

DESIGN COLLABORATION FOR THE RE-EVALUATION OF AN ABANDONED INDUSTRIAL CITY: THE CASE OF SÃO JOÃO DA MADEIRA – PORTUGAL

João A. Mota

University of Aveiro,
Dep. Comunicação e Arte

Pedro C. Almeida

University of Aveiro,
Dep. Comunicação e Arte

Paulo S. Silva

University of Aveiro,
Dep. Comunicação e Arte

Last thirty years of Portuguese urban experience brought intense changes to former rural and old-urban landscapes. The case study of “*Oliva*” factories at the city of *São João da Madeira* (SJM) – Portugal, is an opportunity to discuss the evolvement of policies in design processes. This paper seeks to analyze the results originated by the role of order in planning, in an abandoned industrial site in Portugal, and calls for an enhanced participation between designers (urban agents, architects, urban planners) local stakeholders, residents and politicians (local government, endowments for the arts and research). The empirical material of this study was produced between 2002 and 2006 and comes from team work between the University of Aveiro and the municipality of the aforementioned city. This paper concludes that sites experiencing deep programmatic changes grounded in fragile planning agendas produce always unavoidable experiences with disorder.

The involvement of undergraduate students in research, young researchers, senior researchers, designers, residents, politicians was important for the outcome of this project and nurtured our association with a collaborative network in the northern part of the district of Aveiro (region of Entre Douro e Vouga), mobilizing a variety of agents and stakeholders representing the industrial, cultural, scientific and territorial systems of this region: enterprises, industrial chambers, municipalities, professional schools of different levels, training centers, technological centers (metal mechanics industry, shoe industry, cork industry) and the University of Aveiro.

Moreover, this research represents a contribution to the Museum of Portuguese Design: an estate and virtual museum in collaboration with the Portuguese Design Center - (CPD).

On a broader scale this study investigates: how local identities can foster new product developments and enhance the visibility of this region in the global market.

THE SANCTITY OF DESIGN: EXPLORING THE NEED FOR CONTEMPORARY DESIGN SOLUTIONS THAT ELEVATE SOCIO-CULTURAL SOLIDARITY THROUGH TEMPORARY SHELTER IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

Awareness, Sensitivity, Dignity, Solidarity, Shelter

Kathryn E. Fuller

Interdisciplinary Design Institute,
Washington State University-Spokane

High in the mountains of India, the Jain monks pause with each step they take to sweep the ground before them (Singh, 2001). With great effort, they protect even the most delicate creature that might be crushed underfoot (Singh, 2001). Each brushstroke manifests a consciousness that every step forward demands the acknowledgement that there is something sacred to protect. The simplicity of a footstep becomes a ritual of awareness and respect.

The future of meaningful design lies in the challenge to return to this sensitivity through the formation of spaces, products, and technologies that seek to actively address the socio-cultural issues of our time. With each step forward, this attitude of awareness beckons the designer to consider the social, psychological, and cultural complexities that design encompasses, prompting solutions that exhibit an understanding of and a connection to the people and environments for which they are created. Through this conscious effort, design has the potential to elevate human dignity and promote global solidarity.

Central to this approach is an understanding of the peripheral nature inherent in design: the consideration that with the creation of new spaces emerges a boundary between the domains

of the interior and exterior environment, out of which the distinctions of “insider” and “outsider” are inevitably formed. The social environment thereby engages with the correlating physical space by responding to the limitations that it exerts. In this way it becomes a social responsibility on the part of the designer to recognize the need for design that reaches beyond these physical, social and psychological constraints to respond with solutions that include rather than isolate. This advancement towards inclusive design is essential in the process of creatively resolving many of the contemporary socio-cultural dilemmas that face the modern world.

One of the most critical of these issues is the design of spaces that address the fundamental human need of shelter for displaced and marginalized people in the crises situations of homelessness and natural disaster relief, while upholding human dignity and preventing social isolation. It becomes a challenge to the designer to provide meaningful solutions to these related issues that provide both physical comfort and social connection through the design of transitional and temporary spaces. By addressing functional, aesthetic, and psychological issues, these design solutions have the potential to alleviate distress among the most vulnerable of our global community.

DESIGN RESPONSIBILITY IN A NEOLIBERAL WORLD: TRANSFORMING A FAMILIAR DEBATE

Capitalism, Civil Society, Design Activism, Design Responsibility, Neo-liberalism

Keith Owens

College of Visual Arts & Design,
The University of North Texas

Design's close relationship with market capitalism has fueled a longstanding debate. Try as it might, the profession have yet to reach a working consensus on how best to serve commercial interests while still contributing to the common good—its members holding sharply different opinions about the proper balance between prudential needs and professional responsibilities. This disagreement is deeply woven into design's history: early modernist designers such as Grosz who agitated for disruptive economic revolution versus Schuitema who celebrated design yoked to capitalist production as a progressive force for good; the Bauhaus's ascetic search for form-types as opposed to American designers such as Raymond Loewy who held that aesthetics 'consists of a beautiful sales curve shooting upwards' and the mixed response to the *First Things First 2000* design manifesto excoriating designers seduced by advertising renown and market reward.

However historically important this debate has been, recent worldwide geo-political changes have given it a new urgency while simultaneously compelling designers to move beyond its frequently narrow confines. In the last twenty years, free-market capitalism has empowered commercial interests, extinguished Keynesian social policies and dramatically reshaped the economic, social, cultural and political realities of advanced and developing nations alike. Little in life now remains untouched by the relentless onslaught of market logic.

This presentation will argue that in a world remade by neoliberal ideology, designers should calculate their self-interests, professional legitimacy and social responsibility within in a larger political rubric. Joining policy makers, organizations and activists who seek to find and agitate for a proper balance between the market and civil society—two institutions central to conceptions of human freedom, equality and justice. By immersing themselves in this wider discourse, designers could begin to transform seemingly intractable arguments over market capitalism into broader socio-economic thinking and tangible civic actions. Thereby provoking new ideas for design activism congruent with economic reality and in accord with beliefs about the common good.

TOWARDS A DESIGN ETHNOGRAPHY DATABASE

Ethnography, Anthropology, Design Knowledge, User Research, Database

Isil Oygur

Interdisciplinary Design Institute,
Washington State University

Although ethnography as a research method to study users was borrowed from cultural anthropology, its application in design is not identical to its origins. As design is a market driven profession, so is design ethnography. The proprietary character of the development of products and services defines the limits of ethnography in design disciplines. Ethnography loses its strong connections to knowledge creation and dissemination as it is the case in cultural anthropology. The 'products' of ethnographic research are no longer texts, but the artifacts or services designed for consumption. Pragmatic motivations come before theoretical interests. As a result, ethnography does not generate 'products' (texts reporting the findings and the method of research such as a reports and books) in an anthropological sense. Instead, the term ethnography is merely a 'tool' for reaching user experiences in design. The findings of ethnographic research itself hold rich information and knowledge that the general design community can share and benefit from. However, the proprietary nature of design stands as a barrier for the dissemination of these products. This situation retards design disciplines building knowledge on design ethnography and therefore prevents the faster advancement both in design and design ethnography.

This paper proposes the creation of a design ethnography database (DED) for building and disseminating knowledge on design ethnography. The comparison between anthropological and design model of ethnography shades light to initial challenges for the development of such a database. The aim is to open a discussion for building knowledge on design ethnography and for bringing DED into reality.