

**tradition,
transition,
trajectories:
major
or minor
influences?
proceedings**
helena barbosa + anna calvera

**iC
DHS**
2014

9th International Committee
Design History and Design Studies
8, 9, 10, 11 July | Aveiro, Portugal

II. presentation

***Aqui, onde a terra
acaba e o mar
começa...***
*Here, where the land
ends and the sea
begins...*

Luís Vaz de Camões
Os Lusíadas (ca. 1556)

Welcome to “where the land ends and the sea begins”, welcome to the land of the poets, welcome to the ninth edition of the ICDHS – the International Committee of Design History and Design Studies, and welcome to the home of regional sweet ‘soft eggs’, welcome to Aveiro.

Since the inaugural event held in Barcelona (1999), the ICDHS conferences that followed were held in three continents, bringing to the fore both peripheral countries and the importance of bringing to light hidden, or little known, ‘stories’ of design. The journey to reveal these histories continued in Havana (2000), Istanbul (2002), Guadalajara (2004), Helsinki and Tallinn (2006), Osaka (2008), Brussels (2010), São Paulo (2012) until now when we have arrived in the territorial waters of Aveiro (2014).

In order to underpin the rationale for the organization of this ICDHS 2014 we sought to trace new routes of research, to attract national and international travellers, fearless explorers who, in the spirit of the explorer Fernão Magalhães (1480-1521) 500 years earlier, will brave the difficulties and risks of journeying around the globe to meet others. They will bring with them fresh ideas and approaches accompanied by a strong desire to disseminate their culture. In this spirit, the title to capture the

essence of Aveiro 2014 emerged – **Tradition, Transition, Trajectories: major or minor influences?**

Tradition has a powerful significance in our culture, and is responsible of the transmission of knowledge between generations. Looking at tradition through design (ideas, concepts, experiences and practice) it is possible to identify different influences and to understand how industrialization affected culture.

The constant influences, changes and transformations in society have required new approaches to design. On the one hand, desire encourages creativity, on the other, it engenders responses that try to break with the past in order to become a set of ‘new reference points’. **Transition** provides the means of understanding such changes in order to comprehend how they may impact on the future.

Different influences might lead to diverse **Trajectories** in design. This may vary depending on the perspective of each interlocutor (author, educator and theorist alike).

Starting from the example of Portuguese culture, which has embraced vibrant influences from other countries, it is challenging to follow such a *modus operandi* in order to understand

what has happened elsewhere in the world. Design has affirmed itself in a very particular way, experiencing a number of alterations and influences as a result of external and internal factors relating to the discipline itself. An examination of such issues from the perspective of tradition, transition and trajectories will allow us to understand what was/is/will be the 'state of art' of design history and design studies in an increasing number of countries.

It is also important to map these research possibilities, which may be encapsulated in six routes that are inherent in the full ICDHS title, which focuses on design history – **memory** – and design studies – **theory** – opening a set of other routes quintessential to a fuller understanding of design: authorship – **identity** – related specificities in the construction of tangible and intangible artefacts – **technology** – the constraints inherent in the programme – **society** – and an open route – **open strand** – which could include other itineraries. To give more detailed guidelines to these navigators, have more precise routes that consisted in the creation of fifteen strands, which were indicated by the twinkling stars of night and day – the members of the board and the chairs. Thus arose:

Theme 1. Theory

Strand 1. Histories of design criticism
Strand 2. Design Education in Art, Craft, Technology, and other Traditions
Strand 3. Aesthetics beyond style

Theme 2. Memory

Strand 1. Design Histories: tradition, transgression and transformations
Strand 2. Design Culture
Strand 3. Design Museums

Theme 3. Identity

Strand 1. Design Process and Practice
Strand 2. Localities / Globalities
Strand 3. Authorship and Anonymous Design

Theme 4. Technology

Strand 1. History of Technology: Traditions, Transitions and Trajectories
Strand 2. Materials, Techniques and Processes
Strand 3. Design and Technology

Theme 5. Society

Strand 1. Design Policies
Strand 2. Design Activism
Strand 3. Design Ethics

Theme 6. Open strand

In this context, the conference title and the papers presented will illustrate how our life experiences utilise memory – **traditions** – and the way we live with nature and with the artificial world in our (in)ability to adapt to them

– **transformations** — and, at the same time, feel the necessity of being constantly open to a breadth of possibilities that endow things with meanings – **trajectories**.

The best judges in this process were the Members of the Board, the Chairs, and all Members of the Scientific Committee (comprised of 104 members, from 22 countries) who sought to ensure the presence of travellers with a sense of a shared journey. The dynamics that this conference has aroused amongst peers is visible in the number of researchers interested in 'belonging' to this community. Initially, 193 proposals, representing 33 countries, were submitted; following the various stages of peer evaluation only 110 papers from 30 countries were accepted. Unfortunately, economic constraints have inevitably prevented the presence of many authors, resulting in the uneven size of a number of strands. This notwithstanding, we look forward to another invigorating ICDHS event with colleagues from around the globe.

In the light of the themes around which this conference has been shaped two Portuguese keynote speakers have been invited - Margarida Fragoso and José Bragança de Miranda as interpreters of national culture - and also two

international speakers, Vanni Pasca (Italy) and Clive Dilnot (USA), whose approaches converge in consideration of issues that arise from the conference title Tradition, Transition, Trajectories: Major or Minor Influences? For the first time in the history of the ICDHS, Aveiro 2014 has included a Workshop and a Roundtable that will consider the idea of Europe as a global province through the participation of representatives drawn from a number of design history societies and collectives. We hope that when you flip through this book of proceedings book you will discover a rich variety of new adventures and journeys into the past, present and future.

Helena Barbosa
Conference Convenor

Anna Calvera
Conference Co-covenor

