipads. Oooops! There already are more chairs than

ipads. Always have been. But we always want more. Send your chair. Your chairs. Now!

Participate!

We invite everyone to join this “melting pot”, drawing chairs, taking pictures with or without chairs, placing chairs in these pictures, telling their stories that involve chairs, writing, composing a song about chairs, making chairs, whatever creativity may encourage. Chairs, real or imagined, possible or impossible.

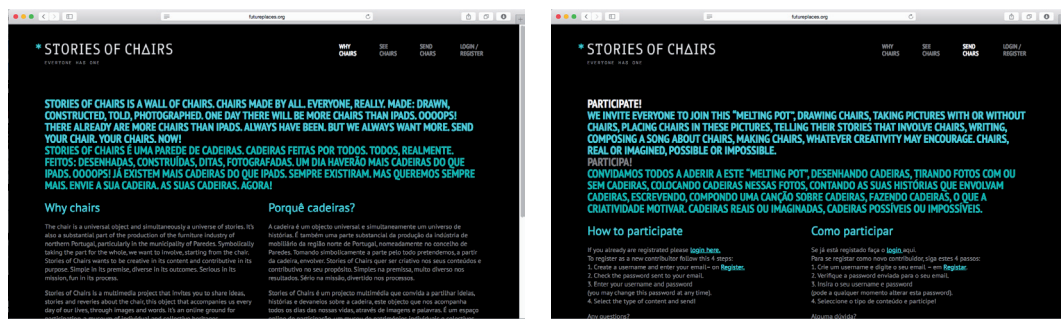


Fig.55 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version, *Why Chairs* and *Send Chairs*.

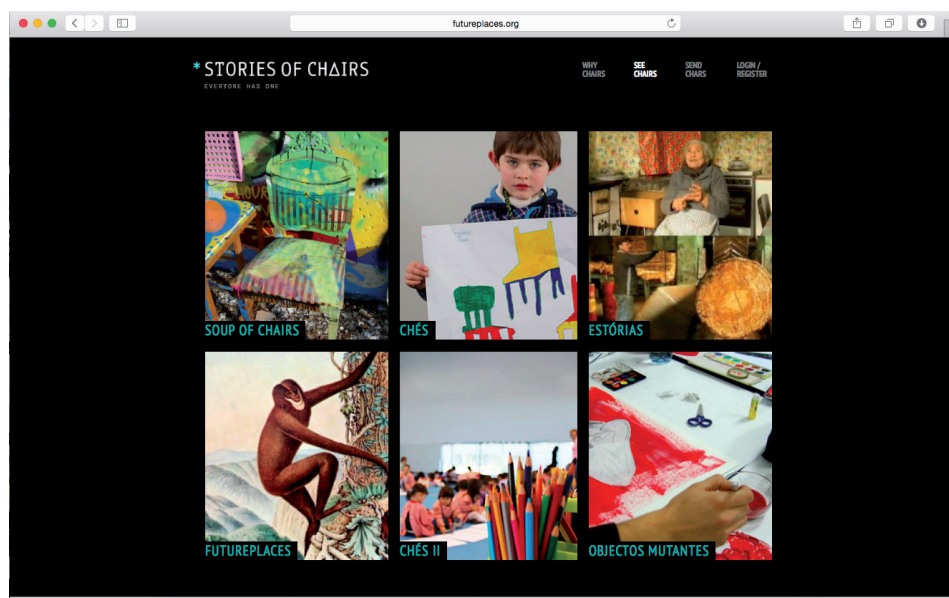


Fig.56 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version, *See Chairs*.

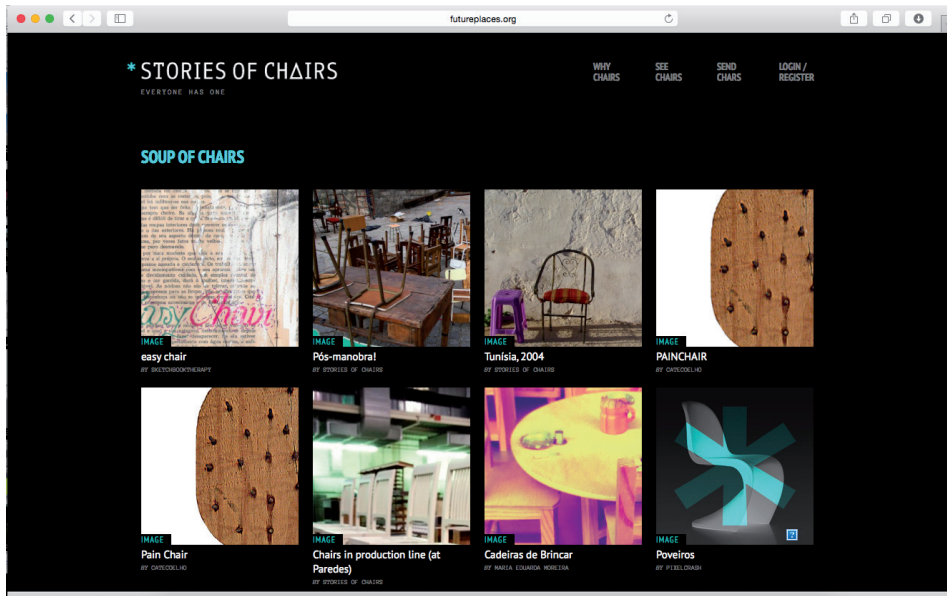


Fig.57 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version, *Soup of Chairs*.

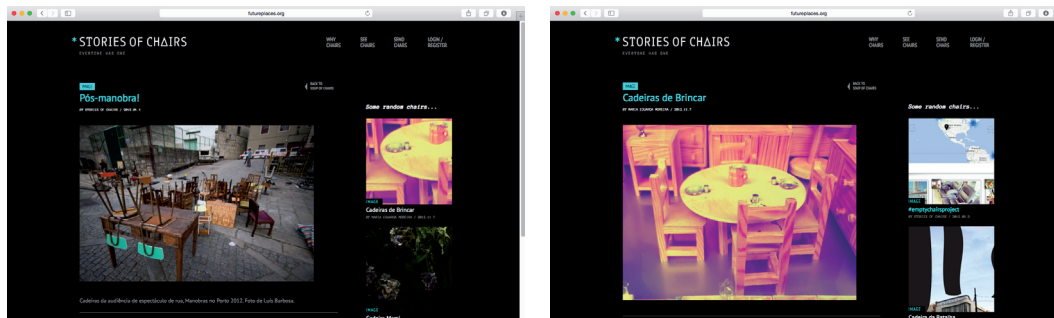


Fig.58 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version, *Soup of Chairs* selection.

For this new version of the website, it was also created a Facebook page to promote interactions and engagement in social networks such as Facebook. *Chair of the day*¹¹³ was created with the intention to highlight, on a daily-basis, participations selected from the website or disclose activities related to the project. Although at the outset seem like a potentially successful strategy, this experience has shown us that this social network visibility did not potentiate the project as expected. At some point, it has become an element of dispersion, with image and other content sharing via Facebook that was never integrated after in storiesofchairs.org. In the face of this failure, we decided to keep the Facebook page active

113 Available at www.facebook.com/chairoftheday.

during 2012 until the end of Art on Chairs, and from there it started to fade-out. We interpret this as an outcome of saturation, due to the project presentation at various web locations. It raised us questions about its relevance to the investigation and on the success of social networks in terms of communication within this type of participatory projects.

After this version, the research project has been focused on the interpretation of the outcomes from the case study. At this point, a new version of the website is being discussed, with a twofold purpose:

- (i) to continue to trigger participation and to aggregate new content, mainly patrimonial and historical, from future engagement activities to be conducted. This will expand the *See Chairs* gallery.
- (ii) develop a new area for the website where research outcomes may be presented, as well as research publications.

6.2.3.2. Citizen labs at FUTUREPLACES festival

Due to its nature, mission and common interests, Stories of Chairs was boosted through a partnership with the international digital media festival FUTUREPLACES. The Stories of Chairs *citizen lab*¹¹⁴—a creative workshop of citizenship and participation—was one of the first public presentations of the Art on Chairs event, in October 2011, with a second edition in 2012.

FUTUREPLACES, an outreach event of the UT Austin | Portugal program in digital media aims at expanding the use and purpose of digital media in society, focusing on strategies and activities of interaction between digital media and local cultures. It operates from the belief that the various expressions of digital media can enhance and foster local cultures, providing new possibilities for content production and experimentation.

114 *Citizen labs* (*Laboratórios de Cidadania*, Portuguese translation) are fast-action, practice-based workshops, addressing a multitude of media contexts. They are free to attend, and the coordinators provide them *pro bono*. Experts and citizens converge and mutually benefit from one another's knowledge. Often the outcomes of the lab inform ongoing research, consolidate themselves in further contexts, and/or get "upgraded" to a permanent FUTUREPLACES project. (FUTUREPLACES, N.D.). This workshop model was introduced at FUTUREPLACES in 2011, complementary to the tech labs.

“(...) the individual is now the key agent, and as such, the natural habitat for digital media is the local one’s tangible space, one’s semantic space: it is simply a matter of time before we come to terms with this and act accordingly. Future Places [*sic*] is simply an attempt to make this as clear and effective as humanly possible.” (Alvelos, 2009)

The methodology of the Stories of Chairs citizen labs has followed the ongoing premise of participation, presented in an accessible language and attempting to demystify a presumed complexity for users who might not be familiar with digital and online interfaces. In two editions, participants were invited to develop creative content that used the chair as the initial pretext for creative exploration. Once the nature and characteristics of the task were understood, the approach was to have participants not just speak, but most decisively to act and make, taking into account the participatory design strategies described by Sanders and Dandavate (1999) and Westerlund (2006, 2007), where the creative experience creates outcomes (participations) that go beyond the experiences of those involved. The action plan emphasizes the processes of spontaneity and not just the final “story”:

“Experiencing is a constructive activity. That is, a user’s experience (with communication, for example) is constructed of two equal parts: what the communicator provides, and what the communicated brings to the interaction. Where the two parts overlap is where the actual communication occurs.” (Sanders and Dandavate, 1999)

6.2.3.2.1. Citizen lab at FUTUREPLACES 2011

The preparatory work for the 2011 edition of FUTUREPLACES¹¹⁵ was parallel with the research and exploratory work taken under the present thesis. In this sense, the first participation of Stories of Chairs as citizen lab had a twofold objective:

- (i) to publicly present the project Stories of Chairs and the context of its development to bridge digital media and local culture;
- (ii) to initiate the construction of a patrimony of chairs, as creative results

¹¹⁵ FUTUREPLACES 2011 took place between October 19-22.

that would be part the website to build around the theme “stories of chairs”, at futureplaces.org/storiesofchairs.

The pre-development consisted of the dynamic work on the notion and awareness of the project’s concept, its the design and construction of its communication. To accomplish this, the research conducted to the thesis was added to the participation in FUTUREPLACES team meetings. These meetings were true laboratories of ideas, with contributions and very interesting discussions that allowed determining not only Stories of Chairs but also the other citizen labs and the overall event¹¹⁶.

Throughout FUTUREPLACES program, we participate in three different moments:

- (i) workshop presentation to the participants, in the collective opening session of citizen labs¹¹⁷;
- (ii) development of the workshop, in two editions, organized with the same structure;
- (iii) presentation of the outcomes and analysis, at festival’s closing session.

Regarding the development of the workshop, everything happened according to the planned schedule.

In the first phase, after explaining what Stories of Chairs is and what is the workshop, a first challenge was made, to create or remember chairs from a personal history and from that intention, then propose a media representation of it, making use of possible languages. Drawing, photograph, record, storytelling, involving chairs, real or imagined: creativity was the mobilizing constituent to this initial “melting pot”, where anything is possible when presented as a “once upon a time a chair...”

Second phase was the interface between digital media and local culture. In the

¹¹⁶ FUTUREPLACES 2011 held five citizen labs: *Type the future*, coordinated by Miguel Januário; *Will you marry us*, coordinated by David Trullo and Pablo Peinado; *Portugal Portefolio v2.0*, coordinated by Eduardo Brito; *Radiate Yourself*, coordinated by Radio Manobras; and *Stories of Chairs*.

¹¹⁷ The visual presentation of Stories of Chairs citizen lab, used in this collective open session, is presented in Appendix B1.



Fig.59 Stories of Chairs citizen lab—activities at FUTUREPLACES 2011.

geographical context of Porto, in its historic center¹¹⁸, we aimed at searching outside a story about some chair, in a particular place or with a particular purpose, whether leisure, professional, transportation, among others. This was about investigating realities that exist in local context and that gained visibility with the engagement of digital media and citizens, now using accessible technologies. It

¹¹⁸ Stories of Chairs citizen lab, like the majority of the activities of 2011's edition, was held at Maus Hábitos, a cultural space in Passos Manuel street, in Porto's historical center.

was intended here to provide an opportunity for participants to wade into the geographical space of FUTUREPLACES, according to their curiosity.

In the third and final phase, we have made the final processing of content collected previously, in particular in its online placement on the Stories of Chairs website. The website was publicly presented at the closing session of FUTUREPLACES 2011, presented as an open participatory repository of chairs, and endorsed to be the largest online collectively built archive of the chairs.

In this first version, developed to showcase the action explored in FUTUREPLACES, it was designed a simple navigation structure, with no hierarchical presentation, where contribution typologies were put on display, with its categorization tags to allow targeting viewed content. Research dealt with the analysis of case studies and projects with similar construction and organization, where navigation structure can be seen. With varying degrees of complexity, this navigation emphasizes accessibility and immediacy in the presentation. From this analysis, we highlight examples Experience Project¹¹⁹ and Neighborland¹²⁰ while participatory construction of platforms experience, and examples as Tumblr, Flickr, and Wordpress as content presentation platforms of digital media.

Hugo Ribeiro was in charge of the web development, a member of FUTUREPLACES team and responsible for the overall management of citizen labs' websites and digital archives.

Stories of Chairs citizenlab at FUTUREPLACES 2011 was—above all—a test tube, a leap forward in search for feedback of what might result as outcome. There were no expectations to match in quantitative terms, only a strong conviction and drive to make the project in which we believe happen. We have met new people—researchers, artists, designers, students, citizens—with similar creative challenges and similar questions. This was, indeed, the overall feeling at the closing session of the citizen labs outcomes, a sense of community of active and creative participants who contributed to make FUTUREPLACES festival an amazing “family” grateful to feel a part of this “place”.

119 Experience Project was analyzed as case study in Section 5.2.4.5.

120 Neighborland was analyzed as case study in Section 5.2.4.6.

6.2.3.2.2. Citizen lab at FUTUREPLACES 2012

A new version of Stories of Chairs was presented as citizen lab for the 2012 edition of the FUTUREPLACES¹²¹. In this second edition, the workshop was held simultaneously with the exhibition in Paredes, as part of Art on Chairs exhibition (presented in Section 6.2.3.4.).

We have adopted a similar strategy in the methodology for the development of the workshop. Preparatory work also took place on a similar schedule as the previous edition, making use of the previous experience, and now the objectives were defined as follows:

- (i) to disseminate Stories of Chairs and aggregate patrimony documentation collected so far, and in the meantime organized for the second version of the website.
- (ii) to develop the patrimony of creative contributions about chairs, making
- (iii) to bridge with the Art in Chairs exhibition

The preparatory tasks took place in a similar way, particularly the participation in team meetings to define action and strategies¹²². Given the successful work of the previous year's workshop, we approached this preparation with a clear sense of what could be the implications and outcomes.

To achieve the goal of building bridges with the Art in Chairs exhibition in Paredes, we invited the Chair Doctors with their Chair Clinic to join us as workshop catalysts. The invitation was made to artist Marta Bernardes, Chair Clinic project coordinator and also working within Art on Chairs.

Chair Clinic consisted of an engagement activity and dissemination of Art on Chairs with “a single mission: to transform warped chairs, broken or long-life

121 Futureplaces 2012 took place between October 17-20.

122 FUTUREPLACES 2012 held seven citizen labs: *Forgotten city*, coordinated by Manufactura Independente and Nodes.pt; *The 3:33 Sweatshop*, coordinated by Philip Marshall and Heitor Alvelos; *Portugal Portefolio 3: Depict Portugal*, coordinated by Júlio Dolbeth; *Museum of Ransom*, coordinated by Daniel Brandão; *PIU: Promoting Urban Interaction*, coordinated by Vânia Vilas Boas, Rita Sá, João Santos, Inês Santos, Jennifer Machado and Nuno Hespanhol; *Rádio Manobras Futuras: a community radio under construction*, a consortium of Rádio Zero, Rádio Manobras and Radiofutura; and *Stories of Chairs*.

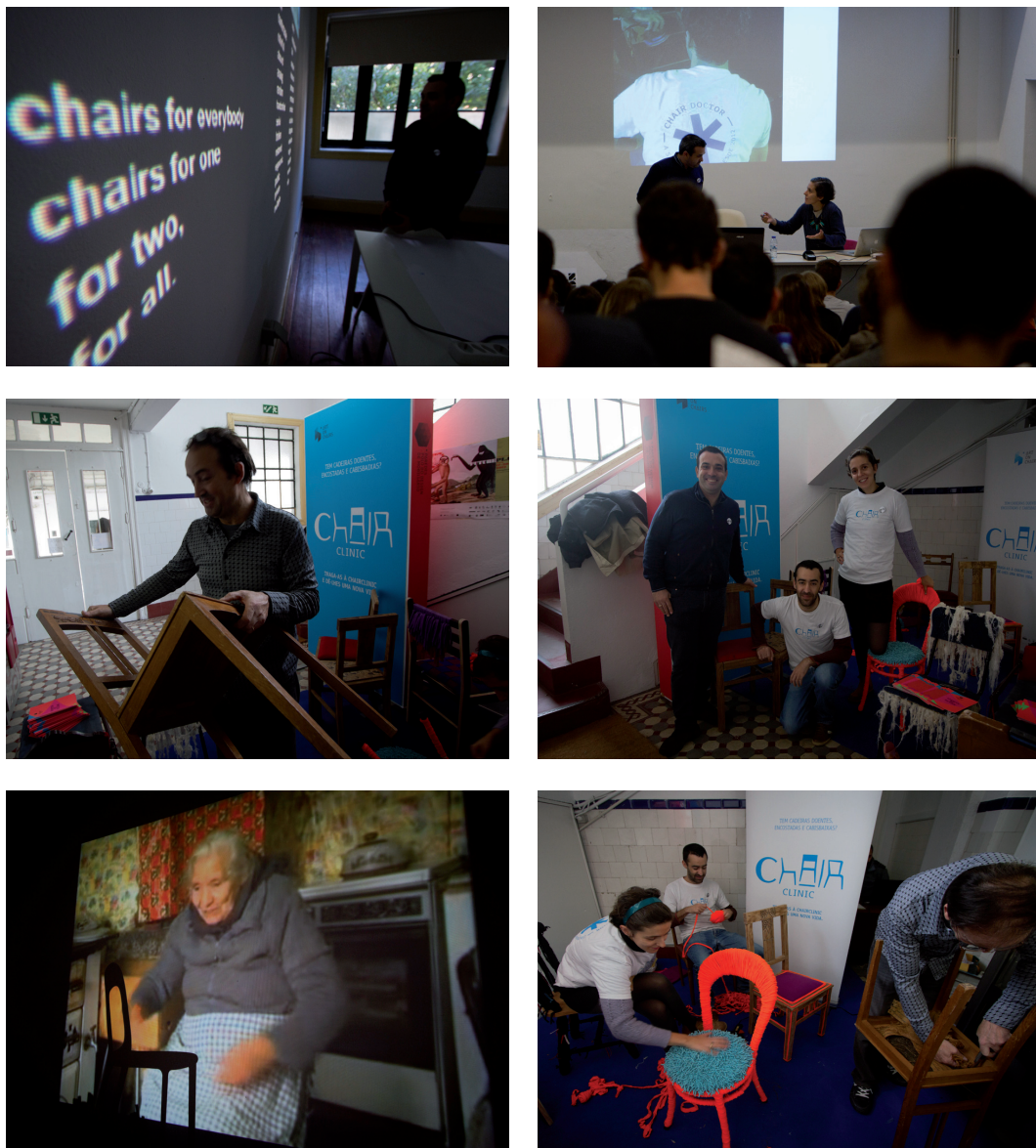


Fig.60 Stories of Chairs citizen lab—activities at FUTUREPLACES 2012.

victims in cheerful, colorful, strong chairs with a new and long life ahead!" (Bernardes, personal communication, September 12, 2013)¹²³.

The opportunity to integrate this project activity served as motto for exploration

¹²³ This quote was translated to English by the author of the current thesis. The original quote in Portuguese is: "uma única missão: transformar cadeiras empenadas, partidas ou vítimas do tempo em cadeiras alegres, coloridas, fortes e com uma nova e longa vida pela frente!" (Bernardes, personal communication, September 12, 2013).

of the chair as physical object, from which we they trigger stories and experiences, with their narrative possibilities. We intend to complement our dynamic digital creativity with a different approach of “making” in material terms, an approach to the chair as central object and mobile of a reflection on the creative processes involved in manufacturing the object itself.

The only required resource was a visible area to perform their actions, since they brought all materials, objects and necessary necessities to develop their activity. This was a relevant feature, since it didn't create any additional preparation work for us.

As in the previous edition, Stories of Chairs participated in three different moments:

- (i) workshop presentation to the participants, in the collective opening session of citizen labs, with Marta Bernardes¹²⁴;
- (ii) workshop development;
- (iii) presentation of outcomes and analysis of the activity at the festival's closing session.

The development of the workshop happened in similar ways, in three phases: introduction and task assignment, development of the work and aggregation in storiesofchairs.org

2012's edition of Stories of Chairs allowed us to continue the production and aggregation of documentary patrimony attached to this link between design, local culture and digital media. Although less participated and more dispersed around the festival locations¹²⁵, the experience and outcomes validated the proposed objectives. In addition to content created by participants, all of them very diverse, Chair Clinic created a curious balance for the digital experimentation that naturally comes at a digital media festival like FUTUREPLACES. This allowed citizens unfamiliar with technology to join us and also tell their “story of chair”.

¹²⁴ The visual presentation of Stories of Chairs citizen lab, used in this collective open session, is presented in Appendix C1.

¹²⁵ Stories of Chairs citizen lab, like many activities of 2012's edition, was held at Academia Contemporânea do Espectáculo, a less central location in Porto's historical district.

6.2.3.3. Chés

As part of a strategy for local community engagement, we reflected on which operational activities could enhance involvement in a project whose nature and original objectives are mostly attached to industrial and institutional decisions. It became clear that this action should take place among the ones that are more available for creativity and, at the same time, less aware of the “institutionalization” of the development strategy proposed by design, assuming it as something inherent to their condition of creativity and for creativity.

Part of the guiding principles that underpin the overall intervention project, as well as catering for the specific target audience with which it set out to work, the aim of the Chés activity was to strengthen the involvement of local people—notably pre-school children aged between three and six years old—in supporting the interdisciplinary basis and understanding intended for the Stories of Chairs.

Bearing in mind the importance of education to promote a cross-section of knowledge, Chés was carried out developing critical thinking and seeking to encourage enjoyment in creative experimentation, valuing children's personal expression. The design of the activity was based on a mission to build an emotional heritage on the part of the local population and participation in the Art on Chairs event. With this in mind, the workshop Chés was prepared. “Ché” is the way a Portuguese child may pronounce the English word “chair”.

After a previous contextualization made by the Stories of Chairs team in an initial meeting with the team of primary school teachers involved, the children were challenged to freely draw a chair, while emphasizing the playfulness of this experience. This meeting was held on February 6, 2012 with 12 kindergarten teachers responsible for the classes with which the first CHÉS session was held, on February 8. Representatives of the Paredes City Council Education Department, who acted as interface between the teachers and the coordinating team of the Art on Chairs project, also attended this presentation.

The children who would undertake the experience were very young (aged between three and six): this is an age range that brings significant differences on the level of skills. The activity was thus organized to meet their expressive capacity. A simple way to monitor their capacity and independence was devised, which also enabled any difficulty or inhibition in participating to be overcome by the collective playful involvement. The level of expressive demand was therefore gradually increased during the course of the activity, in an attempt to facilitate the skills the children demonstrated in the proposals made.

Recognizing that digital media add affective, playful and regenerative dimensions to the required development and regeneration, a children's participatory event drawing chairs was developed to demystify the initial difficulties with knowledge and creative exploration of an idea. Essentially, the aim of this activity was to create the conditions for debating and exchanging ideas amongst the children of Paredes, inquiring into the reflection skills on a topic that is directly connected to their region.

The activity was designed following a series of aims, based on assumptions confirmed with the contacts held with people from Paredes:

- to create the content for the participatory website, to be included as a specific webpage;
- to promote local awareness of the histories and stories related to the theme of the project;
- to involve local communities through creativity.
- to give visibility to the municipality of Paredes and its furniture (and creative) industries;

These aims were subject of discussion with the team of teachers, in a introductory meeting¹²⁶ with the Municipality Education staff, and they were asked to talk with the children in their classroom about chairs as objects with creative possibilities.

¹²⁶ This meeting was held in Paredes City Hall two days before the event. In that discussion, we could describe our goals for the engagement activity. In this meeting we present the outcomes of a mini session for Chés, performed in previous week in kindergarten *Externato Limiar*, in Maia. This activity was photographed and acted as test tube of the similar activity we were to conduct. The fact that we have experienced the reaction of children before built a trust relation between the research team and teachers, who acknowledged our compromise with their work. The visual presentation used in this meeting is presented in Appendix D1.

In the first session (held on February 8, 2012) 345 children from 11 schools in the county were involved. Chés was organized in the Paredes Parish Hall, a central location in the town, and was organized into two parts:

- the morning session involved 170 children from Kindergartens in Paredes, Monte (parish of Mouriz), Outeiro and Carreiras Verdes (parish of Louredo), Insuela (parish of Besteiros) and Vila (parish of Gondalães);



Fig.61 Activity from the first edition of Chés, February 8, 2012.

- the afternoon session involved 175 children from Primary Schools in Mouriz and Paredes and Kindergartens in Carregoso (parish of Bitarães), Estrebuela and Redonda (parish of Madalena).

Each session was scheduled to last for 90 minutes, with a plan that covered not only the creative activity of drawing but also the welcoming of the participants and their supervision through to completion. All tasks pertaining to the involvement of the schools and transportation of participants were carried out by the City Council. With this diverse participation, we aimed at a varied geographical representation from a number of parishes in Paredes.

Subsequent editions were held during Art on Chairs, integrated into the event program, specifically into activities provided for community involvement. For these, there were no preparatory meetings with kindergarten teachers, and officers from the Education Department who had participated in the first preparatory meeting conveyed the information.



Fig.62 Activity from the second edition of Chés, October 23, 2012.

The second event was held on October 23, 2012 at the primary school of Vilela, and involved 64 children. The third event was on November 13, 2012, at the primary school of Sobrosa, involving 60 children. These editions gathered a smaller number of participants, because they were conducted in school's facilities, engaging with the children—the workshop participants—in their own school. This decision was proposed by the Education Department of the Municipality.

Regardless of the changes in location, the activities were conducted in a similar manner, in the same format and for the same length of time, using equivalent resources and conditions in terms of materials and space.

The activity began with the distribution of all children around the available space, in small groups that followed the organization of their own class. The groups were organized in order to avoid inhibitions. This strategy, of giving the children the freedom to sit or lie on the floor freely and spontaneously, was a key decision for the success and intensity of Chés. The support and guidance provided by the professionals involved was crucial to this organization.



Fig.63 Activity from the third edition of Chés, November 13, 2012.

In the initial welcoming segment, pupils displayed a relative level of caution and inhibition, and this was expected. In this first contact, we aimed to earn their trust, encouraging interaction on issues relating to their school, their neighborhood and their individual experiences. In this context, the teachers acted as “trusted adults” with whom they could discuss ideas in groups, before starting the activity itself. In order to facilitate the development of the discussion, simple questions were posed:

- Shall we all draw a chair?
- What do you want your chair to look like?

Provided with familiar materials, such as paper and colored pens, these questions encouraged the children to participate voluntarily in the activity. In the scramble for ideas, children themselves had a desire to start immediately. These materials were available on the floor, reinforcing the intended informality.

The work was undertaken independently by the pupils, adults only intervening as mediators in the case of any difficulties, such as shyness or an inability to represent. We opted not to “correct” the children in their creative expression. We did note, however, on the part of the teachers, a constant concern for performance and end result, in search of a appropriate drawing, as expected in their learning activities. For our part, the emphasis was always placed on the moment, on the enjoyment of the experience and on the discussion of the chair and its possibilities as an object for childhood creativity.

After the stipulated period for the drawing, the final phase consisted of a photographic record of the child with his or her work. These records were, from the planning stage of the activity, seen as the visual outcome of this whole experience, since they simultaneously captured the drawing—the creative participation—and the children—the citizens, the active agents of this participatory activity. On one hand, the different individual viewpoints of each child that visually responded to the same stimulus; on the other hand, their pride in their work was printed in their expressions and the glee with which they presented these results.

The participation of children was previously authorized by their parents and educators; authorization and information was mandatory, because of their participa-

tion and photo reporting, to be used in storiesofchairs.org, and media coverage. Schools previously organized this process.

Children worked on the activity excitedly and with interest, and did not display boredom or impatience. There was an active engagement, a genuine availability very characteristic when children are happy with what they are doing. Even though, we must mention one child who did not engage—a little boy, very reluctant to start the activity. We addressed particular attention to this situation, talking with him but with no success. The school staff educators rebuked the child, but we tried to be mediators between their authority and the volunteer participation of the group. He then decided to make his “chair”, but in the end, before the photograph, destroyed it. The boy then stayed with its colleagues and professor.

Most children showed satisfaction at being able to take their drawings home to show their families, and so fulfilled the objective of sharing, indirectly, the existence of the Stories of Chairs project as part of Art on Chairs.

The responses were overall creative, helping to stimulate the imagination and the sense of belonging amongst the children in a project that they were not aware, or haven't even noticed about it in most cases. We could see the closeness between creativity and the desire to express, that in these particular participants are components that complement each other, providing an integrative experience of different types of knowledge, contributing with some initial ideas to the formation of an early intuitive awareness of the relationship between the identity of the region and the furniture industry.

Through this involvement of young citizens, drawings revealed and provided an empirical basis to their potential relationships with chairs, and an intuitive awareness of the relationship between the identity of Paredes and Stories of Chairs participatory intent. In this blend of History, tradition and the creativity of children, the community reinvents itself as a symbolic territory. This awareness reinforces Jenkins' argument that transformational proposals are designed from early childhood education to ensure that future generations are media producers aware of their responsibility. The participation and gathering of children reveals the most important wealth—creativity, originality and the pleasure that comes from this experimentation—along with the local culture and a sense of community (Jenkins, 2006).

However, although we believe the experience and results to have been positive, we did notice a lack of connection to the overall project by the local population. Overall, the four objectives identified seem to have been achieved, since the children were able, through collective action and an exchange of ideas, to adopt a creative attitude towards something “known”, from the initial challenge. All the children in the various sessions responded, within their capabilities, to the challenge of drawing, even if the understanding of the close link between the activity (and the drawing) and the overall strategy of Art on Chairs was beyond their cognitive abilities. However, although we believe the experience and results to have been positive, we did notice a lack of connection to the overall project by the local population, and even unawareness of the Art on Chairs event.

The proposed action with children was an alternative participatory strategy. It started from the problems researched in the relationship between design and participation, and aimed at contributing to the creative exploration of the children, engaging them with the image of the chair through experimentation. The children were invited to the center of this experience, from an interdisciplinary and interpersonal perspective. This theme, while familiar, promoted interpretative and creative activities, developing their aesthetic sensibility and fostering expressive skills, both relevant to a project culture.

Each activity turned out to be a new challenge to the proposed objectives, although we recognize that the first session, because it was the first experience of its kind, involving so many people, was a process of discovery for the authors, with elements of unpredictability—such as behavior, tolerance, motivation, or interaction in small and large group.

The methodology aimed at an experimental component that allowed the children direct contact, becoming themselves the active subjects of the collaborative project. The role played by the authors as facilitators of the activity was that of mediators of a sharing of ideas and a stimulus for expression. Creativity and imagination of children are territories of affective value. “Creativity means connecting the previously unconnected in ways that are new and meaningful to the individual concern. (...) Young children think, draw conclusions, make predictions, experiment and look for explanations.” (Duffy, 2006, p. 46). Whenever confronted with the proposed activity, they responded promptly, indicating their willingness to be actively involved in the different challenges that were presented to them.

The results suggest that the goal of Stories of Chairs was partially achieved through this community involvement. The findings of this process contributed significantly to the research. The tangible result was the ability to engage around 500 children with the project, with their creative stories as a motive for the creation of drawn chairs, available as an online archive. The greater impact, however, was the awareness of the potential of an iconic object that is part of the region itself.

6.2.3.4. Art on Chairs exhibition

Stories of Chairs was integrated as an exhibition into the set of nine simultaneous exhibitions of 2012's Art on Chairs. It was hosted between September 14 and November 18, in Paredes Railway Station.

This participation did not intend to present the documentary collection of the project but rather to be a forefront vehicle of the "real" exhibition, which is online and available to everyone. It intended, above all, to establish itself as a key instrument for the visibility of participants, allowing them and also their creative participations to be part of "an idea for the world in a chair."

The team of researchers, led by curator Heitor Alvelos, commissioned the exhibition design. The design consisted of an interdisciplinary task and integrated in the planned activities of Stories of Chairs. For its development, working meetings were held with the design and production team of the exhibition layout—that included other researchers from ID+ and production team from the company Outros Mercadus. In those meetings, we were informed on the global guidelines of the exhibition and its formal options, in terms of materials, media and visual branding.

The planning, human and material resources management, and the cost analysis involved was in charge of the production team, together with the Setepés.

At the definition of the exhibition concept, two structural considerations were approached:

- (i) what is the mission of the Stories of Chairs, while exhibition?
—to formally compliance of the project;

- (ii) how to leverage participation and visibility of Stories of Chairs assets, from Paredes and to Paredes?
 - to meet the affective link with local culture and the territory.

This preliminary analysis was a relevant definition for the goals of the exhibition itself. It was necessary to take into account its mission and philosophy in defining engagements, schedules and resources.

6.2.3.4.1. The exhibition

The exhibition was held throughout the 66 days of Art on Chairs, in Paredes Railway Station.

The location was a topic discussed between the curating team and Setepés team, manager of the overall project. Given the possibilities and analyzed in the context of the territorial dispersion of the remaining exhibitions, the railway station was the choice. As discussed in Section 2.2., there is a symbolic value in Paredes industry's history regarding its railway. It was a decisive agent for the industrial development of Paredes in the 20th century. We notice this as an opportunity, giving rationale to questions (i) and (ii) issued in the preliminary analysis.

On the other hand, the nature of the collection to present at Stories of Chairs was substantially different from other exhibitions. At those, is was on display furniture design, developed between designers and local industry—"76 prototypes, 100 designers, 150 by Design", as presented by the organization—while in Stories of Chairs the subject and purpose was fulfilled mainly as a gateway to the territory. This was a metaphor for travelers and visitors that arrived by railway station, that is departure for the presentation and digital environment in storiesofchairs.org. The exhibition collection consisted of digital media, created or aggregated at the project's website, by result of the activities undertaken. This mainly relates to allowing both physical and sensory access to our story.

Following an exploratory visit to the exhibition site, the first draft on its spatial and thematic organization was presented by the design and production team. The planning of this draft followed a series of defined design principles, including the use of Styrofoam as main support. This option is justified by Francisco Providên-

cia, responsible for the exhibition concept of Art on Chairs 2012, as follows:

“(...) the material Styrofoam will serve as the link to the other exhibitions, integrated with the entire project. This white, neutral, inexpensive, lightweight, insulating, self-supporting, easily transformed and printable material is linked (in our imagination) to the function of protecting.” (Providência, 2012, p. 105)

After this meeting, the spatial layout was organized, namely how the raw material was to be articulated with the available space.

From this moment, the curating team could bridge to the second consideration, related to the symbolic dimension of the project.

Note also that during the exhibition there were organized guided tours to the exhibition, in September 25, October 23 and November 13, the last two coincident with Chés workshops (held in the morning). This tours were not succeeded, as it didn't got the chance to mobilize a relevant number of visitors.

6.2.3.4.2. “Participate, aggregate, reveal”

With the definition of the layout and resources available, the following moment of preparation was directed to question *ii*): how to leverage the participation and visibility of the heritage asset of Stories of Chairs, from Paredes and to Paredes?

The answer began first by preparing the synopsis included in the Art on Chairs 2012 exhibition catalog:

“Stories of Chairs is a participatory digital platform about communication narratives concerning the Chair.

The platform encourages the sharing of ideas, stories and musings about the universe of the Chair (itself a universal object), inserted in a particular context (Art on Chairs), and for a common purpose (to revitalize the narratives of the furniture industry in the region of Paredes).

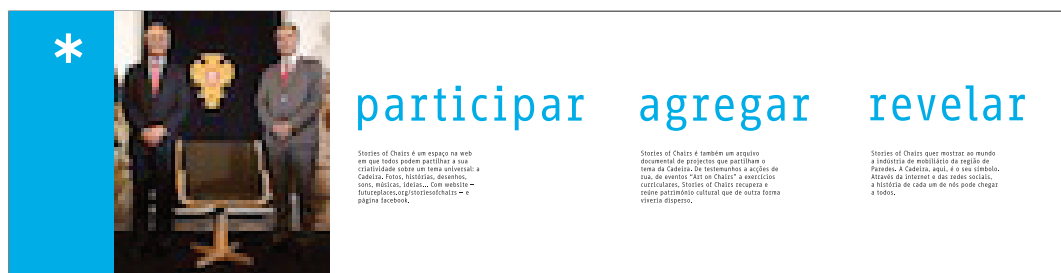
Stories of Chairs examines and encourages the participation of members of the public through digital media. This participation can give rise to



Fig.64 Space and module layout for Stories of Chairs exhibition (project by Francisco Providência and Outros Mercadus).



PAINEL 1



PAINEL 2



PAINEL 5

Fig.65 Graphic design layout for Stories of Chairs exhibition —proposal by curating team (not implemented).

greater social, cultural and economic benefits. While showing to the World the daily life and history of this industry, we also cultivate opportunities at a playful, emotional and patrimonial level. The global informs the local and, as such, Paredes returns to the world its acknowledging echo. Stories of Chairs is a Museum of creative contributions. Its simple premise unfolds with the most diverse results, and its regenerative mission is anything but incompatible with a wide range of playful approaches. Thus it is hoped to contribute to the construction of an increased awareness that industry is also part of mankind's heritage, which, as such, is inherited by all and projected by all onto the future.

ID +, Faculdade de Belas Artes Universidade do Porto

COMMITTEE Heitor Alvelos

EXECUTIVE COORDINATION Jorge Brandão Pereira

WEB DEVELOPMENT Hugo Ribeiro

In cooperation with the Festival FUTUREPLACES, Digital Media and Local Cultures.

Integrated in the Program UT Austin | Portugal¹²⁷ (Art on Chairs, 2012b, p. 9)

Making the transition from narrative to visual communication, the narrative is now mediated in these three fundamental concepts: *participate*, *aggregate* and *reveal*. This three actions structure our endeavor to bridge symbolic affective space with local culture and territorial reality.

Starting with the title the chair in participatory digital universe, the three actions were described as follows:

Participate

Stories of Chairs is a online space where everyone can share their creativity on a universal theme: the chair. Photos, stories, drawings, sounds, music, ideas... With a website (futureplaces.org/storiesofchairs) and a Facebook page (Chair of the day).

Aggregate

Stories of Chairs is also an archive of documents and projects that share the theme of the chair. From testimonies to street actions, from “Art on Chairs” events to school assignments, Stories of Chairs recovers and brings together cultural heritage that otherwise would live disperse.

127 The Portuguese translation of the synopsis, included in the catalog, is as follows:

“Stories of Chairs é uma plataforma digital participativa sobre narrativas de comunicação em redor da Cadeira. A plataforma convida a partilhar ideias, histórias e devaneios sobre o universo da Cadeira (ela própria um objeto universal), inserida num contexto particular (Art on Chairs), e num propósito comum (revitalizar as narrativas da indústria de mobiliário da região de Paredes).

Stories of Chairs estuda e propõe a participação dos cidadãos através dos media digitais. Desta participação podem nascer mais-valias sociais, culturais e económicas. Ao darmos a conhecer ao Mundo o quotidiano e a História desta indústria, cultivamos igualmente possibilidades a nível lúdico, afetivo e patrimonial. O global informa o local, e este – Paredes – devolve-se ao Mundo reconhecendo o seu eco.

Stories of Chairs é um Museu de contributos criativos. A sua premissa simples desdobra-se nos resultados mais diversos, e a sua missão regeneradora é tudo menos incompatível com um vasto campo de abordagens lúdicas. Assim se espera contribuir para a construção de uma consciência acrescida de que indústria é também património humano, que enquanto tal é herdado por todos e projetado pelos mesmos sobre o futuro.” (Art on Chairs, 2012, p. 9)

Reveal

Stories of Chairs aims at revealing the furniture industry of Paredes to the world. The chair is its symbol. Over the Internet and social networks, the story of each of us can reach everyone.

Together with this synthesis, it was showcased some digital work, retrieved from storiesofchairs.org, around the theme chair. To this end, the exhibition was organized with a similar architecture as the website—namely the hierarchy WHY CHAIRS, SEE CHAIRS and SEND CHAIRS. Along these visual graphics, three touchscreens were displayed with offline access to the website.

A slideshow was also included. This slideshow consisted of a triple projection, a visual narrative presenting simultaneously digital of the website content, representative of various activities and actions of Stories of Chairs:

- Creative interpretation on the “chair”, produced by users of storiesofchairs.org and by participants of the first citizen lab, held in FUTURE-PLACES 2011. This was a display of participatory action.
- Photos from Chés initiative held in February 2012, reinforcing the belonging of this project to local culture and putting local citizens in the exhibition highlight.
- Frames from the mini-docs Estórias, also revealing of a history and symbolic heritage of Paredes and its industry. This was a revelation of the possibility of Stories of Chairs to be aggregator of disperse audiovisual content, reframing it into a new communication discourse.

The highlight of the exhibition was its opening, as part of the Art on Chairs opening event. Paredes railway station was the first meeting point of event and this allowed a very significant concentration of visitors at this time. The audience included a great diversity of visitors and feedback was extremely positive, both from institutional representatives and peers and from anonymous citizens, curious about the event and first presented with mesh-up possibility of design with digital media, in a local heritage context.

The opening was a symbolic manifestation of the region with the railway. The exhibition began with a train journey from Porto to Paredes, reiterating the historical connection of this transportation to Paredes' industry and economy.

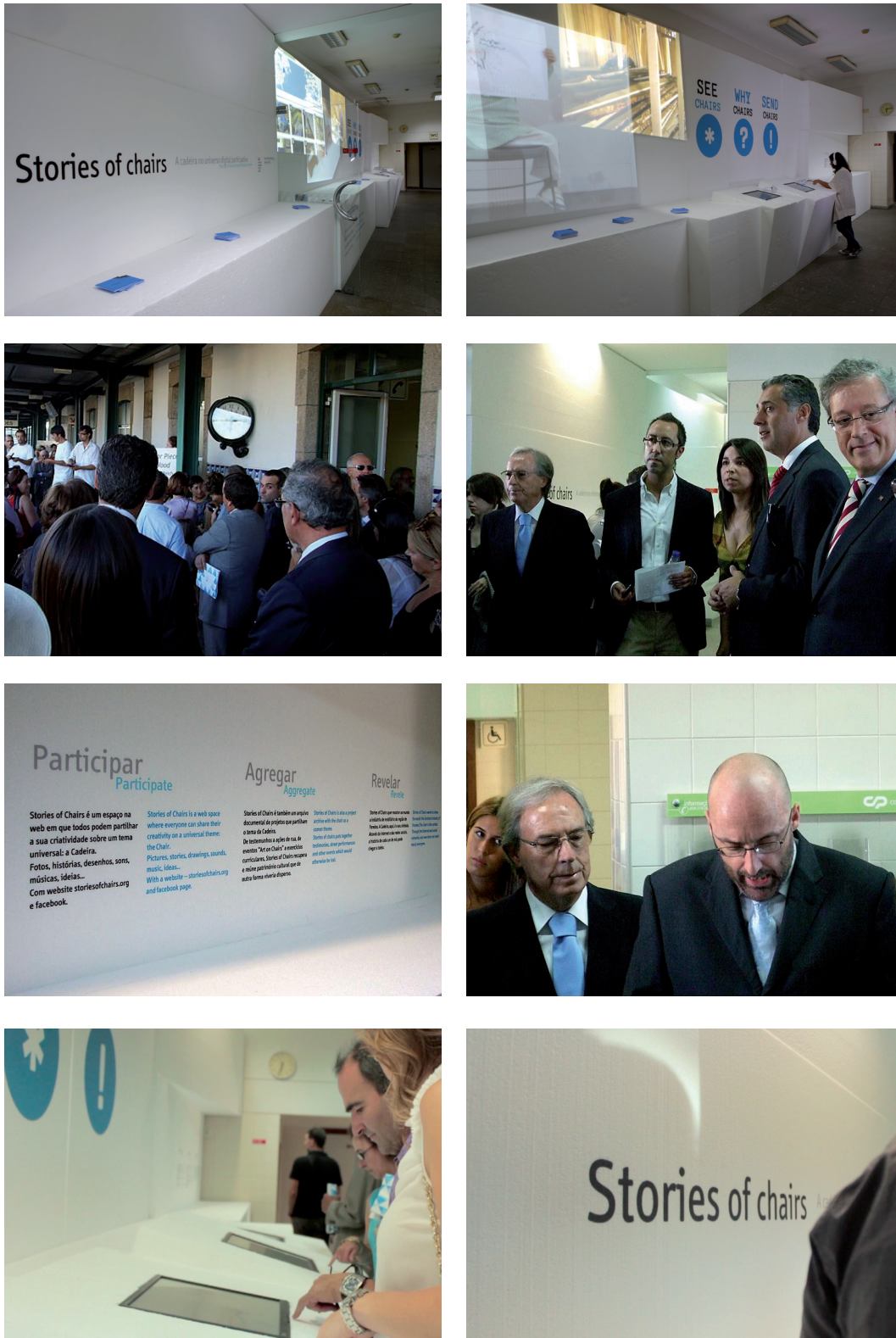


Fig.66 Stories of Chairs exhibition (including the opening).

On a permanent basis, the exhibition was guided by organization's volunteers, who simultaneously performed a brief guided tour to Stories of Chairs and made reception to visitors who used train for travelling to Paredes.

Analyzing the event, we believe that the location of the exhibition was not the best decision, and may have been more valued if it was integrated with the other exhibition, on Paredes Sports Pavillion or Paredes Cultural Center. The organization has shown fragility and difficulties in meeting timelines initially agreed for its implementation, mainly due to the dimension of Art on Chairs, with many simultaneous tasks that required more human and material resources.

Nevertheless, Stories of Chairs' team developed its action to enhance its impact and visibility, expanding its reach beyond the spatial borders intended for it. We tried to particularly increase the educational and affective assets, extending its value and interest to a no-expertise audience, not connoisseur of design phenomena.

6.4. Summary

This chapter has described the research methodologies and the conducted activities within the fieldwork of Stories of Chairs.

Results show that the impact of design is not absolute, neither at the level of organizations nor within its interpretation by citizens. The choice in determining a quantified output reinforces the relevance of collecting information and direct involvement in the development process, to obtain data which is simultaneously relevant and representative. Design is a subject that has to be embedded in the communication processes and cultural dynamics.

The research approach was qualitative, since the dynamic relationship established throughout the development process of Stories of Chairs has no expression on quantitative data. For this qualitative research, the interpretation of the phenomena and the interpretation of their meaning were critical—and it was this need for interpretation that guided it systematically, evaluating the results.

The practice-based research was focused in two action environments:

- (i) Online, which involved the strategy, design, and development of storiesofchairs.org;
- (ii) Offline, which involved citizen engagement activities, with emphasis in Paredes and Porto—within FUTUREPLACES;

The website storiesofchairs.org has evolved in different versions, all prepared according to the research timeline. It has shifted from a participatory presentation website to a mediator able to aggregate information and outcomes Paredes industrial heritage—and this path will provide him sustainability for the future.

FUTUREPLACES citizen labs allowed us to test and verify participatory approaches together with creative citizens, working as laboratory of ideas. The description and validation of these citizen labs is the methodological learning for our research, that posits Stories of Chairs as an autonomous project that consolidates the vision of social development via digital media, mediating it with a specific local culture.

The development of Chés was the most successful activity regarding the local involvement in Paredes. The activity presented itself to its participants informally but indirectly it worked in the immaterial component of the industrial patrimony—alias a continuous goal in our research. The conduction of three editions of Chés demonstrated that this activities can be replicated and tested in different contexts, maintaining its mission and impact.

Taking part of Art on Chairs exhibition showcased Stories of Chairs as a cultural expression of how digital media can be reified, deconstructed and event interpreted by all. The description in this chapter reports on the preparation of the event and curatorial work.

Stories of Chairs, as case study, remains active and relevant because its research questions have been met, in digital media environments and on the symbolic patrimony of Paredes and its citizens.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusion

7.1. Final considerations

In this chapter we conclude the core issues that regulated the research process. We begin by showing the emergence of design concept for the interpretation of organizational strategy, as an innovation model that branches into the economic and creativity spheres. It evolves to build the concept of creative economy, and is particularly associated with models for territorial development.

Due to the involvement of a vast number of people in the course of this research, the conclusions involve aspects of strategic relationship, communication and participation, and reiterates design and digital media as enablers for this construction.

A twofold challenge has been addressed:

- a strategy was developed to provide a progressive identification of Stories of Chairs, looking for an autonomy that enabled the project to evolve in its own pursuit, without ever breaking its initial ground;
- all involved were encouraged to engage, improving the strategic definition of the project, and its respective response to the objectives proposed in the premise.

In the context of globalization of economic activities and the increasingly important insertion of local economies and industries in the international sphere, the idea of developing local and regional culture emphasizes the necessary conditions to ensure the competitiveness and sustainability of economic activity.

In addition to traditional conditions linked to the industrial strategy, design as a constituent part of the development of organizations may be interpreted as the bridge between strategy, communication and participation. This bridge is the territory in which digital media give coherence and specificity to local culture, generating difference and including a system intended to be consistent and contributing to the development of specific assets.

Stories of Chairs has been positioned in its own trail, autonomous from Art on Chairs and engaging in its own pathway. It allowed a deeper theoretical analysis relating to the organizational dynamics between strategy and design, involved

in communication processes that interpret such dynamics as part of a collective heritage, specifically in Paredes' case-study.

The research is accomplished to the extent of its implementation:

- (i) the research aims, as presented in Section 1.3., were met;
- (ii) a legacy for the topic is accomplished, which at the same time becomes a contribution to the Portuguese discussion about design and strategy;
- (iii) it aggregates scattered archives, built up throughout time and context;
- (iv) it maintains an intentional space for voluntary participation that has been and will continue to be the “primordial soup” from which the necessary inputs will arise for future steps of the project;
- (v) it demonstrates that digital media can play an active role in the process of change. As an open, participatory platform—and as a window linking to Art on Chairs and the reality of Paredes—combined in a complex project linked to design and industrial development, it fulfilled a mission of interface between citizens and creativity.

This collective heritage belongs to all citizens, is independent from top-down management decisions concerning design, and highlights plurality, which is the characteristic inherent in the various territories in which it aims to be active.

Three elements became essential:

- (i) the relationships between the various players are a guarantee for strengthening the basis of the project. Companies, academia, industry, citizens and the local authority are key stakeholders, in that each of them participates directly or indirectly in shaping what Stories of Chairs has been, is and can be;
- (ii) design as infrastructure emphasizes the social and economic dimension, because it is in these areas—society and economy—that the strategy of design makes an impact.
- (iii) the territory is a mark of identity, and this influences the two previous elements, giving dimension to the network of players who interact and reinforce the geography, making it a symbolic territory.

Under an inclusive perspective, storiesofchairs.org is the foreground of rooted project, free of the inherent complexity that originated and guided it in the con-

sequential stages of its development. A symbolic participatory space is reflected in the following principles:

- *revealing*: it assimilates design as a “catalyst”. The rooting of the culture of design in the industry and population of Paredes is a slow generational transformation—how we believe it must start in children—but attests to a local narrative that reinforces the established heritage relationship. It rehearses a holistic view that treats design as a method of narrative content, opening up space for dialog and raising the awareness of one’s own heritage.
- *substantive*: it conveys contextual content, of locations and individuals that are actively engaged—regardless of context, latitude or input. The digital platform works as a meeting point for all branch actions and, simultaneously, as a gateway to its presentation.
- *participatory*: in positing that its viability will rely on digital media, design thus moves from the experts towards a universe of participation, and creates the opportunity for the aggregation of traditionally unconnected subjects and competences.
- *open-ended*: its intended strategic mediation calls for a paradigm shift. The relevance of Paredes’ and its stakeholders’ specificities should be taken into account, as it is to them that the project ultimately returns. This strategy mobilizes these local actors—citizens, businesses, industry—and deepen its capital of relationships, between themselves and with local authorities.

The sustainable continuity of the project is a relevant development. Since it is the product of voluntary action, it finds—in a fortunate way—its “shelter” in FUTUREPLACES, a fertile encounter of creativity. Its evolution horizon involves strengthening this synergy, focusing on the creation of cultural, relational and organizational added value through critical networks such as FUTUREPLACES.

It highlights the role of local culture and the conditions for this “locality” - historical, social, heritage, cultural and geographic conditions. It is not a simple system,

since it is fragile for the lack of actors, relational capital, and business competitiveness.

“the challenge now resides not so much in an institutional shift, but in the realization that technology has empowered the individual to lead a myriad of interwoven shifts—the regular sprouting of all kinds of viral phenomena has made that much clear beyond any skepticism. (...) What is at stake is the flourishing of an affective sense of place born out of multiple contributions, the creation and enhancement of narratives and symbolic systems associated with tangible territories.” (Alvelos, 2008, p. 12)

Because the relationship of Paredes with its industry is not a semantic decision made by the institutional and organizational leadership, it is an economic asset that must continue to be nurtured.

7.2. Limitations to the study

Our study has encountered limitations and constraints that inhibited its development and a more effective implementation on the territory. These limitations to the study include:

- We were often confronted with agendas that did not coincide. Those were not scientific or research agendas, so this difference was a limitation to the study.
- The transition of the project positioning, in 2013, from Paredes Center for Furniture Design to Art on Chairs, is a gap that remains to be clarified. This awareness would have allowed us to wrap up Paredes' industry history and governance in a more accurate way.
- Regarding the exhibition, we lack statistical information about the number of visitors. The only data available referred to the overall number of visitors to the nine Art on Chairs exhibitions (65426, in Art on Chairs, 2012a). No aggregate metrics report was available, limiting data for a subsequent analysis.

- The location in Paredes Railway Station seemed, at the onset, a good metaphor for our project but practical issues demonstrated that it was not: it was isolated from the other exhibitions and the preparatory work revealed a lesser involvement of the production teams, in terms of resources and tech facilities.
- Interviews confirmed our belief that the exhibition did not engage local citizens in the most effective way and according to our expectations. By that, we may conclude that Stories of Chairs exhibition did not have the local awareness that was desired—and this includes the guided tours, with a small number of participants.
- Our expectations pointed to a greater availability of Paredes' citizens. The communication of Art on Chairs was not the most effective and this unawareness raise up doubts about the true collective consciousness and interest, by the citizens, in looking at this industry as patrimonial value and heritage.
- 2012's citizen lab was less participated than the first edition. This fact had impact on the dynamics among participants. Our justification for this relies on two facts: (i) it was not a novelty for FUTUREPLACES participants, with many of them aware of what the project was; (ii) it was held simultaneously with 3:33 citizen lab, conducted by Philip Marshall, one of the international artists in the event, and Heitor Alvelos, one of the event curators and a catalyst of the activities.
- The development of the website demanded a continuous management work with web designers, and this was not always a simple process, in agenda and timeline. Nevertheless, all the involved have complied the project with responsibility and according to our recommendations.
- Social media strategy, namely Chair of the day Facebook page, was not properly succeeded. This happened because of the simultaneous activities and the existence of Polo's Facebook page, with a social media manager working on it and promoting interactions more actively.

While acknowledging such limitations, this research exhibits an effective comprehension of its impact. Accordingly, the conducted fieldwork authenticates the developed framework. As an on-going project, of long-term transformation and rooting, this thesis has to be understood as a first stage of a wider ambition that will certainly continue to extend, and that may not be fulfilled with an exhibition.

7.3. Future work

The conclusions resulting from the fieldwork, as well as the conceptual framework established in the first phase, provided new perspectives for research and new starting points in this collective territory.

We interpret this thesis as the first *Story*. The research aims established in the beginning of our roadmap have now to deconstruct: at this context, in Paredes and in the furniture industry. That said, future work will include the development of three strategies:

- At a first level, as we conclude this thesis, we realize tangible opportunities that arise for immediate action. One of these opportunities is the development of a new version of the website, keeping its core intentions, as described in the conclusion of Section 6.2.3.1. This new version must include and disseminate our research conclusions, making them revert directly to those involved with the project, and to academia. By doing so, we will be bridging our activity and results into *communicable knowledge*. Creative and spontaneous participation was always going on, from everywhere and with diverse expressions. This participations reinforce the conviction that Stories of Chairs tend to be an open-ended project and with mobilizing capacity. Because: Stories of Chairs, everyone has one... Also integrated in the fieldwork, to be developed in the follow-up of this document, is the engagement with local citizens within a visual patrimony collection of old photos and memories, of Paredes and its citizens. We have already contacted with the Municipality Archives, that are preparing a call, for the construction of this collection and aggregation of those memories. This affective bounding is one of the most relevant consequences of our project, and we will continue identifying and promoting opportunities such as this.

- At a second level, we identified development possibilities in other locations, with a similar industrial patrimony. This will continue to include FUTUREPLACES and also identify other geographies that might be relevant. We can trigger this with one of our initial mottos—the chair is a universal object and, at the same time, an universe of stories. These considerations include also the development of a new exhibition, to be held in the new Tourism Office in Paredes. This new building has appropriated facilities, and a central location, and may be a good framework for our Stories and to present them again.

- The third strategy, the more holistic one, will generate the greatest impact, from a perspective of sustainability of the project, and recommendations. We will share our experience and expertise, developing ideas and networking with other participatory projects. Stories of Chairs may incorporate new researchers and grow as a team, with researchers from ID+ and UT-Austin Portugal Program Digital Media students (MA and PhD). By doing so, news stories will be written, to continue developing an heritage and knowledge. Also, there is room for more “contributions”, like ours, for the research. We believe we must define an area of mediation for design, digital media and other sciences. These thematics will continue the ecosystem of development, where these possibilities will happen. We acknowledge validity for study in social sciences, such as sociology, anthropology, and areas as business management, which can add a significant value and make Paredes of better territory.

We conclude this document with happiness, because this turned out to be quite a story to tell. We do not close the door, as new creative possibilities immediately arise and the mediation between design, digital media, local heritage and participatory culture will continue to be nurtured. In a McDonaldized and IKEAized world, the statement of our collective heritage must happen first in each one of us. A territory—whatever its definition will be—and its patrimony, develops in a very slow process, a generational change. It is in this commonwealth that we—all—shall participate, to contribute, as we purposed in the title of this thesis. Because we all share the same territory, the geographical one but, specially, the symbolical one. May we continue this story.

References

- Acklin, C.; Cruickshank, L.; Evans, M. (2013). Challenges of introducing new design and design management knowledge into the innovation activities of SMEs with little or no prior design experience. In: *Proceedings of 10th European Academy of Design Conference – Crafting the Future*. Retrived January 26, 2014, from http://daniellen.se/eadpapers/3/challenges_of_introducing_new_design_and_design_management_knowledge_into_the_innovation_activities_of_smes.pdf.
- Ang, I. (1995). The Nature of the Audience. In: Downing, J.; Mohammadi, A.; & Sreberny, A. (Eds.) *Questioning the Media – A Critical Introduction*. SAGE.
- AIMMP (2007). *Respeitar a história, construir o futuro. Livro comemorativo dos 50 Anos da Associação das Indústrias de Madeira e Mobiliário de Portugal*. AIMMP.
- AIMMP (2009). *Boletim Informativo – Indústrias Madeira e Mobiliário de Portugal*. AIMMP.
- Almeida, M.C. (2013), Apresentação | Oliva Creative Factory. Retrived Ocotber 2, 2013, from http://olivacreativefactory.com/eng/?page_id=73.
- Alvelos, H. (2009). *No longer longing: digital media as the agent of contextual change*. Retrieved February 2, 2012, from <http://futureplaces.org/essays/no-longer-longing-digital-media-as-the-agent-of-contextualchange/>.
- Alvelos, H; Gustafson, K.; & São Simão, F. (2012). Between Riot And Rave: Five Years Into a Digital Media Festival. Retrived February 7, 2013, from <http://heitoralvelos.wordpress.com/2012/12/20/five-years-of-futureplaces/>
- Alvelos, H.; & Romeiro, P. (2013). Manobras? In: Rangel, A.; Canha, A.; & Pedrosa, A. (Coord.). *Manobras no Porto*. Câmara Municipal do Porto.
- Alves, P. (n.d.). *Contextualização Histórica – Apontamentos para a história da indústria de mobiliário de Paredes*. PDF Portable Document Format digital file.
- APIMA (n.d.). apima. Retrived February 20, 2013, from <http://www.apima.pt/site/index.php?id=2139>
- Archer, B. (1965). Systematic method for designers. In: Cross, N. (1984). *Developments in design methodology*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Archer, B. (1995). The Nature of Research. In: *Codesign, interdisciplinary journal of design*. January 1995.

- Art on Chairs (2012a). *Relatório Final – Art on Chairs 2012*. PDF Portable Document Format digital file.
- Art on Chairs (2012b). *Art on Chairs 2012 14 Set - 18 Nov*. Paredes Polo do Design de Mobiliário.
- Art on Chairs (2014). *Art on Chairs 2012 - histórico do evento*. Retrived March 12, 2015, from <http://www.artonchairs.com/pt/oquee/art-on-chairs-2012-historico-do-evento>
- Asaro, P.M. (2000). Transforming society by transforming technology: the science and politics of participatory design. In: *Accounting, Management & Information Technologies*, Vol. 10 (2000). Elsevier.
- Avison, D.E.; Lau, F.; Myers, M.D.; & Nielsen, P.A. (1999). *Action Research*. In: *Communications of the ACM*, Vol. 42, No. 1.
- Bacelar, J. (1999). Designarcisismo. Retrived June 7, 2011, from http://bocc.ubi.pt/pag/bacelar_designarcisismo.html.
- Baregheh, A.; Rowley, J.; & Sambrook, S. (2009). Towards a multidisciplinary definition of innovation. In: *Management Decision*, Vol. 47, No. 8, 2009. Emerald Group.
- Barreiro, J. (1922). *Monografia de Paredes*. Tipografia Mendonça (A Vapôr) de Laura Couto & Pinto.
- Battarbee, K; & Mattelmäki, T. (2002). Meaningful Product Relationships. In: *Proceedings of Design and Emotion conference*, July 2002. Loughborough.
- Bayazit, N. (2004). Investigating Design: A Review of Forty Years of Design Research. In: *Design Issues*, Vol. 20, No 1 Winter 2004. The MIT Press.
- Blackshaw, T. (2013). How Shopping Changed Leisure. In: Blackshaw, T. (Ed.) (2013) *Routledge Handbook of Leisure Studies*. Routledge.
- Bolter, J.D.; & Grusin, R. (2002). *Remediation*. The MIT Press.
- Bødker, S.; Pekkola, S. (2010). A short review to the past and present of participatory design. In: *Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems*, 2010, Vol. 22, No. 1.
- Branco, V. & Alvelos, H. (2009). Strategies towards the enhancement of the symbolic value of portuguese artifacts. In: *Proceedings of 8th European Academy of Design Conference*, Aberdeen.
- Brandão, D. (2014). *Museum of Ransom. Towards a system for the aggregation and interpretation of contemporary participatory video as contextual cultural heritage*. PhD Thesis in Digital Media, Universidade do Porto.
- Broadbent, G. (1979). The development of design methods. In: Cross, N. (1984). *Developments in design methodology*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Bruinsma, M. (2005a). Designers are cultural catalysts. In: *Catalysts!*. ExperimentaDesign – Bienal de Lisboa, 2005.

- Bruinsma, Max 2005b. The revolt of the mobs – The culture of engagement. In: *Catalysts!*. ExperimentaDesign – Bienal de Lisboa, 2005.
- Bruns, A. (2006). Towards Producers: Futures for User-Led Content Production. In: Sudweeks, F.; Hrachovec, H.; & Ess, C. (Eds). *Proceedings Cultural Attitudes towards Communication and Technology* (2006), Tartu.
- Buchanan, R. (1992). Wicked Problems in Design Thinking. In: *Design Issues*, Vol. 8, No. 2 Spring 1992. The MIT Press.
- Buchanan, R. (1995). Wicked Problems in Design Thinking. In: Margolin, V. & Buchanan, R. (Eds.) (1995). *The Idea of Design*. The MIT Press.
- Carvalho, J. (2004). *A indústria do mobiliário escolar em Paços de Ferreira : o caso da Fábrica Albino de Matos, Pereiras & Barros, Lda*. Master Thesis, FLUP, Universidade do Porto.
- Castells, M. (1996). *Volume I The Rise of the Network Society*. Basil Blackwell.
- Castells, M. (1997). *Volume II The Power of Identity*. Basil Blackwell.
- Castells, M. (1998). *Volume III End of Millennium*. Basil Blackwell.
- Catone, J. (2007). *Experience Project Embraces Anonymous Socializing*. Retrived January 2, 2015, from http://readwrite.com/2007/11/21/experience_project
- Chandler, D. (2007). *Semiotics: The Basics*. Routledge.
- Cité du design (n.d.). Qu'est-ce que la Cité du design? Retrived September 22, 2013, from <http://www.citedudesign.com/fr/la-cite/>.
- Clark, K. & Smith, R. (2008). Unleashing the power of design thinking. *Design Management Review*, Vol.19/3, Summer 2008.
- connectingcities.net (2013). *Welcome*. Retrived September 30, 2012, from <http://www.connectingcities.net>.
- CPDesign (2013). *Centro Português de Design*. Retrived September 19, 2013, from <https://www.facebook.com/CentroPortuguesdeDesign/photos/a.119125624775163.14576.115104748510584/576087122412342/?type=1&theater>.
- Crabtree, A. (2006). *Designing Collaborative Systems: A Practical Guide to Ethnography*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Creative Citizens (2012). *Media, Community and the Creative Citizen. Research Plan – Phase 1 (June to December 2012)*. Retrived October 2, 2012, from <http://creativecitizens.co.uk/files/2012/08/ccresearchmasterplanjuly30.pdf>.
- Cross, N. (1981). The coming of post-industrial design. In: *Design Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 1, January 1981. Elsevier.

- Cross, N. (1984). *Developments in design methodology*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Cross, N. (1999). Design Research: A Disciplined Conversation. In: *Design Issues*, Vol. 15, No. 2 Summer 1999. The MIT Press.
- Cross, N. (2001). Design Cognition: Results from protocol and other empirical studies of design activity. In: Eastman, C.; McCracken, M.; & Newstatter, W. (Eds.) (2001). *Design Knowing and Learning: Cognition in Design Education*, Elsevier.
- Cross, N. (2002). *Design as a Discipline*. Paper presented for discussion at The Inter-disciplinary Design Quandary' Conference, De Montfort University. Retrived September 19, 2013, from <http://nelly.dmu.ac.uk/4dd/DDR3-Cross.html>
- Cross, N. (2007). *Designerly Ways of Knowing*. BIRKHÄUSER.
- Dandavate, U; Sanders, E.; & Stuart, S.(1996) Emotions Matter: User Empathy in the Product Development Process. In: *Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Annual Meeting*, October 1996.
- De Clerck (2011). Interview with Stefaan De Clerck, Former mayor of Kortrijk and President of Designregio Kortrijk. In: *Innovation Pie*, Year 2, Issue 4, February 2011.
- Dearden, A.; & Rizvi, H. (2008). Participatory design and participatory development: a comparative review. In: *PDC'08: Experiences and Challenges, Participatory Design Conference*, Indiana University, 2008.
- Design for Europe (n.d.). Design for the public sector. Retrived July 2, 2014, from <http://designforeurope.eu/public-sector>.
- Deforge, Y. (1995). Avatars of Design: Design before Design. In: Margolin, V. & Buchanan, R. (Eds.) (1995). *The Idea of Design*. The MIT Press.
- Diário da República (1989). Despacho Normativo N.º32/89. In: *Diário da República – I Série, N.º 75, 31-03-1989*.
- Diário de Notícias (2013). Centro Português de Design. Retrived September 19, 2013, from www.dn.pt/DNMultimedia/DOCS+PDFS/2013/CPDesign.pdf.
- Diário Económico, Lopes, D. (2013). IKEA duplica compras a fornecedores nacionais para 200 milhões. In: *Diário Económico*, Quarta-feira 23 Janeiro 2013, pp. 22-23.
- DI_MAD (2014). *Central de Diseño*. Retrieved September 20, 2013, from <http://www.dimad.org/central-de-diseno>
- Duffy, B. (2006). *Supporting Creativity And Imagination In The Early Years*. Open University Press.
- Dziersk, M. (2007). Visual thinking: a leadership strategy. In: *Design Management Review*, Vol. 18/4, Fall 2007. DMI.

- EGP (2007). *Estudo Estratégico das Indústrias de Madeira e Mobiliário*. AIMMP – Associação das Indústrias de Madeira e Mobiliário de Portugal e EGP – Escola de Gestão do Porto.
- EU (2009). *Design as a driver of user-centred innovation*. Commission of the European Communities.
- EU (2013). *Implementing an Action Plan for Design-Driven Innovation*. Commission of the European Communities.
- EU (2014a). RegioStars 2014: top awards for Europe's most innovative regional projects. Retrived April 14, 2014, from http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-349_en.htm.
- EU (2014b). REGIOSTARS 2014 – Art on Chairs: Portugal's innovative chair-makers gain a global reputation. Retrived April 19, 2014, from http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/videos/regiostars-2014-art-on-chairs-portugal-s-innovative-chair-makers-gain-a-global-reputation.
- experienceproject (2015). About us. Retrived January 3, 2015, from <http://www.experienceproject.com/about-us>.
- Fábrica (n.d.). A Fábrica. Retrived October 22, 2014, <http://www.fabricasantothyrsos.com/pt/espaco/fabrica-santo-thyrso/page/a-fabrica>.
- Fagerberga, J.; Verspagen, B. (2009). Innovation studies—The emerging structure of a new scientific field. In: *Research Policy*, Vol. 38 (2009). Elsevier.
- Fiske, J. (2002). *Introduction to Communication Studies*. Routledge.
- Fleming; Horwath; Comedia; Gestluz; & Opium (2008). *Development of a Creative Industries Cluster in the Northern Region. Macroeconomic Survey – Synthesis And Conclusions*. Fundação de Serralves.
- Florida, R. (2003). Cities and the Creative Class. In: *City & Community*, Vol. 2, Issue 1 March 2003.
- Florida, R.L. (2005). *Cities and the Creative Class*. Routledge.
- Flusser, V. (1999). *The Shape of Things: A Philosophy of Design*. Reaktion Books.
- Fretweel, L. (2012). *Here comes the Neighborland*. Retrived June 4, 2012, from <http://www.govfresh.com/2011/07/neighborland/>.
- Friis, S. (2006). *Councious Design Practice as a Strategic Tool*. e-Types A/S and Silje Alberthe Kamille Friis.
- Fuad-Luke, A., Vina, S. & Moebus, K. (2012). *Suburban-Lifestyles: Designing with a Finnish Community*. Lecture at the Kick-off day, 29.10.2012, Aalto ARTS. PDF Portable Document Format digital file.

- Giaccardi, E. (2004). *Memory and Territory: New Forms of Virtuality for the Museum*. Retrieved November 12, 2013, from <http://www.museumsandtheweb.com/mw2004/papers/giaccardi/giaccardi.html#ixzz3gOIVy4Wn>
- Gluck, F.W.; Kaufman, S.P.; & Walleck, A.S. (1980). Strategic Management for Competitive Advantage. In: *Harvard Business Review*, July 1980.
- Goode, L. (2010). Cultural citizenship online: the Internet and digital culture. In: *Citizenship Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 5. Routledge.
- Grodach, C. (2013). Cultural Economy Planning in Creative Cities: Discourse and Practice. In: *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 37.5, September 2013. John Wiley & Sons.
- Guy, F (2010). Power in the Information Age. In: *International Review Applied Economics*. Vol. 14, No. 2, 2000.
- Heinze, R.G.; & Hoose, F. (2013). The Creative Economy: Vision or Illusion in the Structural Change? In: *European Planning Studies*, Vol. 21, Issue 4, 2013.
- Herzog, H. (1944). What do we really know about daytime serial listeners? In: Lazarsfeld, P. F.; & Stanton, F. N. (Eds.). *Radio research 1942-1943*. Duell, Sloan & Pearce.
- Heskett, J. (2002). *Design: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Heskett, J. (2009). Creating Economic Value by Design. *International Journal of Design*, Vol.3, No. 1, 2009
- Hjarvard, S. (2008). The Mediatization of Society. A Theory of the Media as Agents of Social and Cultural Change. In: *Nordicom Review 29* (2008), Vol. 2.
- Hoskin, T. (n.d.). *Deleuze and Guattari – The Concept of the Rhizome*. Retrieved March 1, 2014, from http://ensemble.va.com.au/enslogic/text/smn_lct08.htm
- IBM (n.d.). *Good Design Is Good Business*. Retrieved December 15, 2013, from <http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/ibm100/us/en/icons/gooddesign/>
- Icsid (n.d.). About us. Retrived September 30, 2013, from <http://www.icsid.org/about/about.htm>.
- Icograda (n.d.). About us. Retrived September 30, 2013, from <http://www.icograda.org/about/about.htm>.
- ID+ (n.d.). *ID+ About us*. Retrived March 2, 2015, from <http://www.idmais.org/about/>.
- IKEA (2013). The IKEA concept – Create a better everyday life. Retrived September 30, 2013, from http://www.ikea.com/ms/en_KR/this-is-ikea/the-ikea-concept/index.html.
- Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergence Culture: Where old and New Media Collide*. New York University Press.

- Jenkins, H. (2009). *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture – Media Education for the 21st Century*. John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.
- Jones, J.C. (1970). *Design methods. Seeds of human futures (8th edition, from 1980)*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Jung (n.d.). Dealing with Ugliness – Proposals for the reevaluation of an industrial site. Retrieved November 27, 2013, from <http://www.reworking-the-factory.org/workshops/aveiro/>.
- Junginger, S.; & Christensen, P.R. (2013). Design and Innovation: Organizational Culture as Making. In: *Proceedings of 10th European Academy of Design Conference – Crafting the Future*. Retrieved January 26, 2014, from http://daniellen.se/eadpapers/3/designinnovation_orgcultureasmaking.pdf.
- Katz, E.; Gurevitch, M.; & Haas, H. (1972). On the use of mass media for important things. In: *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 38, No. 2.
- Katz, E.; Blumler, J.; & Gurevitch, M. (1974). Utilization of mass communication by the individual. In: Blumler, J. & Katz, E. (Eds.). *The uses of mass communication: Current perspectives on gratifications research*. Sage.
- Keen, A. (2007). *The Cult of the Amateur*. Doubleday
- Koponen, J.M. (2010). FutureSelf: Emerging digitized life patterns and a personal future simulation system. In: *Futures*, Vol. 42. Elsevier.
- Kretschmar, A. (2003). The Economic Effects of Design. National Agency for Enterprise and Housing. PDF Portable Document Format digital file.
- Kroes, P. (2002). Design methodology and the nature of technical artefacts. In: *Design Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 3 May 2002. Elsevier.
- Krotz, F. (2011). Media as a Societal Structure and a Situational Frame for Communicative Action: How Mediatization Develops as a Process. Retrieved December 2, 2012, from http://www.mediatisiertewelten.de/fileadmin/mediapool/documents/Vortraege_ICA_Virtuelles_Panel/Krotz.pdf.
- Krotz, F.; & Hepp, A. (2011). A concretization of mediatization: How 'mediatization works' and why mediatized worlds are a helpful concept for empirical mediatization research. In: *Empedocles: European Journal for the Philosophy of Communication*, Vol. 3, Issue 2. Intellect.
- Laestadius, S.; Pedersen, T.E. (2005). Towards a new understanding of innovativeness – and of innovation based indicators. In: *Proceedings of Low-Tech as Misnomer: The Role of Non-Research-Intensive Industries in the Knowledge Economy*, Brussels.
- Lafont, I; & Dolz, P. (2011). Matadero empieza a cerrar sus zanjias. Retrieved September 20, 2013, from http://elpais.com/diario/2011/03/15/madrid/1300191868_850215.html.

- Landry, C.; Bianchini, F. (1995), *The Creative City*. DEMOS / Comedia.
- Landry, C. (2000) *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*. Earthscan.
- Levinson, P. (2001). *Digital McLuhan: A Guide to the Information Millennium*. Routledge
- Lévy, P. (1994). *As Tecnologias da inteligência: o futuro do pensamento na era informática* (Portuguese translation). Instituto Piaget.
- Lockwood, T. (2008). Introduction. In: Lockwood, T. & Walton, T. (Eds.) (2008). *Building Design Strategy. Using Design to Achieve Key Business Objectives*. Allworth Press.
- Luxinnovation (n.d.). Design and your company. Retrived September 18, 2013, from <http://en.luxinnovation.lu/Services/Innovation-management,-creativity-and-design/Design-and-your-company>
- Martin, R. (2007). *How Successful Leaders Think*. Harvard Business Review. Retrived November 1, 2012, from <https://hbr.org/2007/06/how-successful-leaders-think/ar/1>.
- Martin, R. (2009). *The idea of business*. Harvard Univerity Press.
- Matadero (n.d.). *Action areas*. Retrieved September 20, 2013, from <http://www.mataderomadrid.org/action-areas.html>.
- Mateus, A. (Coord.) (2013). *A cultura e a criatividade na internacionalização da economia portuguesa*. Gabinete de Estratégia, Planeamento e Avaliação Culturais. Secretaria de Estado da Cultura.
- McLuhan, M. (1964). *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. The MIT Press.
- Miltner, K. (2011). *Srsly Phenomenal: An Investigation into the appeal of Lolcats*. Master Thesis in Media and Communications, London School of Economics and Political Science.
- Mira Amaral, L. (1992). Design, Indústria e Modernização. In: Sena da Silva (Dir.). *Cadernos de Design*. Ano 1, Número 1, Março 1992.
- Moebus, K; Vina, S.; & Fuad-Luke, A. (2012). *Designing with a suburban Finnish community*. Retrieved September 22, 2013, from <http://window874.com/2012/11/21/designing-with-a-suburban-finnish-community/>
- Moreira, R.B. (2013). Nova lei coloca Paredes na Área Metropolitana do Porto. Retrived December 12, 2013, from <http://www.verdadeiroolhar.pt/materias.php?id=26677&secao=paredes>.
- Morris, M.; & Ogan, C. (1996). The Internet as Mass Medium. In: *Journal of Communication*, Vol. 46, Issue 1, 1996.
- Mota, J.A.; Almeida, P.C.; & Silva, P.S. Design Collaboration for the Re-evaluation of an abandoned industrial city: The case of São João da Madeira - Portugal. In: *Proceedings of Connected 2007 – International Conference on Design Education*,

- Mozota, B.B. (2003). *Design Management. Using Design to Build Brand Value*. Allworth Press.
- Mozota, B.B. (2006). The Four Powers of Design: A Value Model in Design Management. In: *Design Management Review*, Vol. 17, No. 2 Spring 2006. DMI.
- Mumford, M.D. (2003) Where Have We Been, Where Are We Going? Taking Stock in Creativity Research. In: *Creativity Research Journal*, Vol. 15, Issue 2-3, 2003. Taylor & Francis.
- Mutlu, B; Er, A. (2003) *Design Innovation: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives on Product Innovation by Design*. In: *Proceedings of the 5th European Academy of Design Conference*, Barcelona.
- Nadin, M. (1990). Design and Semiotics. In: Koch, W.A. (Ed.). *Semiotics in the Individual Sciences, Vol. II*. Brockmeyer, 1990. Retrived July 12, 2012, from <http://www.nadin.ws/archives/261>.
- Nelson, H.G.; Stolterman, E. (2003). *The design way. Intentional Change in an Unpredictable World. Foundation and Fundamentals of Design Competence*. Educational Tecnology Publications.
- Neumeier, M. (2008). The designful company. In: *Design Management Review*, Vol. 19/2, Spring 2008. DMI.
- Neumeier, M. (2009). *The Designful Company: How to build a culture of nonstop innovation*. New Riders
- Nunes, A.; Pinho, J.; & Ganho, N. (2011/12). O “Ciclone” de fevereiro de 1941: análise histórico-geográfica dos seus efeitos no município de Coimbra. In: *Cadernos de Geografia n.º 30/31 – 2011/12*. Coimbra: FLUC.
- Oliva (n.d.) MANIFESTO | Oliva Creative Factory. Retrived October 2, 2013, from http://olivacreativefactory.com/eng/?page_id=116.
- O’Reilly, T. (2005). What Is Web 2.0 – Design Patterns and Business Models for the Next Generation of Software. Retrived January 15, 2013, from http://www.oreilly.com/pub/a/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html#__federated=1.
- Papanek, V. (1985), *Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*. Thames & Hudson.
- Paredes (2011). *Paredes Centre of Furniture Design*. Paredes Polo do Design de Mobiliário/Paredes Rota dos Móveis.
- Paredes Rota dos Móveis-SACIC (2009). *Art on Chair Bienal – An ideia for the world on a chair. Memória descritiva e justificativa complementar. Concurso SACIC-GE/1/2009*. Paredes Rota dos Móveis Entidade Promotora-Beneficiária.
- Parham, D. (2013). *Neighborland*. Retrived December 13, 2011, from <https://neighborland.com>.

- Parkurst, H.B. (1999). Confusion, Lack of Consensus, and the Definition of Creativity as a Construct. In: *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, Vol. 33, Issue 1, March 1999.
- Pereira, F. (2011). *A Indústria do Mobiliário no Concelho de Paredes*. Master Thesis in *Património e Turismo Cultural*, Universidade do Minho.
- Pereira, J. (2007). *A comunicação multimédia e a construção mediada da mensagem*. Master Thesis in *Multimedia Arte*, University of Porto.
- Pinto, R. (1996). *Paredes – Jóia do Sousa...*. A.Rocha Lda. – Anégia Editores.
- Pordata (2014). Municípios – Consulta por mapa. Retrived October 1, 2014, from <http://www.pordata.pt/Municipios>.
- PROMIM (1990). *Draft do Programa de Modernização da Indústria do Mobiliário de Madeira (PROMIM), 6ª Versão, 6/11/90*. Ministério da Indústria e Energia, Direcção Geral da Indústria.
- PROUD Europe (2014). About PROUD. Retrived September 17, 2013, from <http://test.proudeurope.eu/proud/>.
- Providência, F. (2012). Stereotypes or Massive Ideas. In: Deganello, P. (Coord.) *Art on Chairs – Design Maciço*. Editorial Blau/Paredes Polo do Design de Mobiliário.
- Rangel, A.; Canha, A.; & Pedrosa, A. (Coord.) (2013). *Manobras no Porto*. Câmara Municipal do Porto.
- Rappaport, J. (2008). *Beyond Participant Observation: Collaborative Ethnography as Theoretical Innovation*. In: *Collaborative Anthropologies*, Vol. 1, 2008. University of Nebraska Press.
- Reason, P.; & Bradbury, H. (2006). *Handbook of Action Research: Concise Paperback Edition*. Sage.
- Ritzer, G. (2004). *McDonaldization of Society, Revised New Century Edition*. Sage Publications, Inc.
- Rivas, M. (2011). From Creative Industries to the Creative Place: Refreshing the Local Development Agenda in Small and Medium-sized Towns. In: *REDIGE*, Vol. 2, No. 2, Aug. 2011.
- Romeiro, P. (2013). Manobras: Resultados. In: Rangel, A.; Canha, A.; & Pedrosa, A. (Coord.). *Manobras no Porto*. Câmara Municipal do Porto.
- Ruggiero, T.E. (2000). Uses and Gratifications Theory in the 21st Century. In: *Mass Communication & Society*, Vol. 3, No. 1. Taylor & Francis.
- Runco, M.A.; & Jaeger, G.J. (2012). The Standard Definition of Creativity. In: *Creativity Research Journal*, Vol. 24, Issue 1, 2012.
- Salokannel (n.d.). *City of Lahti – A Forerunner in Industrial Design in Finland*. Retrieved September 22, 2013, from <http://www.designlahti.fi/en>.
- Sanders, E. (2002). From User-Centered to Participatory Design Approaches. In: Frascara, J. (Ed.). *Design and the Social Sciences*, Taylor & Francis Books.

- Sanders, E.; Dandavate, U. (1999). Design for experiencing: new tools. In: *Proceedings of First International Conference on Design and Emotion*, Delft.
- Santos, A.B. (2010). Portugal na Era da Criatividade. In: Neves, A.O. (Coord.)(2010). *CRIATIVIDADE E INOVAÇÃO, Cadernos Sociedade e Trabalho*, n.º14.
- Schwartz, A. (2012). *Neighborland: A Social Network For Neighborhoods*. Retrived June 4, 2012, from <http://www.fastcoexist.com/1679770/neighborland-a-social-network-for-neighborhoods>.
- Scott, T. (2008). *Making things better for people: design is a "how" not a "what"*. Gray's School of Art, The Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen (White Paper).
- Selada, C. & Cunha, I.V. (2010). Repensar um Distrito Industrial do Mobiliário com Base no *Design*: O Caso de Paredes. In: Neves, A.O. (Coord.)(2010). *CRIATIVIDADE E INOVAÇÃO, Cadernos Sociedade e Trabalho*, n.º14.
- Shirky, C. (2010). *Cognitive surplus: creativity and generosity in a connected age*. Penguin Press.
- Simão, C. (2007). *Inovação e Design em Indústria Tradicionais. O Caso da Indústria de Mobiliário de Paredes e Paços de Ferreira*. Master Thesis in *Inovação e Empreendedorismo Tecnológico*, FEUP, Univesidade do Porto.
- Spinuzzi, C. (2005). The Methodology of Participatory Design. In: *Technical Communication*, Vol. 52, No. 2, May 2005.
- Toffler, A. (1980). *The third wave*. Morrow.
- UNESCO (2014). What is the Creative Cities Network?. Retrived Ocotber 22, 2014, from <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/creative-cities-network/about-creative-cities/>.
- UT Austin | Portugal (2015). *About CoLab - UT Austin|Portugal CoLab*. Retrived March 2, 2015, from <http://utaustinportugal.org/about>.
- Valente, A.C. (1990). *O sector da madeira e suas obras em Portugal*. INOFOR Instituto para a Inovação na Formação.
- van Weelden, W. (2005). Being editor: the culture of information. In: *Catalysts!*. ExperimentaDesign – Bienal de Lisboa, 2005.
- Verganti, R. (2008). Design, Meanings, and Radical Innovation: A Metamodel and a Research Agenda. In: *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, Vol. 25, Issue 5. Wiley.
- Verganti, R. (2009). *Design-driven innovation – changing the rules of competition by radically innovating what things mean*. Harvard University Press.
- Verganti, R. (2011). Radical Design and Technology Epiphanies: A New Focus for Research on Design Management. In: *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, Vol. 28, Issue 3. Wiley.

- Vickery, J. (2011) *Beyond the Creative City – Cultural Policy in an age of scarcity*. MADE: a centre for place-making.
- Vieira, J.A. (1887). *O Minho Pittoresco*. Livraria de António Maria Pereira – Editor.
- Vitorino, N. (Coord.) (2014). *Criação de Instrumentos Financeiros para Financiamento do Investimento na Cultura, Património e Indústrias Culturais e Criativas*. Gabinete de Estratégia, Planeamento e Avaliação Culturais.
- WDC Helsinki (2012). *Lahti*. Retrieved September 22, 2013, from <http://wdchelsinki2012.fi/en/cities/lahti>.
- Westergasfabriek (2014). History. Retrieved September 17, 2013, from <http://westergasfabriek.nl/en/westergasfabriek-en/history>
- Westerlund, B. (2006). How can stories get translated into future artefacts? In: *Proceedings of the Design Research Society Conference*, Lisbon.
- Westerlund, B. (2007). A workshop method that involves users talking, doing and making. In: *Proceedings of the International conference on human-machine interaction, Human07*, IEEE, Timimoun.
- Williams, F.; Rice, R. E.; & Rogers, E. M. (1988). *Research methods and the new media*. Free Press.
- Weightman, D; McDonagh, D. (2003). People are Doing it for Themselves. In: *Proceedings of the International Conference on Designing Pleasurable Products and Interfaces*, ACM Press.
- Williams, F, Rice, R. E., & Rogers, E. M. (1988). *Research Methods and the New Media*. The Free Press, New York.
- Wu, G. (2005). The Mediating Role of Perceived Interactivity in the Effect of Actual Interactivity on Attitude toward the Website. In: *Journal of Interactive Advertising*, Vol. 5, No. 2 Spring 2005. American Academy of Advertising. Retrieved August 28, 2013, from <http://jiad.org/article61.html>.
- Yeganeh, H. (2011). *The McDonaldization of Society by George Ritzer*. Retrieved October 10, 2014, from http://www.anglohigher.com/tiny_mce/plugins/filemanager/files/Book_Reviews/The_McDonaldization_of_Society_by_George_Ritzer_Reviewer_Hamid_Yeganeh_Winona_State_University_003.pdf

List of Figures

Fig.1 Sem título. © <i>Jorge Pereira</i>	15
Fig.2 The very first Chairs! #1. © <i>Heitor Alvelos</i>	15
Fig.3 Constelações. © <i>Nuno Ferreira</i>	17
Fig.4 The Chairman. © <i>Rita Sá</i>	17
Fig.5 United Colors of Chairs. © <i>Henrique Praça</i>	19
Fig.6 Toilet seat, all the red chairs. © <i>Sam54321</i>	19
Fig.7 Requese. © <i>João</i>	21
Fig.8 Sem título. © <i>Carlos Cidade</i>	21
Fig.9 Sem título. © <i>Luis Barbosa</i>	23
Fig.10 Chairs in production line (in Paredes) © <i>Jorge Pereira</i>	23
Fig.11 Research roadmap sythesis.	29
Fig.12 First draft of Research roadmap (work in progress).	30
Fig.13 Second draft of Research roadmap (work in progress).	31
Fig.14 Paredes' presentation at Pordata. © <i>Pordata</i>	37
Fig.15 Paredes' geographical location, and relation to main cities in Northern Portugal. © <i>Google</i>	38
Fig.16 Map from Paredes central parish (Barreiro, 1922). On top right we can observe the railway station reference (<i>Estação do Caminho-de-ferro</i>), with straight connection to <i>Praça José Guilherme</i> , the central square. © <i>Barreiro, 1922, p. 316</i>	43
Fig.17 Fábrica A Boa Nova, the first furniture industry; Designs used on the seats of chairs produced (Pereira, 2011). © <i>Pereira, 2011, p. 58/60</i>	45
Fig.18 Newspapers are privileged sources for the memory and inventory of damage caused. <i>O Século</i> , from February 16, 1941; and <i>Jornal de Notícias</i> , from February 18, 1941 (<i>Nunes et al., 2011/12</i>). © <i>Nunes et al., 2011/12, p. 55</i>	46
Fig.19 Paredes Railway Station, photo from middle 20th century. © <i>R.Telmo</i>	47
Fig.20 <i>Rota dos Móveis</i> brand identity (original and rebranded). © <i>CMP</i>	57
Fig.21 <i>Design Hub</i> – Center of the City of Paredes area of implementation and typologies, project coordinated by Inteli (Inteli, 2009). © <i>Inteli, 2009, p.21-22</i>	61
Fig.22 <i>Paredes Polo do Design de Mobiliário</i> visual identity.	63
Fig.23 Visual identity of the sub-brands of Paredes Center of Furniture Design.	65
Fig.24 Visual identity of <i>Art on Chairs 2014-2015</i> brand.	66

Fig.25 Google search results for “design”, retrieved May 20, 2014.	72
Fig.26 Westergasfabriek cultural quarter. © <i>Westergasfabriek</i>	108
Fig.27 CAOS Centro Arti Opificio Siri. © <i>CAOS.museum</i>	109
Fig.28 Designregio Kortrijk. © <i>Designregio Kortrijk</i>	110
Fig.29 PROUD Europe presentations (offline and online). © <i>PROUD europe</i>	112
Fig.30 Luxinnovation activities. © <i>Luxinnovation</i>	113
Fig.31 Cité du Design. © <i>Cité du design</i>	115
Fig.32 Oliva Creative Factory activities. © <i>Oliva Creative Factory</i>	117
Fig.33 Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó. © <i>Fábrica de Santo Thyrsó</i>	118
Fig.34 Matadero and Central de Diseño activity. © <i>Matadero Madrid</i>	153
Fig.35 “Designing with a suburban Finnish community” activity with Tontilla community. © <i>Fuad Luke, 2012, p.25/30/35</i>	155
Fig.36 connectioncities.net projects (selection, from top left to bottom right): Binoculars to... Binoculars from..., by <i>Varvara Guljajeva</i> and <i>Mar Canet Sola</i> ; Entangled Sparks (LinzerSchnitte), by <i>Ars Electronica</i> ; Dancing in the Rain, by <i>Pfadfinderei</i> + <i>The Constitute</i> ; The SMSlingshot, by <i>VR/Urban</i> . © <i>Connectiong Cities / artists</i>	158
Fig.37 Creative Citizens project—photos from the Research methods workshop. © <i>Creative Citizens</i>	160
Fig.38 Experience Project website interface. © <i>Experience Project</i>	162
Fig.39 Neighborland offline and online activities and discussion. © <i>Neighborland</i>	164
Fig.40 Manobras no Porto engagement activities (selection). © <i>Manobras no Porto</i>	166
Fig.41 Museu do Resgate online archive and engagement activities (selection). © <i>Museu do Resgate</i>	169
Fig.42 FUTUREPLACES activities (selection from various editions). © <i>FUTUREPLACES</i>	171
Fig.43 Stories of Chairs typographic identity, original version (within Paredes Center for Furniture Design brand program).	188
Fig.44 Stories of Chairs homepage, first version (2011).	195
Fig.45 Stories of Chairs homepage, first version, <i>projects</i> (selection).	196
Fig.46 Stories of Chairs homepage, first version, <i>dashboard</i>	196
Fig.47 Stories of Chairs homepage, first version, <i>dashboard—new post submission</i>	196
Fig.48 Stories of Chairs interface—framing scheme for second version of the website.	197
Fig.49 Stories of Chairs homepage, second version (2011/2012).	198
Fig.50 Stories of Chairs homepage, second version, <i>Why Chairs</i> and <i>Participate</i>	199
Fig.51 Stories of Chairs homepage, second version, <i>SEE CHAIRS</i> gallery.	199
Fig.52 Stories of Chairs homepage, second version, <i>A Soup of Chairs</i> gallery.	200

Fig.53 Frames from mini-docs Estórias (from top left to bottom right): <i>D. Laura, cadeira e carreteira; Albino Ferreira Carvalho; Os Motosserristas; Marceneiro de Rebordosa; O Imaginário; A Serração.</i> © <i>Maria João Cortesão and José Quinta Ferreira</i>	201
Fig.54 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version (2012).	202
Fig.55 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version— <i>Why Chairs</i> and <i>Send Chairs</i>	203
Fig.56 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version, <i>See Chairs</i>	203
Fig.57 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version, <i>Soup of Chairs</i>	204
Fig.58 Stories of Chairs homepage, third version, <i>Soup of Chairs</i> selection.	204
Fig.59 Stories of Chairs citizen lab—activities at FUTUREPLACES 2011. © <i>Jorge Pereira, Luis Barbosa, Karen Gustafson</i>	208
Fig.60 Stories of Chairs citizen lab—activities at FUTUREPLACES 2012. © <i>Luis Barbosa</i>	211
Fig.61 Activity from the first edition of Chés, February 8, 2012. © <i>Jorge Rodrigues, Carlos Cidade</i>	215
Fig.62 Activity from the second edition of Chés, October 23, 2012. © <i>Jorge Pereira</i>	216
Fig.63 Activity from the third edition of Chés, November 13, 2012. © <i>Jorge Pereira</i>	217
Fig.64 Space and module layout for Stories of Chairs exhibition (project by Francisco Providência e Outros Mercadus). © <i>Francisco Providência, Outros Mercadus</i>	225
Fig.65 Graphic design layout for Stories of Chairs exhibition—proposal by curating team (not implemented). © <i>Jorge Pereira, Heitor Alvelos</i>	225
Fig.66 Stories of Chairs exhibition (including the opening). © <i>Marcus Garcia Moreira, Setepés</i>	228

List of Tables

Table 1 Case study analysis	110
Table 2 Case study analysis	154
Table 3 Action research developed in Stories of Chairs (2011-2013)	194

Appendices

Appendix A

Appendix A presents the transcription of six research interviews, conducted between 2012 and 2013.

The interviewed are relevant to case study's framework, acting in different positions regarding Paredes and Art on Chairs. The purpose of these interviews was to achieve a comprehensive description of the territory and about Paredes Polo do Design de Mobiliário, identifying connections and relations among them. These interviews are primary sources of our research, providing data and information that was not found elsewhere. The interviews were semi-structured, using an interview guide with a list of questions and topics that need to be covered. Nevertheless, the conversations led to other questions, relevant for our research.

Interviews:

- Susana Marques, Henrique Praça and Ana Vieira, from Setepés, responsible for Paredes Center for Furniture Design project coordination and management;
- Gualter Morgado, president of Paredes Entrepreneurial Association—*Associação Empresarial de Paredes* (AEParedes)
- Celso Ferreira, Mayor of Paredes City Hall, promotor of Paredes Center for Furniture Design;
- Carla Gomes, Marketing and Design manager of Fenabel, one of the biggest companies of Paredes, focused on the production of chairs;
- Isabel Bourbon, Maria Bruno Néo and Miguel Afonso, designers from *More Design, More Industry* program. More Design More Industry was a program integrated Paredes Center for Furniture Design where designers were residents, during a period of 8 months in 2012, in various furniture companies of Paredes.
- Paulo Alves, author of the territorial marketing study developed during the preparation of “Art on Chair” SACIC application.

Although it was not possible to translate the complete interviews, every quote that is part of the thesis was translated by the researcher.

Appendix A1

Interview with Setepés team involved with Paredes' project, Susana Marques, Henrique Praça and Ana Vieira.

Interview conducted May 8, 2012 at Setepés office, Porto.

78 min, in Portuguese.

Jorge Pereira (JP): A Setepés está desde o primeiro momento na coordenação e gestão do projecto do Pólo de Design em Paredes. De onde surgiu a ideia inicial e a partir de que momento é que se envolveram no território?

Henrique Praça (HP): Este projeto começou no ano de 2009, em junho surgiu uma candidatura para a CCDR-N, mais propriamente no âmbito do ON2 que tinha o SACIC (Sistema de Apoio ao Cluster das Indústrias Criativas). Apresentou-se a ideia à Câmara Municipal de Paredes para desenhar o projeto e foi aceite. Mas na realidade a primeira semente deste projeto data de 2002, claro que não tinha esta dimensão, foi apenas apresentada uma coisa muito simples a uma instituição de Paredes que não a Câmara Municipal.

Susana Marques (SM): A instituição pediu-nos uma encomenda, ainda nem sequer trabalhávamos com a Câmara Municipal. Criámos um projecto de arte com o envolvimento da comunidade, que era uma comunidade muito específica, mais concretamente a freguesia de Lordelo e cujo objectivo era trabalhar aquilo que era a dimensão histórica daquele local.

HP: No fundo, uma pessoa dessa entidade tinha visto o nosso trabalho em 2001, sobretudo no projecto "Tradições" e, em certa medida, queria replicar um pouco esse modelo.

SM: No fundo, queria ter toda aquela dimensão tradicional histórica, essencialmente, o trabalho da memória e de como é que se podia transformar isso numa componente artística.

HP: Quando fomos a Lordelo, numa primeira conversa, apresentamos um projecto em que tínhamos três ou quatro actividades pensadas e uma delas veio precisamente dar origem a este projecto. Era uma coisinha pequenina...

SM: E que se chamava "Art on Chair".

HP: Aquela entidade não tinha estrutura nem estava muito interessada em abrigar um projecto destes. Claro que é uma entidade que até tem um trabalho importante na freguesia, mas do ponto de vista de trabalhar

com alguém de fora, não estavam muito interessados.

SM: Nesse caso, fizemos a proposta e eles nem nos deram resposta.

HP: Mas percebemos quando apresentamos a proposta que aquilo não lhes dizia nada e, portanto, ficou na gaveta.

SM: Estávamos em 2002, as Indústrias Criativas ainda eram um fenómeno que estava a nascer em Inglaterra, portanto, muito longe de pensar em Portugal. É preciso colocar todos estes passos no tempo. E o Art on Chair era a arte da cadeira, ou seja, era um trabalho de arte que se podia fazer sobre a memória. Escolhemos a cadeira porque nessa altura fizemos uma investigação sobre a memória da importância das cadeiras, das cadeiras de rabo-de-bacalhau, tudo aquilo que tinha a ver com a temática da cadeira. A nossa relação com Paredes inicia-se 3 ou 4 anos depois.

JP: Eu vi no vosso website que em 2007 fizeram o Plano Director do Museu Mosteiro das Artes, foi aí o primeiro contacto com Paredes?

SM: O nosso trabalho começou antes de 2007. Entramos em contacto com Paredes porque eles queriam fazer uma formação connosco e depois da formação começamos a trabalhar na área da programação.

JP: Mas aí já ao nível autárquico?

SM: Sim, a Câmara Municipal contactou-nos por causa da formação e aí começamos muito lentamente, ainda com o executivo anterior, a prestar serviços. Fizemos primeiro a reprogramação e a remodelação de um evento que já tinham mas que queriam que fosse mais interessante. Depois, nessa altura estávamos em época de eleições, a Câmara estava a lançar o Museu do Móvel e não tinha quem lhe pudesse fazer esse trabalho, perguntou-nos se estaríamos disponíveis, nós dissemos que sim, e quando entra o novo executivo, já estávamos a desenvolver o plano para o Museu do Móvel que ia ser no centro da cidade. O novo executivo aconselhou-se com a equipa técnica para saber se

era de manter o trabalho com a Setepés, felizmente a equipa técnica deu boas referências e começamos a ser contratados para a assessoria e para criar linhas estratégicas e desenvolver políticas culturais locais para a Câmara. Portanto, isto é um trabalho com a Câmara mas nunca nos passou pela cabeça que o “Art on Chair” tivesse lugar. Depois veio a “Cadeira Parede”, o que nos fez rir porque fazia frente ao Art on Chair. Mas foi neste trabalho de consultoria, de reestruturação e de desenvolvimento de um conjunto de actividades em Paredes que, em 2009, é publicada a agenda das Indústrias Criativas e começamos a perceber que poderia haver lugar para esse projecto. A agenda já falava da promoção de grandes eventos e percebemos que o Art on Chair tinha potencial para se tornar um grande evento, ficamos atentos e quando saiu a publicação fizemos uma proposta muito concreta ao Vereador.

JP: Quase chave-na-mão?

SM: Não. Foi apenas dizer-lhe que o Art on Chair tinha perfil para ser um grande evento. Ele não conhecia.

JP: Então foram-no desenvolvendo em paralelo e depois apresentaram um bloco mais consolidado?

HP: Aquilo que desenvolvemos em 2002 acabou ali. Era algo muito pequenino que ficou na gaveta. Depois em 2007 aconteceu esse “Cadeira Parade” e que foi assim uma coisa extraordinária já muito associado à indústria e que teve uma grande repercussão. Nós nessa altura até falámos ao Vereador que, por acaso, até tínhamos uma ideia parecida e que já tinha 3 ou 4 anos. Só que o vereador também não deu grande importância e, portanto, também não insistimos mais. Mas entretanto quando em 2009 fizemos essa proposta do Art on Chair, o Vereador e o Presidente estavam mais alinhados e acabaram por se interessar. O Art on Chair também é um projecto deles, de certa maneira porque ambos já tinham pensado em algo do género, que a cadeira devia ser um símbolo icónico do território e que devia ser explorado.

SM: Foi muito engraçado porque nós enviámos um email ao Vereador a dizer: “Saiu um concurso para um grande evento, temos a certeza que o Art on Chair seria um projecto a desenvolver.” Ele reencaminhou o email para o Presidente e o Presidente deu-nos uma resposta a dizer: “Avancem.” Nós estruturamos todo o dossier no âmbito daquilo que era o nosso trabalho de consultoria e nem discutimos conteúdos com eles. Explicamos mais ou menos, que ia ser assim ou assado mas nada em específico.

HP: Tal como na ciência, há descobertas e trabalhos que estão a ser feitos ao mesmo tempo em vários sítios e quem comunica primeiro é que ganha a paternidade. Nesta área temos projectos em que acon-

tecem essas coisas também, simultaneidade de pensamento e de estruturas.

SM: E a cadeira é um elemento óbvio.

HP: Se perguntar a diferentes pessoas de quem é a paternidade deste projecto, o Presidente dirá que já tinha pensado nele, a Professora Sandra Lau dirá que desde 2006 que era dela e nós também já tínhamos um projecto para isso.

JP: Houve aqui um conjunto de epifanias que toda a gente pareceu ignorar.

Ana Vieira (AV): A temática era mais ou menos óbvia.

JP: Sim, juntar indústria local, com arte e cultura...

HP: Eu não concordo com aquilo que a Ana disse. As evidências são óbvias até ao momento em que as concretizámos. Porque até lá não passam de evidências mas ninguém as apanha.

AV: Sim, mas coincidiram com várias linhas de pensamento.

SM: A cadeira era o elemento. Se tivessem pedido à Professora Sandra Lau para fazer uma candidatura ao SACIC ela teria feito uma coisa, o Presidente tinha feito outra e nós fizemos outra com todos eles.

JP: O ponto de chegada seria sempre diferente.

SM: O Art on Chair, que agora se chama Art on Chairs, na ideia da Bienal, é feito com um conjunto de pessoas que trouxeram inputs, mesmo depois da candidatura estar fechada e aprovada queriam mudar o projecto que agora está em cima da mesa.

HP: Até à candidatura não houve inputs de ninguém, só depois. Porque o trabalho da candidatura é da Setepés, bem ou mal, é. Até à candidatura fomos fazendo convites, já havia alguns comissários identificados, outros que ainda se iam decidir... Mas nenhuma entidade deu contributos para isso. Há projectos que se pensam, que se escrevem ou que se criam em que pode acontecer duas coisas: ou o cliente ou a pessoa a quem vamos apresenta-lo não o percebe; ou porque o tempo de o fazer, ou melhor, o clima social não é o mais adequado e, portanto, não é o momento e ficam na gaveta. Depois passado 6, 7 ou 10 anos podem vir a ser recuperados.

JP: Se Paredes não tivesse agarrado a vossa proposta no quadro do programa que estava a ser lançado poderiam, por exemplo, deslocar isto para Paços de Ferreira ou outro território aqui da região?

HP: Não, não temos relação com essas cidades. Além do mais, a Setepés não faz um projecto que pode ser

feito em Paredes, Lisboa, Aveiro ou na China. Os nossos projectos não são standard. Certamente que apresentaríamos outro projecto. Este projecto só tem todo o potencial porque é em Paredes. Se fosse em Paços de Ferreira era outro projecto diferente.

JP: Internamente na Setepés tinham algum portfólio ligado concretamente ao design? Como é que isto passa do Art on Chairs para o Pólo de Design?

HP: O Pólo de Design e o Art on Chairs estão interligados até do ponto de vista do financiamento mas são coisas diferentes.

AV: O Pólo é uma figura que não existe até do ponto de vista formal do financiamento.

SM: Isto tem tudo a ver com o conjunto de oportunidades que apareceram no território. Nesta agenda das indústrias criativas foram abertos dois concursos, um para grandes eventos e outro para equipamentos. Estamos a falar de 2008/2009 que foi um ano, especialmente o de 2008, em que o QREN de 2007 se começa a implementar e, portanto, começa a abrir um conjunto de candidaturas.

Uma delas foi a parceria para a regeneração urbana, que se tratou de um conjunto de candidaturas de requalificação urbana em que a Câmara Municipal de Paredes é contactada pela Inteli para desenvolver uma candidatura no âmbito da regeneração urbana com o objectivo de se criar uma cidade criativa, com um investimento de alguns milhões de euros. Essa candidatura é desenvolvida directamente com a presidência e nós fomos chamados para opinar por causa do equipamento sendo que até acabou por não se concretizar. Isto é na transição de 2008 para 2009, em 2009 abrem os SACIC—grandes eventos e equipamentos—nós propusemos os grandes eventos e a Ydreams propõe a criação da fábrica do design. A criação de um grande equipamento ligado ao design numa lógica de um centro de Ciência Viva com muitas aspas no design. Por isso, a Câmara Municipal de Paredes fica até Setembro de 2009 com 3 candidaturas à CCDR-N. Uma delas a saber que era aprovada, que era a de regeneração urbana, e outras duas inseridas nos concursos da agenda das Indústrias Criativas. Mas mesmo aquela que não era da agenda das Indústrias Criativas, a da regeneração urbana, tem um conteúdo associado às Indústrias Criativas.

No nosso caso ainda levou algum tempo a ser aprovado, o PRU (Parceria para a Regeneração Urbano) foi aprovado e avançou em Paredes. Mas o Art on Chairs esteve muito tempo para ser visto pela comissão técnica e há um momento em 2010 em que o funcionamento do PRU começa a correr mal porque o modelo que estavam a desenvolver não estava resultar. E é nesse momento que a Câmara Municipal nos pede

para que tomemos conta do PRU e que façamos a integração dos projectos.

O que fizemos foi olhar para os projectos existentes e em função do conteúdo em que já estávamos envolvidos e tratamos de o reconfigurar adequando àquilo que eram os projectos de território. Ou seja, regenerar a cidade, criar um circuito de arte pública, fazer um grande evento internacional e deixar em legado um grande equipamento para a área de interpretação e investigação do design.

JP: Vocês já tinham este know-how para a gestão artística e cultural mas para esta questão mais ligada à regeneração urbana penso que não. Tiveram que se reestruturar internamente ou chamar recursos externos?

HP: Não. Nós quando não sabemos vamos aprender e até penso que é uma qualidade aqui dentro, aprendemos rapidamente. Portanto, temos alguma experiência e outras vamos procurar.

SM: Havia grande parte do trabalho que também já estava feito. A candidatura da Inteli tinha um dossier muito bem organizado só que a Inteli não teve capacidade de transpor a candidatura para o terreno. Por isso, o que nos pediram foi que transferíssemos do papel para o terreno, só que tínhamos ao mesmo tempo a Cidade Criativa, outros estavam a fazer o grande evento e ainda outros que estavam a trabalhar na fábrica. Ou seja, era necessário alguém que conseguisse ter uma visão coordenadora e integradora destes conteúdos.

JP: Mas isto terá sido uma questão de distância geográfica da capital? De não perceberem bem a realidade local da cidade de Paredes?

SM: Não. O que diferencia a Setepés é que é uma consultora de consultoria/acção. Nós fazemos a parte estratégica mas sabemos como é que a havemos de implementar e implementamos. Grande parte das consultoras deste país só trabalha a parte estratégica e faz apenas os dossiers.

JP: Pois, o trabalho de muitas consultoras pode ser aplicado aqui como em outro local.

HP: Sim, muitas vezes até se vê isso. Não estou a dizer que façam um mau trabalho, neste caso até foi bem feito só que depois não têm a vocação para a operacionalização das coisas.

JP: Então a Inteli sai do processo?

SM: A Inteli tinha outra parceira no terreno que era a Vector Estratégico, que se mantém no processo a nível dos dossiers técnicos, mas a Inteli saiu porque realmente não acrescentava nada. Aquilo que fize-

mos foi manter os projectos mas dar-lhes uma nova ancoragem. O que a Inteli tinha em ideia era que o Pólo de Design Mobiliário era a cidade de Paredes, portanto, quando se lê a candidatura o Design Hub era uma metodologia. Tem o Pólo Empreendedor, o Pólo Criativo, tudo ali se passava, só que isso era projecto de laboratório. Nós fizemos pequenos ajustes nos conteúdos já desenvolvidos e pensamos numa visão do território, sendo que um projecto destes não está fechado em papéis, nem pode estar. É um projecto de trabalho de uma equipa que se vai desenvolvendo, vai crescendo e vai-se sedimentando aquilo que é a acção.

HP: Também é importante referir que a operacionalização dos projectos mostra-nos depois uma outra realidade. Existem sempre muitas lacunas, muitas coisas que há ainda por fazer, umas já estão documentadas, outras nem por isso. Portanto, isso é uma operação que leva o seu tempo.

SM: A questão que o Jorge põe é da legitimidade e da capacidade. Ninguém fez isto antes.

JP: Que dificuldades é que a Setepés observou na tal operacionalização do projecto a nível local, especialmente, ao nível da autarquia, agentes empresariais, entre outros? Pessoalmente, senti que muita gente não estava familiarizada com o projecto Art on Chairs e com o design.

SM: As empresas sabem o que é o design. Este processo de envolvimento das empresas começou até antes do Art on Chairs com o trabalho de marketing territorial que fizemos com um consultor. [Paulo Alves]. Quando se reúne as empresas, pelo menos as principais, toda a gente sabe que design é valor. Não é uma coisa que se coloque em discussão.

JP: Mas têm consciência de que forma é que esse valor pode ser utilizado?

SM: Não. Essa é a questão.

JP: Para muitos o design ainda é apenas aquilo que é bonito... Tem que se integrar em Portugal o design no seio das empresas.

AV: Muito recentemente tive uma situação com uma empresa que penso que espelha muito daquilo que é a realidade do território. Para as empresas de Paredes, pelo menos para a larga maioria, design é igual a bonito que é igual a não funcional. Ou seja, as empresas acham que o design pode trazer-lhes algum valor mas pensam que isso lhes vai causar entropia. Portanto, têm uma visão de design precisamente oposta à realidade. Depois há quase um choque civilizacional quando um designer sénior vai falar com um empresário mas no fundo, a argumentação passa-se ao nível

dele daquilo que o empresário entende como sendo o design e aquilo que realmente não é e que o designer tenta mostrar que é.

JP: Já observei, em visitas que faço a empresas com os meus alunos, empresários que muitas vezes têm menos formação do que os seus colaboradores e dizem: “eu não percebo isto mas se é design é bom”. Portanto, se não percebem é porque é bom.

AV: Eu penso que há de tudo. Há alguns que pensam assim. Aqueles que acham que não têm design são muito mais permeáveis à mudança.

SM: Ainda não encontramos um território que esteja desperto e completamente à espera que entre um grande projecto de design nas suas empresas. Encontramos um território que tem empresas que já têm design, outras que têm alguma coisa que acham que é design e outras que não têm de todo e sabem o valor do design mas estão desligadas. Portanto, não encontramos o território ideal para implementar este projecto mas o trabalho não está feito. As associações empresariais não movimentaram o território, não é um território que haja dinâmica empresarial cooperativa, que se internacionalize numa certa dimensão. São poucas as estruturas que conhecemos que trabalhem em parceria. O exemplo que conhecemos da associação de empresas é da Viriato porque tem aquele sistema de trabalho e vai a diferentes fornecedores desenvolver trabalho. Há muito modelo económico de subcontrato mas isso existe no Têxtil, no Calçado, em que uns fazem os atacadores e outros põem os botões.

HP: Há outros que trabalham uma marca conhecida e estrangeira e o valor é criado por essa marca e não pelas empresas. O design para a maioria das pessoas, incluindo empresários, é apenas o equivalente a desenho, o tal “bonito”. E o design é muito mais do que isso. Portanto, ainda há muitos que confundem o design com o desenho. A não existência de marcas é um subproduto da não compreensão do design. Mas isto tem a ver, fundamentalmente, com o atraso do ponto de vista da educação.

SM: Do território e não só, do país.

HP: As coisas batem sempre no mesmo, não podemos esquecer que há 38 anos atrás havia 27% de analfabetos em Portugal, provavelmente no território de Paredes havia cerca de 50% ou mais, trabalho infantil em grande escala, etc. E isso continua a ser o grande handicap que, para já, foram precisos cerca de 30 anos para dar um salto e mesmo assim ainda não está completo.

AV: Mas um dos problemas que tem a ver com isto que o Henrique referiu, que está ligado à educação e ao factor cultural, no sentido global, é o facto do projecto ser tão complexo e tão vasto que a maior par-

te das empresas nem o conseguem entender muito bem. Isto gera um problema de comunicação grave. Nós falamos com centenas de empresas e nas sessões que fazíamos para apresentar o projecto, talvez, só 30% das empresas é que realmente percebeu que mais-valia que estava ali subjacente.

SM: Só que este é um projecto que nunca poderá chegar a todas as empresas. Daqui a 10 anos talvez seja possível, se for continuado, se tiver investimento e se for realmente bem feito, se calhar aí vai ser possível dizer que começamos o Art on Chairs com 50 empresas e agora estamos com 300. Temos de encontrar uma forma de medir porque temos quase a certeza que as empresas se vão começar a interessar em Setembro quando começarem a ouvir os nomes mais sonantes e vão-se questionar porque é que não fizeram a cadeira do Ronaldo...

JP: Há a teoria, nas Ciências da Comunicação, da Difusão de Inovações...

SM: Exactamente. No primeiro momento do Art on Chairs chamou-se para comissário a Guta Moura Guedes e ela na primeira reunião disse-nos claramente que não estava interessada, que a questão da arte e do design, esses dois nomes a confundiam imenso e que não era a área dela. No dia 29 de Novembro quando estive em Paredes fez a *mea culpa* e disse que se houve uma área que o Experimenta Design renegou foi a da Indústria. Portanto, há momentos e este é um projecto para muito tempo.

HP: No Experimenta Design o tema também é outro.

SM: Sim. Só que é um modelo que coloca o design como uma disciplina ao lado de outras grandes disciplinas artísticas e académicas. Portanto dá-lhe um estatuto completamente diferente.

JP: Sim, é muito diferente. Eles têm aquela colecção do Designwise que é um concurso de produtos mas mesmo esses são muito particulares.

SM: Mas onde eu queria chegar é que quando nós mostramos o projecto à Guta Moura Guedes ela também não o achou muito interessante no sentido daquilo que lhe estávamos a propor. Este é um projecto que algumas pessoas viram e entenderam no território e até fora dele, e essas são as pessoas que estão conosco no projecto, no entanto, há outras que vão poder estar no Pólo de Design. No entanto, não sabemos se vamos ter Art on Chairs e Pólo de Design a seguir, esperemos que sim mas na verdade não temos a certeza.

JP: Como é que vocês apresentam este projecto em Paredes? Apresentam o Art on Chairs à frente do Pólo ou o Pólo como chapéu para o Art on Chairs?

AV: Depende. Adaptámos o discurso ao intérprete. É a única forma de o fazer.

SM: Por exemplo, se o estivermos a apresentar a alguém da marcenaria que queremos muito que nos faça a cadeira, dizemos que esta cadeira é para o Mourinho e que vai ser feita por um designer e, às vezes, nem contamos a história toda porque o projecto é de tal complexidade que não dá. Por isso, penso que somos completamente adaptáveis. (risos)

AV: Eu penso que nós começamos, ingenuamente, pelo menos numa fase inicial, a querer dizer tudo. Depois acabámos por ficar tão cansados e exaustos e percebíamos que os resultados eram incipientes que decidimos começar a focar-nos nas partes que interessavam em cada caso. E assim foi, fomos às escolas e falamos só no Art on Chairs e nas actividades de formação também, já nas empresas falámos no desenvolvimento de protótipos no Art on Chairs...

SM: O momento em que as pessoas se vão aperceber disto vai ser em Setembro, quando as notícias começarem a sair para a rua sobre as cadeiras que lá estão, quem é que vai estar, o número de cadeiras, a arte pública na rua, os artistas. Tudo isso vai criar dimensão na cabeça das pessoas.

HP: A integração das coisas não é preciso ser feita por toda a gente. O marceneiro não precisa de integrar o projecto da mesma forma que um empresário, por exemplo.

AV: Mas eu acho que, sempre que temos espaço para isso, pomos o Pólo do Design à frente.

JP: A minha pergunta até tem a ver com aquela notícia do P3, onde na entrevista falei sobre o Art on Chairs, sobre o Pólo, sobre o Stories e inclusive referi a minha actividade académica e de investigação, e a jornalista editou daquela forma...

SM: Exactamente, por ser um projecto tão complexo tem assessoria de imprensa, que tem o trabalho de filtrar e colocar as coisas no contexto correcto e, de alguma forma, também pedir para ver. Porque quando se entra em roda livre com os jornalistas, às vezes, pode correr mal. Mas foi uma notícia interessante, claro que sim.

JP: O projecto Art on Chairs já está com uma estrutura mais ou menos amadurecida ao nível de comissários, houve alguns nomes que ficaram pelo caminho, mas certamente voltarão. Vocês fizeram algum head hunting e consideram que há pessoas que interessam agregar ao projeto porque sabem que eles vão ser um chamariz?

SM: Nós passámos da Guta Moura Guedes, que até era uma pessoa que estava muito presente em Paredes, para a lógica dos parceiros universitários. Sempre

pensamos que este projecto só poderia ser feito com a lógica de parceria com as universidades porque não há espírito crítico no território.

HP: Aquando da candidatura tive uma reunião com a ESAD, com o Sérgio Afonso, mas na altura ainda não era para eles serem comissários.

JP: A Setepés documenta de alguma forma o processo de desenvolvimento do vosso trabalho para além destes emails ou dos relatórios breves que possam fazer? Como é que estruturam o vosso trabalho?

SM: Nós fazemos as agendas com o ponto de situação.
AV: Nós temos realmente muito material que está focado na lógica dos pequenos projectos e de apresentações que temos de fazer. Fazemos as nossas agendas e memos das reuniões, às vezes, há dias em que são tantas e que se sucedem que é quase impossível estarmos sempre a mandar memos para toda a gente sobre tudo. Mas temos muitos documentos e planos de trabalho.

JP: Da vossa parte vai implicar algum relatório final a propósito da candidatura?

SM: Sim, tem que haver um relatório final. Mas até chegarmos lá havemos de ficar todos velhinhos. (risos)

JP: Há um documento que é a Memória Descritiva, datado de Outubro de 2011, em que vocês elencam um conjunto de objectivos, que eu diria longo e demasiado ambicioso. Esta é a vossa métrica de avaliação?

SM: Há um sistema de avaliação. Há uma avaliação de públicos para o evento e há uma avaliação de resultados.

JP: De públicos, como assim?

SM: Das pessoas que vão ver o evento.

JP: Mas como vai ser feita?

SM: É um inquérito de satisfação e que terá também uma outra perspectiva que não será só fechada no Art on Chairs, abordando mais a cidade de Paredes e sobre o que é que as pessoas viram mais, além deste evento. Portanto, vai ser um estudo bastante abrangente. Começou por ser um estudo de satisfação de públicos mas o projecto entretanto cresceu, nós também vamos ver se o estendemos à arte pública e à percepção do território e, igualmente, ao impacto económico.

JP: Em relação ao design e à indústria como é que vão fazer a avaliação?

SM: Não dá para fazer uma avaliação muito específica e apoiada em números. Mas posso dizer que do Art on Chairs vai sair uma visão de Paredes num determinado sentido, ou seja, um território de oportunidades, de inovação, de design que está a ser incorporado na indústria. É um sítio do qual se vai ouvir falar enquadrado na temática do design. Além disso, saem também coisas concretas, isto é, saem colecções de cadeiras, que é propriedade da autarquia, em que se envolveu a indústria ao prototipar e que tem continuidade. Há projectos que têm outputs muito concretos, no Stories of Chairs, o output é a memória de um grande evento, além daquilo que tem em si.

Portanto, a ideia de que vai aumentar um dígito ou dois nas vendas é difícil de assegurar, até porque se calhar nem daqui a 10 anos temos um aumento de facturação de dois dígitos, porque quem factura 65 milhões de euros anuais (valor das três principais empresas de Paredes) é difícil aumentar muito mais.
SM: No que toca à apresentação de resultados que têm a ver com a candidatura nós vamos apresentar dados concretos. O que vai para além disso e que nós não tínhamos pensado.

HP: Também há muita parte da divulgação que passa pelas Universidades, cabe-lhes a elas trabalharem para isso. Este ponto é importante porque eu pergunto qual é o trabalho delas neste momento? Neste momento estou um pouco afastado do projecto mas pergunto se já alguma Universidade nos veio bater a porta para fazer isto ou aquilo?

SM: Não. Só o Jorge Pereira é que está a desenvolver investigação.

HP: Pois. Esse é que é o problema.

SM: Não, estou a mentir. O projecto Art on Chairs, Duets e Design Maciço têm um mestrado associado. A ESAD com alguns alunos, mais propriamente, a Maria Milano e uma aluna, interessaram-se pelo projecto Duets quando lhes apresentei e a aluna desenvolveu a tese de mestrado sobre isso. O Paolo Deganello com outra aluna fez exactamente o mesmo. Mais do que isso desconheço.

HP: Sim mas a ESAD está ligada ao projecto de tal maneira que se torna mais fácil. Só que, por exemplo, a Faculdade de Economia do Porto já foi a Paredes tentar saber mais alguma coisa e até fazer alguns estudos económicos? Não.

JP: Várias áreas poderiam dar o seu contributo.

HP: Sim, é aí onde eu quero chegar. Não são só aqueles ligados ao projecto que têm de participar, mas sim aquelas Universidades de outras áreas que têm que de observar o terreno e não estar à espera que vão ter com eles para lhes mostrar as coisas.

JP: Mas isso faz parte da antiga discussão sobre a ligação entre Universidades e Empresas.

SM: Não é só com empresas, é também com instituições e territórios.

JP: Sim, o que se discute é que as universidades estão ainda muito desligadas do mundo real.

SM: A verdade é que Paredes não é um território atractivo.

HP: Há também do ponto de vista intelectual e académico uma segregação do território. Tal como algumas pessoas dizem que o que interessa é “Porto e Lisboa e o resto é paisagem”, também a intelectualidade pensa dessa maneira.

SM: Uma coisa que é interessante é que o arquitecto Rui Sousa vai fazer um doutoramento sobre Cidades Criativas e vai estudar o caso de Paredes e até nos propôs um projecto que é muito interessante, que é a criação de um laboratório de espaço criativo de reflexão de arquitectura. Só que a dificuldade passa muito pelo sítio onde tudo está a decorrer mas é também o que torna tudo mais desafiante. No entanto, às vezes também somos surpreendidos, por exemplo, temos aí outro projecto que ainda não está fechado e vai integrar o Art on Chairs, que é com um grande grupo económico nacional e eles não sabem onde é Paredes mas como viram tanta gente interessada alinharam.

AV: E porque o chavão “design” funciona, não é?

SM: Claro.

JP: No meio desta rede tão complexa como é que surgem os meios digitais?

HP: No fundo, pensei nas narrativas textuais e pensei no texto escrito e aí surge o Stories of Chairs e o Contos. Depois vêm as narrativas digitais.

AV: Essas narrativas permitiam criar a dimensão audiovisual.

HP: E foi aí que eu falei com o Heitor Alvelos.

JP: O Stories of Chairs evolui a partir daí?

HP: Os nomes foram propostos por nós. Eram mais ou menos provisórios, alguns mudaram e outros não. Mas o digital era incontornável enquanto nome e meio expressivo destas áreas. E, sobretudo, porque apostava muito nas novas narrativas para a indústria, na área do marketing, da publicidade, da comunicação.

JP: Gostariam de fazer algum comentário introdutório ou alguma análise à forma como está a evoluir o Stories of Chairs?

SM: Não, faz parte do processo vocês irem desenvolvendo um caminho.

JP: Daquilo que consegui perceber, foi uma das primeiras áreas a ficar definida, até foi umas das

primeiras a ganhar visibilidade. Funcionou um pouco como ponta de lança do projecto do Pólo e do Art on Chairs. De que forma é que vocês analisam na Setepés este mediatismo do Stories of Chairs?

SM: O problema das plataformas digitais depende do meio onde nos movimentamos. Se estamos dentro daquilo que é o meio digital, se somos muito assíduos, realmente percebemos a importância que determinados projectos vão ter no meio digital. No entanto, se estamos no meio não digital, que confesso ser mais o meu caso, é esse suporte que nos dá o nome. Portanto, eu não tenho a real percepção, vou sabendo da importância do projecto pelo ponto de situação que nos vão dando de reunião em reunião e, por isso, vocês têm autonomia para desenvolver o projecto para que ele se torne cada vez mais importante e isso se transfira depois para a exposição. Mas o feedback que eu tenho não é algo que eu perceba como utilizador porque na verdade sou um pouco desligada das plataformas digitais.

HP: Os projectos digitais também têm uma outra dinâmica e chamam públicos diferentes. Enquanto, por exemplo, numa exposição se trabalha para um dia que vai ser o auge, provavelmente, na inauguração e os dias seguintes, nos meios digitais pode-se estar a trabalhar um ano ou dois e a coisa estar assim muito morna e de repente há um boom.

SM: Pelo vosso ponto de situação temos ideia de que é um projecto que tem chamado cada vez mais pessoas, que tem muita gente interessada no tema, que é importante tanto a nível nacional como internacional.

JP: E que repercussões é que estes projectos estão a ter localmente? Têm tido algum feedback por parte da indústria?

AV: As empresas sabem alguma coisa em relação ao Pólo de Design mas acho que neste momento as empresas não têm ainda a força suficiente para olharem para aquilo e saberem tudo sobre o projecto. É um trabalho que estamos a fazer e que tem de continuar porque os parceiros no terreno, nomeadamente, a Associação Empresarial de Paredes que devia ter um trabalho muito forte de promoção do Pólo de Design também não o faz. Portanto, nós trabalhamos muito a “partir pedra”, sempre que vamos para as empresas temos de apresentar as coisas, fazer emails e cartas e organizar visitas... Os comissários estão a ir às empresas fazer visitas personalizadas empresa-a-empresa para promover a prototipagem, a criação de cadeiras, promoção internacional. Eu acho que vai demorar muito tempo até que isto se consolide. São os dez anos.

JP: O que será Paredes três anos após este even-

to? E como é que a Setepés está a pensar manter a ligação a cidade?

SM: O Presidente fala do ano II do Pólo e esse ano vai ser aquele em que se consolida um conjunto de coisas. Há uma série de coisas que já estão consolidadas mas que é preciso dar-lhe continuidade e há outras que ainda se estão a consolidar. O ano de 2013 é o ano II do Pólo. Nós queremos continuar com o Art on Chairs e o Presidente também quer, isso faz-se com dinheiro privado e ainda temos de o angariar. Esperamos que o sucesso da primeira edição ajude para a segunda edição em 2014. Mas o Pólo tem outros desafios porque projectos trazem projectos, por isso, há algumas coisas a definir. A nossa ligação de continuidade ainda não está garantida, há um momento em que a passagem tem de ser feita só que também ainda não está decidido qual é a estrutura de gestão futura. Isso é algo que ficará decidido este ano, antes do evento.

JP: Acham que o sucesso do evento pode condicionar esse contacto futuro da Setepés com Pa- redes?

SM: O sucesso da Setepés está condicionado também pelo sucesso de todos os parceiros, este é um projecto de grande rede em que todos estamos ligados de alguma forma e, portanto, a continuidade está muito dependente do factor económico, especialmente, com dinheiro de privados. Este factor é muito mais decisivo do que qualquer outro porque a Câmara Municipal não tem dinheiro, o QREN está esgotado e por isso só pode haver dinheiro nos privados. O projecto em si está a correr bem, as parcerias e os parceiros estão a portar-se bem.

JP: Privados locais, de preferência?

SM: Não, nacionais. Haverá um momento em que o Art on Chairs vai ser muito mais do que a cadeira. Na segunda edição tem de se reflectir o que é que é o projecto, pois a cadeira foi muito explorada na primeira edição.

AV: E há indústrias chateadas por ser só sobre cadeiras. Dá um protagonismo muito grande a empresas de cadeiras que não é necessariamente o mesmo em termos proporcionais.

HP: Mas isso é porque não compreenderam qual era o objectivo.

AV: Exactamente.

JP: Essa poderá ser uma falha de comunicação?

AV: É o tempo das empresas perceberem os resultados e o sucesso do Art on Chairs.

HP: Uma coisa é certa, podem procurar a nível mundial o Art on Chairs, que não existe. Até hoje pelo me-

nos ainda não se encontrou nada igual a nível mundial. Em Portugal todos os empresários queriam mais uma feira de mobiliário ou algo do género e disso já existe de sobra, mais propriamente, 358 feiras a nível europeu. É essa diferença que às vezes as pessoas não percebem.

SM: Nós não estamos só a falar da introdução de designers nas empresas, nós aqui estamos a falar do factor de importância de comunicar design.

Appendix A2

Interview with Gualter Morgado

Interview conducted October 22, 2012 at AEParedes' office, Paredes.

57 min, in Portuguese.

Jorge Pereira (JP): O que é a Associação Empresarial de Paredes (AEP) e de que forma é que se posiciona?

Gualter Morgado (GM): A AEP é uma associação patronal, trata-se de uma instituição de utilidade pública, sendo abrangente, pois não nos dedicámos exclusivamente ao sector industrial, trabalhamos também o sector comercial e terciário. A única área que realmente não trabalhamos é a da agricultura, para isso existe a cooperativa agrícola.

Os associados são transversais das várias áreas, sendo certo que cerca de 50% das empresas de mobiliário são nossas sócias. Para além de toda a área de informação e de apoio a projectos, temos também a área de consultoria e, ainda, uma componente muito forte de formação. Damos apoio às feiras nacionais e à actividade comercial da própria indústria e do comércio de mobiliário. A par disso, em parceria com a associação sectorial APIMA, damos também apoio a todas as feiras internacionais. Somos parceiros do projecto Interfurniture, que apoia a participação em feiras em Espanha, França, Itália, China, Brasil, entre outros países. Mas o nosso trabalho não se esgota aqui, sendo que desenvolvemos igualmente um conjunto de actividades, juntamente com os industriais, quer ao nível da responsabilidade social, quer ao nível de apoio à própria actividade. Posso dizer que fazemos tudo pelos nossos associados ou, se não conseguirmos, arranjamos um parceiro que o faça. Por isso, a AEP acaba por ter uma actividade muito abrangente. Obviamente que temos um cuidado especial com aquilo que é o principal sector da região, pois neste momento, estamos a falar de cerca de 700 empresas em actividade no concelho e que representam em termos de volume de negócios no mobiliário, estofos e colchões, cerca de 60 a 65% da produção nacional de mobiliário. Embora os números gerais não dêem essa ênfase porque neste CAE estão misturadas outras actividades que, estando identificadas aqui, acabam por distorcer um bocadinho os dados nacionais. Mas há uma grande concentração regional.

JP: Como é que a AEP se envolveu no projecto do Pólo de Design?

GM: Foi praticamente desde o início, mais concretamente, a partir de 2006. Comecei a acompanhar o projecto, tivemos algumas reuniões de brain storming, algumas contaram inclusive com a presença do Presidente da Câmara de Paredes, onde se ia discutindo alguma estratégia e pensando como é que poderíamos avançar. A AEP teve uma intervenção muito forte praticamente desde o início do desenho do projecto. Tornámo-nos parceiros precisamente para fazer a ligação com a indústria local e, basicamente, os contactos com a indústria passaram pela Associação Empresarial.

JP: Que tipo de apoio é que prestam ao projecto em concreto?

GM: Temos duas situações. Temos um projecto em que somos promotores, o de internacionalização do Pólo, criando uma rede internacional ligada ao design e à criatividade. Depois temos outra componente que é a nossa participação enquanto interlocutores privilegiados junto da indústria. Portanto, um projecto, gerimos directamente e, no outro caso, prestamos apoio para a colocação dos designers nas residências, para seleccionar as empresas e para divulgar. Neste sentido, fizemos, por exemplo, sessões nas freguesias de Paredes para criarmos um maior nível de proximidade. No fundo, fomos desmistificando um pouco esta temática, fomos mostrando as mais-valias que poderiam surgir. Claro que é sempre um processo lento e gradual, se agora reiniciássemos o processo com o conhecimento que já existe do projecto neste momento teríamos seguramente quatro ou cinco mais empresas a aderir logo numa primeira fase. Até porque o que acontecia, numa primeira abordagem, era que apareciam muitas empresas que não entendiam bem qual era a mais-valia que este projecto podia trazer para eles e, noutros casos, entendiam que isto não seria adequado para eles e que não teriam capa-

cidade para fazer parte do projecto, principalmente, as empresas de menor dimensão. Só que isso é uma visão totalmente errada, porque efectivamente as empresas de menor dimensão são aquelas que mais poderiam beneficiar, que mais teriam a aprender com o projecto e que mais valor acrescentado poderiam gerar junto do seu produto, para poder avançar para outros mercados.

JP: Até porque vendo numa perspectiva de escala de empresas não há aqui nenhuma grande empresa, a maioria são PME.

GM: Só há uma grande empresa em Portugal e não é portuguesa, está instalada em Paços de Ferreira, é a Swedwood. Todas as outras empresas portuguesas de mobiliário são PME. Nós temos no ranking das 100 maiores empresas nacionais de mobiliário, pelo volume de facturação, 22 empresas.

JP: O que até é estranhamente pouco tendo em conta que representa 65% do volume de exportação.

GM: O que acontece é que neste CAE temos empresas de colchões, a Colunex está cá mas as restantes não, temos também algumas empresas de estofos, ou seja, existe alguma concentração dispersa, que não está aqui no concelho, como é o caso da J.Louro em Santarém. Além disso, temos ainda mobiliário de escritório que também acaba por estar neste CAE. Se estivermos a ver quem produz mobiliário doméstico e de hotelaria, nesse caso temos nesta região um volume muito superior. Porque ao limparmos a base e tratarmos de nichos, temos uma relevância muito maior, já estamos a falar de 50 empresas e dessas representamos 50% a nível nacional, sendo certo que até são de média/grande dimensão e acabam por aparecer neste ranking.

JP: Referiu que as empresas consultam a AEP por causa de necessidades em termos de formação, esclarecimento de dúvidas ou definição de algum tipo de programa estrutural. Sentia que antes deste projecto do Pólo surgir havia uma procura relativamente ao Design?

GM: O que acontece na generalidade dos casos em Portugal e na região, em particular, é que o design está sempre muito associado a uma questão estética. Ou seja, este projecto veio ajudar a desmistificar o que é que é o design, quais são as várias vertentes do design. Normalmente associava-se o design apenas à componente estética e ouvem-se os típicos comentários de: "aquilo é bonito, tem design". Quando muitas vezes até pode ser bonito mas de design não tem nada. Na AEP tínhamos o único concurso de de-

sign ligado ao mobiliário a nível nacional, que era na ExportHome, onde por vezes vinham projectos a concurso que não cumpriam as funções. Tivemos uma altura, por exemplo, um móvel de bar onde não cabia uma garrafa lá dentro. Aquela peça nunca poderia ter design. Este concurso já era uma tentativa de tentar mostrar o que é que era o design e de que no mobiliário clássico pode haver um re-styling e o próprio mobiliário pode ter design. Não havia uma visão integrada do que é que era o design e de que forma se poderia trabalhar essa componente.

Além disso, o projecto do Pólo de Design foi importante para tornar perceptível o benefício que o design poderia trazer para as empresas. Até porque as empresas de menor dimensão e, numa necessidade de internacionalização, pois não tendo capacidade ou suporte no mercado nacional e mesmo no mercado de proximidade que é o mercado ibérico, a única forma de exportarem produtos é com produtos de valor acrescentado. Ou seja, não podem apostar na quantidade mas têm de apostar na qualidade, na exclusividade e na customização do produto.

JP: Até em contraponto daquilo que se faz, por exemplo, no IKEA.

GM: Temos de entrar em segmentos completamente diferentes e temos de utilizar as mais-valias técnicas que temos ao nível da mão de obra, porque o que uma máquina pode fazer aqui, pode fazer em qualquer outra parte do mundo. O sistema de produção com a utilização de produção intensiva ou muito pouco especializada ao nível de *know-how* de materiais que se está a utilizar acaba por não ser competitivo porque alguém vai conseguir fazer algo muito parecido com uma relação de custo muito mais baixo. O objectivo é trabalhar com peças que tenham valor acrescentado, que cumpram as funções para as quais são criadas e que se possa contar uma história à volta daquela peça ou daquela produto e da própria empresa que o produz. Isto é importante e era algo que não estava a ser feito pelas empresas e, mais recentemente, algumas começam a fazê-lo, que é contar a história em torno do produto. A ideia é demonstrar que aquilo não apenas mais um móvel, mas que é um móvel que por detrás dele tem toda uma tradição de fabrico de várias décadas. Desta forma, pode-se gerar valor acrescentado e mostrar aquilo que é o produto português. Muitas vezes quando conseguimos ter produtos bem produzidos e os colocamos em mercados internacionais, especialmente, no caso de peças de design que estão dentro da linha do contemporâneo, pensamos automaticamente que o produto é italiano e não português. Não há uma afirmação do produto português.

JP: Portanto, na sua opinião não é uma questão de país mas de cultura e de autores?

GM: É uma questão de autores. Nós não ditamos tendências no mobiliário, não temos esta afirmação da nossa capacidade produtiva e, embora ela seja reconhecida ao nível do sector profissional, o mesmo não acontece com o público em geral. Estamos a inverter, em alguns mercados, esse reconhecimento, como é o caso do mercado francês. Neste mercado já se pergunta se o produto de mobiliário é português, algo que até há alguns anos atrás os franceses queriam esconder. Isto também pode ser explicado com o facto de nos últimos anos o mobiliário português ter sido premiado em vários certames internacionais, ainda há 3 anos a participação portuguesa foi premiada como a melhor na feira internacional de Paris. Já no mercado italiano temos mais dificuldade, por exemplo, na feira iSaloni em Milão não nos permitem participar como nós gostaríamos, temos sempre uma restrição grande à entrada. Estamos com um número limitado de empresas, podíamos levar três ou quatro vezes mais empresas mas não nos concedem mais espaço porque somos concorrentes directos dos italianos.

JP: Haverá uma política proteccionista.

GM: Sim, há ali uma protecção camuflada.

JP: Mas é só em relação a Portugal?

GM: Principalmente em relação aos portugueses. Pouco a pouco vamos conseguindo alargar esse espaço e penetrando nesse mercado mas é muito difícil. Mas posso dar-lhe outros exemplos de boas participações em certames internacionais. Este ano na feira de Shangai participaram 3 empresas portuguesas em conjunto, entre 3000 empresas de todo o mundo, e uma das empresas portuguesas, a Fenabel, foi premiada com o melhor produto de mobiliário apresentado na feira. Portanto, até estamos a conseguir estes feitos que nos destacam só que depois acabamos por não ter o conhecimento no mercado nacional. A comunicação social não ajuda, nem apoia à divulgação destas pequenas vitórias que todas somadas vão afirmando o mobiliário a nível internacional.

JP: Mas retomando a questão já colocada, os associados da AEP consultavam-vos e perguntavam-vos sobre design directamente?

GM: Sim, o design faz parte do vocabulário há muito tempo, só que era mal interpretado. Como em tudo, havia um pequeno grupo de empresas que já interpretava o design correctamente, já tinham designers internos e desenvolviam o seu próprio trabalho. Por vezes, pediam-nos para promovermos mais aquilo que eles estavam a desenvolver no momento. Chegamos a promover algumas conferências na Inter Casa em Lisboa, até com designers e o director do Domus

Academy de Milão, com o IADE, com a ESAD, enfim, um conjunto de entidades que foram falar aos empresários sobre o design, tentando desmistificar um pouco o conceito. Chegamos também a reunir o Francisco Providência, o Carlos Aguiar, entre outros, ou seja, reunimos várias pessoas ligadas ao design e premiadas pelo seu trabalho nos últimos anos para contarem um pouco o seu percurso e de que forma é que se poderia trabalhar esta temática. Só que eram apenas acções pontuais, não havia continuidade nem uma componente estratégica que ligasse tudo isto.

JP: A resposta na altura já era semelhante à que foi quando se propôs o Art on Chairs?

GM: Houve empresas que aproveitaram essas acções para alterarem a sua postura relativamente ao design e que as incorporaram enquanto estratégia da própria empresa, houve outras que entenderam que aquilo não seria o ideal para eles e que na maior parte dos casos não servia de nada. Até porque havia aqui algumas más experiências que tinham a ver com a venda do projecto de design. Todos os dias entram pela porta designers ou desenhadores, na maior parte dos casos, que aparecem com propostas de projectos para as empresas. Só que muitas das vezes esses projectos não se adequam sequer à estrutura produtiva da própria empresa, ou seja, não parte de dentro mas de fora. Por outro lado, na maioria das vezes, nos concursos que realizávamos as peças que surgiam nada tinham a ver com aquilo que a empresa realmente produzia ou desenvolvia/comercializava. A ideia era que as peças que fossem a concurso saíssem da linha da empresa para entrar a concurso, isto é, que fosse uma das peças que estivesse representada no próprio certame. Mas muitas empresas iam buscar um designer para uma actividade pontual e que produzia uma peça para o concurso, mostrando claramente que design não fazia parte da estratégia da empresa.

JP: Parece-me que a indústria local funciona numa lógica mais de encomenda do que criação de marca própria. Isto é assim?

GM: O problema é que no sector do mobiliário português, muitas vezes, não temos marca associada à produção. O que acontece é que as empresas apresentam colecções, na maioria dos casos, com design próprio. Portanto, já não estamos a falar tanto da colocação de encomenda a feitio nas empresas. Ainda temos essa situação mas cada vez mais o design é próprio e é apresentado pelas empresas ao público profissional, ao comércio de revenda e a centrais de compras, como propostas de colecções para eles poderem adquirir. A única questão é que a maior parte das empresas não tem um branding associado ao seu mobiliário. A empresa A, B ou C não é reconhecida

enquanto produtora daquele produto. É reconhecida pelo seu cliente mas não pelo público, não há aqui um intermediário. Vendem para a loja, é mobiliário de qualidade que faz parte de uma determinada colecção mas, provavelmente, ou o nome da empresa é omitido ou, em alguns casos, pura e simplesmente não tem qualquer referência. A maior parte do mobiliário não tem a referência de que é produzido em Portugal, não tem a chapinha a dizer “made in Portugal” nem tem a marca associada. Salvo raras excepções, como é óbvio.

JP: De uma perspectiva interna da AEP, a que é que este projecto do Pólo e o Art on Chairs obrigou? E como é que vocês se prepararam internamente?

GM: Passámos por todo um processo de aprendizagem para podermos dar apoio às empresas, mais concretamente, para sermos capazes de as encaminhar para quem as pode ajudar devidamente. Aqui temos de encontrar as soluções e, a maior parte das vezes, não temos de ser nós a dar uma resposta directa à empresa, a resposta pode ser tão simples como apontar o caminho mais correcto. A outra forma de ajuda é, ao reconhecer a necessidade da empresa, ajudá-los também na própria estratégia e a identificar qual é a melhor abordagem para conseguirem atingir os objectivos que pretendem.

JP: Tentam perceber exactamente qual é a necessidade da empresa?

GM: Sim e de que modo é que isto pode ser resolvido. As empresas têm uma dimensão tão díspar e capacidades tão diferenciadas que cada caso é um caso. Não há uma estratégia que possa ser comum a todas. Claro que há aspectos globais comuns, mas os aspectos específicos acabam por ter de ser adaptados a cada uma delas.

JP: Esse é um dos erros mais habituais, ou seja, o de querer aplicar um modelo a todas as empresas. Pode funcionar em alguma indústria mas não neste contexto.

GM: Exactamente. Temos de perceber claramente quais são as mais-valias de cada uma das empresas para que depois o seu produto possa reflectir essa mais-valia. Se estamos a falar de uma pequena empresa que tem um trabalho artesanal, vamos ter de o aproveitar e desenvolver uma lógica de produção associada a essa característica especial. Muito provavelmente esta empresa não vai poder produzir grande quantidade, mas sim sempre numa base de grande qualidade, com grande valor acrescentado e que seja percebido por quem compra. Muitas das vezes os pro-

duto têm valor acrescentado mas não é percebido e isso tem de ser alterado.

JP: Como parceiro deste projecto como é a AEP e o Dr. Gualter Morgado vêem o fenómeno que aconteceu nestes últimos dois meses e meio em Paredes? Qual foi a vossa percepção?

GM: Na verdade, acabamos por ser surpreendidos pelo efeito que isto teve. O grande objectivo que tínhamos traçado, enquanto associação empresarial, era esta grande acção de demonstração empresarial da capacidade de saber fazer na região. Queríamos mostrar que nós somos capazes de desenvolver qualquer tipo de projecto na área do mobiliário, seja produzido na China, no Brasil, nos EUA, Canadá ou Inglaterra. Esta acção de demonstração foi uma das grandes mais-valias, depois o impacto que o próprio projecto teve a nível externo, ou seja, como tínhamos o compromisso de criar a rede de parceiros, de articular o conjunto de parceiros que pudessem apoiar as empresas e gerar um processo de internacionalização, acabamos por ser surpreendidos com o reconhecimento lá fora. Na realidade, na maior parte das vezes, as pessoas já tinham informação sobre o projecto, aliás, surgiram-nos parceiros que nos contactaram directamente a perguntar sobre o projecto. Noutros casos, não tinham conhecimento e a partir do momento em que tiveram, por iniciativa própria, envolveram-se e acabaram por ajudar à divulgação. Por exemplo, Bilbao é uma cidade que passou por um projecto semelhante de regeneração urbana, claro que tem algo que o distingue que é o efeito Guggenheim, mas agora estamos preparar uma missão invertida, isto é, vêm cá arquitectos, empresários ligados à área do design e à arquitectura para procurar parceiros para produzirem os seus trabalhos. Para além disso, fomos convidados a estar no congresso internacional de criatividade que é realizado todos os anos, no mês de Março, em Bilbao e está, neste momento, a decorrer uma reunião no Guggenheim porque há interesse por parte do museu de ter a exposição durante um período como exposição temporária. Portanto, todas estas acções têm-se vindo a despoletar quase por si só. Tivemos também contactos com a Alemanha, Hannover quer a itinerância do Art on Chairs, tal como, Munique, Viena de Áustria, Kortrijk na Bélgica, Saint-Étienne na França, entre outros.

JP: Esses parceiros da rede são de que tipo?

GM: Estamos a falar de associações empresariais, universidades, empresas ou associações ligadas à indústria criativa e ao design que são de regiões com alguma ligação ao mobiliário, espalhadas um pouco por todo o mundo.

JP: Esta rede existe com um *networking* estabelecido ou são contactos bilaterais apenas?

GM: É uma rede que vai trabalhar numa plataforma de *networking* que vai servir, para já, para partilhar ideias, ou seja, sempre que surge uma ideia na região é comunicada aos parceiros.

JP: Mas esta rede tem nome?

GM: Esta rede já está formalizada mas ainda não a baptizamos.

JP: Eu sei no caso da empresa Viriato que faz parte da iGlobal, um consórcio, que funciona mais ou menos nos mesmos moldes mas numa perspectiva empresarial.

GM: Aqui trata-se de uma congregação de esforços dentro de cada região, só que depende dos interesses de cada parceiro. Por exemplo, neste momento estamos em contacto com a Alemanha, a Câmara de Comércio está a colocar-nos em contacto com a Associação Hoteleira para que nos encomendem projectos para a produção de mobiliário e decoração de hotéis, estamos a difundir informação sobre redes de lojas que estão interessadas em ter parceiros e fornecedores de mobiliário cá em Portugal. Para além disso, temos outros parceiros ligados à formação para permutas de trabalhadores, estamos a falar numa espécie de Erasmus ao nível empresarial e que esteve a decorrer recentemente, ou seja, um empresário ia lá para fora trabalhar com um outro empresário da mesma área, que nalguns casos se podia tornar parceiro ou, na maior parte dos casos, o objectivo era que se tornasse parceiro no seu mercado. Se temos aqui um produtor de mobiliário e se temos lá fora alguém que o comercializa, este produtor vai trabalhar com a empresa que o comercializa para perceber as necessidades da empresa e acabar por se tornar fornecedor dessa empresa. Estes são alguns dos projectos em que estamos envolvidos com a rede e, em alguns casos, é bilateral, noutros não. No caso de Valência, eles tem um dos mais modernos centros tecnológicos na área do mobiliário e este contacto está a gerar uma parceria entre a associação empresarial de Paredes e a AIDIMA em Espanha, sediada em Valência, para a criação de uma extensão do Centro Tecnológico aqui em Paredes. O objectivo é revitalizarmos aquilo que já foi o Centro Tecnológico do Mobiliário, que já fechou há uns anos, mas agora como precisamos dessa ferramenta até para fazer testes de ensaios, para dar apoio a todas as áreas, inclusive prototipagem, e como eles têm esse *know-how*, têm a componente da certificação, isso permite-nos acelerar o processo. Por isso, quer sejam contactos para desenvolver iniciativas ligadas aos design e promoção mútua dos

vários projectos, quer para situações de promoção de negócio para as próprias empresas estamos aptos. Claro que a segunda é a componente que mais nos interessa enquanto Associação Empresarial, só que, se calhar nalguns casos para entrar em determinados mercados, tal como o Austríaco, começar por fazer uma exposição ou ter lá uma itinerância do Art on Chairs e, associado a isso, ter lá uma exposição ou um conjunto de reuniões de negócio com as empresas ligadas ao Art on Chairs, vai ser um cartão de visita e as empresas terão a possibilidade de estabelecer contactos comerciais com aquele mercado.

JP: Como é que pensam fazer essa avaliação de resultados a nível interno? Têm alguma expectativa de resultados?

GM: Para já temos um conjunto de actividades programadas e algumas até já começaram, porque à medida que o Art on Chairs se foi desenrolando acabamos por ter a necessidade de as desenvolver. Um desses casos, foi a parceria com a APIMA, até ao final do mês temos de ter a situação clarificada e definido em que moldes é que vai arrancar, mas à partida começará em Janeiro. No início de Dezembro vamos ter missões invertidas com Bilbao já com propostas de negócio entre empresas e interessados em colaborar com essas empresas, depois a participação em algumas iniciativas e mesmo os convites que já tivemos para a itinerância da exposição são fulcrais. Vamos aproveitar e fazer um trabalho de proximidade com as empresas para a penetração em determinados mercados onde não é fácil entrar porque são mercados maduros, onde há a informação perfeita sobre o seu funcionamento, só que exactamente por isso, todo o mundo lá está e nós somos mais uns a concorrer. Por isso, temos de ir com uma atitude diferenciadora.

JP: E qual poderá ser o retorno para as empresas que participam neste projecto? Certamente que é uma questão que vos é colocada pelos empresários.

GM: Os empresários até poderão pensar em divulgar a região no âmbito da responsabilidade social mas o que é certo é que isso não tem sustentabilidade se não tiver resultados práticos e financeiros. Havendo esses resultados estas empresas vão estar com muito maior apetência para investir neste projecto e aplicar uma metodologia para o melhorar e para lhe dar uma dimensão cada vez mais alargada. Eu penso que só através deste processo é que podemos lá chegar. Não é rápido mas gradualmente vamos chegar a uma posição de reconhecimento no mercado. De outra forma só através de campanhas publicitárias que custam imenso e com a dificuldade acrescida de que até poderemos fazer isso muito bem num determinado

mercado mas esgotamos toda a capacidade financeira que temos só para atingir um mercado. Isso não faz sentido nem é possível conseguirmos continuar a investir sempre dessa forma em todos os locais. Há que fazer esse esforço de participar também nos concursos internacionais ligados ao design e à criatividade para que nos possamos colocar no *ranking* das melhores empresas ou dos melhores projectos das empresas de Paredes, para que associados a isso, elas se possam posicionar. E acima de tudo que se possa mudar de atitude ao nível da comunicação da empresa, especialmente, ao nível da comunicação desses resultados, porque só dessa forma é que conseguimos o reconhecimento.

JP: Qual é a percepção que tem das empresas de Paredes para este fenómeno que são os media digitais e de que forma é que eles são integrados em termos de comunicação?

GM: Em termos globais estamos numa fase embrionária, claro que, se formos a olhar à lupa a realidade de cada empresa, vai variando caso a caso. Há empresas que estão na linha da frente, fazendo do melhor que se faz a nível internacional e temos empresas que pura e simplesmente não têm estratégia nessa área, têm simplesmente uma presença na internet, a maior parte das vezes encontramos sites que nem são bilingues. Além disso, muitas das vezes têm erros estratégicos ao nível da comunicação porque não se percebe numa consulta ao site o que é que a empresa faz. Chegamos a ter situações onde contam a história da família mas esquecem-se de dizer aquilo que produzem. E é óbvio que quando estamos a consultar um site e não obtemos uma resposta imediata àquilo que procuramos não continuamos nessa página. Além disso, ainda há muitas outras empresas que pura e simplesmente não têm presença na internet.

JP: Mas sente que da parte dos empresários têm noção dessa lacuna na comunicação ou ainda nem sequer despertaram para a necessidade de maior aposta nessa área?

GM: Não tendo qualquer tipo de dados estatísticos, penso que os empresários já estão a começar a despertar para esta necessidade de uma comunicação melhor e mais eficaz. Há empresas com estratégias muito bem montadas e muito bem estruturadas mas claro que a maior parte das empresas do mobiliário não tem essa estratégia definida. Há uma aposta muito pequena ao nível da comunicação e quando isso não existe também não há aposta ao nível do branding e da afirmação da marca. Principalmente as micro e médias empresas, essas estão muito mais atrasadas nesse nível.

JP: Falando concretamente no projecto Stories of Chairs, percebemos desde o início que podíamos marcar a diferença ao promover um envolvimento com a comunidade. Que análise faz daquilo que foi este projecto em Paredes, não apenas para as empresas mas também para os paredenses?

GM: Quem esteve directa ou indirectamente ligado acabou por se envolver no projecto no seu todo. Pode ter sido apenas por ter curiosidade de saber mais sobre o projecto e acabou por o divulgar. A maior falha que tivemos foi o não termos conseguido comunicar bem à população em geral. Quem tinha a tal ligação à área, estivesse de alguma forma ligado ao projecto ou até porque tinha um familiar que produziu x ou y ou porque o filho estava na escola e colaborou na execução de uma das cadeiras, essas pessoas tiveram algum envolvimento. As restantes pessoas acabou por lhes passar ao lado e não tiveram uma percepção clara do que estava a acontecer.

JP: Mas acha que isso aconteceu por desinteresse das pessoas ou terá sido apenas a estratégia de comunicação?

GM: É difícil mobilizar a população em geral para um projecto deste género. Depois, para além disso, o projecto era complexo. Tentar comunicar o projecto no seu todo acabava por não se tornar perceptível o que é que efectivamente se estava a fazer. Isto não quer dizer que a comunicação não tivesse qualidade mas essa falha mostrou que se calhar a comunicação não estava focada para um determinado público-alvo, aquele que não entendia da forma que estávamos a comunicar. Tem de se repensar a estrutura de comunicação para se envolver a própria comunidade. As pessoas em geral aperceberam-se que estava a decorrer algo por causa dos cartazes do Mourinho ou do Ronaldo e porque também começaram a aparecer pessoas de fora a perguntar onde é que estava a decorrer o evento. O grave é quando as próprias pessoas da terra não sabem o que é que está a acontecer e onde, isto condiciona um pouco porque depois não tem o efeito multiplicador que se pretende. Quem visitou até acabou por ir lá mais do que uma vez e levava sempre mais pessoas, como foi relatado por gente de fora muito ligada a estas áreas que veio ver o Art on Chairs.

JP: Mas esse público já tinha interesse.

GM: Sim mas veio e até acabou por voltar novamente, trazendo sempre mais gente. Eu acompanhei mais a visita de estrangeiros que vieram até cá, ligados aos contactos estabelecidos ao nível da rede e com a curiosidade do potencial que poderíamos ter, todos eles fizeram uma avaliação extremamente positiva,

de tal forma, que se dispuseram a apoiar e a participar no projecto tanto durante o evento como depois em todo o trabalho pós-evento que temos de fazer para dar continuidade a este projecto. O objectivo é que se faça a segunda bienal e que se aproveite a mais-valia que foi gerada ao nível do projecto para que possa gerar todo o valor acrescentado para a região.

JP: De que forma é que em termos futuros as empresas podem criar essa mais-valia com a comunidade?

GM: As empresas estão mais preocupadas com a componente de internacionalização do que propriamente ao nível local. Vêm o projecto tendo em conta o potencial de abertura a novos mercados ou até de mercados que já conhecem mas levando novos produtos. Assim teremos um maior número de empresas e empresários a participar no projecto, não tenho a menor dúvida. Ao nível da comunicação com a população é preciso continuar a trabalhar. Primeiro tem que se explicar os resultados de curto prazo (quem visitou, porque visitou, etc.), que impacto é que está a ter quer a nível externo, quer a nível interno mas fora da região e qual é o potencial destas iniciativas. É bom que as pessoas perceberem qual é a oportunidade que perderam para que na próxima não a percam.

JP: O que prevê para Paredes até 2015? Em 2014 vai decorrer o próximo Art on Chairs e em 2015 será o encerramento da implementação do Pólo de Design. Quais são os próximos passos?

GM: A perspectiva é que efectivamente o projecto consiga entrar em velocidade de cruzeiro neste próximo período. O interesse manifestado por potenciais criativos, investidores e parceiros para participar no projecto, quer das residências, quer da incubadora que vai ser criada, vai trazer massa crítica para o concelho, vai gerar valor acrescentado que, creio, que a maior parte das empresas vai aproveitar e que vai conseguir ter resultados a curto prazo. Até porque esta dimensão da internacionalização, do dar a conhecer e do ser conhecido, vai ter um retorno a médio prazo. Por isso, neste período penso que vamos conseguir ter uma maturação do projecto, chegaremos a uma velocidade de cruzeiro e na próxima edição vamos ter ainda maior impacto, maior participação e com um número de visitantes a disparar substancialmente. Temos um conjunto alargado de empresas a investir nesta iniciativa. Entretanto alguns deles vão sentir o benefício, vão melhorar a sua condição porque acabou por ser uma lufada de ar fresco no meio de toda esta conjuntura. Foi um conhecer de algo que desconheciam que pode potenciar a sustentabilidade de várias empresas que estavam numa situação bastante complicada, com perda de mercado, com falta

de ideias. Ideias não faltam, elas estão aí, agora temos de as concretizar em projectos e implementá-los. Penso que isso é o que vai acontecer nos próximos 3 anos. Vai ser uma afirmação do Pólo de Paredes, enquanto Pólo de criatividade e design em toda uma região.

Appendix A3

Interview with Celso Ferreira

Interview conducted January 15, 2013 at Paredes City Hall, Paredes.

61 min, in Portuguese.

Jorge Pereira (JP): Trouxe aqui algumas ideias para questões nomeadamente esta ligação, primeiro sobre território de Paredes e a sua realidade industrial, querendo saber como é que nasce esta ideia do Polo de Design e depois focando mais na parte do Stories of Chairs, media digitais e envolvimento da comunidade.

A primeira questão é mais geral sobre o projecto do Pólo de Design de Mobiliário, que é o primeiro projecto estruturante de transformação do território. Quero perceber, de parte da autarquia, de onde é que o projecto nasceu? Como é foram diagnosticados determinadas problemáticas desta indústria?

Celso Ferreira (CF): Há aqui algum *background* porque eu sou licenciado em Direito, fui professor universitário de Direito e a indústria do mobiliário chegou até ao meu ADN por via familiar, portanto, há aqui um conhecimento empírico da indústria de mobiliário desta região, que me permitiu fazer uma avaliação assertiva e, principalmente, porque eu passei 4 anos pela AIMMP (Associação de Indústrias da Madeira e Mobiliário de Portugal) como dirigente. Antes disso, conhecia o historial da empresa do meu pai. É só para explicar todo este background e para que possa perceber como é que estas coisas nascem. Quando integrei a direcção da AIMMP comecei a lidar com o nome dos estudos e estatísticas que me surpreenderam e uma das que mais me surpreendeu foi o advento da cadeia de valor que se começava a sentir em Portugal no final da década de 1990. E portanto no final da década de 90, estávamos a terminar quase uma década de PEDIP que permitiu uma reindustrialização do país. Na altura colocava-se a questão, nós criámos fábricas novas basicamente, modernizamos a tecnologia das nossas empresas, ainda por cima no final da década tivemos um boom do consumo privado em Portugal. E tivemos que pensar nos novos desafios que surgiam.

No final da década de 90, a maior parte das fábricas que produziam mobiliário clássico de madeira maciça

e com o advento dos créditos à habitação e do crédito ao consumo, o que se verificou foi que milhares de casais jovens recorreram ao crédito para comprar a habitação e para mobilar a respectiva casa. O que se verificou foi uma confusão muito grande entre o consumidor tradicional de mobiliário, que comprava o mobiliário clássico de madeira maciça e o novo consumidor de mobiliário, claramente mais contemporâneo e mais próximo do design.

Eu apercebi-me naquela altura que algo estaria para acontecer e efectivamente em 2001 verificou-se uma mudança radical, não tenho agora estatísticas aqui à mão, mas se até 98/99 cerca de 90% das fábricas de aqui da região fazia mobiliário clássico, em 2001 esses 90% já fazia mobiliário contemporâneo. Uma mudança impressionante.

JP: Uma inversão total.

CF: Foi impressionante. Mas nós reparamos que não havia domínio da cadeia de valor, havia vários planos de negocio completamente autónomos diferentes que resultavam, havia quem trabalhasse para retalho (a maioria), havia quem trabalhasse como subcontratado (segunda linha de grandeza) e havia quem fabricasse e vendesse directamente ao público. Mas em 2001 cheguei à conclusão que esta mudança radical foi feita tendo por base tendências e, muitas vezes, por cópia. Ou seja aquilo que muitas vezes de *copy design*, no fundo nem é propriamente uma cópia, mas é pegar num conceito ou num tipo de produto, introduzir algumas modificações e adapta-lo muito provavelmente até a sensibilidade que o mercado de consumo tem do produto e a expectativa. E assim as empresas iam conseguindo, com correcções aqui e ali, toda a gente conseguia vender.

Isto fez-me logo perceber que o grande desígnio dos próximos anos não seria nem tecnológico, nem organizativo, sabia claramente que era necessário acrescentar design. Então fiz uma avaliação às empresas de Paredes e verifiquei que nós tínhamos quase toda a cadeia de valor, desde a primeira transformação até

à pós-venda. Fiz um quadro sobre as várias fazes da cadeia de valor do mobiliário, desde a manutenção industrial, assessoria técnica e tecnológica específica do setor da madeira e do mobiliário, a formação profissional, o centro tecnológico, enfim.

Reparei que faltava ali qualquer coisa, isto é, faltava a criação. Nós tínhamos tudo, menos a criação do produto. Comecei então a investigar onde é que as pessoas vão buscar a criação do produto. A maior parte fazia-o internamente, *copy design*, já as empresas com presença nos mercados internacionais e com maior responsabilidade compravam propriedade intelectual fora de Portugal.

JP: Sim.

CF: Foi então que eu comecei a perceber que tínhamos que fazer alguma coisa e tentei através da Associação Empresarial de Paredes, dinamizar um projecto, que todavia não descolou por falta de capacidade e meios financeiros porque as políticas públicas sectoriais estão desacreditadas. Se você for falar com um empresário e disser que uma determinada associação vai fazer um projecto para isto ou para aquilo, o empresário não tem paciência. A essas associações nunca conseguimos tirar sumo do associativismo. As associações, infelizmente, em Portugal são as agências de viagens para as feiras e mais nada. Eu fui dirigente da AIMMP e deixei de ser porque, sinceramente, aquilo não presta serviço nenhum às empresas. Organizei uma coisa na Av. da Boavista que se chamou Deco Decor, que foi um embrião do Pólo de Design Mobiliário de Paredes. Eu quis realizar isto numa associação sectorial mas quando percebi que a associação sectorial não tinha músculo para lá ir nem sequer havia consenso, desisti e resolvi transferir o projecto que era meu, a ideia que era minha, para a Câmara Municipal de Paredes onde eu tinha poder decisório.

JP: Enquanto dirigente da AIMMP já fazia parte da Câmara Municipal de Paredes?

CF: Já era vereador. Coincidiu porque entrei para dirigente em 1997. Foi uma coincidência.

JP: E aproveitou a coincidência para concretizar a semente do projecto.

CF: Portanto resolvi pegar no meu projecto e implementá-lo aqui. E em 2005 foi feito diagnóstico sobre os grandes projectos da criatividade no mundo e aprendi imenso. Na altura contactámos um gabinete de perspectiva do Ministério do Ambiente, que nos ajudou na reflexão e foi mesmo muito interessante.

JP: Sim, eu conheço.

CF: Foram muito interessantes na componente da reflexão. Fizemos um projecto que se traduziu numa candidatura, depois de termos chegado à conclusão que havia aqui um conjunto de factores absolutamente fundamentais: o valor histórico e o factor tradicional. Isto porque introduzir design nas indústrias tradicionais, seja no mobiliário, no calçado ou têxtil ou outra qualquer é complicado. Introduzir inovação nestes produtos, em condições normais, para se ter sucesso num médio prazo é através do design e depois o design condiciona tudo mais, condiciona o processo produtivo, condiciona o processo de marketing, a distribuição e tudo isso.

Eu cheguei à conclusão de que a inovação no sector industrial de mobiliário tinha que ser feito através do design e na altura fui sensibilizado para o fenómeno das Indústrias Criativas, que não foi uma expressão que eu achasse imensa piada, ainda hoje não acho muito feliz.

JP: Sim, não é consensual.

CF: Pois não. Mas percebo que criatividade pode ser acrescentar valor, criatividade pode ser a criar inovação, investigação, desenvolvimento e portanto, eu "comprei" a ideia dos Indústrias Criativas com o design e a arquitectura como aspectos fundamentais. Estudamos vários modelos, como por exemplo, o modelo de Barcelona. As pessoas pensam que Indústrias Criativas é um fenómeno recente mas não é.

JP: Não, não.

CF: Barcelona apostou nos Jogos Olímpicos num conjunto de iniciativas com o objectivo de vender uma cidade moderna, jovem, dinâmica e empreendedora e criativa para atrair criativos do Norte da Europa. E conseguiu. Barcelona deve ser das cidades do Sul da Europa que mais expatriados tem no Norte a Europa e deve rivalizar com Milão, aliás, Milão é que deve estar a rivalizar com Barcelona.

Portanto, fizemos essa avaliação, estudamos o modelo de Roterdão, do Dubai, Singapura e Dublin e o modelo que mais nos convenceu foi o de Dublin. Isto porque é um modelo pequeno de custos e um modelo promotor e facilitador, o que é uma filosofia que eu partilho muito. Acho que se o sector público conseguir ser promotor e facilitador de iniciativas pode ter mais resultados do que sendo um *player* activo.

E portanto, nós montámos uma operação, que parte deste pressuposto: nós temos tradição, temos uma industria com uma dimensão crítica mínima para poder ser trabalhada, temos abundância de empresas, temos uma proximidade aos grandes centros de formação de design portugueses, naturalmente, estamos aqui nas barbas de uma grande cidade, muito provavelmente a 4^a ou 5^a cidade ibérica, estamos ao

pé da melhor universidade do país, estamos a 60 km da UA, 60 km da UM. Ou seja, tínhamos que trabalhar tudo isto e então o que fizemos foi tentar estabelecer um novo nível de confluência do conhecimento dos empresários e do conhecimento dos designers. Normalmente diz-se empiricamente que os designers estão lá em cima desfasados da realidade e com um nível de conhecimentos académicos demasiado evoluídos para a realidade da indústria portuguesa e, por outro lado, diz-se que a realidade da indústria portuguesa está desfasada da realidade das universidades, que está muito afastada porque os empresários têm baixa qualificação académica.

JP: Claro, claro. Sobretudo por ser toda uma região interiorizada.

CF: Sim e porque respondem ao mercado, ou seja, respondem mas não provocam o mercado. E daí que o objectivo foi fazer subir o nível de ambição dos empresários e fazer com que os designers descessem um bocadinho à terra porque a realidade das empresas é esta. Assim sendo, o nosso projecto andou todo a volta disto. Mas como é que o podemos fazer sem dinheiro? Ou seja, eu poderia tentar lançar um projecto voluntarista, juntando uma dúzia de empresas e um ou dois universitários e tentar fazê-lo sem dinheiro. Mas a verdade é que o envolvimento das empresas não seria o mesmo porque se as empresas não sentissem a escala do projecto e que daqui a alguns anos poderiam ganhar efectivamente com isto, as empresas fugiam. E foi aí que nós montamos o Polo do Design Mobiliário com um programa tão extenso e tão aberto, de forma, a permitir uma envolvimento não apenas da sociedade civil mas que está direccionado para o novo modelo de regeneração urbana. E o que tentamos vender aos empresários e conseguimos? A ideia de que nós vamos criar um projecto para trazer para Paredes todos aqueles que queiram vender design aos empresários. Porque os empresários não querem funcionários, não querem designers nas empresas, estamos a falar de empresas que têm entre 10 a 150/200 trabalhadores. E exceptuando as que têm 200/250 trabalhadores, mais nenhuma tem dimensão crítica para ter um designer interno. Têm um desenhador técnico quanto muito.

JP: Alguém que executa aquilo que alguém pensou.

C. Exactamente. Mas não tem dimensão crítica para ter internalizado o lugar de designer. O segredo é fazer com os designers o que o próprio mercado fez sem regulação nenhuma com a manutenção industrial. Com o PEDIP começaram "a chover" máquinas de controlo numérico e de repente aparece no mercado de manutenção industrial uma necessidade que não

existia aqui. Os nossos mecânicos de máquinas industriais da região sabiam fazer a manutenção básica.

JP: Sim, ainda era tudo muito à moda antiga.

CF: Pois eles só sabiam trabalhar com massas, óleos, conhecimentos básicos de electricidade para compor uma bobine, etc.. Quando entra aqui o mercado das máquinas de controlo numérico, com o uso intensivo de pneumáticos e de hidráulicos, muda completamente o cenário. Começaram a aparecer empresas de manutenção industrial específicas, e recursos humanos de programação de CNC. Ou seja, quando os empresários precisaram o mercado apareceu e nós sentimos em 2001 e em 2005 confirmamos, que os empresários precisam de um mercado, precisam que apareçam ofertas de design de produto. Ninguém quer pagar 3000€/5000€ para ter um designer interno numa fábrica. Isto porque ninguém quer ficar preso em permanência à mesma linguagem estilística. Por exemplo, as marcas de automóveis, de seis em seis anos renovam a equipa de designers ou pelo menos a coordenação da equipa de design. De outra maneira um Peugeot tinha sempre o mesmo tipo de faróis ao longo de vinte e cinco anos, a Mercedes tinha sempre o mesmo tipo de frentes e pára-choques e não pode ser. E quando se vê que a própria Rolls Royce já abandonou aquela grelha vertical de vértices, ou seja, esta marca já cedeu porque a equipa de design mudou. Por exemplo a BMW contratou uma equipa de designers femininas para desenhar o Z4 e apenas lhes condicionaram ao conceito da grelha de faróis. Portanto, as empresas querem ser surpreendidas na oferta de design, da mesma forma que são surpreendidas com a manutenção industrial ou pela capacidade do técnico de programação da CNC, etc.

Por isso, depois de muita investigação e diagnóstico, o nosso modelo foi criar um mercado de design na cidade de Paredes. É uma cidade com óptimas acessibilidades, não é grande, muito bonita, limpa que não tem centro histórico mas que é arranjadinha, que tem uma ligação ao centro do Porto de comboio, é servida por quatro auto-estradas. Trata-se de território competitivo interessantíssimo, decidimos tentar seduzir designers e arquitectos para virem para Paredes fazer regeneração económica do tecido empresarial de mobiliário. E o modelo anda todo à volta disso. Para convenceremos os designers criamos um conjunto de oportunidades ao nível dos concursos, ao nível das residências e definimos um conjunto de programações para envolver a sociedade civil onde se insere o Stories of Chairs. E portanto, o nosso objectivo foi ter um programa global. Se olhar para o concelho de Paredes poderá perguntar: mas porque que Paredes chegou a ter em 2009 um total de 1268 fábricas novas? Como é que isso é possível quando não há uma universidade aqui na região que

tenha a Engenharia ou Design de Mobiliário (estas duas licenciaturas estão em Aveiro, estupidamente) quando o centro tecnológico faliu e o centro de formação profissional só liberta setenta miúdos por ano, que arranjam emprego na hora. Portanto qualquer pessoa pergunta: mas porque é que isto aconteceu? Aconteceu porque houve uma tradição secular que permitiu que as fábricas fossem aparecendo e porque na década, principalmente de 60/70 a tecnologia era muito básica e permitiu que qualquer bom marceneiro ou qualquer bom profissional do mobiliário, com o mínimo de capacidade organizativa comercial pudesse com facilidade montar uma unidade industrial porque a tecnologia era muito básica. Dá-se então um boom porque o mercado absorvia o mobiliário e o empreendedorismo de cada profissional foi permitindo o aparecimento de empresas. Mas elas apareceram numa determinada conjuntura. Hoje, esta conjuntura é de uma grande oportunidade para os designers e o que nós pretendemos fazer é proporcionar o encontro regular e permanente entre designers e empresários.

JP: O que quer dizer com nisso?

CF: Quer dizer que vamos criar oportunidades para os designers se instalarem cá com baixo custo e organizar encontros fechados aos designers que estão a trabalhar connosco no Polo do Design. E só eles é que vão ter acesso às empresas. É óbvio que as empresas podem contratar fora mas não vão beneficiar dos incentivos que nós temos para dar aos designers que estiverem a trabalhar em rede connosco. Portanto, vamos criar oportunidades comerciais a sério, ou seja, vamos organizar dois eventos anuais de compra de design, mais concretamente, duas feiras de design internas do Polo, onde as empresas vêm ver o que os designers têm para oferecer. E é neste modelo que nós acreditamos que vai ser um grande sucesso, porque se os designers conseguirem perceber o mercado e se conseguirem perceber a engenharia do produto de mobiliário e se os empresários perceberem o factor inovador e potencial comercial dos produtos e das ofertas, eu não tenho dúvidas nenhuma que poderemos criar aqui um grande mercado. Com uma grande vantagem, é que a Câmara Municipal está a injectar milhões com o objectivo de isto ser um grande sucesso.

JP: A CMP foi o grande facilitador deste percurso. Isto implicou alguma reestruturação na própria autarquia por exemplo? Existia aqui internamente um *know-how* para lidar com esta temática do designer?

CF: Nós preferimos contratar uma empresa autónoma para a coordenação de todo este processo.

JP: Em termos de perspectiva de curto prazo com a autarquia, provavelmente vai ser necessário enquadrar isto de alguma forma. Como é que o vão fazer?

CF: Sim, o Polo vai ser autonomizado. Ainda não escolhemos a figura jurídica por uma razão muito simples, as candidaturas estão em nome da CMP e a CM tem um financiamento de 85% a fundo perdido e enquanto os fundos comunitários se mantiverem nesta ordem de grandeza, o projecto tem que ser da CM porque fica mais barato para toda a gente. E é só por isso. Pois, o nosso objectivo é autonomizar a sua gestão e o que nós fizemos foi contratar uma empresa de organização de eventos na área cultural.

JP: A Setepés tem um *know-how* bastante consolidado.

CP: Sem dúvida e que tem uma ligação às universidades muito bem estruturada. Isto não é a mesma coisa que organizar um casamento, um concerto ou um comício político. O que se trata aqui é contratar uma equipa de produção para fazer a ligação, do ponto de vista regulamentar e do ponto de vista de organização de eventos entre as universidades, onde está conhecimento e as empresas, onde está a riqueza. Por isso, este modelo vai continuar a ser desenvolvido desta forma, aliás a 2ª edição do Art on Chairs está confirmada para 2014 e nós não pretendemos prescindir de nenhum dos parceiros. Queremos continuar a trabalhar com a ESAD, com a UP, com a U. de Aveiro, com o IDT, com a Setepés... Queremos trabalhar com os mesmos parceiros, porque nós não nos podemos dar ao luxo de prescindir daqueles que ajudaram a criar este projecto. E há muito para melhorar mas o *networking* está aqui, não há outra. Poderá entrar aqui eventualmente mais um parceiro, mas o *networking* é este. O nosso objectivo é um dia mais tarde chegarmos a um ponto em que os empresários digam à CM que querem assumir o projeto. No dia que isso acontecer, nós concluímos o nosso trabalho.

JP: Passados cerca de dois meses de ter terminado o Art on Chairs como é que observa o território? Entretanto já assentou alguma da espuma que se gerou em termos mediáticos.

CF: Sinceramente, posso-lhe transmitir um grande entusiasmo e posso-lhe dizer que as empresas estão ansiosas por passarmos à segunda fase o mais rapidamente possível porque perceberam que há oportunidades a tirar daqui. Por exemplo, a Nini Andrade Silva desenhou a cadeira de Ronaldo, já está a trabalhar com a empresa que a produziu para equipar hotéis.

JP: Aliás, ela tem uma série de projectos premiados internacionalmente.

CF: Mas não se conheciam e não havia sequer a noção por parte da maioria dos designers. Por exemplo, o Paolo Rizzato está a trabalhar com a empresa que prototipou a cadeira da Maria Bethania. Os designers também são vendedores de produto e, portanto, sabendo da existência de uma fábrica, conseguiu executar um produto a medida, com as indicações que eles deram, criam-se oportunidades. A cadeira de Ronaldo é uma escultura, é uma obra de arte.

JP: Não será uma cadeira no sentido tradicional, decididamente.

CF: Exactamente, eu não tenho dúvidas nenhuma que os empresários já perceberam isto. Por exemplo, a empresa que prototipou a cadeira vencedora do concurso internacional, já está a vender a cadeira na Alemanha. Ou seja, os empresários perceberam que o facto de nós levarmos o design até às últimas consequências quase, faz com que eles tenham notoriedade, faz com que eles sejam vistos, faz com que eles sejam opção, seja através do contacto com o designer, seja através dos produtos que prototiparam, está a haver oportunidades. Aquilo que nós sempre dissemos aos empresários é que nós íamos trabalhar a cadeira na primeira edição como um ícone mas na segunda edição será sempre a cadeira no Duets e o mobiliário doméstico e o de hotelaria na componente dos concursos. Porque o objectivo é a cadeira para fazer marketing através do Duets.

JP: Pois, é necessário encontrar aqui alguma coisa que seja mais fácil comunicar em termos mediáticos.

CF: E os concursos internacionais de design direccionados para produto comercializável. A segunda edição do Art on Chairs vai ser uma edição mais direccionada para o mercado, onde os designers vão ter uma relação contratual completamente diferente e onde as empresas vão ter oportunidades completamente diferentes. Isto é o que nos interessa, chama-se sustentabilidade.

Este ano, por exemplo, oferecemos os direitos de autor das cadeira dos concursos, que eram da Câmara Municipal, às empresas que os prototiparam. Oferecemos porque as empresas que vieram voluntariamente merecem isso.

JP: Merecem ganhar com o investimento que fizeram.

CF: Na segunda e terceira edição e daí para a frente, os direitos de autor dos concursos serão vendidos

pela Câmara Municipal às empresas e será isso que vai fazer financiar o Polo. E se acontecer o que aconteceu este ano, eu não tenho dúvidas nenhuma que o Polo de Design vai ser um sucesso comercial para as nossas empresas. É essa a minha grande expectativa, isto é, criar um mercado de designer que não existe.

JP: Além do consolidar das empresas já existentes, perspectiva-se o surgimento de novas empresas?

CF: Sim, sem dúvida. Aliás, um dos participantes achou tanta piada ao conceito e percebeu a oportunidade que criou uma marca nova com a ajuda do designer residente, criaram uma marca nova, e já está a tentar lançar uma nova completamente diferente.

JP: Por exemplo, em visita à Fenabel percebi que eles exportam praticamente tudo o que fazem. Há questões geográficas de localização, por exemplo, o mercado Nórdico, tem especificidades muito próprias, o mercado do Médio Oriente também...

CF: É essa a nossa grande expectativa, nós tivemos quinhentas e tal candidaturas aos concursos de design para cadeiras, se não estou em erro. Agora imagine que aparecem quinhentas propostas de mobiliário doméstico. O que é que vai acontecer é que os concorrentes que vierem do Japão vêm com produto japonês, os nórdicos vêm com produto nórdico e as empresas portuguesas vão pensar que se quiserem “atacar” o mercado japonês podem criar um produto com potencial. Pode não ser um campeão de vendas mas há de ser qualquer coisa à volta disto. Nós recebemos propostas de trinta e sete países, são trinta e sete mercados (se não estou em erro), admitamos que alguns desses têm o mesmo tipo de produto do centro da Europa, mas nem todos. Basicamente, conseguimos dar aos empresários uma perspectiva de produtos direccionados para determinado tipo de mercados.

Acho, com toda a certeza e com toda a segurança, que nos próximos anos vamos assistir ao aparecimento de joint-ventures entre designers e empresários, mais concretamente, ao aparecimento de um mercado de design. Vamos assistir a um boom do design intensivo nas empresas, ou seja, o PEDIP foi responsável pela tecnologia e produção intensiva nas nossas fábricas e o nosso objectivo é que esta metodologia leve à utilização intensiva do design nas empresas.

JP: Acha que este diálogo entre poder local, empresas e as próprias universidades foi percebido pelos cidadãos Paredenses? Já foi identificado que o envolvimento da comunidade poderá não ter sido a frente mais bem sucedida mas nota-se

nas pessoas alguma atenção nova para o design?

CF: O investimento no circuito da arte pública tem como objectivo sensibilizar as pessoas para o design. O estabelecimento de parcerias com as escolas de Paredes foi feito com o objectivo de introduzir o design como disciplina extra-curricular. Tivemos outras iniciativas como é o caso das montras do comércio tradicional, que foram inspiradas nas esculturas dos artistas convidados.

Mas mais do que isto, voltava um pouco atrás para dizer que quem quiser implementar um projecto com estas características não pode ignorar que as lideranças são fundamentais e o poder de convocatória também, ou seja, eu admito que este projecto possa ter tido sucesso porque a Câmara Municipal liderou e os empresários, de alguma forma, respeitaram essa a liderança em questão de natureza económica. Isto pode não acontecer noutros territórios, porque o ADN de Paredes é assim, 50% da população activa trabalha na indústria do mobiliário, portanto, as pessoas aceitam que a Câmara tenha uma agenda direccionada para o mobiliário, provavelmente esta agenda, por exemplo em Guimarães ou em Santo Tirso ou Barcelos não seria aceite.

Poderia haver uma aceitação de uma agenda para o têxtil mas para o mobiliário não. As pessoas aqui aceitam e patrocinam e, por outro lado, o poder de convocatória, porque a Câmara Municipal quando convida os empresários para uma reunião de trabalho eles vêm. Coisa que não acontece com as associações sectoriais ou locais porque já perderam a credibilidade e isto é fundamental. Eu acredito numa dada a descredibilização de algum sector associativo em Portugal. De maneira que, eu acho que as Câmaras Municipais têm aqui um papel fundamental nos próximos anos, de tal forma que eu acredito que a metodologia que está a ser desenvolvida em Paredes até possa ser transferida para a Associação Empresarial de Paredes. Só que é algo que apenas vai acontecer quando os empresários pedirem.

JP: Este projecto tem várias dimensões.

CF: Exactamente, essa é uma das vantagens deste projecto: a sua escala. Não trabalhamos apenas na dimensão da grandiosidade, trabalhamos também na relação da sociedade civil. Da mesma forma que no passado nos cafés só se falava de móveis, aliás, eu ri-me quando era estudante universitário em Lisboa e me perguntaram o que é que os nortenhos falavam nos cafés. Eu achei imensa piada porque achavam que eu era extraterrestre, e eu perguntei de que é que eles falavam em Lisboa. E o meu interlocutor, um grande amigo meu, respondeu: falamos de futebol, falamos de carros, de mulheres, toda a gente fala. E eu respondi-lhe que nós erámos muito melhores

porque só falávamos de carros bons, de mulheres boas e de futebol a sério e também de móveis (risos). Ele achou imensa piada. E eu disse-lhe que não sabíamos fazer mais nada, eram fábricas atrás de fábricas. E isso é que levou esta comunidade, esta componente social, fez com que as pessoas falando no quotidiano da sua profissão e o conhecimento fosse disseminado um pouco por todas as empresas. E a prova disso é que os próprios trabalhadores transmitiam aos amigos as inovações técnicas e tecnológicas que sentiam na sua fábrica e as empresas cresceram. Se isto acontecer ao nível do design e se um dia tivermos aqui uma comunidade significativa a residir e a trabalhar em Paredes, o que vai acontecer é que eles vão se encontrar nos mesmos sítios porque são grupos culturais coesos. Falando do ponto de vista histórico, aqui há uns 30/40 anos atrás os marceneiros não se davam com os polidores porque eram classes profissionais que não tinham um particular respeito mútuo, havia uma disputa entre estes grupos. Estes grupos relativamente fechados eram de tal forma coesos que faziam crescer as próprias empresas com o brio de fazer bem. Se isto acontecer com os designers, e eu não tenho dúvida nenhuma que acontecerá, podemos estar aqui a criar uma comunidade em que o conhecimento é a essência do relacionamento. Isto vai levar a uma maior competitividade entre designers ligados às empresas e o sucesso do designer será o sucesso comercial das empresas tal como o sucesso comercial das empresas será uma grande oportunidade para os designers. Se conseguirmos transformar este projecto de natureza económica em algo de relevância social, que conte com o envolvimento das pessoas, ao ponto de elas quererem crescer juntas, eu penso que vamos ter aqui um grande sucesso.

JP: Mas que tipo de relação profissional se poderá vir a criar aqui?

CF: Eu não acredito nisto como um mercado de trabalho puro e duro, ou seja, um mercado de propriedade intelectual puro e duro, porque se formos por aí, não faltam nórdicos a fazer e a vender design. Isso não acrescenta valor e para isso as nossas empresas não precisam do Polo de Design. A grande vantagem que temos é conseguir ter aqui 100 ou 150 designers que conheçam bem as nossas fábricas e que pensem da seguinte forma: “eu desenhei esta colecção e adequa-se à empresa A e então vou bater à porta e propor-lhe este produto porque a conheço.” E se o empresário perceber e aproveitar isso vão surgir aqui grandes oportunidades. A Câmara Municipal não vai sair disto enquanto não sentir que o mercado tem vida própria e estas interacções não acontecerem. A CM vai continuar nisto incentivando a criatividade e a prototipagem porque sabemos que os empresários não vão interessar-se subitamente pelo design. Isto

é um processo de assimilação e por isso vamos provocá-los, lançando concursos, premiando os melhores concorrentes e vamos passar a pagar a prototipagem. Ou seja, os designers têm oportunidades, as empresas têm oportunidades e quando começar a haver resultados, nós já não precisaremos de nos preocupar.

**JP: Já há aqui uma ideia bem definida daquilo que possa vir a ser o funcionamento desta di-
aléctica.**

CF: Exactamente. Eu não sei quantos anos é que isto poderá demorar, penso que menos do que 10 anos é difícil.

JP: Há quem defenda que estas transformações são até geracionais. O facto das empresas em Portugal ainda terem uma índole muito familiar faz com que só com a mudança de gerações na liderança é que se façam algumas mudanças na gestão.

CF: Sim mas também é uma vantagem porque a partir do momento em que perceberem que o mercado absorve, o design passa a ser assimilado pelo empresário como um custo tão importante como uma CNC móvel ou uma calibradora.

JP: Claro que sim.

CF: O nosso objectivo é fazer com que a cadeia de valor tenha o mesmo valor inter-partes. Quando o empresário olhar para cadeia de valor e pensar de que forma é que vai estruturar o seu plano de negócios, quando ele escolher uma parte da cadeia de valor o design está lá. Nós queremos que o empresário perceba que o design é tão importante como a manutenção industrial ou como a assistência pós-venda ou a assessoria de marketing, entre outras coisas. Ou seja, nós estamos a dar uma grande ênfase ao design porque não o temos mas ele tem que ocupar na cadeia de valor um lugar que é seu. E os empresários têm de olhar para a propriedade intelectual como uma coisa tão importante como a matéria-prima ou outra coisa qualquer.

JP: Falando agora mais na parte dos Media Digitais. Como surge esta ideia de pensar os meios digitais como parte integrante de um projecto desta natureza?

CF: É fundamental. Os meios digitais são o futuro e seja na parte da concepção, do apoio ao design na componente de software, seja pela componente de produção, pelo domínio do 3D ou pelo domínio da comunicação. O digital aqui, e isso vai-se ver pelo Centro de Interpretação de Design que vamos construir na Fábrica do Design, tem uma componente muito

importante na interactividade e na relação da informação com o conteúdo. É fácil fazer um site apelativo, agradável e que permita que o utilizador tenha um acesso rápido ao conteúdo mas aquilo de que nós estamos a falar é muito mais complexo. Na segunda edição do Art on Chairs vamos tentar fazer uma plataforma universal de vendas. Ou seja, queremos uma plataforma que permita que um consumidor na Nova Zelândia possa submeter um pedido de consulta para o fornecimento de mobiliário qualquer e depois as nossas empresas em rede possam apresentar a sua proposta de fornecimento. A globalização está a avançar com uma velocidade tão grande que eu penso que o domínio da cadeia de valor tem que chegar ao meio digital e ao domínio de conhecimento de tecnologias que nos permitam potenciar negócios através da internet. Eu nem sequer estou a dizer nada de novo, aliás há uma fábrica de móveis em Paredes, uma das maiores empresas do país, que está neste momento a estudar a substituição dos pontos de venda físicos para digitais. Por isso, está a investir muito dinheiro em estudos de avaliação do impacto para encerrar estabelecimentos comerciais, sair da presença física e passar para a presença digital. E isto é outro campeonato, ninguém consegue dar este passo sem interirizar o design e sem o fazer em paralelo. Nós vamos estar nessa guerra e vamos estar na linha da frente. Já há alguns exemplos de abordagens destas no centro e norte da europa e o Polo de Design de Paredes vai estar na frente disto. Nós só poderemos ambicionar crescer se não crescermos mais do que os outros, caso contrário, crescemos todos a mesma coisa e para bem da sustentabilidade económica deste território, temos de crescer mais do que os outros. A estratégia vai por aí. Vamos começar a ensaiar uma plataforma que não será certamente a plataforma definitiva, será uma plataforma de primeira geração, não tem sequer que ter sucesso imediato mas é uma plataforma que vai servir de base à sua evolução. Essa plataforma vai ter uma dependência do design gráfico e digital muito grande. Há ferramentas que já existem, como o 3D, mas aqui o grande segredo é acrescentar ao 3D uma plataforma de compras, idêntico aquelas que o sector público tem. Temos a plataforma da Vortal e vamos assentar dentro da mesma filosofia.

JP: Sim, estas coisas já estão mais ou menos definidas e as próprias regras de interacção são quase as mesmas.

CF: No entanto, há aqui outros critérios, mais ligados à ética para que o interessado não tenha problemas com direitos de propriedade intelectual, entre outras questões importantes. Há ferramentas que terão de ser construídas para que o próprio consumidor final possa fazer propostas e pedidos de alteração aos produtos, de forma a que o mercado possa ter valor

acrescentado. Portanto, muitas coisas ainda estão a ser estudadas e a primeira proposta ainda será de primeira geração, o que é inevitável. Nós não podemos chegar logo com uma proposta perfeita, a própria internet há uns anos atrás era terrível.

JP: Sim, na altura era fabuloso mas entretanto as nossas necessidades também foram mudando.

CF: Exactamente. O que queremos fazer no que toca ao comércio digital é precisamente aquilo que as casas de software fizeram, que foi antecipar as necessidades do consumidor. Antes de termos o email nos telemóveis nem sequer imaginávamos que essa poderia vir a ser uma necessidade quotidiana. Cheguei a ler uns estudos que diziam que o email não resolve problemas, o email serve para documentos com alguma profundidade mas não serve para o “sim”, “já”, “ok” e “talvez”. Mentira. Isto é completamente falso! (risos) Mas a ideia que tínhamos do email é que era uma alternativa ao fax e ao telex, ou seja, para a transferência de grande quantidade de informação, o que já não se verifica. O próprio sms cai em desuso com os emails e chats e com os custos de um e outros. Em Paredes vamos ter que fazer essa evolução e vamos ter de o fazer em paralelo, o design em conjunto com a componente tecnológica, são as duas pedras basilares do mercado do futuro.

JP: Essas de facto são as duas missões fundamentais, por um lado abranger uma audiência o mais internacional possível, por outro lado procurar através desta lógica participativa e através dos conteúdos que estão online, o envolvimento da própria comunidade.

CF: É fundamental que a comunidade valorize o design porque se não prefere o *kitsch*. Com o devido respeito, você trabalha em Barcelos, o Galo de Barcelos é um ícone português e já houve várias tentativas de redecorar o Galo de Barcelos. No entanto, nenhuma funciona porque o design original que está associado à tradição é mais forte do que a inovação. Mas a Joana Vasconcelos, por incrível que pareça, conseguiu com sucesso, reinventar as imagens tradicionais portuguesas, como é o caso do Galo de Barcelos, do Coração de Viana, entre outros. O que quer dizer que há espaço para a inovação através do design mas a opinião pública tem que assimilar o design e ainda estamos muito longe de ver isso acontecer. Mas a verdade é que o nosso mercado já não é o mercado português, é o mercado global. Portanto, se as nossas empresas conseguirem entrar nas redes frequentadas por pessoas interessadas em design, as nossas empresas vão vender. Acho, com toda a sinceridade, que o caminho é este. É preciso envolver a comunidade, mostrar às pessoas através dos meios digitais a importância do

design para o produto, para o mercado, para as profissões e para as empresas e fazer com que as pessoas respirem design. Nós gostávamos que a cidade de Paredes, que era o que qualquer autarca gostaria, respirasse design. Se isso acontecesse, se toda a gente tivesse um sentido apurado de design, as nossas empresas sentiam isso através dos seus trabalhadores e de todos os cidadãos. Portanto, há aqui um desafio, este mais geracional, mas o trabalhador industrial não tem que ser forçosamente o agente da mudança, as lideranças e o poder convocatório são o factor de mudança. Por isso, se os empresários, em conjunto com as pessoas certas, promoverem essas mudanças, os trabalhadores vão atrás e depois as famílias e os amigos também vão perceber isso e vão comentar que a produção das suas empresas está claramente num patamar diferente. Por exemplo, no hoje Têxtil há imensas empresas que trabalham com marcas de grande prestígio mundial e muitos dos trabalhadores que saem das empresas estabelecem unidades de produção usando as tendências que aprenderam nas empresas onde trabalharam e muito provavelmente com as mesmas fontes de inspiração. Aquilo que eu acho que conseguimos aqui no Pólo de Design foi encontrar uma metodologia que faz a diferença porque já muita gente tinha tentado e ninguém tinha conseguido e nós estamos a conseguir e é aí que está o grande mérito.

JP: E haverá continuidade do Art on Chairs e do Stories of Chairs?

CF: Vai continuar e o nosso objectivo é fazer com que o Stories of Chairs seja quase uma carta de conforto para a inovação que se está aqui a fazer, ou seja, pretendemos que as pessoas que tiverem a oportunidade de conhecer o trabalho do Stories of Chairs percebam que a indústria do mobiliário está a mudar, é claramente inovadora e uma indústria de futuro onde se vai trabalhar o design e os meios digitais. A única coisa que vamos mudar significativamente é a programação cultural necessária. Tudo o resto vai-se manter. Na programação cultural procuramos eventos culturais de natureza musical ou de teatro que tivessem design, ou seja, que quase fossem desenhados para elevar o gosto das pessoas. Mas não vale a pena.

JP: Pois não tem esse poder de convocatória, não é?

CF: Não funciona mesmo. Portanto, temos que ter eventos que tenham esse poder de convocatória de massas mas que tenham uma linguagem que permita disseminar a cultura do design em classes menos sensíveis ao tema. Isso vamos mudar radicalmente. Tudo o resto mantém-se e é estrutura para sucesso.

JP: Como é que perspectiva Paredes daqui a 10 anos? O que haverá para fazer a seguir do Pólo de Design Mobiliário de Paredes?

CF: Eu não tenho essa pretensão de adivinhar o futuro mas acredito que dentro de 10 anos o mobiliário de Paredes estará no top mundial da relação design/ indústria e não tenho dúvida que teremos um conjunto de empresas muito melhor preparadas e um mercado muito mais estruturado. E não será difícil de adivinhar o aumento de negócios por esta relação. O que vem a seguir, sinceramente, não sei. Penso que o que virá a seguir a isso serão estratégias comerciais e a ambição das empresas em pegar neste "boião" de cultura e transformar isto em escala. Já temos empresas que estão a abrir lojas fora de Portugal, nomeadamente em Espanha, França, Suíça, África de Sul, Dubai, entre outros, e, portanto, eu acho que a seguir a isto virá uma nova geração de políticas empresariais para a globalização das nossas empresas. Daqui a 10 anos já teremos de certeza absoluta um mercado de design, já teremos a Fábrica de Design a funcionar, já teremos o Centro Tecnológico a velocidade de cruzeiro, de certeza que o curso de Engenharia de Madeiras já estará a funcionar e espero que tenhamos aqui a Licenciatura de Design de Mobiliário para completar esta rede que nos falta. Estou convencido que reunidas estas condições, as empresas vão ganhar dinheiro e saber fazer negócios com isto e o segredo é esse, ou seja, se as empresas fizerem negócio, o território ganha. O nosso objectivo é transformar Paredes num centro de competências na área do mobiliário em todas as suas disciplinas.

Appendix A4

Interview with Carla Gomes

Interview conducted March 19, 2013 at Fenabel, Paredes.

49 min, in Portuguese.

Jorge Pereira (JP): Como é que descreve a Fenabel enquanto empresa e no contexto do município de Paredes?

Carla Gomes (CG): A Fenabel, enquanto marca, existe há 20 anos mas como a empresa em si já existe há muito mais tempo. Tem passado de geração em geração, tal como muitas outras empresas da zona. A empresa original tem registos de 1910, surgiu como uma empresa de pequena dimensão e fazia mobiliário em geral, como é característico da região, até que ao longo dos anos se foi especializando e direccionando só para um tipo de produto: a cadeira. Na 2ª geração já estava mesmo especializada em cadeira e, actualmente, nesta terceira geração já não há dúvidas, sendo a cadeira o produto primordial da empresa. Claro que também tem a variante de mesas, porque é quase a evolução de um para o outro, podemos dizer que é “o sapato e a meia”. Quem nos pergunta sobre mesas pergunta-nos sobre cadeiras, quem nos pergunta de cadeiras passa para as banquetas e quem quer saber de banquetas pergunta-nos sobre cabeceiras de cama... Na verdade, é um pouco através das perguntas e dos desafios dos clientes que vamos evoluindo. A Fenabel não segue só desafios internos, muitas vezes, são os clientes que os propõem e de forma insistente. Destaco também que todos os processos e todo o investimento que fazemos é na direcção da afirmação e expansão, ou seja, de termos um bom produto, de nos especializarmos nele e de sermos uma empresa de referência para o desenvolvimento desse produto. Por isso, somos uma empresa de referência na região.

JP: Que tipo de clientes são esses que vos propõem os desafios que referiu?

CG: É mais a nível internacional, pois, 70% dos clientes da Fenabel são estrangeiros.

JP: Mas estamos a falar de arquitectos, designers, decoradores ou outro tipo de cliente?

CG: Todos eles têm alguma coisa a dizer. Imagine um grande grupo de decoração em que estão habituados a fazer decorações de hotéis de ponta a ponta. Muitas vezes o projecto é entregue inteiramente a uma empresa mas, por exemplo, se eles querem cabeceiras de cama e nós só fazemos as cadeiras, eles muito provavelmente propõem-nos a criação dessas cadeiras. Nessa situação, nós tentámos, fazemos uma ou duas experiências, propomos alguma, e, em muitos casos, tem sucesso. Posso dizer que são mesmo os clientes a puxar por segmentos, não somos sempre nós que nos lembramos e apostamos em determinado produto. Claro que vamos investindo, uma ou outra vez, em novas experiências, no entanto, muitas vezes parte mesmo dos nossos clientes.

JP: Como é que surgiu a Fenabel como marca?

CG: Já desde a segunda geração, em que estava na direcção o pai do actual gerente, o Sr. Mário Leite, a empresa já estava bem direccionada para a produção da cadeira, mais tarde a empresa passou para os dois filhos, Mário Abel e Fernando, sendo que o nome Fenabel vem da junção dos nomes dos dois filhos. Em 1992 a direcção ficou a cargo do Mário e da Elsa Leite, ou seja, tem tido sempre pessoas da família na sua estrutura.

JP: Essa é uma característica comum das empresas da região, têm sempre uma índole muito familiar. Daquilo que conseguiu perceber, da parte da gerência da família Leite como é que foi percebido o conceito de design há 20 anos atrás?

CG: Desde que entramos na equipa Fenabel, eu e os outros dois designers, fomos-nos apercebendo do que é que é importante, a que é que a equipa e, especialmente, a gerência dão mais valor. Eu entendi que a parte do design, isto é, ter um engenheiro de produção e ter um designer de produto era fundamental. Pois, por mais *know-how* que já tivessem era preciso alguém atento às tendências, atento a novas funcio-

nalidades e novas aplicações, era necessário alguém que desse uma nova roupagem. Desde que eu entrei em 1992, na Fenabel sempre tiveram cuidado e primaram pelo design. Mais importante do que isso, entendem que o design não é só a estética. Muita gente diz que o “design é bonito”, o design não é bonito, não depreendem que o design é um conjunto de factores. Mas a gerência da Fenabel percebeu isso desde muito cedo, mesmo não atribuindo nomes e não usando o conceito de design, na verdade, já tinham uma série de considerações como base.

JP: Qual é a situação actual em termos de designers na Fenabel?

CG: Neste momento, a nível interno, temos designers de comunicação, designers de equipamento e designers de produto mas também recorremos a profissionais externos à empresa. A Andrea Noronha que trabalhou connosco no Art on Chairs é designer, já foi interna e agora é externa, é uma colaboradora da Fenabel, seguiu o seu percurso mas não se desligou da empresa. Damos valor a profissionais deste género, que conhecem a marca e que sabem como é que nós funcionámos, sabem quais são os nossos métodos e continuam a querer trabalhar connosco.

JP: Há um capital que se conquista.

CG: Exactamente, há ali todo um conhecimento da empresa, o que também foi um dos objectivos aquando da colocação dos designers. Muitas vezes deparámo-nos com designers que vêm ter connosco e apresentam-nos os seus projectos e querem saber se são viáveis. E, com muita pena nossa, temos de recusar e avisar que são projectos que não são exequíveis a nível da produção. Chegamos mesmo a fazer um circuito para os profissionais entenderem, porque, por vezes, por mais espectacular que seja o nosso projecto e por mais empenhados que estejamos em defendê-lo, há coisas que temos de entender que não são possíveis e não terão saída no mercado. É engraçado que alguns destes profissionais apareceram depois do projecto do Pólo do Design, tiveram conhecimento das empresas, procuraram-nos e apresentaram-nos os projectos, o que foi algo muito bom.

JP: Esse foi um dos pontos positivos do Art on Chairs?

CG: Com certeza. Houve esta troca de experiências, eles são jovens, têm ideias espectaculares e querem-nas por em prática e nós nunca dizemos que não. Temos designers que trabalham connosco, como por exemplo, o Hector Garcia, que fez exactamente o mesmo, veio ter connosco e mostrou-nos os seus projectos, nós aceitamos e fizemos uma proposta. Não

fechamos as portas a ninguém, estamos aptos a receber tudo, especialmente ideias boas e inovadoras. Outro designer, o Tuomas Tolvanen, veio do concurso internacional, fez a cadeira Poika e ganhou o terceiro lugar, neste momento estamos a desenvolver esse projeto. O mesmo está a acontecer com o Paolo Rizzato que fez a cadeira Oásis e com quem estamos a começar uma relação de trabalho. Estas parcerias foram das coisas boas que surgiram com o evento Art on Chairs. Eu acompanho o trabalho da Associação Empresarial de Paredes e já há algum tempo que seguia atenta esta ideia do Pólo de Design.

JP: A Fenabel acompanhou então o processo de definição da estratégia global.

CG: Eu acompanho o projecto desde 2008 através da Associação Empresarial de Paredes, que era parceira do projecto, o que fez com que eu fosse assistir às primeiras reuniões e que fosse acompanhando as decisões que se estavam a tomar. Depois quando já estava a trabalhar na Fenabel o projecto foi-nos apresentado, já que estamos muito ligados à Associação Empresarial, e logo dissemos que estávamos disponíveis para colaborar, mediante a nossa estrutura e a nossa possibilidade.

JP: Referiu os vossos parceiros internacionais. Sentiu que houve alguma repercussão nesses mercados mais longínquos do evento realizado aqui em Paredes?

CG: Sim. Fizemos a divulgação do evento através dos nossos canais e daqui a três/quatro semanas vamos voltar a reforçar essa comunicação porque vamos levar a Poika e a Oásis a Milão, para a feira iSaloni.

JP: Sei que a nível institucional, tanto a Câmara Municipal de Paredes como a Associação Empresarial, estão com uma série de iniciativas no estrangeiro. Gostaria de saber se da parte das empresas envolvidas também há este orgulho de querer mostrar o que fizeram?

CG: Claro que sim. Até porque conseguimos fazer trabalhos com pessoas de grande conhecimento, colaborar com o Paolo Rizzato para a Fenabel é muito bom. Agora vamos estar em Itália, podíamos já ter divulgado esta parceria o ano passado mas preferimos deixar amadurecer um pouco. Quando saiu a exposição colocámos no site e mandamos comunicação por email aos clientes mas o feedback não foi significativo, talvez porque acho que os nossos clientes estavam um pouco de fora do contexto. Dizermos que fizemos uma cadeira desenhada pelo Paolo Rizzato e realizada pela Fenabel não tem à partida grande impacto. No entanto, por exemplo, falamos com o Win

[cliente holandês] que viu a cadeira aqui e referiu que já a tinha visto no site e perguntou se era para vender. Aí nós tivemos que dizer que não podíamos. A partir daí começamos a ter um bocadinho mais de cuidado com a cadeira Oásis. A cadeira é bonita, as pessoas gostam dela e tem mercado. Eu tive aqui 8 professores de Design do Produto da Alemanha que mal entraram, a primeira pergunta que fizeram foi se podiam comprar a cadeira (Oásis). Adoraram-na! Mas depois tivemos que explicar a história, que era uma cadeira conceptual, que ainda estava numa primeira fase, que estávamos a ver a viabilidade de entrada no mercado... E eles diziam: “mas vocês estão a mostrar uma cadeira que não podem vender?” Uma pergunta pertinente. Ou seja, é daquelas coisas que queremos muito mostrar mas que para já ainda não podemos.

JP: E perante esse interesse o que é que fazem? Pretendem fazer alguma coisa a curto prazo, transformando-a num produto do portfólio da Fenabel?

CG: Faz sentido porque está a ser alvo de interesse. Vamos ver em Milão até que ponto é que vão ser faladas e que *feedback* vamos ter. Da Poika todos os comentários foram muito bons, especialmente, do mercado nórdico. Portanto é viável e, por isso, vamos começar a produzi-la e a comercializá-la. Relativamente ao Oásis ainda não sabemos, o facto de ser uma cadeira premiada num concurso internacional de design é bom, é um ponto forte, de facto, só que não é tudo.

JP: No mercado nórdico são um pouco mais maduros e acabam por relativizar os prémios.

CG: É verdade.

JP: Em Portugal, se calhar, bastava colocar essa informação no placard da cadeira e já poderia significar qualquer coisa.

CG: Claro. Isso tem a ver com cada mercado. Para o mercado nórdico, como já referi, o prémio é bom mas não garante nada. No entanto, em relação à Oásis vamos ponderar. Se se tornar muito forte para vender e se for vontade da empresa e do designer, conversámos e decidimos se vamos avançar ou não. Penso que o Paolo Rizzato também não terá nada contra se um dos projectos for avante e começar a ser muito divulgado.

JP: Qual foi a vossa intenção ao participarem no Art on Chairs, enquanto empresa?

CG: O Pólo de Design queria dinamizar esta vertente de querer passar para o exterior o nosso know-how

português, mostrar que temos empresas boas, que sabem trabalhar e moldar madeira e mostrar que precisamos das ideias frescas dos criativos para fazer um “casamento” e começar a mobilizar.

Sinceramente, ao nível do processo produtivo não nos veio acrescentar nada de novo porque já o fazíamos, contudo, não sei se era a realidade de todas as empresas presentes. A verdade é que ouvi durante as reuniões que tivemos, algumas empresas a referir que, de facto, foi uma coisa nova e que nunca tinham feito, admitindo que este trabalho proporcionou algum tipo de conhecimento e de experiência inovadora ao nível das metodologias utilizadas. O que eu considero excelente porque posso ver que as empresas vão crescer um bocadinho e vão-se adaptar a novos processos de produção e apresentar-se a uma nova realidade.

Mesmo trabalhar com o Paolo que é um grande designer, tal como outros com os quais já trabalhamos e que vêm cá frequentemente, não foi de toda novidade. Atualmente não temos só os 420 modelos que estão em exibição na Fenabel, porque fazemos “taylor made”, ou seja, eles vêm cá, trazem o seu projecto, dizem o que querem, nós reunimos a equipa técnica para ver se é possível e desenvolvemos o protótipo. Portanto, já existe ali um processo e um relacionamento que nos é familiar.

O facto do Pólo de Design desenvolver este projecto e da Fenabel entrar, de se ter feito o “Duets” e realizar estes modelos, isso é a novidade. Há desafios que surgem em todo o desenvolvimento de um produto novo e estes desafios que se proporcionaram com o Art on Chairs é novo para nós. Existir este tipo de apostas em Portugal é fantástico!

JP: E relativamente à divulgação do produto português?

CG: Isso também é algo que já fazemos habitualmente. Todos os anos, nas nossas feiras, em todos os contactos, nas saídas dos comerciais, nas prospecções de mercado levámos sempre o “made in Portugal”. As empresas também querem passar a imagem do que Paredes e do que Portugal faz. Nós vemo-nos obrigados a fazê-lo porque, infelizmente, em muitos locais do mundo o produto português ainda é desconhecido. Em muitos sítios ficam espantados por trabalharmos madeira, por exemplo, e ficam até um pouco sépticos com o nosso trabalho.

JP: Talvez também se deva às notícias da situação actual do país...

CG: Por vezes, é difícil assegurar que um “made in Portugal” é bom ou que os nossos produtos são de qualidade e temos de insistir para que venham cá ver. Essa é uma das preocupações da Fenabel e de outras empresas da região, isto é, a projecção. E, mais

propriamente, com a comunicação e com a imagem destas experiências, como o Art on Chairs, para que o resultado que passa para fora seja excelente e que traga retorno. No nosso entender foi isso que o Pólo de Design quis fazer e a Fenabel incorporou esta iniciativa de uma forma muito natural, porque também é um esforço que temos vindo a fazer desde 1996. Portanto, na minha perspectiva é de valorizar este trabalho do Pólo de Design, embora ainda não se possam tirar já as conclusões todas, porque ainda foi a primeira edição do evento e só ao terceiro e quarto é que vamos poder comparar e ver o que é preciso alterar ou não.

JP: Passado meio ano do Art on Chairs, o Pólo de Design está novamente num trabalho de bastidores, já a preparar a 2ª edição para 2014. Como é que vê, também como Paredense, a cidade, as empresas, as pessoas perante aquilo que aconteceu? As pessoas ainda comentam alguma coisa?

CG: Da minha experiência posso dizer que, no que toca às empresas que estiveram envolvidas, ainda há um burburinho, muitas empresas ainda estão a pegar nos produtos que fizeram e a levá-los a feiras, a divulgá-los, não só o trabalho da empresa mas também o trabalho do Pólo de Design. Relativamente aos habitantes da cidade o que eu acho é que este foi o primeiro evento e penso nem todas as pessoas compreenderam o seu verdadeiro propósito. Sei que, tal como foi referido lá, é normal que num meio em que as pessoas não estão muito familiarizados com este tipo de eventos culturais, não assimilem da mesma forma. Obviamente que eu, como me interessei mais por esta área, vou dar muito mais importância e perceber o valor de um evento destes. Se é para envolver a população também temos de a sensibilizar para isso, temos de ser mais cuidadosos em questões tão simples como, por exemplo, explicar o que é o Pólo de Design. Porque o Pólo já existe há tanto tempo e para nós é tão natural e tão presente que nos esquecemos um pouco da perspectiva do cidadão. Pelo que eu vi na cidade penso que essa informação não foi assim tão bem passada à população em geral. Se calhar, até sabiam por alto, porque a filha fez uma cadeira ou pintou-a e então a família foi lá ver mas muito superficialmente. E, por isso, eu volto a reforçar que isto não pode terminar aqui, tem de haver uma segunda e uma terceira edição até que a seu tempo, o Art on Chairs será de conhecimento geral.

JP: Esta parte do trabalho com a população não foi o mais bem-sucedido e acreditamos que é uma frente que tem de ser trabalhada concretamente, tem que partir do Pólo, da autarquia mas também é necessário o envolvimento de todas as empresas, começando talvez pelos colaboradores.

CG: Os nossos colaboradores sabiam do Art on Chairs porque trabalharam para ele.

JP: Mas sentiu da parte dos colaboradores algum interesse de querer ir ver o resultado final?

CG: Sim e acabaram por ver. Por exemplo, aqui na empresa há um determinado espaço onde temos sempre os últimos modelos e estavam lá os protótipos desenvolvidos pelos nossos colaboradores. Também os flyers que saíram estavam em todos os lugares comuns, como os bares, as zonas de café. Tal como os livros que foram publicados, logo que abriu a exposição, que continham uma explicação do evento, as empresas participantes e as suas respectivas cadeiras e outras imagens. Os nossos colaboradores tiveram acesso a tudo isso e ficaram deslumbrados.

JP: Isso é o que lhes confere aquele sentimento de pertença?

CG: Exactamente. Muitos até já tinham ido ver a exposição antes de eu falar disso e de lhes mostrar os livros, falavam das cadeiras da empresa e até defendiam que deviam estar em sítios melhores na exposição, opinando sobre esses pormenores mais técnicos.

JP: Essa questão do destaque foi muito apontada pelas empresas, especialmente, na reunião de avaliação.

CG: Na Fenabel sabíamos que nesta primeira fase não ia haver o destaque dos nossos produtos em detrimento dos produtos dos outros. A ideia aqui era promover experiências, provocar reacções e divulgar uma região. O que se queria era promover uma arte, que é a indústria da madeira de Paredes. Não se tratava de algo promocional a nível específico e individual de cada empresa, era promocional a nível geral.

JP: Até porque são imensas empresas.

CG: Daqui a uns anos talvez já seja possível as empresas trabalharem mais a nível individual mas agora não. Nesta fase nem nos passou pela cabeça. O que às vezes acontecia e, aliás acabámos por chamar à atenção em algumas reuniões, é que nos suportes base (site, blogs, redes sociais) as empresas não foram mencionadas numa primeira fase. Claro que depois houve um pedido de desculpas por parte do Pólo de Design e a situação foi corrigida. As empresas, como já referi, não entraram no projeto só pela projecção nos media, mas esperámos um reconhecimento por todo o esforço em termo de tempo e despesa. A Fenabel ajudou a promover a região e as empresas da região, no qual nós estávamos incluídos.

JP: Conhece o projecto “Stories of Chairs”? O que pensa sobre ele e que sugestão faria para a sua continuidade?

CG: Eu interessei-me pelo percurso proporcionado pelo Art on Chairs, em todas as suas actividades. No entanto, achei que algumas actividades passaram uma imagem de serem individuais, isto é, não havia um fio condutor que puxasse as pessoas de umas, para ver as outras, que levasse a que as pessoas compreendessem a actividade, não só por si, mas num todo. É verdade que alguns eventos foram sobrevivendo por si só e ganharam vida assim mas creio que por mais que tenham tentado ligar as coisas isso não foi compreendido porque quem foi visitar o espaço. Quando se ia à Casa da Cultura, no Palacete da Granja, notava-se uma quebra. Eu fui lá com a equipa da Fenabel e observei algumas das reacções da equipa e concluí que havia muita coisa que eles não percebiam, não ligaram ao evento e, portanto, não tinham opinião. Eu, particularmente, gostei imenso, é para continuar, tanto relativamente à actividade de associação sensorial, entre ver e ouvir, como de todo o resto. Mas isso é a minha opinião porque já estou familiarizada e gosto da temática. Penso que deve ser ainda mais aprofundado e não só num local mas abrangendo a cidade toda. Por exemplo, as cabines que estavam no jardim para ouvirmos a história poderiam estar espalhadas pela cidade, até para permitir que mais pessoas possam participar, pois, muitas sentem-se inibidas a participar porque acham que é só para artistas ou especialistas.

JP: Sim, nós apercebemo-nos disso mas é algo que acontece em todo o lado.

CG: Sim, mas o facto de estar localizado num local comum, por exemplo, no jardim José Guilherme poderia ser positivo. Passa lá tanta gente durante o dia. Faltou também mais explicação do que é que aquilo era para que as pessoas pudessem perceber aquela experiência na sua totalidade. Para o futuro do Art on Chairs é a opinião das pessoas comuns que interessa, é bom olharmos para elas e se as queremos integrar no evento vamos ter de as entender melhor e integrá-las de uma forma mais efectiva. Caso contrário, só daqui a uns anos é que os Paredenses vão compreender a real importância e significado deste projecto.

Appendix A5

Interview with Isabel Bourbon, Maria Bruno Néó and Miguel Afonso, designers from More Design, More Industry program

Interview conducted March 24, 2013 at Maia

54 min, in Portuguese.

Jorge Pereira (JP): A minha primeira pergunta é simples e ao mesmo tempo de resposta curiosa— como descobriram Paredes?

Miguel Afonso (MA): Candidatamo-nos ao concurso e fomos escolhidos. Do processo em si, o que sabemos é que foram submetidas as candidaturas e depois seleccionadas pelos tutores sete.

JP: Portanto, não houve nenhuma visita exploratória inicial, foram seleccionados e partiram logo para Paredes?

Maria Bruno Néó (MBN): Na verdade, em 2010 eu soube que iam ser aprovados fundos na zona e que iam fazer coisas que tinham a ver com design. Na altura mandei um email mas não recebi resposta.

JP: Mandaste para onde?

MBN: Mandei para uma organização que estava ligada a “Paredes, a Cidade do Design”. Apresentei-me, disse que gostava de colaborar no projecto que eles iam fazer e perguntei como é que estavam a pensar organizar a iniciativa. Mas ninguém me respondeu. Depois em 2011 foram abertas as candidaturas para as residências e candidatamo-nos.

JP: Como é tiveram conhecimento dessa abertura a candidaturas?

MBN: Foi através de internet e de outras pessoas que também estavam interessadas.

JP: Como é que foi a chegada a Paredes? Vocês não são de Paredes, pois não?

MA: Eu sou de Braga.

MBN: E eu sou dos arredores de Lisboa.

Isabel Bourbon (IB): Eu sou de Guimarães.

JP: Como é que foi o primeiro impacto?

MBN: O primeiro impacto foi antes de chegarmos. Até uma semana antes não tínhamos qualquer informação sobre onde é que íamos viver, sobre o que é que era preciso levar, não tínhamos qualquer informação sobre Paredes, se íamos começar no dia 5 ou não...

MA: Acabámos só por começar no dia 9.

MBN: Tivemos uma sessão de acolhimento na AEParedes, onde nos foi apresentado o projecto, a dimensão do mesmo, as residências e tudo o que engloba o Art on Chairs. E nessa altura explicaram-nos onde é que íamos viver.

JP: Então vocês não tinham o grau de conhecimento mínimo sobre o que é que seria toda esta experiência?

MA: Nada.

MBN: Não sabíamos as empresas com as quais íamos colaborar, não sabíamos quem eram os tutores que íamos ter, fomos mais ou menos largados em Paredes.

MA: Sabíamos que aquelas pessoas iam ser tutores mas não sabíamos de quem.

JP: Nessa reunião com a AEParedes as empresas estavam presentes?

MBN: Não.

MA: Nós fomos para lá numa segunda e só dois dias depois é que foram apresentadas as empresas.

MBN: Os designers nem foram ver as empresas em que os outros iam trabalhar, só foram ver aquelas onde eles iam trabalhar. O que eu acho que até poderia ter sido bom porque já que estávamos lá ficávamos a conhecer todas as empresas, em vez de ficar em casa.

MA: Fomos seleccionados pelos tutores, cada um escolheu o designer que queria.

MBN: E depois tentaram adaptar, mais ou menos, o portfólio a cada empresa.

JP: Como é que foi esse processo de chegada às empresas?

MBN: Eu estive na Viriato e na Margem Ideal. A Viriato é uma empresa grande e tem um departamento criativo. Já a Margem Ideal teve um problema porque a fábrica ardeu, têm apenas acabamentos de madeira e têm praticamente duas pessoas a trabalhar, é uma micro empresa e muito familiar.

IB: Eu estive na Gualtorres, que é uma empresa já com alguma dimensão. Quem criava as peças era o dono da empresa que é arquitecto e depois tinham também uma designer mas era só para a parte de modelação.

MA: Eu tive em duas empresas, ambas eram de índole familiar, mas uma delas acabei por desistir ao terceiro mês porque a dona da empresa queria que o designer fizesse o trabalho de desenhador técnico e isso não correspondia às funções descritas no programa. Depois de várias chamadas da parte dela para que eu fizesse isso, tive que desistir. Daí fui trabalhar para a Suideneto.

JP: Maria, que diferenças é que percebeste entre a Viriato—que trabalha com grandes contratos— e essa outra empresa mais pequena, a Margem Ideal?

MBN: Quando fui para a Viriato eles tinham um *briefing* preparado para mim, só o facto de saberem o que é que é um *briefing* e de terem preparado alguma coisa é muito bom e muito diferente de ir para uma empresa onde nem sequer sabem o que é que é o design e o que é que ele pode fazer. Portanto, tive essa dualidade. Quando fui para a outra empresa, onde eles queriam que eu fizesse móveis à “Boca do Lobo” como fiz para a Viriato, disse-lhes que não ia fazer isso porque não era isso que eles precisavam. Fiz uma avaliação do que potencialmente poderiam precisar e fiz uma apresentação de 50 páginas onde expliquei direitinho durante algumas horas onde é que eles poderiam ter potencial. Como não tinham fabrico nessa empresa mais pequena, se calhar teriam mais sucesso ao usar várias técnicas e não tinham que estar limitados às máquinas que tinham. Tentei identificar isso, não como um ponto fraco mas como uma oportunidade, e depois começamos a criar uma marca devagarinho porque em termos financeiros, não estamos no melhor momento.

Na Viriato tinha um *briefing* exactamente com aquilo que precisava. Eles queriam fazer várias linhas, pediam projectos imediatos, não queriam projectos em que se tentasse fazer os interiores mais produto, a ideia era ter várias linhas para vários estilos dos hotéis. Queriam ter já os orçamentos prontos para só mostrar os tecidos e funcionar como standard mas sem os clientes sentirem que aquilo já estava customizado.

IB: No meu caso, o dono da empresa inicialmente também estava com uma ideia diferente daquilo que era o projecto.

JP: Mas se o dono da empresa é arquitecto, a priori, deveria ter, pelo menos, uma noção genérica do que é um designer poderia fazer.

IB: Pois, mas não tinha muito essa noção, tanto que a única designer que lá estava nem tinha voto na parte criativa, trabalhava apenas na modelação. Quem mandava ali era o dono e quando entrei ele tinha muito a ideia de que eu ia para lá fazer modelação. Em vez de estar a criar, ele pretendia que eu fizesse aquilo que ele me mandasse, no fundo, continuar a linha que ele já tinha criado. Isso trouxe alguns problemas porque houve uma fase em que eu queria desistir, e mesmo o meu tutor também, porque achava que já não havia solução. Mas foi-se aguentado e conseguimos chegar a alguma coisa.

MA: Na Gabino, a empresa era gerida pelos dois irmãos, a D.^a Carolina e a Sr. Alexandre. Ela tinha formação em decoração e tinha muita clientela lá de Paredes e notava-se que ela queria apenas que eu estivesse lá para desenhar duas ou três peças, desenhei uma mesinha e um armário para a loja, na altura ela já estava satisfeita com o que eu tinha feito e queria que eu avançasse para trabalhar directamente com os clientes e a fazer aquilo que ela fazia, basicamente. E aí não deu certo. Na Suideneto não tinham qualquer noção do que era o design, as linhas que eles têm foram compradas a arquitectos ou penso que era o próprio comercial que trazia as ideias baseadas naquilo que via e depois faziam os desenhos. Por isso, foi também um trabalho muito difícil nessa empresa porque é bastante complicado conseguir mudar o pensamento daquelas pessoas, que estão habituadas àquele sistema de trabalho e àquele linha de mobiliário. Porque é o que se vê naquela região, uma empresa faz uma linha, outros fazem igual e na Suideneto também queriam fazer da mesma forma...Foi aí que eu consegui intervir um pouco.

JP: Na vossa opinião, quais foram as razões para estas dificuldades aquando da vossa chegada?

MA: Pode ter sido uma falha de comunicação do projecto mas a verdade é que, à excepção da Viriato e de mais uma outra, a maioria das empresas não estão conscientes do que é o design.

MBN: Penso que da parte da organização deveria ter sido feita uma preparação ou uma sessão de esclarecimento.

JP: Tenho conhecimento de que foram feitas essas sessões de esclarecimento, antes de vocês irem para as empresas.

MBN: O responsável da Margem Ideal faz parte da AEParedes e não fazia a mínima ideia do que era o programa.

IB: E mesmo o dono da empresa onde eu estava nunca foi a nenhuma reunião.

MA: Na Suideneto acho que quem foi às reuniões foi a esposa do dono que estava na loja, nem estava na fábrica. Por isso, as informações não passaram internamente como deveriam ter passado.

JP: Daquilo que vocês perceberam, enquanto estiveram nas empresas, porque é que acham que eles aderiram a este projecto, mesmo sem saber do que se tratava concretamente?

MBN: Mais em específico, porque o Sr. António da Margem Ideal quer meter-se em todos os projectos que aparecem, mesmo sem ter consciência daquilo que são ou do que é podem ganhar. (risos)

IS: Eu acho que na minha empresa foi por pensar que seria uma forma mais barata de fazer aquilo que ele precisava, que era o 3D.

MA: No meu caso é a mesma coisa, por 2 mil euros tinham um designer a trabalhar para eles, com um horário normal de 8 horas diárias e isso compensava-lhes. Nunca seria um investimento de risco e tinham ali mão de obra qualificada.

JP: Acham que o design é muito visto dessa forma, isto é, o cumprimento de uma tarefa operativa ou acham que alguma coisa mudou com esta vossa contribuição?

MBN: Eu acho que alguma coisa mudou porque no caso da Margem Ideal, já que a Viriato é um caso à parte, o Sr. António acabou de ir agora a Bilbao apresentar a marca, portanto, acho que ele está muito entusiasmado com isso, mesmo que não ande tão rápido como poderia porque não há recursos. Eu tento continuar a fazer algumas coisas para ele mas eu tenho emprego e também não tenho tanta disponibilidade. Acho que ele percebeu que poderia haver potencial e fora daquilo que já conhece. Os artigos dele iam só para a Galiza, que é um mercado super esgotado, e ele começou a entender que existe mais para além disso.

IS: O responsável da Gualtorres sempre foi um pouco contra aquilo que estava a ser feito mas agora parece-me que ele está a apostar muito mais naquilo que eu criei. Começou a ir a feiras, já colocou os produtos à venda em algumas lojas e, a partir daí, acho que ele se entusiasmou mais e quer partir para outros mercados também.

MA: Na Suideneto acho que ajudei um pouco a melhorar a consciência deles perante o design, depois também continuei a trabalhar com eles mas mesmo assim ainda é muito difícil conseguir com que eles mudem alguma coisa.

JP: Vocês tinham alguma experiência profissional anterior?

IB: Sim, eu tinha mas era de interiores.

MBN: Sim.

JP: Não foi o vosso primeiro emprego, mas estavam ligados à parte industrial da madeira?

IB: Sim.

MBN: Eu terminei o meu curso em 2008 e vim trabalhar para Rio Tinto para o grupo menina design, depois trabalhei para vários estúdios fora de Portugal e quando regresssei fui para Paredes.

JP: O que é que perceberam da indústria de Paredes em termos de capacidade e de preparação tecnológica para responder aos desafios dos designers?

MA: Em termos da preparação tecnológica de certas empresas surpreendeu-me pela positiva, portanto, têm empresas muito bem preparadas e as que não estão tão bem preparadas, se calhar, compensam com uma boa mão de obra.

MBN: Em termos de técnicas manuais e artesanais é muito boa, penso que essa é parte interessante de Paredes. As pessoas sabem todas o que fazem ao nível técnico, desde o uso de tecnologia mais avançada até à mais artesanal. Não acho que exista nenhum ponto fraco nessa parte. Resta é saber como é isso se pode aplicar e de que forma é que se pode tornar uma mais-valia.

JP: No caso das empresas onde estiveram houve alguma necessidade de eles se reestruturarem internamente para vocês serem integrados?

MA: De certeza que nenhuma empresa se preocupou com isso.

IS: Não.

JP: Vocês tinham, por exemplo, um posto de trabalho quando chegaram lá?

MBN: Algumas empresas tinham, outras não.

MA: Eu tinha lá uma secretária que estava vazia e é óbvio que fiquei lá. (risos)

JP: Mas estou a falar de outro tipo de condições, além da secretária, sabiam quem ia ser o vosso interlocutor directo ou tinham um computador adequado?

MBN: Na Viriato tinha a arquitecta que era a pessoa a quem respondia. Computadores não, aliás, disseram-nos logo que tínhamos de levar o nosso portátil.

MA: No meu caso, a empresa disse-me que tinha lá um senhor que fazia a ponte com a produção e era com ele que tinha de "tratar" mas também tinha sem-

pre de falar antes com os donos da empresa para mostrar o que ia fazer.

IS: Eu lembro-me perfeitamente quando cheguei no primeiro dia e me disseram onde é que eu ficava, que era num canto de uma secretária que lá estava. Eu levei o computador, um bloco e o lápis. A pessoa que me recebeu não viu isso e veio-me trazer umas folhas brancas e um lápis 6B, que dizia que era o lápis do design (risos).

MA: Eu também tive uma história engraçada que foi quando cheguei a Suideneto, a senhora chegou ao escritório e disse: “Está aqui o Miguel, ele é o design.” (risos)

JP: Quando já estavam integrados nas empresas e tinham o vosso interlocutor sentiam-se mais próximos da gestão de topo ou da parte produtiva?

MBN: Numa empresa com duas pessoas sentia-me ligada a todos. (risos) Mas, por exemplo, na Viriato falava com a arquitecta que era a responsável pelo departamento criativo e falava também com a responsável pelo departamento comercial, que era filha do dono e tinha grande notoriedade na empresa. Mais tarde pedi para ir a zona de produção para falar com as pessoas que faziam o acabamento e fazer perguntas, ou seja, tinha liberdade total, desde que não empatsasse muito tempo.

IB: O responsável por mim era o dono da empresa mas sempre foi muito complicado falar com ele durante os 8 meses em que lá estive. Mais para o final, já na parte da produção das peças comecei a ter contacto com as outras pessoas.

MA: No meu caso foi gradual. No princípio estava mais próximo da gestão de topo mas depois com o tempo fui equilibrando as coisas e as relações eram iguais, tanto na fábrica como com a gestão da empresa.

JP: Como é que se sentiram recebidos no meio de uma estrutura empresarial?

MBN: Acho que não é só uma questão de sermos designers, acho que é também uma questão de idade. Ao princípio era muito difícil porque eles achavam que éramos uns miúdos que tínhamos saído da faculdade há pouco tempo e nos vínhamos exibir com conhecimentos especiais.

MA: Na Suideneto o dono era completamente desconfiado. Olhava para mim do tipo: “vem para aqui este marmelo, que nunca fez nada, começou a trabalhar outro dia e não sabe nada.” (risos). No entanto, a esposa dele era diferente, dizia-me sempre para fazer coisas diferentes, pensava que eu ia chegar lá a fazer coisas completamente diferentes e móveis “xpto”.

IB: Na empresa onde estive acho que ninguém sabia do projecto, portanto, olhavam para mim como mais

uma estagiária, porque passavam por lá muitos estagiários. E tal como nunca deram muito valor aos estagiários, também não me deram a mim. Só mais para o fim é que começou a haver mais confiança entre ambas as partes, até lá o meu convívio era com a outra designer que trabalhava lá.

JP: Notaram que as pessoas estavam a par do que era o Pólo de Design? Ou o que é que era o Art on Chairs?

Todos: Não, não sabiam quase nada.

JP: As vossas empresas eram em que zona de Paredes?

MBN: Uma em Lordelo e outra em Campo.
MA e IB: Em Rebordosa.

JP: Não é nenhuma na zona perto da cidade de Paredes, é tudo na zona norte.

IB: Na altura da inauguração, que foi na estação, lembro-me de estar no café e as pessoas estarem a perguntar o que é que aquilo era. Ninguém sabia o que é que estava a acontecer.

JP: Porque é que acham que isso aconteceu?

IB: Eu penso que tem a ver com o factor divulgação, que deveria ter sido melhor desde o início.

MBN: Sim, também concordo. Um projecto desta dimensão, com o potencial que tem, com os fundos que obteve e em que existem 67 candidaturas para nove vagas, ainda por cima a nível internacional, acho que não é significativo. O mesmo aconteceu no concurso das cadeiras, isto é, receberem 400 candidaturas também não me parece significativo. Se virmos no Designboom, há prémios muito mais baixos, que normalmente é o que cativa. Este aqui é para fazer apenas protótipos, com prémios altíssimos e receberam 400 candidaturas, quando no Portal do Design recebem 5 mil candidaturas. Acho que há aqui qualquer coisa que não está bem.

MA: Eu penso que mesmo dentro do programa há uma falha de comunicação.

JP: Falha de comunicação?

MBN: Da própria organização.

JP: Quando falam em organização, referem-se a quem?

MBN: À Setepés, a AEP...

JP: Podem concretizar?

MBN: Coisas práticas, como esquecerem-se de me pagar a água, por exemplo, e ficarmos com a água cortada.

IB: Quando já lhes tínhamos pago a água...

MBN: E levámos um dia inteiro para resolver o problema e portanto não podemos ir trabalhar.

MA: Termos estado 3 meses sem receber salário.

IB: Nós telefonávamos e diziam-nos que iam pagar no dia seguinte e no dia seguinte não acontecia nada.

MBN: São pequenas coisas que trazem insatisfação. Pedimos fotografias à Setepés das nossas peças em Julho e chegaram há duas semanas.

JP: Se me permitem a minha opinião, eu penso que a dificuldade que existiu tem a ver com a dimensão do projecto. A Setepés é uma estrutura altamente profissional, preparada para projectos deste género mas se calhar não desta escala. Tinha muitos envolvidos, pessoas e empresas, e eventualmente esse poderá ser um dos problemas em termos de comunicação interna. Em termos de comunicação externa parece-me que de facto a comunicação gerou assim alguma imagem errada porque as pessoas de facto pensavam que a zona da exposição era Paredes. Vocês tiveram um jantar de apresentação com a autarquia e, do que vocês perceberam, qual era a expectativa deles?

MBN: O que eles queriam era que um de nós fizesse um "milagre" para todas as empresas perceberem essa como exemplo.

MA: Fomos bem recebidos com um discurso muito optimista e disseram que depositavam muita esperança em nós.

JP: Foram feitos pontos de situação, reuniões intercalares?

IB: Tivemos uma reunião para dizermos o que é que estávamos a achar das empresas.

MA: Mas o contacto que tivemos com a Câmara Municipal foi mais ao princípio.

JP: Da parte dos vossos colegas que vieram de fora, Índia e Nova Zelândia, o que é que vos passaram em termos de experiência?

IB: Eu acho que correu tudo bem, foram muito bem aceites na empresa.

MBN: Eu acho que teve tremido porque havia a barreira da língua e para haver um trabalho contínuo não pode ser quando vai lá o tutor de 3 em 3 semanas, que era quase as únicas oportunidades que elas tinham para falar. Isso às vezes desmotivava-as porque elas não conseguiam comunicar bem, inclusive o Miguel, às vezes, ia com elas para tentar comunicar melhor. Se calhar poderia ter havido um livrinho com pala-

vras em português e inglês com algum vocabulário técnico...

JP: Nas empresas não havia quem falasse inglês?

MBN: A Wendy esteve em duas empresas e era muito difícil.

MA: Os dois administradores sabiam falar inglês.

IB: O Ricardo não falava...

MA: Não? Pronto, então um não falava bem e outro falava mas quase nunca lá estava e ela tinha que se entender mais ou menos com o resto das pessoas.

JP: Mas elas conseguiram observar/comparar alguma coisa em termos de processos industriais com o local de origem delas?

Todos: Não.

MBN: A Wendy era mais experiente e trabalhava na oficina da faculdade. A Anna era investigadora não estava tão ligada à prática.

MA: Para elas também foi uma experiência completamente nova.

JP: Em termos de consequências deste projecto, vocês acham que por parte das empresas mudou alguma coisa em termos de perspectiva sobre o que é o design? Tirando algum ou outro caso, a maioria de vós ao terminar o projecto terminou também a ligação às empresas, muito poucos continuaram.

MA: Alguns continuaram, como eu ou a Maria, como *freelancers*.

MBN: As empresas não têm dimensões em termos financeiros para justificar um designer a tempo inteiro.

MA: Exacto. Em termos de trabalho não se justificava eu estar lá.

MBN: Talvez a Viriato...

JP: Mas não se justifica porquê? Tem a ver com o tipo de trabalho que eles fazem, que é mais produção?

MBN: Não basta ter capacidade produtiva. É preciso criar produto e a seguir divulgá-lo. E até divulgar e começar a vender não se justifica um designer a tempo inteiro porque eles não têm potencial financeiro para isso. Mais vale, por exemplo, contratar o Miguel como *freelancer*, ele desenha uma linha, eles tratam de a produzir e depois lançam-na. Dali a 3 ou 4 meses têm a possibilidade de lançar outra. O que eles precisam de ter é a parte de divulgação, que é uma falha da maioria das empresas, não compreendem que até podem ter um produto fabuloso mas se ninguém o conhecer não vale a pena. É como as residências, se ninguém souber que elas existem mais vale desistir.

MA: Relativamente à Suideneto, as residências começaram em Janeiro e em Fevereiro eles tiveram na Export Home na Exponor e até conseguiram fazer vários contactos na América do Sul e França. Só que depois não deram em nada porque não conseguiram dar seguimento e isto passa muito pela divulgação.

JP: Sentiram que as empresas onde vocês tinham alguma preocupação com a comunicação? Ou que, pelo menos, com a vossa presença perceberam que tinham de mudar alguma coisa nas estratégias de comunicação?

MBN: Eu ando numa batalha (com a Margem Ideal) para termos um site, até já comprámos o domínio. Agora é preciso que pensem que são necessárias fotografias para não ter um site em branco, é preciso transportar os produtos quando os comprarem, é preciso chegar ao cliente em termos de brochuras, é preciso ter cartões de visita, é preciso perceber como é que vai falar com o cliente, qual é o público, ou seja, são necessárias uma série de coisas que nada tem a ver com o produto em si.

MA: Essa questão da divulgação/comunicação só surgiu quando tivemos que preparar os protótipos para a exposição. As empresas nem sabiam muito bem para o que servia ou se era mesmo necessário.

JP: Na altura vocês desenvolveram uma série de produtos e depois foi feita uma selecção, não é?

MA: Na empresa em que estava, ao fim de dois meses, já tinha uma mesinha feita. Foi assim muito rápido. Mas depois na Suideneto fizeram um dos móveis para testar (o protótipo) mas depois não se preocuparam em fazer o resto da linha. Ficou aquilo feito e bastou. Esteve em exposição na loja e em outros sítios mas mais nada.

MBN: Não chegaram a vender?

MA: Não. A seguir ainda fizeram um outro móvel mas depois também não tiveram a preocupação de fazer o resto da linha, que nem ficou comigo até ao fim das residências. Portanto, o que me parece é que fizeram estes móveis porque tinha de ser mas sem preocupação em continuar as linhas.

JP: Quando aconteceu o Art on Chairs foi, no fundo, o culminar de todo o trabalho, tanto para vocês como para as empresas. Qual foi a reacção das empresas ao chegar a esses dias?

MA: Eu penso que ficaram orgulhosos. Tiveram a oportunidade de desfilar ali um bocadinho...

MBN: Eles também gostaram porque puderam-se afirmar perante as outras empresas de Paredes.

MA: Exactamente. Mas acho que eles tinham esperança de que as consequências fossem muito positi-

vas em termos de oportunidades de negócio. Só que acho que não lhes trouxe nada por aí além.

JP: Vocês obtiveram algum tipo de contacto, nomeadamente trabalho freelancer, portanto, mantém algum tipo de ligação com estas empresas. Achem que outro designer, que não tendo tido esta experiência com a indústria, poderia na mesma integrar-se num processo de trabalho com as mesmas empresas ou é preciso conhecê-las mais a fundo? No fundo, acham a indústria de Paredes está preparada para designers ou não?

MA: A indústria não está preparada de todo para designers, espero que daqui a 20 anos já esteja.

MBN: 20 anos?! (risos)

MA: Estas alterações são geracionais, portanto, levam tempo.

MBN: Em 20 anos se calhar já fecharam algumas.

MA: Maria, na empresa onde eu estava os donos tinham cerca de 40 anos, até que os filhos deles assumam o comando da empresa vai levar 20 anos, pelo menos. E como acontece naquela, acontece em muitas outras. Além disso, vamos ver se os filhos vão de facto ter uma visão diferente para a empresa... Mas eu acho que é possível outros designers trabalharem nestas empresas, só que é um processo penoso. Para qualquer designer é muito difícil trabalhar e conseguir fazer um trabalho com a indústria de Paredes.

MBN: Mas se houvesse uma empresa de sucesso que tivesse vendido logo imenso, o que é impossível porque falta a divulgação, aí sim, essa podia perceber o trabalho do designer e poderia mudar muita coisa. Só se fala em sucesso quando existe dinheiro a entrar, só que isso só pode acontecer quando todo o trabalho é feito.

JP: Neste momento as empresas já estão cheias de vontade de que o próximo Art in Chairs surja. Tanto para as residências como para a prototipagem do concurso internacional, porque as poucas empresas que aderiram ao evento começaram a ter alguns negócios, ainda poucos, mas a verdade é que tiveram imensa publicidade. Participaram em feiras, a exposição é itinerante e vai estar presente um pouco por todo o mundo, por isso, a divulgação foi enorme.

IS: Pois, esse concurso teve muito mais visibilidade que o nosso. O que nós participamos não estava tão a "descoberto".

MA: O Duets tem um nome sonante associado àquela cadeira e tem muito mais visibilidade.

JP: Mas do ponto de vista da empresa o que é que vocês acham que seria mais interessante, ter

um designer lá ou fazer um trabalho com o Paolo, por exemplo?

MBN: Há empresas que já contratam determinados designers para fazerem uma linha, é muito usual no mercado francês, portanto, não têm lá um designer a tempo inteiro.

JP: Mas vocês acham que é mais vantajoso para uma empresa ter lá um designer para trabalhar na vertente de design industrial, mais concretamente, para a optimização de processos, entre outras coisas?

MBN: As que têm dimensão faz sentido que tenha uma pessoa a tempo inteiro para isso mas as que não têm ou que são manuais acho que não faz muita falta. MA: Até que ponto valeria a pena ter lá um designer 7 dias por semana? À partida nunca iriam ter muito trabalho.

MBN: Por exemplo, as grandes empresas têm engenheiros para produção, não têm designers.

JP: Mas acham que teriam *know-how*, formação e capacidade para também intervir nesse processo? Pelo que percebi vocês foram respondendo à questão de desenho de linha, construção de peças/produto. Nunca vos foi solicitado um trabalho mais de estrutura?

MA: Não.

JP: Eu digo também ao nível da comunicação, por exemplo, sugerirem algum conceito para comunicar as peças que criaram.

MBN: No meu caso eu fiz esse trabalho.

IS: Eu também fiz o catálogo e disse onde é que o poderiam distribuir.

MBN: Na Viriato fiz uma avaliação do site, disse-lhes onde é que poderiam melhorar e que tipo de ferramentas seriam necessárias para isso. Mesmo para a Margem Ideal sugeri ideias para que se pudessem vender melhor os móveis, fiz o logótipo inclusive, todos os móveis têm uma chapinha com o nome da marca. Seleccionei também quais seriam os melhores sítios para comunicar, incluindo eventos, fiz uma espécie de planeamento.

JP: Agora particularizando na frente que estou envolvido, conhecem o projeto Stories of Chairs?

MBN: Foi-nos apresentado no primeiro dia. Era o que descrevia histórias, não era?

MA: Não, era o dos contos para miúdos.

JP: É um pouco disso tudo, o Stories of Chairs é

a vertente que lida mais com os media digitais. Esta foi a primeira actividade a ganhar forma em outubro de 2011 e percebemos, desde o início, que iria existir sempre, independentemente do Art on Chairs, até porque temos uma dimensão mais autónoma em relação a todas as outras actividades. Fizemos algumas acções de envolvimento da comunidade, nomeadamente crianças porque percebemos que era aí que tínhamos de nos focar. No fundo, tentamos desmistificar um pouco a ideia da cultura do design.

MA: Eu também conheço mal, na altura vi no site e depois na exposição na estação também vi alguma coisa mas foi basicamente isso.

JP: Como é que vocês acham que esta parte da comunicação e do envolvimento com os media digitais podem contribuir de alguma forma para um projecto deste género?

MA: O contributo pode passar por tentar envolver mais as pessoas no projecto em si.

JP: Mas envolver como?

MA: Atrair as pessoas, criar curiosidade para que elas tenham vontade de participar nas actividades.

Appendix A6

Interview with Paulo Alves

Interview conducted August 26, 2013 via Skype.

61 min, in Portuguese.

Jorge Pereira (JP): Gostaria de iniciar pedindo-lhe que se apresentasse. Qual é o seu *background* e de que forma se envolveu neste projecto em Paredes?

Paulo Alves (PA): Esta minha colaboração surge um pouco com um trabalho que eu desenvolvi para a Setepés. No fundo, tive uma participação muito pouco significativa no projecto e teve a ver, sobretudo, com dois momentos e duas intensidades diferentes. Sou consultor, a minha formação base é em Economia, tenho também um MBA em Marketing e tenho vindo a fazer formação e capacitação profissional em áreas muito diversificadas que vão, desde as questões do marketing territorial até às questões do planeamento estratégico, do desenvolvimento territorial, do apoio e da mentoria a empreendedores. Mais recentemente tenho trabalhado na área do Design Thinking e noutras questões ligadas ao design, que cada vez interessam mais do ponto de vista do seu cruzamento com outras áreas ligadas à gestão e aos territórios. O meu *background* em termos profissionais é um bocado diversificado, já fui autarca e, portanto, já trabalhei na área do desenvolvimento local. Depois tive uma ligação à consultoria e estive quase dez anos a trabalhar em consultoria na área do planeamento estratégico territorial, no desenvolvimento urbano e rural. A seguir estive numa área mais ligada ao empreendedorismo, montei e geri uma incubadora de empresas e, a partir daí, montei a minha empresa e passei a trabalhar como consultor freelancer e como consultor individual. Por isso, trabalho um mix de áreas que estão muito orientados para o planeamento territorial e depois combinam as vertentes ligadas aos empreendedorismo, à inovação e à criatividade. Isto é o panorama geral do meu *background*, sendo que o marketing territorial enquadra-se também nesta vertente de cruzar as componentes da gestão. Esta valência surgiu muito do tal MBA que eu fiz em Marketing e depois, quando me lancei no plano estratégico territorial, cruzei um pouco as duas áreas e comecei a trabalhar este tema que, há dez anos,

ainda era recente em Portugal. Foi daí que veio esta ligação à Setepés.

JP: Há então um percurso anterior com outros projectos?

PA: Sim, há algumas ligações anteriores à Setepés. Eu já fazia algum trabalho com eles na área de planeamento territorial, a Setepés também colaborava com uma antiga empresa de consultoria onde eu fui consultor. A Setepés trabalhava sobretudo as questões culturais nessa empresa e vem daí este relacionamento. Também estive a fazer alguma formação para a Setepés, mais concretamente, para alguns agentes de um projecto que eles geriam ao nível da região norte e onde, por acaso, também estavam pessoas de Paredes. Daí também algum conhecimento sobre aquilo que estava a acontecer em Paredes e sobre o trabalho que a Setepés estava a desenvolver em Paredes. Esta foi um pouco a minha entrada neste processo. Quando a Setepés me contactou na altura ainda estavam a arrancar com o projecto do Pólo de Design para o Mobiliário e foi bastante aliciante porque estes processos são, do ponto de vista do marketing territorial, muito importantes para reposicionar territórios, para saber valorizar os seus principais ativos e competências. Foi um desafio interessante, fez-me pensar um pouco sobre o que é que poderia ser o Marketing territorial associado a Paredes. Era um novo projecto que tinha um impacto muito transversal em todo o município e que se queria aproveitar em termos da comunicação e de reposicionamento, para criar uma imagem mais dinâmica de Paredes. Portanto, foi esse o meu primeiro envolvimento com o trabalho de Paredes. O título do trabalho era algo como “Roadmap para o marketing territorial do projecto Paredes Pólo Criativo do Design Mobiliário”. A lógica não era fazer um plano de marketing, era pensar o que é que podia ser o marketing territorial de Paredes, até porque a cidade na altura tinha lançado algumas iniciativas. Não lhe chamaria um plano ou uma estratégia de marketing mas tinham lançado a Rota dos Móveis.

JP: Isso na altura tinha muito mais a ver com o próprio marketing e não com o processo tão estruturado que acabou por ser, não é?

PA: Exactamente. Sobretudo, porque a perspectiva de quando se começa a trabalhar o marketing territorial, este é um primeiro choque que normalmente temos quando trabalhamos esta área, é fazer perceber os principais agentes que o marketing territorial é muito mais do que os slogans e as campanhas de comunicação. O marketing territorial tem muito mais a ver com a oferta que este território apresenta, ou melhor, a forma como apresenta a sua oferta e a que mercados é que a apresenta. Logo, o primeiro passo foi desconstruir um pouco esta questão de "Paredes, Rota dos Móveis" porque isto é muito curto para potenciar tudo aquilo que Paredes pode oferecer e a forma como se pode posicionar. O trabalho passou muito por perceber que outras abordagens é que poderiam ser desenvolvidas, que activos é que eram mais importantes e, a partir daí, podíamos estruturar um conjunto de orientações para Paredes, enquadrar o projecto da cidade criativa e saber valorizar e reposicionar. Pois, houve também uma postura, nesse caso do município, de não querer acabar com a marca "Paredes, a Rota dos Móveis". Essa era, aliás, uma situação bastante complicada.

JP: Era complicado fazer o balanço entre as duas coisas.

PA: Exactamente. O Pólo de Design Mobiliário era muito forte do ponto de vista daquilo que poderia vir a modificar em termos da cidade e do concelho e do próprio capital simbólico associado a Paredes. E a marca "Paredes, a Rota dos Móveis" era algo muito curto para enquadrar todo este grande projecto e estes objectivos. Além disso, havia também uma dinâmica na altura, que procuramos integrar ou pelo menos ter em consideração, sobretudo do ponto de vista da internacionalização, que era o projecto PlanetIT Valley.

JP: Sim. Mas esse projecto também entretanto parece que ficou parado.

PA: Sim, está em *stand-by*. Era um projecto em que as componentes empresariais e de mobiliário eram muito fortes mas que na altura em que começamos a fazer este trabalho, em termos daquilo que era o radar nacional, fazia com que Paredes aparecesse em revistas de gestão dos EUA como um projecto-piloto exemplar a nível internacional de cidades sustentáveis e de cidades criativas. De alguma forma, se aquilo na altura fosse para a frente, nós teríamos que integrar também essas dimensões todas naquilo que poderia ser a imagem de Paredes. Por isso, o trabalho foi mui-

to por aí, foi algo muito trabalhado a nível local, ou seja, fomos falar com as pessoas, fizemos um trabalho de base, tentámos perceber o que é que as pessoas pensavam sobre Paredes, o que é que os empresários pensavam sobre o projecto do Pólo Mobiliário e o que é que significava toda esta dinâmica em torno do design no território. Foram recolhidas um conjunto de orientações interessantes que depois resultaram numa espécie de um *briefing*.

JP: É o tal *roadmap* que referiu.

PA: Sim, que foi passado depois à agência de comunicação que trabalhou especificamente o marketing do projecto do Pólo de Design Mobiliário.

JP: A Inteli?

PA: Não, a Inteli esteve envolvida apenas no início do processo da candidatura do projecto do Pólo de Design, portanto, é anterior a tudo isto. Quando comecei a trabalhar já a Inteli tinha apresentado o projecto e o projecto que foi depois desenvolvido pela Setepés já não tinha nada a ver. Eu julgo que a empresa se chama A Transformadora.

JP: Exacto, A Transformadora foi a empresa responsável pela comunicação visual do evento.

PA: Sim, foi a empresa que fez a comunicação toda do Polo de Design do Mobiliário e foi no fundo quem pegou neste tal *briefing* e o interpretou. Basicamente, o que fizemos foi olhar para o território na sua globalidade, perceber que impactos é que o projecto podia ter no território. Só que depois as acções de marketing restringiam-se apenas ao projecto, não se alargavam a uma acção municipal mais abrangente. Por isso é que funcionou quase como um *briefing* de enquadramento para que depois A Transformadora, do ponto de vista do marketing e da comunicação, pudesse fazer perceber que aquelas acções teriam de ser trabalhadas,

JP: Claro, como activar o projecto na fase inicial.

PA: Exactamente.

JP: Antes de chegar ao território trabalhou ou teve conhecimento de outros projectos de cidades criativas ou até há algumas que tivessem feito parte do vosso estudo sobre o tema?

PA: Eu acho que quando a Inteli trabalhou no início fez esse levantamento, uma componente do documento da Inteli tem precisamente a ver com casos de outras cidades e de outros processos deste tipo. Do ponto de vista do trabalho de marketing que eu fiz,

usei algumas referências de alguns territórios que estavam a seguir este percurso mas não estava incluído no meu trabalho a análise ou elaboração de estudos de caso.

JP: Sim, claro, mas gostaria de saber qual a sua perspectiva neste caso? Das outras entrevistas que tenho, quase todos me referem os mesmos casos de estudo como exemplo, naturalmente porque todos beberam a informação desse tal estudo que referiu.

PA: Sim, aliás, a própria Associação Empresarial lançou um documento, que eu li e gostei de ler, sobre estudo de casos que foram feitos para a parte de implementação do projecto, sobretudo, na área da internacionalização. Mas essa era concretamente uma parte do trabalho que tinha a ver até com a elaboração desses estudos de caso. Na minha área, eu não fiz, mas utilizei alguma informação de outros casos. Que até nem têm muita comparação porque o caso de Paredes é muito particular, até por se tratar de uma cidade de média dimensão. Estes processos de regeneração urbana, de lançamento de dinâmicas a partir da criatividade e design acontecem mais em cidade de maior dimensão, estamos a falar de cidades como Bilbao ou como Barcelona ou Glasgow. E a maior parte dos estudos de caso que existem tem muito a ver com esta tipologia de cidades e não com cidades de pequena e média dimensão como Paredes. Aliás, um dos aspectos que eu refiro em todos os documentos que fiz é a necessidade de não usar o “one size fits all” para esta abordagem a desenvolver para Paredes. Os estudos de caso existem realmente para cidades de maior dimensão e depois quando aquelas fórmulas ou algumas daquelas guidelines, o contexto local não tem aquela massificação de actores, não tem aquele tipo de envolvimento da população e, também, não contam com outras características que também são importantes, como o cluster sectorial muito interessante e com alguma dinâmica de Paredes.

Na verdade, eu até usei mais a questão de alguns estudos de caso depois numa segunda intervenção de minha parte no projecto, que já não teve especificamente a ver com a questão do marketing territorial, mas sim com a realização de um estudo de caso, ou seja, de fazer de Paredes um estudo de caso para as questões de utilização do design mobiliário do ponto de vista do desenvolvimento da cidade. Foi o último trabalho que eu desenvolvi com a Susana Marques (da Setepés, coordenadora geral do Pólo) e que resultou numa publicação, que se chama “Paredes, Pólo de Design Mobiliário” e cujo Pólo até apresentou recentemente em Aveiro numa conferência.

JP: A conferência da APDR, não é?

PA: Exactamente. O que eu fiz com ela foi esse pequeno estudo de caso da situação de Paredes, desde o início até ao final do Art on Chairs, onde se fez aquela acção de avaliação no day-after do Art on Chairs. Relativamente ao marketing, na altura fiz alguma pesquisa e tive acesso a alguns casos e a algumas situações interessantes mas como lhe digo há alguma dificuldade em enquadrá-las no perfil de cidade média que é Paredes.

JP: Qual foi a sua primeira impressão quando chegou ao território de Paredes? Conseguia logo perspectivar qual seria a receptividade das pessoas ao projecto em si ou naquilo que ele iria propor em termos de transformação?

PA: Fruto dos meus dez anos de consultoria nesta área, sou um pouco céptico neste tipo de projectos, à partida, porque quando me “venderam” o projecto pela primeira vez, parecia-me uma espécie de nave alienígena num território que não tinha nada a ver com aquilo. (risos) Portanto, há sempre algum receio na importação destes projectos muito na moda, ou seja, os temas são importantes mas são temas que estão trabalhados ao nível de alguns territórios mais icónicos. Aquilo que eu pensava era que estaríamos perante mais alguém a quem foi vendida esta ideia das cidades criativas e que comprou um projecto, que depois não tem nada a ver com aquilo que o território pode oferecer ou com a ancoragem a esse território. É evidente que tinha algumas referências de Paredes, sobretudo, as questões ligadas à dinâmica de mobiliário, até porque tenho algumas relações familiares que passam também por aí. Tinha a referência que, do ponto de vista urbano, a cidade não era muito qualificada e lembro-me de ter estado numa conferência de lançamento que decorria em Paredes, antes ainda de eu pensar que poderia vir a estar ligado ao processo, e em que o Prof. Augusto Mateus foi falar. Recordo-me de estarmos a falar todos antes da sessão e ele ter feito um comentário do género: “Isto das cidades criativas é muito interessante mas uma pessoa chega aqui e nem passeios tem.” E eu também tinha um pouco essa sensação.

JP: É a questão da pirâmide das necessidades.

PA: É a pirâmide das necessidades e até um pouco do próprio ambiente urbano. Não se pode passar de uma cidade média, ainda com uma forte componente rural, com uma base industrial muito século XX para, de repente, uma cidade criativa muito baseada em factores e materiais de muito maior intensidade e conhecimento. Tem que haver aqui um trabalho mais abrangente a desenvolver. Portanto, eu tinha um pouco este choque de situações de um projecto que era bastante exigente para um território que, no

meu imaginário, era ainda pouco qualificado. No entanto, confesso que estava enganado. O trabalho que fiz permitiu-me perceber melhor Paredes, acha que há, do ponto de vista da liderança política, pessoas com vontade de fazer coisas. Há políticos empreendedores, que não é fácil de encontrar, isto é, há pessoas que não têm problema em pegar na mala, bater a portas e lutar porque têm uma ideia e querem fazer coisas. Penso que isso é positivo. Ao mesmo tempo, há uma dinâmica empresarial que ainda não está muito orientada para determinados tipos de factores que são muito importantes no que toca à competitividade, mas existem alguns casos que podem funcionar como âncoras e drivers para criar novas dinâmicas. Só que depois há uma parte da população e do território que é muito rural e que não será fácil de envolver em projectos deste tipo. Por isso, na minha perspectiva, aliás isso está também nos documentos que escrevi, um dos factores críticos deste projecto é também a sustentabilidade.

JP: No sentido em que mais do que o conceito de cidade criativa está em causa o conceito de cidade.

PA: Isso mesmo, o que está em causa é o conceito de cidade e o que é que Paredes quer ser enquanto cidade. Não é possível avançar para processos mais exigentes sem mobilizar a comunidade e sem trabalhar com ela de uma forma muito mais intensa, que pode não ser tão orientada para grandes projectos e para coisas com muita visibilidade mas que tem de ser trabalhada na base, sobretudo, a partir da educação.

JP: Às vezes é uma mudança quase geracional.

PA: Sim, isto é um projecto de mudança geracional. É um projecto de médio/longo prazo.

JP: As implicações junto do território foram as mais imediatas, até porque tem a ver com edificações que são muito mais visíveis, mas junto dos cidadãos já se reconheceu que as coisas não correram tão bem, não tiveram o mesmo impacto. Porque é que acha que isto aconteceu desta forma? Há indicadores estudados noutros casos que pudessem sugerir que isto pudesse acontecer?

PA: Há indicadores muito associados a estes projectos, mesmos nas tais cidades de maior dimensão, que mostram que ou se trabalha o envolvimento dos públicos e da comunidade desde o início e de uma forma muito forte ou dificilmente se consegue ancorar um projecto destes. Ou seja, fazer com que não seja apenas um projecto temporalmente muito definido e que seja alguma coisa mais sustentada. Eu acho é que o problema está um pouco na tal importação de

modelos, que funcionam nalguns contextos mas não noutros.

JP: É uma questão de escala, às vezes.

PA: Sim, mas é uma crítica que eu faço, neste caso particular à Inteli, porque conheço a Inteli e a Catarina Selada e já trabalhámos noutros contextos. A Inteli faz muito a importação destes modelos. Eu não posso pegar no modelo de Bilbao e importá-lo directamente para Paredes, não é a mesma população, não tem o mesmo tipo de abordagem aos projectos e à inovação, não tem as mesmas qualificações, não tem o mesmo histórico em termos de dinâmica empresarial ou empreendedora, portanto, há um conjunto de características que nós temos de perceber e que depois nos ajudam a desenhar o próprio projecto e o seu programa de implementação. Este problema não é único de Paredes, a maior parte dos projectos em Portugal e, mesmo a nível internacional, que têm vindo a ser feitos nesta área, que é assim. Muitas vezes é pegar em 3 ou 4 grandes acções que foram casos de sucesso e toca a fazer um pequeno Guggenheim, fazer a campanha de marketing em cima disto e depois fazer um instituto de design e de inovação ou uma incubadora de empresas e temos as coisas a funcionar. Repare que as incubadoras de empresas vão ser, nestas próximas eleições, as novas rotundas!

JP: Sim, aliás, o chavão de “cidade criativa” ou “cluster criativo” já é um discurso redondo que, às vezes, nem se sabe muito bem o que é que está a ser dito mas que é usado. Até o próprio termo “design”.

PA: Design, empreendedorismo, inovação são palavras que eu tento usar menos porque como o conceito não é claro para toda a gente e toda a gente fala nelas, não estamos a dizer nada. É muito complicado e eu acho que nós estamos a passar essa fase agora, ou seja, toda a gente quer ter um projecto que permita chamar à cidade “criativa”, seja uma incubadora, um centro de design, uma fábrica de design, um museu. Pronto, são as novas lógicas de competitividade urbana (risos) e ainda bem. Cada vez estamos a evoluir mais num outro sentido e a incorporar componentes importantes mas depois esquecemo-nos da ancoragem local. E o capital simbólico e a capacidade de governança local são muito determinantes nestes projectos e, portanto, na própria concepção dos projectos é preciso, por exemplo, começar a trabalhar com as associações locais para eles começarem a fazer determinado tipo de projectos que sustentem depois novas dinâmicas. Provavelmente, não dá tantos votos, não tem tanta visibilidade, não aparece tanto na imprensa mas são trabalhos que têm de ser feitos. Por acaso, Paredes até tem algum trabalho desenvolvido nesse

campo, nomeadamente na área da cultura, que é um trabalho muito interessante e que já está a ser feito há bastante tempo. Por exemplo, o trabalho que vocês fizeram junto dos jovens e o “Cadeira Parade” são projectos muito validados pela comunidade porque têm o seu envolvimento.

JP: E é através deles que tomam conhecimento do que é que aconteceu, porque o que aconteceu na indústria ou num concurso internacional, por exemplo, acaba por não chegar a todas as pessoas. Aliás, tivemos a oportunidade de falar com a Fenabel e eles próprios sentiram dificuldade de fazer chegar aos seus colaboradores o que é que era o projecto em que se envolveram.

PA: Do ponto de vista dos empresários, quando medimos impactos após o Art on Chairs, até fiquei algo surpreendido com os resultados porque, realmente aqueles que participaram reconheceram a importância e perceberam que tinham de apreender de uma forma diferente. Ou seja, aquilo acabou por mexer com as próprias empresas pela forma como as pessoas da empresa percebiam estes novos projectos e este contexto e, por isso, até acabou por ter alguns efeitos que eu não pensei iam ser tão marcados mas que acabaram por ser. Agora a dificuldade está em escalar isso para as empresas perceberem o design de uma forma diferente. Eu recorde-me que numa das primeiras reuniões que eu tive com as empresários perguntei se achavam que a área do design era importante e todos, sem excepção, disseram que o design era o mais importante e que tralhavam e faziam coisas com design. Mas eles não sabiam do que é que estavam a falar.

JP: Sim claro mas isso não é só um problema de Paredes, é do país e da própria disciplina que é recente no senso-comum.

PA: Pois é.

JP: Qual é a sua opinião em relação ao papel que os meios digitais podem desempenhar nesta promoção do projecto? Foram tomadas algumas iniciativas que ligassem com esta dominância dos meios digitais?

PA: Essa parte do projecto e a utilização específica desses meios já não conheço tão bem porque não a acompanhei. Eu acho que esses meios são essenciais porque, do ponto de vista da comunicação são cada vez mais potentes e, por isso, têm de fazer parte das ferramentas que utilizámos para comunicar qualquer tipo de projecto ou de iniciativa ou mesmo para comunicar com os cidadãos. A par disso, eu acho que são uma componente fundamental daquilo que se

chama de co-criação. São meios que permitem que os públicos a quem nos dirigimos possam ser eles próprios fazedores de conteúdos. Eu acho que essa é uma mais-valia fundamental e que, cada vez mais, esse tipo de projectos tem de ter. Além disso, é um instrumento muito fácil e que é muito apelativo para o envolvimento da comunidade. Portanto, penso que o poder comunicacional que tem e, ao mesmo tempo, o poder de envolvimento e co-criação que eles integram são fundamentais. Isto também acontece porque cada vez mais estes projectos são de conteúdos, portanto, ou eu tenho cidadãos que são capazes de criar e entender conteúdos e que os sabem produzir ou então dificilmente tenho capacidade para mudar um capital simbólico, para envolver a comunidade no próprio projecto, para lhe dar notoriedade.

JP: De que modo é que essa comunidade pode preencher algum espaço que, de alguma forma, possa não ser considerado numa abordagem tradicional ou de importação de modelo?

PA: Há duas coisas que me parecem interessantes neste domínio. Por um lado, é a integração do digital com o físico. Eu se tiver capacidade de integrar conteúdos com suporte digital mas que depois podem ter também alguma componente física, aí vou fazer com que a cidade tenha um papel importante. Por outro lado, está a questão das experiências, ou seja, se eu for capaz de criar experiências que integram conteúdos e que a partir das experiências que possibilito, geram novos conteúdos, eu consigo ter duas áreas de actuação importantes para os media digitais, que não são necessariamente as mais tradicionais. Uma área que agora está muito na moda, a partir dos meios digitais, é o gamification, que consiste em utilizar o mind set dos jogos para envolver pessoas na produção de conteúdos e, por exemplo, na exploração de cidades pode ser uma forma de eu trabalhar e explorar estes meios e por as pessoas a criar conteúdos a partir de uma lógica de jogos.

JP: Além da participação e da experiência nós quisemos incluir aqui, outro conceito-chave que é a agregação. Quisemos que as pessoas percebessem que só através da participação activa é que podiam fazer parte da co-criação de conteúdos, uma vez que isto é um museu colectivo, na sua definição mais larga, em que todos podemos e temos alguma coisa a acrescentar. Também percebemos que havia um papel muito importante que não estava pensado no projecto e essa foi, de facto, uma das lacunas que os media digitais preencheram da melhor forma, que foi a capacidade de agregar uma série de pessoas e de conteúdos que estavam perdidos ou esquecidos. Existiam mas não tinham outro meio para se tornarem públicos. Uma das coisas que nos

satisfaz foi ter conseguido revelar uma colecção de 6 mini-docs, feitos em 2007, descoberta entre várias conversas e reuniões informais e que estavam arquivados. Um desses mini-docs é com a última “cadeireira” viva, ou seja, uma cadeireira é algo que devia ter sido falado desde início neste projecto e não foi. E outro foi sobre um dos últimos industriais “tradicionais”, empreendedores, que toda a vida viveu na fábrica e para aquela indústria. Estes trabalhos foram desenvolvidos para um projecto que a autarquia lançou há uns anos atrás, para um museu de mobiliário, que depois acabou por ficar parado e que agora vai ser integrado numa fase posterior da cidade criativa. Mas estes mini-docs estavam perdidos em DVDs, numa caixa de um sótão da Setepés... De facto, revelar isto ao mundo parece-me que é uma tarefa vital, quase que não teríamos que fazer mais nada e teríamos a nossa missão cumprida. Conseguimos agregar estes conteúdos, tanto o documental, como das coisas que os paredenses vão fazendo, e revelá-los, mais do que ao mundo global, ao mundo de Paredes. Foi assim uma das tarefas principais e, como disse, penso que a agregação é um conceito-chave.

PA: Eu acho que essa questão da agregação é uma questão fundamental, sobretudo, no que toca aos media digitais. Acho que também há uma função que está implícita no que me disse mas que depois penso que cada vez é mais relevante e que devia ser devidamente sublinhada nestes processos, que é a questão da curadoria. A curadoria é fundamental e nos media digitais muito mais porque é preciso filtrar, dar relevância, promover conteúdos e aí a figura do curador. O curador é determinante.

JP: Haverá capacidade no futuro de conseguir fazer a ponte que não se conseguiu fazer nesta primeira edição? Será possível ligar a criatividade individual com a indústria local? A criatividade das empresas paredenses, que não é a indústria mas que tem a ver com a sua forma de estar, a sua forma de querer consumir cultura? De querer viver numa cidade colectiva e na tal definição de cidade e ligar isto com a indústria, que no fundo é o alvo principal de transformação que o projecto procura?

PA: Essa é a questão central do projecto e isso passa por uma coisa que, também é um conceito que está cada vez mais banalizado mas que eu penso que é essencial porque pelo menos ajuda-nos a estruturar estes processos, que é o o conceito de eco-sistema criativo. Primeiro as cidades são eco-sistemas e temos de as entender dessa maneira, há interligações e há jogos de forças e acções e pró-acções entre todos os indivíduos e entre todas as organizações e componentes

que fazem parte de uma cidade, que vão desde o espaço físico, até às questões ambientais, de formação, da indústria. Há um conjunto de actores que estão numa cidade e que formam este eco-sistema. Agora para quem quer uma cidade criativa tem que ter um eco-sistema que é criativo. Isto passa muito por uma questão que tem a ver com a própria governança do projecto e da cidade e o problema da governança coloca-se de uma forma muito particular neste processo, porque tem de saber, ao mesmo tempo, criar uma cultura de criatividade, educar para a criatividade, introduzir a criatividade de uma forma mais forte no ADN dos paredenses. E só a partir daí é que pode ter outputs de criatividade através, por exemplo, da indústria de mobiliário. É que não é possível estar à espera de ter outputs de criatividade, se primeiro não estiver a criar as condições para que eles venham a aparecer.

JP: Uma das questões que se coloca é se se pretende que a próxima geração seja de industriais que estão preparados para receber o design ou de designers que estão preparados para trabalhar com a indústria.

PA: Eu acho que a resposta não será nem uma coisa, nem outra, será alguma coisa complementar, ou seja, não são industriais que integram o design...

JP: Eu refiro indústrias no sentido em que há uma grande tradição familiar na indústria.

PA: Sim, sim. O empreendedorismo em Paredes é um caso particular e, por isso, é que tem havido alguma dificuldade em termos de evolução, que tem a ver com o facto de os novos empreendedores replicarem exactamente o modelo dos seus mentores. A indústria de Paredes só vai conseguir fazer o upgrade quando estes novos empreendedores integrarem novas componentes de inovação, nomeadamente a questão do design. Portanto, se conseguirmos que a próxima geração de empreendedores em Paredes consiga fazer diferente e incluir novos componentes, já estamos a entrar no upgrade necessário. Acho que este projecto pode ser muito importante para começar a ajudar a fazer esta mudança.

JP: Mesmo que um desses jovens empreendedores seja um empresário de 70 anos, isto é, um jovem empreendedor tem de ser de espírito, não necessariamente de idade. Tal como vimos naquela sessão e que me deixou particularmente sensibilizado.

PA: Há dois aspectos que também me parecem fulcrais do ponto de vista da implementação destes projectos e depois no seu desenvolvimento e no futuro.

Por um lado, perceber que cada vez mais os projectos micro são importantes. Ou seja, eu não sei até que ponto o projecto do Pólo de Design Mobiliário deveria ser mais partido em projectos micro. Muitas vezes como o projecto é muito grande, perdemos aqui a lógica da importância de pequenas acções que são importantes para o futuro do projecto. Por exemplo, o caso da incubadora de empresas tem que se tratada como um projecto micro. E tem que se dar importância à forma como vai ser tratado esse projecto, que vai contribuir para um todo. Só que muitas vezes a lógica de estarmos a ver a floresta, impede-nos de ver cada um das suas árvores. Mas o resultado do projecto vai ser o resultado da forma como cresce cada uma das suas árvores. Portanto, eu penso que há aqui uma dimensão micro destes projectos maiores que muitas vezes é perdida. Acho que já se está a perceber agora, depois de muitos anos a trabalhar projectos megalómanos, que é necessário voltar a uma escala micro, que é cada vez mais determinante. Por exemplo, em Paredes devia haver um projecto para envolvimento e animação da comunidade e não há. Essa componente é decisiva para este projecto, portanto, nessa lógica do micro nos projectos globais, eu acho que estaria na altura de se pegar no projecto todo, redimensioná-lo e encontrar aqui micro projectos que são críticos no desenvolvimento do projecto no futuro. Por outro lado, também há uma coisa que é cada vez mais importante em termos de lógica de gestão deste tipo de projectos que é o *learning by doing*, ou seja, vamos aprender à medida que vamos desenvolvendo o próprio projecto e vamos fazê-lo através de pequenos passos. Não vale a pena ter aqui uma lógica e de grandes iniciativas e de grande dimensão porque isto cada vez se faz mais com pequenos passos e tudo hoje muda do dia para a noite. Não vale a pena estar a desenhar acções a dois anos porque é imenso tempo, por isso, vamos fazer coisas mais pequenas, com pequenos passos e vamos aprender à maneira que o fazemos. E é assim que se gerem estes grandes projectos. Um planeamento estratégico, actualmente mudou muito e o planeamento estratégico cinge-se ao dia a dia e ao curto prazo. O contexto é muito esse, é um conceito de mudança muito forte e não faz sentido, mesmo que sejam projectos estruturantes. É preciso fazer uma gestão muito *step by step* e através de micro projectos e geri-los muito bem.

Por isso, eu acho que se calhar o projecto de Paredes, depois desta primeira fase, valeria a pena ser partido numa série de micro projectos que têm a ver com estas questões da animação da comunidade, da incubação, do que é que significa empresários designers e designers empresários, as questões do media digitais e a importância da produção de conteúdos e da curadoria e etc. Por exemplo, há aqui uma série de micro projectos dentro do projecto que não estavam definidos à partida mas que agora para a

próxima fase eu acho que seria essencial trabalhá-los a essa escala.

JP: Gostaria de acrescentar mais algum comentário sobre o projecto geral?

PA: O projecto de Paredes é muito ambicioso e é um projecto que eu acho que tem pernas para andar. Tem uma componente fundamental que é a ancoragem local, que muitos outros projectos deste tipo que eu conheço não têm. Estão-me a passar pela mão alguns projectos deste tipo...

JP: Neste momento, só aqui no norte temos São João da Madeira, Santo Tirso...

PA: Só para ter uma ideia, aqui no Norte, no que toca a projetos deste género, poucos são iguais ao de Paredes, mas que têm algo a ver com cidades criativas ou incubadoras criativas, nós temos 12 projectos. Isto só no Norte, se for a ver nenhum deles está ligado com nenhum outro. Portanto, para eles não faz sentido estarem a trabalhar em rede, não faz sentido andar a replicar equipamentos, não faz sentido ganhar escala, não faz sentido articular recursos, nada disso faz sentido... Mas é o que está a acontecer.

JP: Sim é aquela perspectiva paroquial do território.

PA: Mesmo. É o meu quintal. Agora no próximo período de programação dos fundos comunitários as coisas vão ser um bocadinho diferentes. Nós dizemos sempre isto (risos). Mas eu acho que, desta vez, vai ser um pouco diferente do ponto de vista do imaterial. Portanto, vão mudar muitas dinâmicas de equipamentos que estão para aí a ser feitos, da articulação em rede e de alguma especialização inteligente, ou seja, que áreas é que são mesmos fundamentais e onde é que se vai colocar a aposta, não pode ser em tudo, mas tem de ser naquelas áreas onde efectivamente se possa ir em frente e em que se tenha capacidade para ser competitivo. Eu acho que isso vai mudar alguma lógica de projetos mais soltos que andam por aí mas penso que Paredes, daqueles que eu conheço pelo menos até Lisboa, é um dos projetos mais interessantes nesta área, a par do de Óbidos.

Appendix B

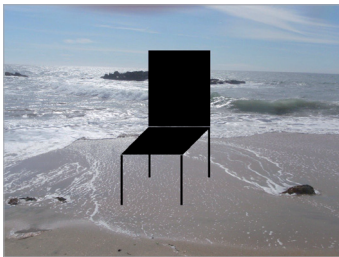
Appendix B presents visual material related to FUTUREPLACES 2011 citizen lab, as it follows:

- Visual presentation used in the collective opening session of the citizen labs;
- Stories of Chairs synopsis, included in Citizen Labs presentation document.

Appendix B1

Visual presentation, opening session, October 19, 2011, Porto (Maus Hábitos).

slide 1



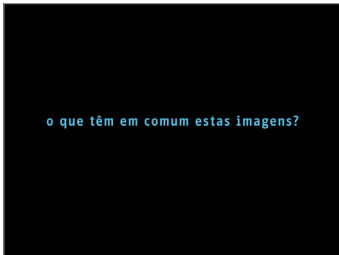
slide 2



slide 3



slide 4



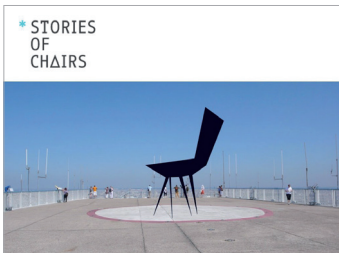
slide 5



slide 6



slide 7



slide 8



slide 9



slide 10



slide 11



slide 12



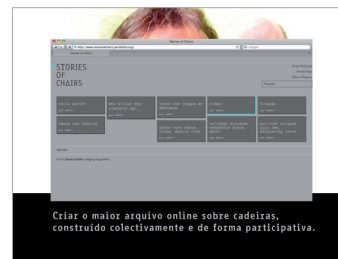
slide 13



slide 14



slide 15



slide 16



slide 17



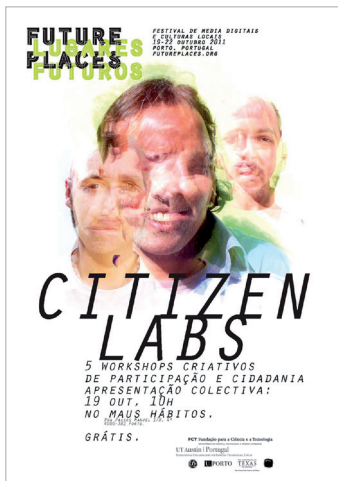
slide 18



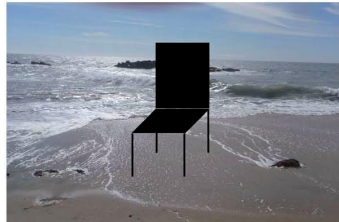
Appendix B2

Stories of Chairs synopsis, included in 2011 Citizen Labs presentation document.

page 1 (cover)



page 3 (Stories of Chairs)



STORIES OF CHAIRS

EM COOPERAÇÃO COM A CÂMARA MUNICIPAL DE PAREDES
WORKSHOP DE UM DIA (DUAS EDIÇÕES) + WEBSITE PARTICIPATIVO.
19 OU 20 DE OUTUBRO, MAUS HÁBITOS
10H - 17H
APRESENTAÇÃO: 19 DE OUTUBRO, 10H, MAUS HÁBITOS
COORDENADOR: JORGE PEREIRA

A CADEIRA É UM OBJECTO UNIVERSAL, UM UNIVERSO DE HISTÓRIAS. É TAMBÉM UMA PARTE SUBSTANCIAL DA PRODUÇÃO DA INDÚSTRIA DE MOBILIÁRIO DA REGIÃO NORTE DE PORTUGAL.

STORIES OF CHAIRS PRETENDE CONTRIBUIR PARA A REINVENÇÃO E PROMOÇÃO DAS NARRATIVAS ASSOCIADAS A ESTA INDÚSTRIA; PRETENDE TAMBÉM FACILITAR A PARTILHA DE HISTÓRIAS DE VIDA, E CONVIDAR AS PESSOAS A CONVERGIR NA SUA CRIATIVIDADE.

STORIES OF CHAIRS PRETENDE SER CRIATIVO NOS SEUS CONTEÚDOS, E CONTRIBUTIVO NO SEU PROPÓSITO. SIMPLES NA SUA PREMISSA, MUITO DIVERSO NOS SEUS RESULTADOS. SÉRIO NA SUA MISSÃO, MUITO DIVERTIDO NOS SEUS PROCESSOS.

CONVIDAMOS TODOS A ADERIR A ESTE MELTING POT:
DESENHANDO CADEIRAS
TIRANDO FOTOS COM OU SEM CADEIRAS
COLOCANDO CADEIRAS NESSAS FOTOS
CONTANDO AS SUAS HISTÓRIAS QUE ENVOLVAM CADEIRAS
CONTANDO HISTÓRIAS DAS CADEIRAS DE OUTROS
PERGUNTANDO COISAS SOBRE CADEIRAS
VOTANDO EM CADEIRAS
DISSECANDO CADEIRAS
FAZENDO LOGOTIPOS PARA CADEIRAS
COMPRANDO E VENDENDO CADEIRAS
COMPODO UMA CANÇÃO SOBRE UMA CADEIRA
ESCREVENDO UM POEMA SOBRE UMA CADEIRA
FAZENDO UMA CADEIRA

+++++

... E, DESTAS FORMAS, CRIAMOS A BASE DESTE ARQUIVO ONLINE DE HISTÓRIAS DE CADEIRAS.

O CONTEÚDO GERADO NESTE LABORATÓRIO SERÁ EXIBIDO PERMANENTEMENTE NO WEBSITE "STORIES OF CHAIRS", A SER PUBLICAMENTE INAUGURADO NA SESSÃO DE ENCERRAMENTO DO FESTIVAL FUTUREPLACES, DIA 22 DE OUTUBRO.

Appendix C

Appendix C presents visual material related to FUTUREPLACES 2012 citizen lab, as it follows:

- Visual presentation used in the collective opening session of the citizen labs;
- Stories of Chairs synopsis, included in Citizen Labs presentation document.

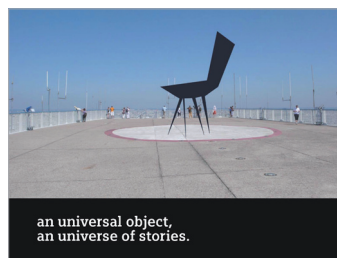
Appendix C1

Visual presentation, opening session, October 18, 2012, Porto (PINC).

slide 1



slide 2



slide 3

Stories of Chairs invites you and everyone to share ideas, stories and reveries about the Chair, this object that accompanies us every day of our lives, through images, words, sounds and experiences.

slide 4



slide 5



slide 6

Stories of Chairs wants to participate in the reinvention and promotion of narratives around the chair and the furniture industry of Northern Portugal, sharing stories and life histories and, above all, uniting the community (both local and global) through their creativity and participatory communication.

slide 7

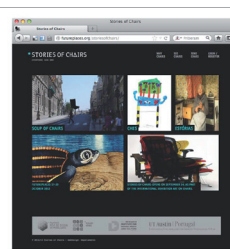


slide 8

It's an online ground for participation, a museum of individual and collective heritages.

Content generated in this lab will be permanently exhibited in the project website and take part in the Stories of Chairs exhibition.

slide 9



slide 10

A Chair Clinic
and its Chair Doctors
will also be in operation.

slide 11



slide 12

What are we going to do?
Chairs and stories of chairs, around chairs, rehabing chairs (whatever a chair might be).

How are we going to do that?
Together.
You should bring creativity and a willingness to find and tell a good story. Bring a camera, a laptop, a pencil or a recorder.
We have paper, materials and a great team.

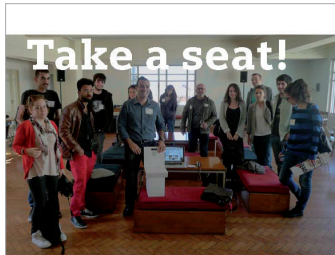
slide 13

Why?
Because chairs are made for all. There already are more chairs than iPads. Always have been. But we always want more. Send your chair. Your chairs.

When it will be?
**Citizen Lab,
19th October 10-13h
Kick-off @ Edificio Almeida Garrett
Room 15**

Online, anytime.

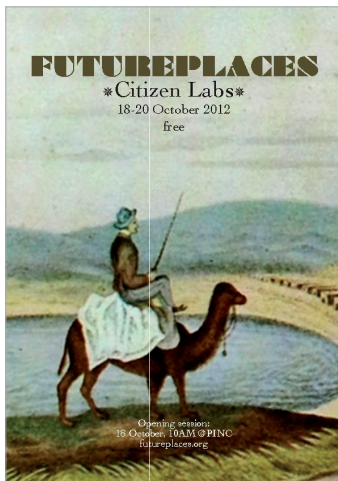
slide 14



Appendix C2

Stories of Chairs synopsis, included in 2012 Citizen Labs presentation document.

page 1 (cover)



page 3 (Stories of Chairs)



Jorge Pereira

Stories of Chairs invites you and everyone to share ideas, stories and reveries about the Chair, this object that accompanies us every day of our lives, through images, words, sounds and experiences.

Stories of Chairs wants to participate in the reinvention and promotion of narratives around the chair and the furniture industry of Northern Portugal, sharing stories and life histories and, above all, uniting the community (both local and global) through their creativity and participatory communication.

It's an online ground for participation, a museum of individual and collective heritages. Content generated in this lab will be permanently exhibited in the project website and take part in the Stories of Chairs exhibition.

A Chair Clinic and its Chair Doctors will also be in operation.
<http://futureplaces.org/storiesofchairs>

Participants should bring: creativity and a willingness to find and tell a good story. They can also bring a camera, a laptop, a pencil or a recorder.

Schedule:
 18 Oct, 10AM (briefing)
 19 Oct, 10AM-1PM (lab)
 20 Oct, 3PM (outcomes)

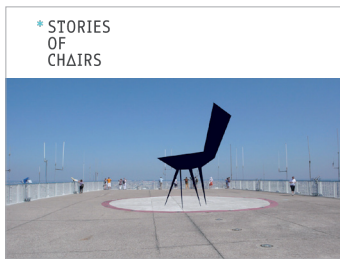
Appendix D

Appendix D presents visual material related to the activity *Chés* (Section 6.2.3.3.):
– Appendix D1 presents the visual presentation discussed in the preparatory.

Appendix D1

Visual presentation, introductory discussion meeting, February 6, 2012, Paredes.

slide 1



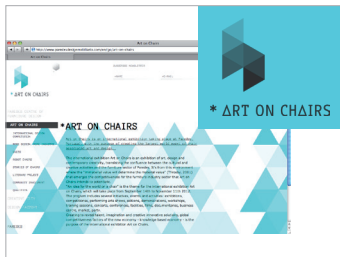
slide 2



slide 3



slide 4



slide 5



slide 6



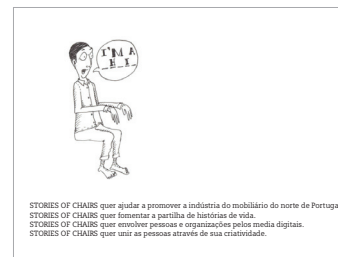
slide 7



slide 8



slide 9



slide 10

futureplaces 2011
[citizen lab "stories of chairs"](http://citizenlab.org/storiesofchairs)

design participativo em que a própria **experiência criativa** possibilita aos agentes envolvidos desenvolverem uma cultura participativa que vai além da própria experiência.

www.futureplaces.org/storiesofchairs

slide 11

um objecto universal,
 um universo de histórias.

slide 12

Art on Chairs é um evento artístico, cultural e de criatividade envolvido no processo e actividades de design ligadas à indústria do mobiliário do concelho de Paredes, materializado numa grande exposição internacional, cujo tema da primeira edição, a realizar em 2012, é "as Ideas for the World: ou a Chair".

Um dos vectores estratégicos para o envolvimento da comunidade local e para incluir uma audiência internacional são os media digitais participativos

slide 13

Os media digitais acrescentam dimensões afectivas, lúdicas e regeneradoras para o desenvolvimento e regeneração que se pretende.

slide 14

* STORIES OF CHAIRS

Olá. A minha Ché chama-se

www.futureplaces.org/storiesofchairs

slide 15

8 Fevereiro 2012 - Centro Paroquial de Paredes

CHÉS

Evento participativo infantil de desenho de cadeiras

slide 16

CHÉS

CHÉS é uma actividade de envolvimento das crianças do ensino pré-escolar, do concelho de Paredes, no projecto STORIES OF CHAIRS.

OBJECTIVOS

- Criação de conteúdos para o website participativo;
- Criar notoriedade ao concelho de Paredes e à sua indústria do mobiliário (e indústrias criativas);
- Promover a consciencialização local das histórias e estórias ligadas ao tema do projecto;
- Envolver a comunidade local, pela criatividade.

slide 17

CHÉS

PRÉ-EVENTO

- Dialogar com as crianças sobre o objecto cadeira, as suas possibilidades criativas, a sua ligação ao mobiliário e indústria.

EVENTO

- Desenvolvimento de desenhos, com marcadores;
- Haverá registo dos desenhos e da interacção na sala;
- Organização da sala por escolas e turmas;
- Actividade livre: tema para o desenho?
- As crianças levarão os trabalhos para casa;

slide 18

CHÉS

PÓS-EVENTO

- Dialogar com as crianças e compilarem testemunhos das crianças (porque esta cadeira? o que é que ela tem ou faz de especial?);
- Comunicação posterior para o exterior (perceber a cobertura dos media, jornais escolares, entre outros);
- Visitar o website Stories of Chairs - e ver a secção sobre o evento.

