



ethics in design;  
an option to achieve environmental  
and social consciousness

Andres Caro del Castillo

Oslo and Akershus University College of  
Applied Sciences



Old city of Cáceres,  
Extremadura, Spain

Photo: Manolo Vega 2012

For the reader

This manuscript that you now have in your possession represents various things and it has been generated by numerous reasons. Firstly, it represents a compendium of ideas, theories, statements, thoughts, hopes and illusions rendered by various individuals along a wide span of time. In this work the doings and contributions of several people that work with passion and fervour for their beliefs and principles are utilised to generate new knowledge. Secondly this knowledge would be utilised to generate an option on how to create design methodologies, processes and practices, with more and better social and environmental characteristics. It is essential to understand that the character of this thesis is purely academic; the end and utmost wish is to generate and spread knowledge that might incentivise change. It is because of these characteristics that no economical retribution or pursuit is even taken into consideration. Hence, rather than being oriented towards business or industry, this work is directed towards academic research, scholar environments and non-profitable aspects of organisations. Lastly, this work is dedicated to you, the interested and conscious reader who will employ his or her precious time on listening this pledge. For that, my most sincere gratefulness. I hope we, together, the reader and the author as a powerful joint, would be able to generate a true sense of consciousness rendered in our forthcoming errands.

*'Is that, indeed, too extravagant a hope? Have you not heard how it has gone with many a cause before now? First few heed it; next most men condemn it; lastly, all men accept it – and the cause is won'*

William Morris



Spangereid, Vest-Adger,  
Norway.

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Castillo 2014

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#### About the author

I have been working with and for the imperative of ethics in design for the past three years. By varied means and with different approaches I have worked on behalf of giving a meaning and form to the concept of ethics and I've been trying to integrate this complex notion, this rather ethereal word into the doings of design. When performing this I have been influenced by many factors and circumstances that I understand as important and define me as a person. In this project the concepts of locality and cultural manifestations will be taken into special consideration. The reason for this might come from the very beginning; throughout my life I've had the fortune to live in four different countries and I have got to speak four different languages (I would like to think that Norwegian will soon be the fifth). I've had the opportunity to live in urban areas with more than 25 million people and in semi-rural ones with only couple thousands.

I have been able to witness the opulence and luxuriousness that economical wealth bring to societies or spheres within a society, and I have seen the need and vulnerability of those who possess almost nothing.

All this, I am afraid, has moulded my perception and my doings; I've come to realise the need to work for the benefit of societies as a whole and for every one of its members, and to do my best in order to make people acknowledge ecosystems as a mean to preserve human's existence and identity.

I have put cultural variations and characteristics in a very special and important place. I have come to perceive that it is essential to understand culture as a way to understand human mind and actions.

I must also add that I have an educational background oriented through a more theoretical level of industrial design, therefore what I am used to, what I can perform with passion and interest, and what I would like to dedicate my life to, is the generation and spread of knowledge. My ideals in life are to work on research and academia and that is why I dedicate this project to pursuit this cause.

In this work I pretend to give an option, with the help of old hopes and ideas, on how study, analyse, understand, implement and utilise the capabilities and characteristics of human identity as a mean and a pathway to generate new knowledge and schemes that might contribute to safeguard environments and provide well being for the people that inhabits them.

- In order to fully comprehend and evaluate this project, it is of essential importance to understand how this work is structured. As this being a study dedicated and generated for instances that work with research and development of knowledge, as for example academia, the development of the theory, its implementation and the late findings of it are identified as the actual product of this thesis. Then, the product this time and in this case is the mental forms and the generation of knowledge that is presented as printed words on this manuscript. Hence, a physical object is not of relevance and provides no further or better understanding of the project. This doesn't mean that the thesis lacks a product, since the product itself is the theories and its interpretations, not a product in the form of a physical or material object



Local nature  
Extremadura, Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega. 2012

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## Abstract

*This project presents an option within the design research and education on how to confer ethical circumstances to design projects that might become physical products. This work rests in three levels or areas of research which are: the re-consideration on the production segments in design by a re-assessment on the crafted means of production, integrating cultural sustainability into the design process and the generation of innovation by studying and analysing past theories. This project intends to merge these approaches in order to generate usable tools and relevant methodologies for designers in order to improve the environmental and social characteristics their designs might get in contact with. In order to exemplify these approaches and present them in a more landed environment, the project will find help by two methods; first these theories were exemplified by two different geographical spaces in order to see how the issues of environment, culture and resources modify the implementation of the theory itself, secondly a series of workshops were generated in order to perceive and understand how designers and students within design education interpret and interiorise this provided knowledge. Lastly, it is relevant to mention that even if the theory is so far based on these three previously mentioned levels, it may be possible to try and find more levels as further research areas either to strengthen the already conceived theory or to provide pathways for new development.*



**Natural environment,  
Oppland, Norway.**

**Photo: Andres Caro del  
Castillo, 2014**

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Rural environment,  
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Photo: Manolo Vega, 2010

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**Jostedalsglacién, Sogn og  
Fjordane, Norway.**

**Photo: Aud Julie Befring, 2014**

## 1 INTRODUCTION

*"We propose a novel role for the ethicists-the ethicists as designer-who subscribes to a pragmatic view of ethics in order to bring ethics into the research and design of artefacts-no matter the stage of development".*

Aimee van Wynsberghe, Scott Robbins

As the previous quotation proposes, this project aims to find ways on how designers can firstly develop, and secondly integrate methods of designing with a high level of ethical consciousness. This project also aims to be a helping tool for professionals and academics working on the design education, research or even and in some circumstances, praxis, to get involved on the imperative of social and environmental consciousness. Research has shown that designers, sometimes being so focused on solving the problems of the user (intermediate user, end user or customer in general) might overlook some other individuals closely related with the design development and design manufacturing (for example workmen, labour force, guilds of craftsmen, etc.) and considerations that the design development is closely related to (the natural and human-built environments) (Papanek, 1985) (Fry, 2009) (Morris, 1911).

This project presents various levels of action in order to address ethics, the levels presented next are the ones that have been so far addressed and studied, it might be relevant to mention that other levels might exist and this might be a good area of opportunity to create further work on research.

- The re-consideration of the production segments in design: People that work with their hands in order to manufacture the goods designers conceptualise. This people might be called labour force, working class, workmen, craftsmen or artisans depending on the labours they perform or their status within manufacturing considerations (Morris, 2009). Research has demonstrated that some of these people don't receive the appropriate credit, importance or remuneration they would deserve (Kropotkin, 1906) (Fry, 2009) (Papanek, 1985) (Reid, 1986), therefore it is a premise of this project to aware designers of this circumstances and encourage them to consider them as well when they develop design processes.

- The issues within cultural sustainability: This project also aims to demonstrate and exemplify how certain manifestations of cultural sustainability can be an easy-to-use tool designers have at hand in order to confer ethics in design. Previous work has utilised existing examples of design projects that were not conceptualised thinking on cultural sustainability but might indeed have characteristics of it (Stansky, 1985). This way it's pretended to demonstrate that the issue of cultural sustainability might be first a good option designers possess, and secondly that it might be closer and easier to reach and achieve that it might be seen at first time.



Native nature from  
Extremadura, Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega. 2012

- Generation of innovation by the consideration of past theories: The pursuit of innovation is a discipline designers are quite encouraged to perform (Tidd & Bessant, 2014), this work also provides an option on how to generate situations of innovation by unearthing theories and methods proposed in the past (Morris, 1911). Even if some of those methods were not so relevant or didn't generate the desired impact, if are to be seen with the eyes of the present, merged and enhance with new approaches and finally implemented in current scenarios, these theories can be a rich ground for the growing of innovation (Fry, 2009) (Stansky, 1985). The work so far performed has focused on ideologies developed as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution.



Therefore the **research question** of the project is structured as the following:

*How to confer a higher level of ethical consciousness trough the design process and design development by utilising the following three concepts:*

- *The reconsideration of craftsmanship and crafted means of production.*
- *The recognition of cultural sustainability as an important and accessible tool.*
- *The study, comprehension and implementation of past theories in order to generate areas of innovation.*





Ås, Akershus, Norway.

Photo: Andres Caro del  
Castillo. 2014

## 1.2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### **REASSESSMENT OF THE CRAFTED MEANS OF PRODUCTION IN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN.**

ARTICLE PUBLISHED FOR THE 16TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENGINEERING AND PRODUCT DESIGN EDUCATION 4 & 5 SEPTEMBER 2014, UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE, THE NETHERLANDS.

### **OLD HOPES TROUGH NEW SCHEMES; A PATH TOWARDS INNOVATION.**

ARTICLE ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION ON THE 17TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENGINEERING AND PRODUCT DESIGN EDUCATION 3 & 4 SEPTEMBER 2015, UNIVERSITY OF LONGBOROUGH, UK.

### **THE IDEA OF LESS AS A PATHWAY TO CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY; THE BAC CHAIR.**

ARTICLE CURRENTLY IN REVIEW FOR PUBLICATION IN THE CONFERENCE CULTURE(S) IN SUSTAINABLE FUTURES: THEORIES, POLICIES, PRACTICES (6-8 MAY 2015, HELSINKI, FINLAND).

### **ABOUT A PROPOSED PRODUCTION METHOD AND ITS IMPLICATIONS WITH THE GENERATION OF FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS.** UNPUBLISHED ARTICLE.

## 1.3 AREAS OF COOPERATION

Since the mentioned areas of research need the help of numerous disciplines and qualifications, it is thought as quite enriching to generate cooperation with different branches of knowledge both inside the design sphere and outside. Some of these disciplines are listed below:

- Cultural sustainability.
- History of art and history of design.
- Eco-design, environmental design.
- Universal design.
- Industrial design and technology.
- Design engineering.
- Natural sciences.
- Applied ecology
- Forestry
- Ethicists, both in the areas of pure ethics and ethics in technology.
- Economic sciences, in order to expand its economic potential.
- Sociology, in order to understand the behaviour of human beings and societies.



Natural environment,  
Extremadura, Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega 2012

## 1.4 OBJETIVES AND METHODS

This project is planned to give individuals within design disciplines an option on how to proceed when the attainment of ethics is desired. Therefore the biggest intent is to generate and spread new, relevant and useful knowledge that might aid the design process and might help every individual that is related to it somehow. As an outcome, it is expected that the theory would be put in practice in order to generate a positive change in the minds of designers, the experience of users, the environments and the live of the producers. It is a certainty that this outlook might seem extremely optimistic to some (Keitsch, 2012), and some might claim that in order for these proposition to flourish, many changes that can be perceived as "impossible" might have to happen first. The posture of this project stands that every step, every movement that is made towards a more ethical environment in design, is a gain (Papanek, 1985) (van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2014). The purest approach on ethics encourage the human being to not only distinguish between good and bad, but also take a stand and act so "good" will prevail, and what is "good" but the well-being of every man equally?

Talking more concretely on the three levels of the project, it will be useful to clarify the importance each of them represent, who is expected to be benefited with them and how would they act in order to achieve a desired change

- The part that involves the reconsideration and importance in craftsmanship is intended to provide tools for designers in order to grant credit and fair circumstances to the people in the working segments of the design process. Therefore, designers will be the first ones to acquire benefit with these considerations. The second segment that would get benefit would be those individuals that were mentioned before, the ones that physically manufacture the products designers conceive. Then designers first by the theory and then the people out there for the implementation of it. That is the expected result.
- The part that talks about the integration and implementation of cultural sustainability as a tool to achieve ethics is also planed firstly to be efficient for designers, when they start implementing it in practice, then both the natural and the human-built environments would acquire benefit.
- When it comes to the development of innovation, those that work with design are the ones to be helped, the development and constant generation of innovation is a characteristic within design disciplines and every helping hand designers can get to accomplish these matters is of big importance. In the research so far performed mainly ideas from the Arts and Crafts movement are analysed along with some economical and social theories emerged on the 19th century. It is true that much knowledge lies in the past and it would be of important profitableness to consider some other theories that might be used to generate ethical approaches.



Kjeller, Akershus, Norway

Photo: Andres Caro del Castillo, 2013.

The methodology is a very important part of the research development. This project will find help in several kinds of methods depending on the desired results it would be expected to retrieve.

- The first method is of course the one that goes hand by hand with research. Qualitative interviews and quantitative methods of extract information have been and will be performed. Interviews and in-depth analysis with experts in the areas of cultural sustainability, design history, art history, critic design, systemic design, technology, ethics in technology, design engineering, craftsmanship, guilds of craftsmen and also sociology, psychology, natural sciences, ecology, botany, forestry and environmental studies have been and will be performed in order to extract as most relevant knowledge as possible.
- The participation of locality: so far this project has attained the issues of cultural sustainability and local circumstances by landing the theory in two geographical spaces; this two geographical spaces are Norway and Spain. Sometimes when more spatial reduction is needed or desired the spaces are Eastern Norway and Western Spain. These two areas were chosen by the mere reason that the first one is where the research has been based and the second is where the researcher has more familiarity and cultural connection. These geographical areas can modify if further development after the Master thesis requires it.
- Workshops: since this project is conceived first to be a helping tool for designers, they are the ones this project has to fully understand. The conception and implementation of workshops with designers and students within product and industrial design education, during the master's thesis project is a good method to understand how these individuals perceive the approaches this project aims to unfold. The participants of the workshop would receive a brief on the methodologies and the overall explanation of the theory, then they will be left to develop a product that is based on the three levels where this theory is conceived (mentioned above). These workshops are planned to be performed firstly in a Norwegian institution with Norwegian designers and students, then the same workshop would be performed in Spain with Spanish designers and students, this in order to extract and analyse the desired differentiations in conceptualisation and procedures each particular area provides. It is important to mention that due limitations of time and resources, these workshops have been performed only in Norway, leaving the implementation of the ones in Spain as an opportunity for further research and development.





Local fauna, Extremadura, Spain

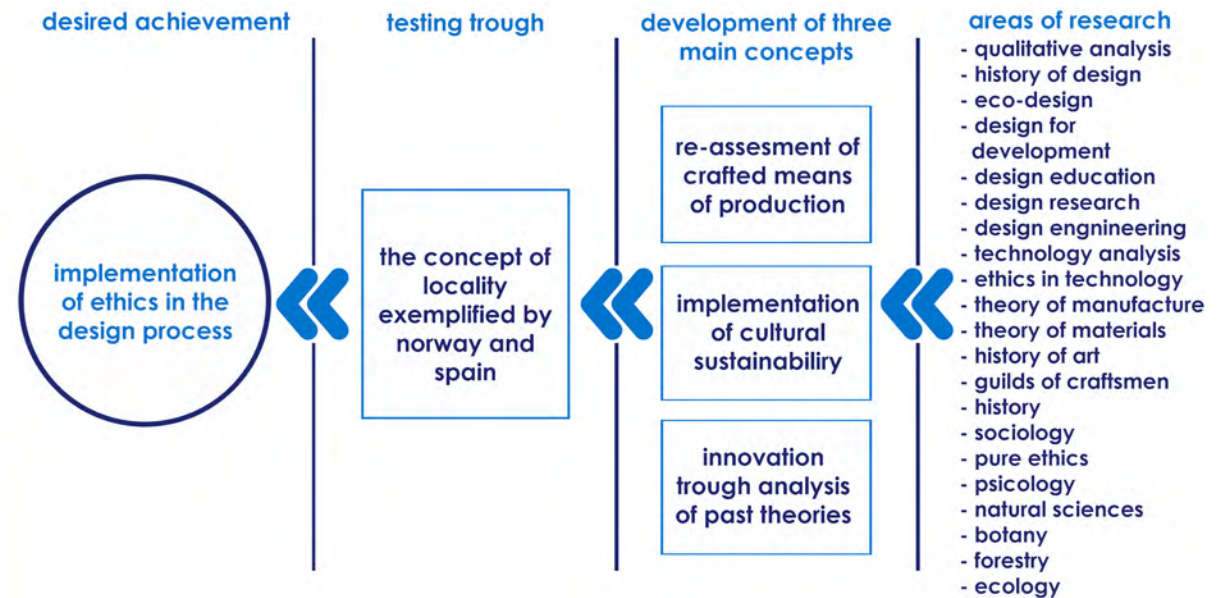
Photo: Manolo Vega, 2012.

## 1.5 RESULTS AND ETHICAL QUESTIONS

The finality of this project is, as stated before, the achievement of more ethical circumstances for the people and the environment that are related directly and indirectly on the design process. Research has shown that the need for ethically social and environmental conditions is quite relevant and every effort is put towards that cause is an advantage. This is why it is believed that this project could have firstly important relevance within design spheres, and secondly, within other spheres design inevitably touches.

Since this project when finished is supposed to work as a helping tool for designers, it is intended to be put in practice. It is an inevitable need that designers think more on the ethical implications of their actions (Walker, 2012) and since it is desired that every single project every designer performs would contain a suitable degree of ethical consciousness (Spier & Bird, 2014), the relevance of this project is self-explained. Research has also showed that the achievement of social and environmental credentials to design development is not a plus anymore, it is a must (Uphaus, 2008) (Thorpe, 2007) (Brower, Mallory, & Ohlman, 2005).

Since the core and cornerstone of this project is ethics, the mere ethical considerations that could arise in the development of it will be put in special consideration. It won't suffice to achieve an ethical final project as a result if the process to achieve it was somehow or at some point unethical.





Plato in "The School of Athens" by Raphael

## 2 A PURE APPROACH ON ETHICS

This project will be dedicated to provide an option on how to achieve ethically social and environmental circumstances and characteristics to the design development and design theory. It might be relevant to mention that indeed the word ethics by itself represents a vast and broad area within design theory. Therefore in this work, the word ethics will be considered as the quality to preserve and enhance environments and provide wellbeing to the people design is related to. Before going in depth with the theory and the methodology, it would be important and relevant to speak about what the term of ethics mean and what does it stands for. Only when we have understood the meaning of pure ethic, we could then understand it in the context of design.

Ethics by itself is a term that mankind has been dealing with since the very beginning of the rational thinking. The fathers of ethics, in the Classic Greece, tried to give a form and a meaning to human behaviour and conduct. The pillars of the western philosophy, created by individuals like Aristotle, Plato, Socrates. And then lately by Immanuel Kant, suggest and analysed the rightfulness and wrongness of human conduct.

### 2.1 THE COMPLEXITY OF ETHICS, VALUE AND MORAL

*"Ethicists have been seen as a group of morality police by non-ethicists, telling people what they can and cannot do". (van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2014)*

This small sentence arises quite well the awareness on why it is important to explain and bring the concept of ethics to a better understanding; it might be relevant that more involvement and awareness would be given on how ethics work and how ethics can be integrated on several levels of human disciplines, in this case, design (Loffhouse, 2009).

The terms of value and moral go hand by hand with ethics, some schools of thought supports the idea that values follow to morals, for other schools of thought is the other way round (Spier & Bird, 2014), for some the term of ethics is the same of the one of morals, for others the term of ethics stays on a more theoretical ground while morals are more practical and involve customs or traditions (Spier & Bird, 2014). It might be important to mention that values are perceived and conceived in a completely different way for different individuals or different societies. While values can change or be interpreted in numerous ways, the concept of ethic has to maintain the same, be understood and interiorised by everyone the same way, no matter the discrepancies on the conception of values.

# Aristoteles



Aristotle as portrayed in the Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493.

It is a certainty that professionals and ethicists must pertinently translate the concept of value into contemporary norms so they can be then successfully used to create design requirements (van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2014).

An Aristotelian way of taking ethics into considerations prays for an involvement of the members of a society, interaction and mutual responsibility, instead or the generation of individual ethos (Keitsch).

Kant sustains that *'a man is morally good, not so far as he acts from passion or self-interest, but so far as he acts on an impersonal principle valid for others as well as for himself'*. (Kant & Paton, 2005) This correlates with other propositions developed by other cultures or ways of thinking like the widely know maxim *'do to others what they want them to do with you'* or its variations (Walker, 2012). Kant offers on his theories an option to ethics by including others well being in one's results and procedures.

Kant also explains the universality of ethics by addressing the fact that "good will" or moral value has to be implemented in every stage of action and no only on selected or particular ones. He explains it with an example where one man owes to two persons but he only pays to one because he dislikes the other. This moral contradiction is based on the fact that every person should be treated as same, excluding passions or self-interests. A very practical premise developed by Kant states that within every person's actions, every individual has to be seen as the mean and as the end. Man cannot suffer and be considered a mean for the sake of another one's comfort, being then the end. In other words; it is morally incorrect to provide well being for a man (a group of people or a society) if another man (group of people or society) has to suffer for this to be achieved.

Kant is really efficient on concentrate and summarise these thoughts with the following sentence:

*"Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end."*

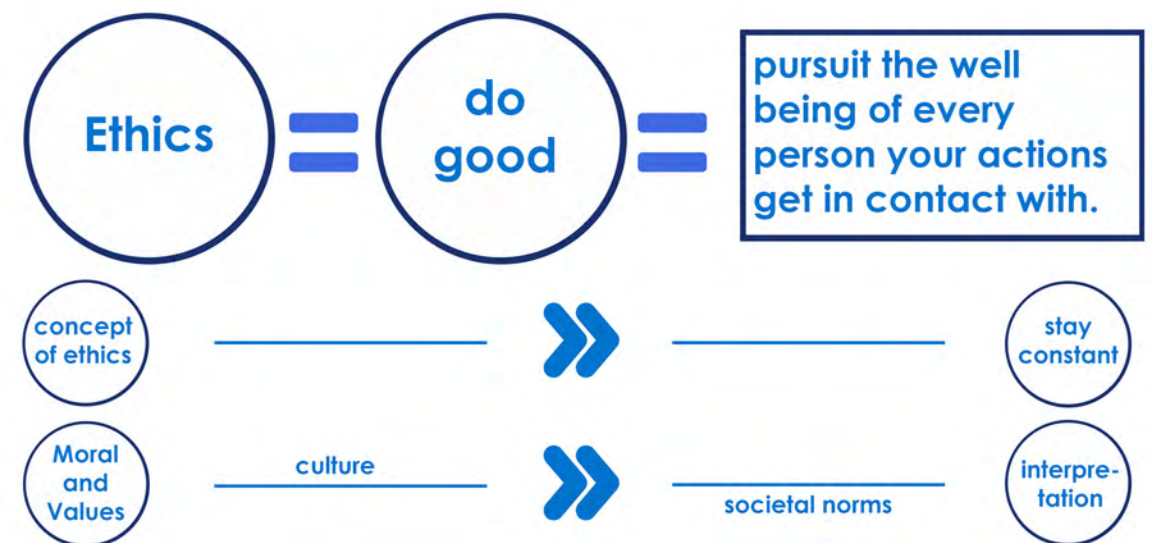


Immanuel Kant. unknown author, 18th century.

Lastly but not less important it might be useful to analyse some theories regarding the Naturalistic Materialism, where topics as secularism, rationalism and industrial capitalism seem to be the pillars of the doctrine of the Western world. Nietzsche (1889) and more recent critics performed by individuals like Theodor Adorno in the mid-twentieth century (1947) and E.F. Schumacher in the late part of the twentieth century (1973) claim that morals are more related and based on reason, scientific investigation and experience, finding fulfilment on the physical world instead of in traditional religious beliefs (Walker, 2012). These approaches seem to be "value-free" since they correlate only with investigation, analysis and the understanding of the physical world. With approaches like those, values might become based on a foundation of ever-shifting societal norms, where each change might look like a step forward, but in a long term scenario these moves can lead to a self destructive pattern, which is environmental and social negative (Walker, 2012). Author T.E Jessop states that the Naturalistic Materialism that Nietzsche proposes, that became at some important degree the mind-set for physically scientific progress, discards some basic moral principles like equality and kindness for being considered mere moral pretensions (Jessop, 1967) (Walker, 2012). It might be relevant to bring pragmatic ethos to the scientific level again in order to achieve better standards of morality.

As a final reflection it would be suitable to quote a statement made by Edmund Burke, which says:

*"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing"*





Augustus Pugin. Unknown author. 19th century.

### 3 ETHICS IN DESIGN: WHEN AND WHERE CAN BE FOUND

The research performed explains that experts have identified three main subjects or topics where the concept of ethics in design rests. These are called the social values, environmental values and economical values. In order to understand the considerations that ethics attains to design disciplines it would be essential to understand what those concepts mean.

#### 3.1 SOCIAL VALUES

This term refers on how the concept of ethics interacts with the concept of us as human beings. In the context of design then the three concepts of ethic, human being and design should interact in harmony. Society is formulated by concepts like justice, peace and compassion, it is the interpretation of these concepts what creates social meaning (Walker, 2012). The social values are the interpretations we give in order to preform "virtue" in our endeavours (van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2014); these doings can be performed in several levels.

Explained in a simple way: social values in design disciplines coexist in order to bring virtue to the people design itself is related to. This might sounds as an obviousness since it's well known design is a discipline where the solving of problems and generation of pleasure is importantly praised. Notwithstanding the approaches previously explained where the concept of pure ethics is explained should not escape the look of the designer, it wont be possible to correctly address ethic in a design development if the social values are not applied equally to every single individual this development reaches and touches, not merely or solely the end user, customer or client.

A perspective of change lays in the premise that future generations develop policies to not only pursuit benefit for themselves but for those individuals that would live in the future (Kohler, 2013).





Friedrich Nietzsche by  
Edvard Munch, 1906.

### 3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

These kind of values are the ones that refer to the preservation of environments, both the natural and the human-built. The values addressed to environment in design are closely related to theories of sustainability, eco-design and green development. Author Andreas R. Köhler utilises the concept sustainable development ethics to refer of what designers and engineers can do in order to improve the environmental characteristics of their doings. He explains that people working within these spheres have a large influence on the way resources are managed; he claims that 'they determine which and how many materials are into goods' (Kohler, 2013). He also claims that designers and engineers play an important role on leading the change towards more efficient utilisation of materials since 'their design choices determine how long users will keep a product before replacing it with a new one'.

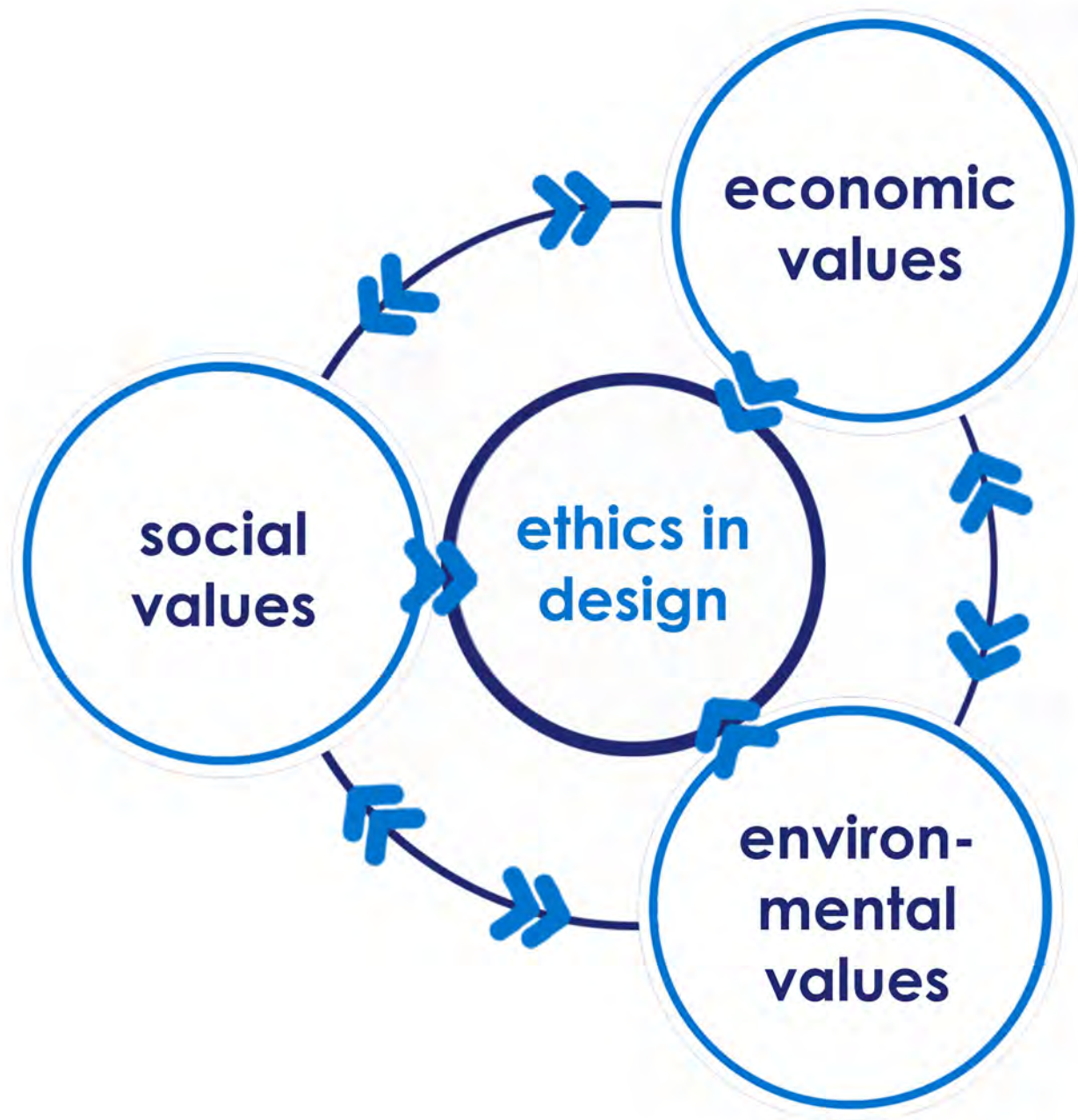
This example brings light to the idea that designers do play an important role on the environmental credentials of their work, therefore a designer that would like to embed ethics on his/her doings should provide environmental values in every step of the design development.

### 3.3 ECONOMICAL VALUES

These values are the ones related to the financial feasibility of design development. Being part of a world ruled by economical norms, these values seem to be greatly important and sometimes are the cornerstone of whole design developments. Not only these values are important for designers, research shows that the public is leaded in an important way by the economical implications design projects or products carry within. Economic values are based on the premises of acquiring income and generating financial progress and stability, therefore incentivise the user or consumer to participate in a rapid monetary flow where the obtainment of greater volumes of profit is the goal. There are many ways to address economical values to design process or production and when some strategies are in fact thought to coexist peacefully with other values (environmental and social), many of them run on the premises of acquire greater income despite its incompatibility with the values previously mentioned. Author Joseph Guiltinan describes the next practices as frequent paths to do so:

- Limited function life design: it refers on how a product is conceived to last for a determined period of time, as it was an expiration date.
- Design for limited repair: it means that a project is designed in order to be partially or completely impossible to repair.
- Design aesthetics that lead to reduced satisfaction: surfaces or finishes that might look shiny or polished but are designed to be damaged or degraded quickly by everyday usage.
- Design for fashion: let design projects enter into the rapid and ever-fluctuating fashion trends, these projects can be even computers or cars.
- Design for functional enhancement through adding or upgrading product features: adding new features to products in order to incentivise replacement on a more reduced time spam.

Since sometimes, economical values are the ones taken in greater consideration within the design development the other two values could be relegated to less levels of importance and asking firms to rethink their methods could be seen for them as an unilateral competitive disarmament (Guiltinan, 2008).



### 3.4 ON HOW THE THREE VALUES INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER

It is a desired scenario that the three values would be addressed in the same way and at the same level throughout the process of design development. While this is considered as the optimal scenario, it is a reality that these circumstances does not always apply for the design behind the goods we encounter ourselves with every day (Bezençon & Bili, 2010). Many times more importance are given to certain type of values, unbalancing the development and arising ethical issues (van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2014). Author Stuart Walker explains that design has inherently endorsed and supporting what can now be considered as "progress" and "growth", but in reality those concepts only refer to technological progress and financial growth in the shape of ever-increasing profits. Walker also states that an ill-driven quest for the next technological advancement and the importance given to competitive advantage, all this helped with the use of unconscious marketing, had developed human exploitation and environmental destruction. Walker concludes that the prioritisation of economic values which are linked to naturalistic materialism perceive the environmental and social values as vague or relativistic. Even if the conceptualisations proposed by Walker seem to be drastic, research on the topic has proved that it is a fact that the mainstream mains of production put significantly more interest on economic values than in the other previously mentioned.

Another way to explain how marketing can be used as a tool to lower or heighten the imprinting of values in design process is trough an example: an anti-commercial manifesto developed in 1964 from a group of graphic designers who pledged for a more useful, lasting and democratic forms of communication, the contrary of the product marketing tendencies viewed on that specific period (Keitsch, 2012).

As research in this text has previously listed, the consumer plays a key role on how values are distributed in design development. Consumer expectations or desires can put the balance in different directions if designers only listen to these signals, the lack of user concern for environmental and social consequences or the desire for low-cost goods might incentivise designers on applying more economical values to their design development at the cost of diminishing the others (Guiltinan, 2008).

This works is thought to give an option to impart values at the same level throughout the design process, it is important to mention that the posture of this work does not go against the pursuit of economical values, it is the prioritising of this values over the other what is to be modified. If a design development is unbalanced or lacks characteristics on environmental values and social values it is not possible to be called ethically correct.



Cañamero, Extremadura,  
Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega 2014

### 3.5 CURRENT APPROACHES: AN ANALYSIS

Currently several ways or methods exist to mediate the issues of how, where and when to imprint ethical consciousness to design development and production. Societies, public sectors, private initiative and individuals have seen the need and potential of confer ethical credentials of their doings, this might be for various reasons and can be achieved by various ways. It is of relevance to enlist some of those activities in order to comprehend them better and understand their pros/counters, on which level they act, for who are designed for and how they contribute within the field of ethics. There is a wide range of options for designers and professionals in general to achieve this, therefore this work will concentrate only in some of those from the wide existing spectrum.

#### 3.5.1 Fair Trade

The words Fair Trade can seem familiar to plenty of people; certainly it is a movement that has experienced good acceptance within Western societies and the phenomenon has and is in growing. As a known definition, fair trade is a movement within production, distribution and commercialisation that visualises producers and their spatial environments at the same level of importance than consumers. Fair trade is based on the premises that the needs or demands of the consumer should not hinder the circumstances of the providers or facilitators (Goodman, 2010). In this text the concept of consumer would refer to the end users or end customers. The concept of producers would refer to the ones physically manufacturing the goods the users need. Lastly the concept of provider would refer to the organisations, firms or corporations that serve as intermediaries or bridges to connect the producer with the consumer.

Research has demonstrated that not only providers of goods have seen potential in fair trade; also consumers are 'increasingly willing to integrate ethics on their product purchase decision' (Goodman, 2010). However this arises rather important and interesting considerations: even if the ends set by fair trade organisations or providers are the achievement of ethical conditions, the means to achieve it can be subject of analysis.

First of all the relationship between the provider and the consumer has to be observed: researcher has demonstrated that the level of attachment a consumer presents towards a fair trade product is provided firstly by the values this consumer presents inherently in himself, and then to the capability of the provider to imprint or present these values to the product. If the product and the consumer present the same or similar values, successful attachment would be generated (Bezençon & Blii, 2010). Generally these values are exemplified on the form of the following principles:

- Small producer empowerment
- Better working conditions
- Respect for the environment



Oslo, Norway

Photo: Andres Caro del  
Castillo, 2013

Author Valéry Bezençon exemplifies the mind-set of the consumer with the use of fair trade coffee (a product widely labelled as fair trade, however it is a certainty that this assumptions can be extended to several types of products and services). The following assumptions explain in a better way the three statements listed before and go as following:

- I buy fair trade coffee because I think that it gives more power to small producers in international trade.
- I buy fair trade coffee because I think that people participating in its production have better working conditions than the others.
- I buy fair trade coffee because I think that it is produced in a better respect of the environment than non-fair trade coffee.

Then the conclusion assumption can be formulated as following:

- I buy fair trade coffee because I think that it is a way to make coffee trade fair.

The information this study provides arises the conclusion that the client perceives fair trade on a positive way and the term is in growth. However this type of distribution is more directed towards enhancing the concepts of small farmers empowerment and working conditions than of environmental issues. Therefore fair trade can be considered more as a current that focuses on economic and social values than the environmental counterpart (Bezençon & Bili, 2010).

Some studies performed by experts suggest that some corporative behaviours might utilise the concept of fair trade and what surrounds it for an unethical *end* and through unethical *means*. Author Michael K. Goodman's studies on the field of celebritytization and over-commercialisation of fair trade involvements might arise problematic considerations within the relationship the consumers and the producers hold. When well-established brands like Saks Fifth Avenue, Nestle or Topshop present fair trade options to the market, it might be the chance that this would be held as marketing strategies where the meaning of participating in fair trade is transformed on consuming those brands products. This might bring confusion or misunderstanding to the consumer and might blur the differences between helping for a cause and simply buying products. Even so, some brands might charge extra prices to the previously mentioned types of products since it is demonstrated that the willingness to pay by the consumer is present.

When the author talks about celebritytization of fair trade two perspectives can be taken into account: first of all the celebritytization of fair trade is a strategy planned either by celebrities or by corporations to bring this concept to the masses. When well known celebrities include fair trade on their speeches, daily routines or even in their own brands and products, are spreading this way of consumption to a wider segment of the population by making it more reachable and common. This of course is intended to have a positive *end*, which is make fair trade more accessible and common. However the *means* are not always based on an ethical foundation, since the reasons for the fair trade purchase might not be the conscious decision of empowering producers and safeguard environments. When consumers see a celebrity incentivising fair trade products the consumer might be motivated by more "superficial" motives (Walker, 2012) like social acceptance or merely wanting to feel, look or act like the celebrity itself.

Purist approaches might suggest that this strategies fall into unethical practices because the means to attract the attention of the public and subsequently the mere motivation of the purchaser are not the ethical approach itself. Meanwhile more practical approaches suggest that even if the methods are not ideal, the *end* is desirable and therefore the *means* might go into a lower level. This follows the conception that it doesn't really matter the reason for the consumer or even his/her awareness on the purchase if at the end it does good.



Local nature in Extremadura,  
Spain

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2013

### 3.5.2 Eco-Labeling

Eco-labelling is a method that has experienced growth lately and designers are implementing it more and more on their doings. Not only designers are involved on eco-labelling, firms and producers try to address this matter by the selection of materials and the way they deal with manufacturing processes. As a regular exemplification, eco-labelling is achieved by a rigorous selection of materials, methods of manufacturing and very importantly; by a proper selection of the location and working force that is going to create the project. If all these considerations are carried in a positive way then it will be possible to call the project as eco-labelled.

Author Ann Thorpe explains that *"with global sourcing of lower-cost materials and labour, substances banned in 'developed' countries can be used in 'developing' countries and then enter developed countries as finished products"* (Thorpe, 2007). This quote arises an important point when we talk about locality on materials and means of production, it is true that sometimes addressing eco-labels to design can be harder than it might look. Therefore it is important that designers and consequently consumers understand the products they create and buy through all its implications.

Alastair Faud-Luke states that *"Green design has a long pedigree and before the Industrial Revolution it was the norm for many cultures. Goods like furniture and utility items tended to be made locally by craftsmen such as blacksmiths, wheelwrights, and woodland workers, from readily available local resources"* (Fuad-Luke, 2009). With this is meant that the experience and knowledge for generating eco-labelling and therefore ethical design is not something that man has to generate from scratch, the knowledge is already there and has been there for a long time, its just a matter of categorised and put it in practice on an efficient way.

There are many examples of eco-labelling and it might be relevant to illustrate just one in order to make the concept more understandable: The Eco-Recliner of British designer Simon White will be exemplified and taken into account later on this work.



Jostedalsglaciären, Sogn og Fjordane, Norway.

Photo: Aud Julie Befring, 2014

### 3.6 CONCLUSION ON ETHICS IN DESIGN

Once the concept of ethics and ethics in design has been explained and exemplified it would be easier to understand further propositions regarding these topics. It is important to mention again that all the work performed so far is presented as mere concepts, explanation of definitions and brief examples in practice. This segment could have been perceived as purely theoretical but it can be said as a justification that it is fundamental to understand thoroughly the concepts of ethics and how it interacts with design in order to understand the following part of the project, which talks about the fulfilment of the previously explained concepts.

We can also extract some concepts from the work previously developed:

One is the differentiation between purist and practical approaches in ethical design. The first one prays for ethical characteristics in every single aspect and approach of the design development and implementation, if a single implication in that process is perceived as unethical then the whole process would be discarded as unethical. Meanwhile a more practical approach allows more "flexibility" in design process and wouldn't consider a whole project as unethical for some detail if the end of it is indeed ethical. Regarding these considerations author Ann Thorpe mentions that when it comes to purist and practical approaches, none are better than the other, they just address different considerations and indeed they complement each other. Purist approaches are needed as statutes and direction pointers for efficient developments, while practical approaches are needed in order to land and efficiently implement theories into practice and reach results (Thorpe, 2007).

Another important concept to be mentioned in the conclusion is the one that talks about the pragmatic approach that designers have to possess when trying to work and implement ethics in their work. A pragmatic approach might lead to better understanding and implementation of concept, also provides and practical promotes a practical mind-set where ethics are actually and efficiently integrated instead of remaining as mere concepts or hard to reach terminology (van Wynsberghe & Robbins, 2014).



Cáceres, Extremadura,  
Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2014

## 4 DEVELOPMENT OF THEORY

The next chapter will be dedicated to present, elaborate and explain in a deep manner the theory and approach on where this work is essentially based. The development of this methodology represent a vast study generated in the two-year's duration of the Master Programme and exemplified in four already-made research papers.

It would be important to mention that these four articles were developed in different times and for different assignments throughout the duration of the Programme, however the reasons on why they are relevant for this project are, firstly, the fact that they address the same problem but from different angles and with different tools and perceptions. Secondly, those articles were developed, since the very beginning, in order to be used in the Master Project, therefore they posses the same aims and direction. It is supposed that those articles interact with each other in order to be supportive the one of the other to fully explain one same idea. It can be said also that they represent segments or subcategories of the same research ground and together will be the pieces needed to adequately assemble the puzzle that is this project.

These four papers have been listed before and will appear in this text in a coherent order so the theory itself can be explained and understood in an appropriate manner. Three of these articles are already published (or in process of publication) in scientific journals closely related to design, this was desired in order to demonstrate and justify the quality and relevance of the theories here listed and explained. The last article listed, being the case that is an unpublished article and hence its validity hasn't been proved, would be used merely as a tool to or explain better or provide more insights on the content of the other three.



John Ruskin by John Everett  
Millais, 1856-57

#### 4.1 CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY AS A TOOL FOR ACHIEVING ETHICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

The concept of sustainable development, as proved, rests in four fundamental pillars. Those adopt the names of social sustainability, economical sustainability, environmental sustainability and newly the term of cultural sustainability (Soini, 2014). The adequate interaction between these four concepts creates what is called a sustainable community.

Cultural sustainability as a concept can be defined as the inclusion and understanding of cultural aspects, demonstrations and manifestations of the human being as a mean to achieve sustainability.

As supposed, this segment will focus mainly on this fourth concept. Even so, the term of cultural sustainability is broad and represents by itself an intricate and challenging subject of research. It is for this reason that this chapter, rather than explaining the pure concept and approaches of cultural sustainability, will present a pragmatic option on how to identify and subsequently utilise manifestations of this concept in order to generate social and environmental consciousness within the design process and the development of products. One of the main aims of this work is to demonstrate how the concept of cultural sustainability, rather than being an abstract and ethereal form that might be perceived as distant or difficult to utilise, can be quite tangible and a right-at-hand tool for designers, design students and academics that seek to confer social and environmental credentials to their doings. The way this work will address these matters will be by identifying an example of cultural sustainability and explain it on a pragmatic way.

It is important to mention that the example this work presents is just one in several possible ways to tackle the issue and it shouldn't be considered as the only path or way to do so. It should rather be considered as a practical approach and one simple exemplification out of many to understand and integrate cultural sustainability, developed by the mere initiative and aim to provide the previously mentioned individuals with broader and varied knowledge to perform their work.





John Brett, *The Glacier of Rosenlauri*, 1856.

#### 4.1.1 Abstraction In Design As A Path Towards Cultural Sustainability

This section will be dedicated to analyse a specific cultural manifestation that influenced on a very important manner the doings of designers throughout the whole past century, and it will argue that because of that reason, it can be considered as a true manifestation of culture. The Modernism, represented by many individuals as Walter Gropius, Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, Henry van de Velde, and by whole organisations or movements as the Bauhaus or the Werkbund created the mould on where the minds of designer would emerge throughout the whole past century and our present days. It is of big importance to recognise the imperative of understanding the history and past of design in order to perform better results today, in this example is taken into consideration the fact that Modernism and its subsequent expressions and influences are indeed real and tangible cultural manifestations of the western world, if those movements are understood as true manifestations of culture instead of mere theories or propositions, it will be possible to understand the mind-sets of designers of our time. Author Paul Greenhalgh states that 'in terms of quality, the international style is the most successful "look" ever to have been invented' influenced 'thousands of buildings and millions of objects'. On a very interesting way, Greenhalgh renders the picture of the mind of the people that experienced the beginning of the Modern movement stating that '*the millions of anonymous designers amongst us, the homeowners of Britain, painted their walls beige and boxed in their Victorian fixtures and fittings with hardboard. This was their oblique response to the modernist call for the rejection of historical style and enhancement of purity*'.

In other words author Christopher Wilk states the following:

*"Indeed, the build environment that we live in today was largely shaped by Modernism. The buildings we inhabit, the chairs we sit on, the graphic design that surrounds us have all been created by the aesthetics and the ideology of Modernist design. We live in an era that still identifies itself in terms of Modernism as post-Modernist or even post-post-Modernist, it simply is not possible to work in ignorance of the most powerful force in the creation of twentieth century visual culture".*

Wilk mentions that Modernism can be then conceived as a major twentieth century movement in art, architecture, design, and literature, even culture, and as it can be perceived, modernism has influenced on a very important way the doings of designers, mainly on the interpretation and implementation of aesthetic meaning and value to objects.



Caceres, Extremadura,  
Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2013.

If we continue talking about Modernism as the powerful influence it was, it can be possible to mention that one of the most important premises on where Modernism rests is in a concept of morality; The precursors of this movement understood the way to address moral righteousness to design and development was by exploding the sense of truth, and the way to generate or demonstrate that truth was through simplicity. Therefore if a project was simple, it would be considered as morally correct (Greenhalgh, 1990). When talking about construction and appearance of objects, and in Greenhalgh's words, "truth meant the avoidance of contrivances which created an illusion of false impression". As known the Modern movement also proposed a systematic rejection for decoration and ornamentation, proposing that those could mask the structural and spatial truthness of an object, the feeling of the moment pointed that if the human race in a process of moving away from the past and the unsatisfactory conditions in which society was immerse into, then the past styles had to be seen as aesthetically and morally undesirable (Greenhalgh, 1990). This arises two rather interesting considerations; the first one explains the idea that in the mind of Modernists, historicism was indeed a conceived as a cause of social havoc and retardation, impeding society to mutate into more desirable shapes. The second consideration implies that, saying all this, it is possible to perceive that Modernists were truly motivated to improve social conditions and provide well-being, of course at their own way and upon their specific premises.

Now that a substantial background has been presented in order to understand the powerful mechanism that Modernism was, and the importance that occupied on moulding and inspiring the doings and thinking of designers of this contemporary time, and why this paper considers this movement a holistic developer of cultural characteristics, it would be relevant also to present a rather different face of it. Being an undeniable truth that Modernism generated and incentivised positive change, new theories and fresh knowledge, it is also true that supported ideologies that brought negative, undesirable and improvable conditions for some segments of the population, the natural and the built environment. Therefore it is important to mention that the posture of this work does not underwrite Modernism as a positive manifestation as a whole, nor it states that Modernism is an ecologically conscious movement, rather what this work aims for is to unveil that if seen through some frame, some characteristics of it can indeed be perceived as environmental.

Talking more in depth of these subjects, it might be relevant to mention some discrepancies: With the homogenisation and in some cases alienation of design and cultural manifestations that were proposed by the so-called "international style", efforts were put into make a standardisation for the conceptualisation and interpretation of aesthetic values. This at some extent contributed to a devaluation of local manifestations of culture and individual interpretation of aesthetics. Also standardised the mind of designers into certain rather strict parameters contributing to a loss of personality for the sake of pursuing the simplicity of form (Greenhalgh, 1990). As it can be perceived, standardisation of mind-sets can go totally against cultural sustainability.



Lillehammer, Oppland,  
Norway.

Photo: Andres Caro del  
Castillo, 2014.

Another important topic to address mentions that they visualised the means of mass production and prefabrication in an almost messianic way, they saw the machine and the industrial technology as a saviour and solver of the problems they dealt with on that specific time. This sincere and passionate believe, rather than being initiated or motivated by environmental causes, was a response to the economical, political and social circumstances mainland Europe was going through in that specific period of history. This concept is well explained by author Paul Greenhalgh, which states that *"their worship of the idea of mass production (in the absence of the political, economic, psychological and ecological reality of it) demonstrated the extent of the space between their quest and the material means with which they wished to accomplish it"*. Here it is possible to identify traces of the influence that Nietzsche's capitalistic materialism was in that moment and that subsequently contributed to social dislocation. It is also important to consider Greenhalgh's quotation when it comes to point how Modernists failed on achieving one of their biggest goals for putting the machine and the mass production in such a high hierarchy.

Notwithstanding the theories proposed by the Modernism failed at some degree on being environmental and socially moral, the idea of pursuing those qualities has been there even before that time. Research has demonstrated that the awareness for improving circumstances and generating positive changes on the ways mass manufacturing is performed has been there for a long time, and emerged more than a hundred years ago when the mechanisation of production and the current distribution of labour also emerged. An example of this can be found in the mere words of William Morris:

*"Everything made by man's hands has a form, which must be either beautiful or ugly; beautiful if it is in accord with Nature, and helps her; ugly if it is discordant with Nature, and thwarts her."*

Author Peter Stansky pointed out these words the following way:

*"Morris's views on the environment, on preserving what is of value in both the natural and "built" worlds, on decentralising bloated government, are as significant now as they were in Morris's own time, or even more so. Earlier in the twentieth century, much of his thinking, particularly its political side, was dismissed as sheer romanticism. After the Second World War, it appeared that modernisation, centralisation, industrialism, rationalism – all the faceless movements of the time – were in control and would take care of the world. Today, when we have a keen sense of the shambles of their efforts, the suggestions which Morris made in his designs, his writings, his actions and his politics have new power and relevance"*.

This quotation displays an interesting way to merge culture and sustainability, Stansky talks about cultural and natural preservation, as well as human movements and institutions, and how all these aspects interact with each other and coexist. And consequently, by bringing Morris's works onto contemporary contexts, proves that the importance of these approaches and pathways had not been vanished through the years, but they seem present in a very strong and important way. With this quotation, the discussion is directed towards the idea if simplicity should not end on the shape, as a mere consequence of the aesthetic approach, it ought to go on the mere constitution of the project. Previously the creators of the Arts and Crafts movement put effort on aware the society on certain important considerations, some of them can be summarised as the necessity, as well, to make our production processes and methods shorter, leaner, more local and closer to the people (Morris, 1911) (Naylor, 1971). Isn't this the idea of less as well?



**BAC armchair by Jasper Morrison.**

**Photo: Retrieved from Cappellini catalogue.**

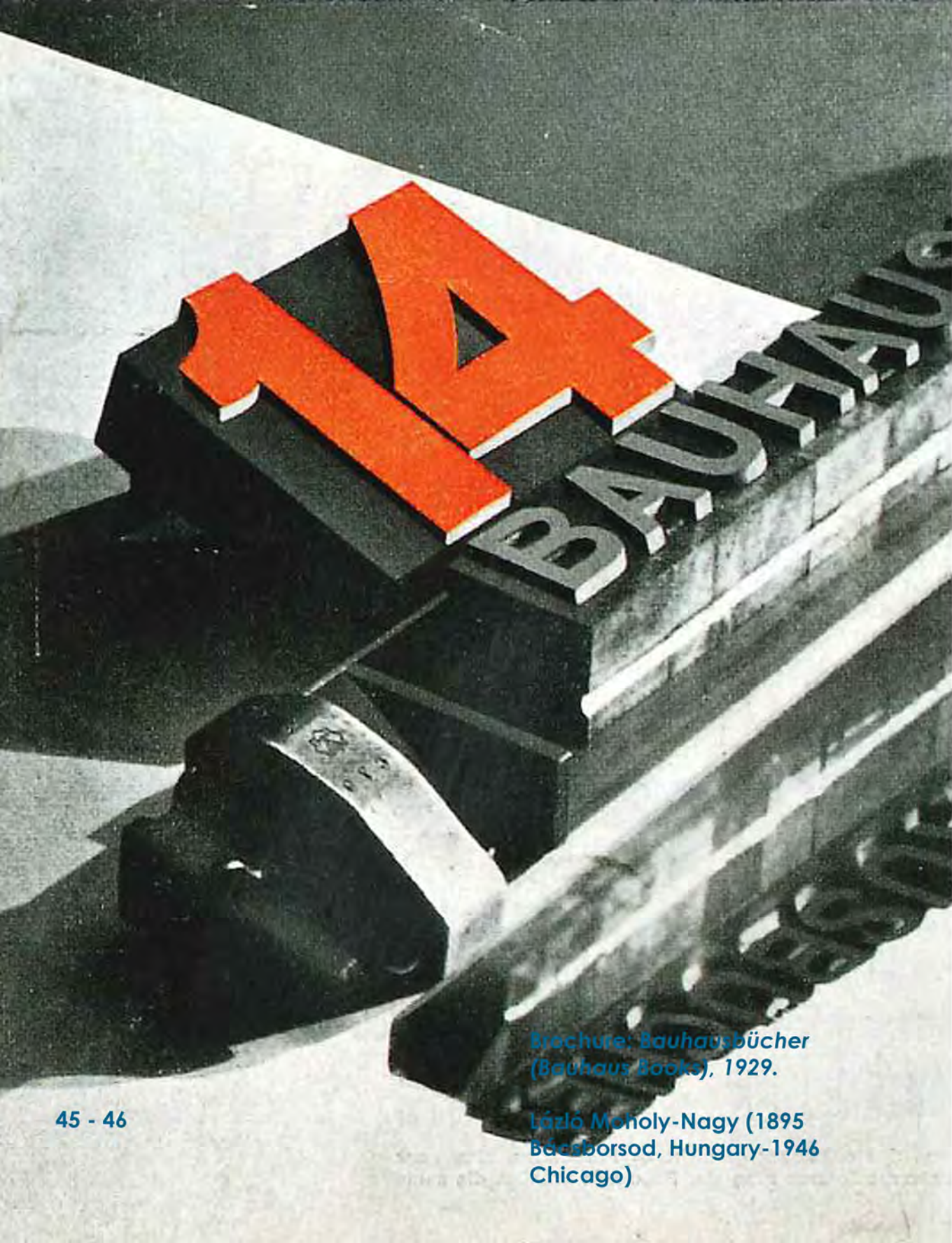
#### **4.1.2 An Example**

In order to provide this segment with better tools to understand the theory, an example will be brought into analysis. This example is expected to provide better understanding in several levels that have been previously mentioned throughout the work. The example selected for this paper is the Bac armchair created by the British designer Jasper Morrison and the justification for the choosing of this specific product and the levels on how it exemplifies the theory.

An aesthetic analysis of this product suggests that the simplicity in form, construction and materials correlates with the ideologies and later on manifestations of the Modern movement (Boyer & Zanco, 1999). The showing of true and honest characteristics of the material used to fabricate this chair are quite visible, Morrison does not use any decoration or visual aid to enhance, alternate or modify the inherent characteristics of the wood (or polyurethane) in the product. Morrison follows through his design language a clear predisposition for clean and simple figures, making visible that he has found substantial interest and inspiration in key representatives of the Modern movement as Buckminster Fuller and Le Corbusier (Morrison, 1990). This confers the example with the characteristic of a project truly influenced by Modernism and therefore a true manifestation of a specific culture.

When this first premise is displayed and the example can be taken and conceived as a representative of a given expression, then it is possible to start analysing in from the angle of the second level, which is the product as an example of cultural sustainability, however the sustainable posture of the product has to be evident. The way this can be explained rests again on the physical and aesthetical attributes found on it. It can be possible to say that this specific product incentivises the utilisation of few materials, few processes of manufacture, reduced time of production and low degree of complexity of form. If we take into consideration these attributes it can be possible to imply a "simple" product is also involved within less variables, therefore less costs.

When all this is said it can be possible to think that many other products can exemplify in a better way all this theories (Uphaus, 2008) and that is an evident reality, some projects can be more oriented to Modern movements or even can be more developed towards environmentalism and cultural sustainability. Therefore, the reasons this specific product was chosen rests on the premises of first, being developed by a very influential and well known designer (Boyer & Zanco, 1999), therefore, maybe an example easier to relate to. And secondly, it is also important for this paper to explain the condition of a product that possesses 'sustainable characteristics without being planned for it' which means that according with the research performed, it is recognised and understood that his product was generated by the mere freedom of will and opportunity, it was not bound to any predisposition that an influence of formal inspiration or ideology, related to the ones previously mentioned could provide, a pristine example on which both manifestations coexist without being intentionally addressed to it.



Brochure: *Bauhausbücher*  
(*Bauhaus Books*), 1929.

László Moholy-Nagy (1895  
Bácsborsod, Hungary-1946  
Chicago)

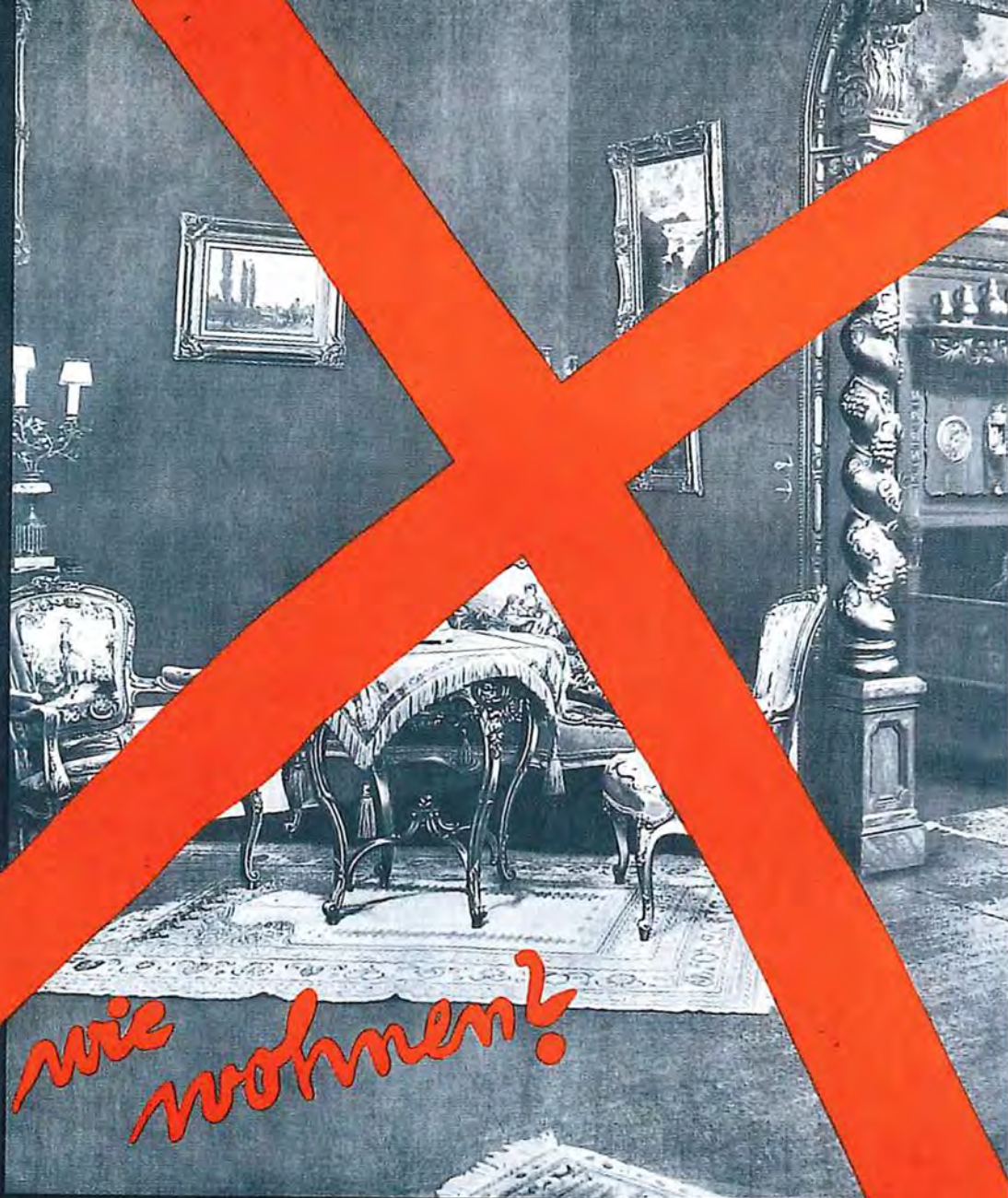
#### 4.1.3 The Relation Between The Arts And Crafts Movement And Modernism

This chapter will be dedicated to provide an opinion on how the theories proposed by the Modernism relate to the ones that generated the Arts and Crafts movement. Research performed demonstrates that it is a common conception to separate both approaches and sometimes consider them as against each other. This work will give an option on why are indeed quite related and on how some of their core theorems seem quite close and familiar to each other.

Perhaps one of the very precursors of the Modern thinking was Augustus Pugin, in 1835 he started generating propositions towards a recognition of the true identity and attributes of a material, same as a construction process where the construction, joinery and solution of the structure were visible and revealed. He started criticising the over-decoration of his time where the materials were hidden under a layer of other materials that served as "imitators", for example plaster or papier-mâché to imitate stonework (Greenhalgh, 1990). As it is known, Pugin served as a highly valuable source of inspiration for Morris and Ruskin, however, the work of Pugin also served as an important inspiration for other individuals not so visibly associated with his theories; Herman Muthesius, which was consequently an extremely important inspiration for Walter Gropius, recognised his work in the areas of form imposition and craftsmanship. Then, later on Le Corbusier acknowledged the work of Ruskin regarding abstraction and truth of materials (Greenhalgh, 1990).

The bond between Modernism and other previous theories can be quite well exemplified by the connection Morris and the Bauhaus School presents. The second took important and valuable inspiration in the work performed by Morris as stated in its programme of April 1919:

*"Architects, painters, sculptors, we must all return to crafts!... A foundation in handicraft is essential for every artist... let us therefore create a new guild of craftsmen without the class distinctions that raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist! Let us together desire, conceive and create the new building of the future, which will combine everythin – architecture and sculpture and painting – in a single form which will one day rise towards the heavens from the hands of a million workers as the crystalline symbol of a new and coming faith".*



**DIE**  
**WOHNUNG**  
47 - 48  
**WERKBUND AUSSTELLUNG**

Poster, Die Wohnung (The Dwelling) Werkbund  
Ausstellung Stuttgart (The Werkbund Exhibition Stuttgart)  
1927

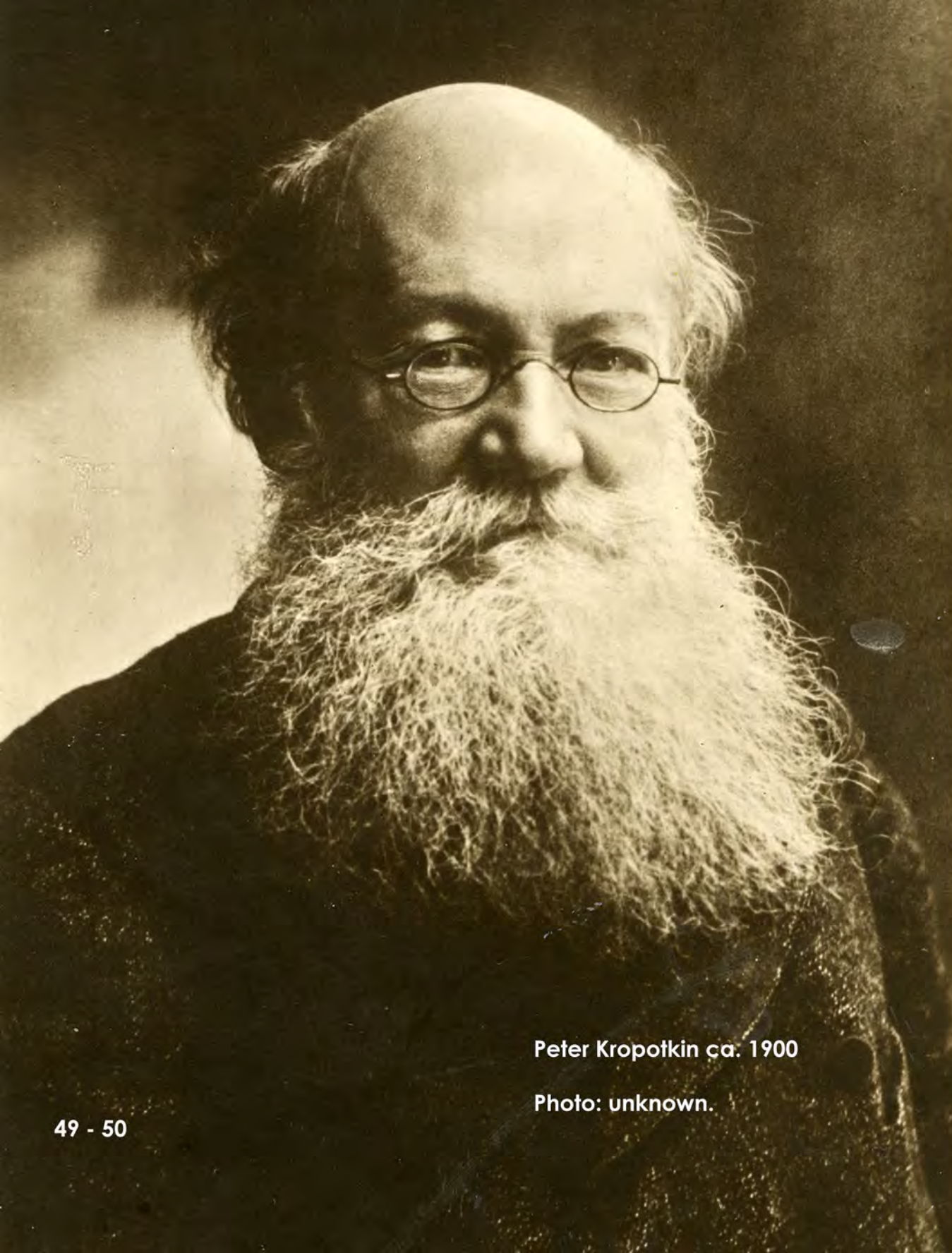
The Bauhaus praised a rejection of industrialisation and mechanisation that appeared so closely related to the war. Seeming quite related with, and almost adopting the propositions made by Morris, which prayed not only for a return to the hand-craft production and the manual skill that characterise the form (Stansky, 1985), but for an entire work and manufacturing model much more closely related to medievalism and small production.

Not only was Morris an important part of the development of the Bauhaus, the Deutscher Werkbund took several concepts from him as well, as the idea of not imitating hand-made in machine-made goods, And the idea of product as a mean to recreate the culture in the pre-capitalist era (Schwartz, 1996). Referring to this, author Christopher Wilk mentions in this quotation:

*" William Morris depicted an agrarian idyll in News From Nowhere (1890), reacting against the horrors of mechanised production and the problems of social dislocation associated with industrialisation in Britain during the nineteenth century. This vision fed the hopes and dreams of those associated with the Arts and Crafts movement both in Britain and elsewhere, inspiring the craftsmen and designers of the Wiener Werkstätte and the Deutscher Werkbund in the early years of the twentieth century".*

Lastly it seems relevant to mention some of the ideologies and norms the first stages of Modernism were characterised of. This first phase was essentially a mere set of ideas on how the designed world could 'transform human consciousness and improve material conditions' (Greenhalgh, 1990). These sometimes called or considered utopian ideas pray for a return to nature, stating that better world would be achieved not by improving the external accessories of life or implementing new technologies, but rather from restoring the inner world of emotional and spiritual values.

It was in this period when also Modernists, as same as the creators of the Arts and Crafts movement, shared the notion that separating the practices of art and design, and separating art from life itself was undesired. And even when the Modern movement rejected the pure idea of implementing craftsmanship as the righteous mean of production and replaced it with the desire of mass production, they took and integrated the concept of pristine form, enhancement of material qualities and rejection of imitation proposed by architects and designers such as Pugin, Ruskin and Morris.

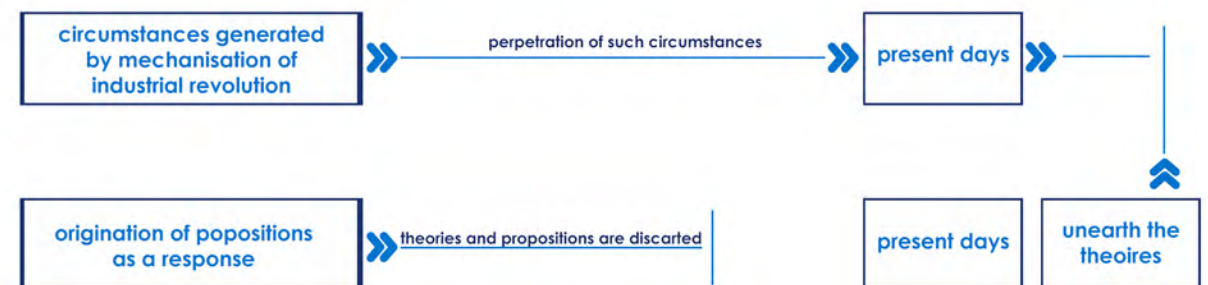


Peter Kropotkin ca. 1900

Photo: unknown.

## 4.2 PAST THEORIES AS A RELEVANT SOURCE OF INNOVATION

A short but concise definition of innovation proposed by the Encyclopaedia Britannica refers as an 'effect that brings social change'. The reason this concise definition is nonetheless offered is because it highlights that innovation is a concept that indeed generates, initiates, drives or assists social changes or transformations. This segment seeks to provide ideas on how to address and imprint innovation on the design process by looking, analysing, understanding and implementing theories generated in the late nineteenth century as a result of the industrialisation and mechanisation of labour environments. These theoretical contributions might have a strong historical basis and might seem 'dated' to some. However, research has demonstrated that many (poor) working and environmental circumstances that we find today were generated during this period (Kropotkin, 1900), (Morris, 2009), (Reid, 1986), and, since we have not been able to get rid of or modify them, these theories are still valid and apply to contemporary scenarios (Fry, 2009), (Thorpe, 2007). In order to make this chapter more understandable, and to follow a coherent line, first, an overview of the study's context is provided, an analysis of the circumstances that developed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries still identifiable at the present time. These findings were obtained through an archival and bibliographical research that, initially, form a picture of the working circumstances during the Industrial Revolution and then depict the same circumstances but in our times. Second, an analysis shows which circumstances have extended throughout both periods. An alternative will be proposed on how to improve these circumstances, formulated and based on theories developed at the same time that the problems first emerged, more than a hundred years ago. Remembering that these theories are clearly not new in our current context is relevant, yet, while they were generated as a response to on going problems that also emerged more than a hundred years ago, and have endured until this time, they are as valid as they were in the moment when they were first proposed. The innovative part of this study lies in how to extract these theories, analyse them with the eyes of the present, merge them with current postures and propositions and, finally, implement them in current projects to solve problems more efficiently. All this is achieved by comprehending past and new theories, suggesting examples of projects already being created and, last, providing a proposal for the development of projects.





John Ruskin, *La Cascade de la Folie, Chamouni, 1894*

#### 4.2.1 Exemplifying An Area Of Change

Automation and mechanisation of different tasks – as for example, those that emerged as a consequence of the Industrial Revolution's technical and technological impulses among furniture makers – changed working procedures in many ways. These technical and technological 'improvements' were created to help workers and make their exertions easier and more bearable by reducing physical work and the time needed, as well as diminishing the complexity or 'skilfulness' of certain tasks. At least, that was the primary intention. However, inherent in these transformation, harmful situations emerged as well. Work that was initially performed with skill and precision changed to mechanical routines full of boredom and monotony, making workers uncreative and demotivated and transforming skilled craftsmen into mechanised operatives. It is possible to observe that these circumstances have not changed until today, and workers in many sectors of industry, just as they did in furniture making, complain about monotonous tasks, excessive working hours and unfavourable circumstances in working places. Clearly, the automation of activities has not brought more fairness to workers: it has mainly brought greater income to 'owners'. Reflecting on these matters, designers have the opportunity to contribute to changing these patterns by generating projects that incentivise the capabilities and productivity of skilled workers, giving them the opportunity to develop and participate with their imagination and characteristics (Morris, 1911). This means generating projects that involve the workforce and thinking systematically about their needs and conditions, instead of only relying on them as an assumed and 'de facto' phase of the manufacturing process. As author Peter Kropotkin wrote in 1900:

*Must all this skill, all this intelligence, be swept away by the factory, instead of becoming a new fertile source of progress under a better organisation of production? Must all this independence and inventiveness of the worker disappear before the factory levelling? And, if it must, would such a transformation be a progress, as so many economists who have only studied figures and not human beings are ready to maintain? (Kropotkin, 1900)*

Human capital has not been the only element affected by this way of producing items. It is of importance to recognise that great damage has been caused to ecological and environmental systems through the economic, manufacturing and distribution frameworks applied since the Industrial Revolution. Kropotkin incisively described this as 'the narrow conception that profits are the only leading motive to human society, and the stubborn view which suggests that what has existed yesterday would last forever'. In 1911, Morris offered a proposition:

*There is one duty obvious to us all; it is that we should set ourselves, each one of us to doing our best to guard the natural beauty of the earth: we ought to look upon it as a crime, an injury to our fellows, only excusable because of ignorance to mar the natural beauty, which is the property of all men; and scarce less than a crime to look on and do nothing while others are marring it, if we can no longer pledge this ignorance.*





Spangereid, Aust-Adger,  
Norway.

Photo: Andres Caro del  
Castillo, 2014.

This offers a wide area of opportunity for designers to develop intelligent solutions, either by safeguarding and preserving the natural environments that still exist or by taking a step forward and improving those systems that, in most cases, are already damaged or endangered. Designers can choose to generate projects that preserve or promote ecological considerations, among which are ideas on how to reduce materials and eliminate packaging, shipping and transportation, as well as relying on controlled sources, markets and working environments (Thompson, 2013) (Fuad-Luke, 2009) (Thorpe, 2007).

One point that can be expanded upon is related to intermediaries in design production (Reid, 1986). Designers would more easily and more effectively work on more simple schemes where the maker and the user are close and have an intimate relation, one knowing the needs and desires of the other (Morris, 2009). When mass production started to be the main way of production, secondary industries started to emerge between users and producers. These intermediate industries created a bigger distance between the two groups that formerly had to be necessarily close. This separation developed into negative circumstances for users because, since the intermediaries had to receive some income, the products would become more expensive. This process also affected the producers in important ways. In order for these intermediaries to survive, the producers had to lower their prices. Consequently, the workers were the ones that suffered the most (Kropotkin, 1900), (Reid, 1986). In addition, since the close connection between them was lost, it became more difficult for one group to identify the needs and understand the conditions of the other. As mentioned previously, Thorpe writes that, *'with global sourcing of lower-cost materials and labour, substances banned in "developed" countries can be used in "developing" countries and then enter developed countries as finished products'* (Thorpe, 2007). The theories described above consider the benefits of bringing production once again as close as possible to the users. Both parties will benefit if projects with these characteristics were to be developed, reducing the role of intermediaries such as distributors, shippers, retailers and sellers. Fuad-Luke suggested that:

*"Green design has a long pedigree and before the Industrial Revolution it was the norm for many cultures. Goods like furniture and utility items tended to be made locally by craftsmen such as blacksmiths, wheelwrights, and woodland workers, from readily available local resources". (Fuad-Luke, 2009)*



Local flora, Extremadura,  
Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2013.

The issue of local materials is also something that has to be seriously considered. If designers would use only (or mostly) materials found in close localities, the large market of materials distribution would be reduced, and, with this, the demand for non-protected or endangered raw materials would fall. Design would mould and adapt to the circumstances of the places where it is performed, not as sometimes has been the case – the other way round. The usage of mainly local materials would, quite importantly, confer on the design a uniqueness and particularity that would be unmatched, generating beauty and singularity in projects (Jordan, 2002). Thomson stated that:

*“The Nordic Ecolabel, Blue Angel and EU Ecolabel are used to mark products that meet extremely high environmental requirements based on lifecycle assessment (LCA). This includes an assessment of raw materials, production, use and disposal, fair trade, promotes better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability and fair terms for farmers and workers”.* (Thompson & Thompson, 2013)

Technology is not something that needs to be seen as opposed to these matters. It is exactly the opposite. As explained previously, all technological advances that occurred in the Industrial Revolution was meant to help workers and to make his tasks more bearable. That it did not accomplish this is because of the greed of, and misuse by, some segments or entities within the production processes (Morris, 2009). All the technological tools the modern world possesses can be put to the service of people and, especially, users. The more production adopts these approaches, the more these theories can be validated.

Two positive and supporting perspectives from two different authors can be added here. One said, ‘New technology is taking production back to the small-scale craft user and placing it in the hands of the consumer’ (Lefteri, 2012). The second stated, ‘While the word [craft] may have disappeared from some visible marquees, the good news is that the material concerns, processes and transformations that craft addresses are enjoying larger and more usually literate audiences than ever before’ (Thompson & Thompson, 2013).



Spangereid, Aust-Adger,  
Norway.

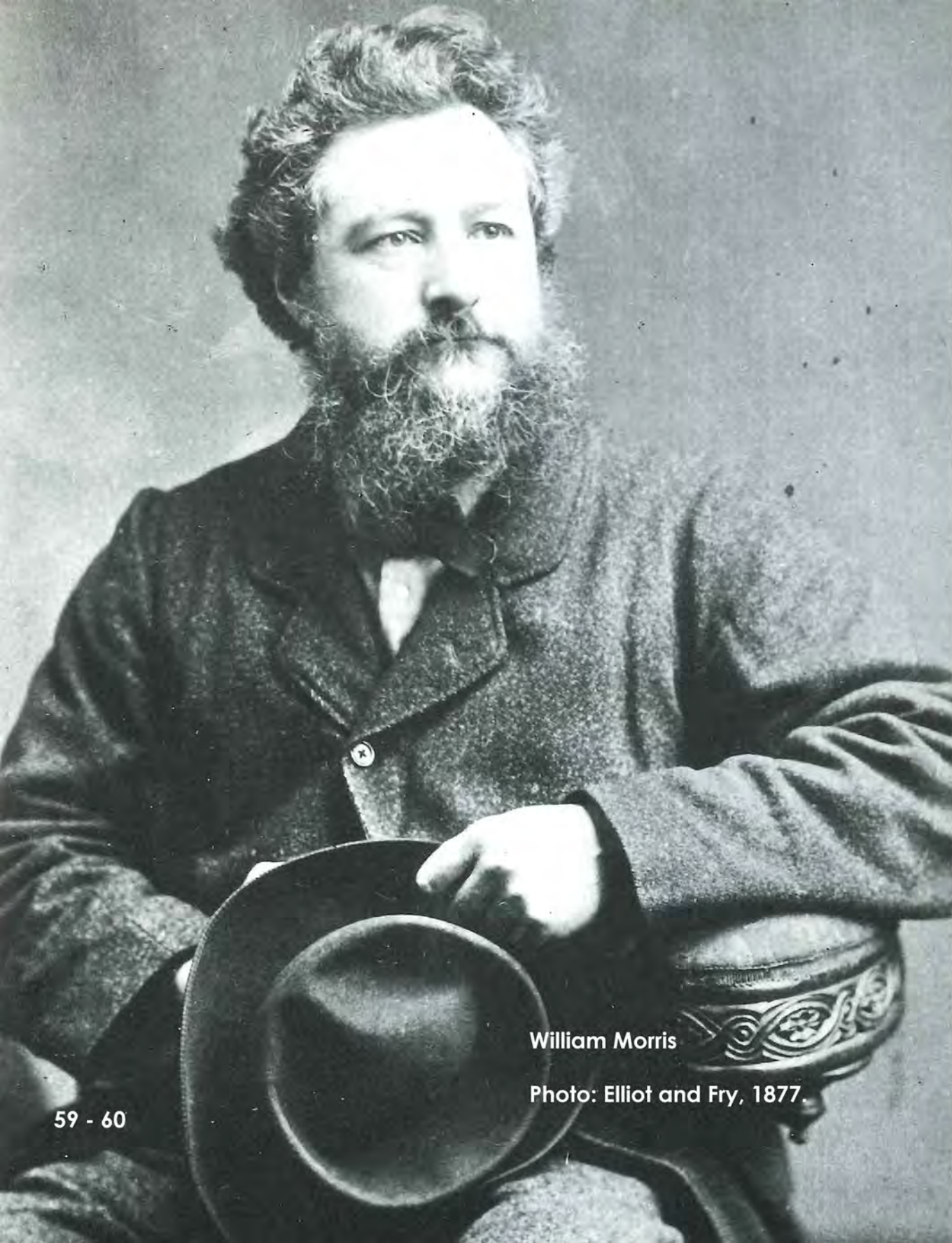
Photo: Andres Caro del  
Castillo, 2014

#### 4.2.2 Two Projects As An Example

In the next subsection, two projects from two different designers are presented and explained. These projects were selected because they reflect the ethical qualities presented by the theories emerging in response to the Industrial Revolution.

The Eco-Recliner of British designer Simon White appears to be a simple, humble product, however this recliner's innovation does not lie in its form or aesthetics; it is stated on its manufacturing methods and the selection of materials. When this project was developed, it was a pioneer in only using protected, regulated and locally extracted ash wood in its construction. The manufacturing of this product ensures energy and resource consumption is reduced, and it can be performed in considerably smaller environments. This project safeguards local environments and brings work back into the hands of craftsmen and small manufacturers, instead of being mass-produced [14, (Proctor, 2009)]. As a response to the industrialisation seen in his time, Morris long ago proposed local markets and crafted means of production be established as a pathway towards workers' well-being and ecological sustainability (Morris, 1911). Because of increased, mainstream patterns of mass production, these ideas had little impact in his time, and sometimes were considered mere romanticism (Stansky, 1985). However, now that people's mind-set and circumstances is different, these kind of approaches might have a better ground on which thrive and work. As we can see from this comparison, White has not 'invented' or created the theories or frameworks of the characteristics he decides to imprint onto his projects, but this could be an example of how an innovative designer sees the potential of some 'old' or 'discarded' ideas and puts them in practice with positive results.

Another contemporary example is the more conceptual work and approaches of British designer and naval architect David Trubridge. He invites us to think about the way production in design has led to unnecessary consumerism. He questions the ethical considerations involved in the way we put things on the market and challenges designers to consider if they need to put yet another 'product' out there in a market that is already overloaded with goods and objects – with invented necessities and artefacts of 'pleasure' but not 'usability'. He criticises the impact and trail of 'litter' a person leaves behind when he or she acquires and disposes significant amounts of goods throughout his or her life. These ideas can also be perceived on a very similar fashion on the work and analysis performed by Jasper Morrioso and Naoto Fukasawa called Supernormal. Trubridge is innovative because he sets opinions at the core of what a designer is supposed to do. He puts in doubt the essence of product and industrial design and invites the people involved in this area to be critic and consider other aspects rather than the expected impulse to sell. Sometimes, designers are so concentrated on solving 'problems' that they fail to analyse if the problems are actually there or if the 'solving' of that problem would cause even more issues. These theories and thoughts appear to be strongly related to environmentalism since they seek to generate change in the current means of production and distribution (Walker, 2012). Again, we focus on diminishing the load of manufactured goods to relieve pressure on the structures that provide these goods: nature and human hands. Trubridge not only pleads for an aware and conscious public and consumers, he also seeks to promote this in designers because he believes his duty lays in incentivising these changes.



William Morris

Photo: Elliot and Fry, 1877

### 4.3 THE REASSESSMENT OF CRAFTSMANSHIP

Designers seek one simple purpose: to make people's lives better. Ethical research on the design process (Papanek, 1971) has shown that designers are preoccupied with pleasing the client or user by making products that can make a positive impact on their lives. Some designers work for the sake of making the world a more beautiful and easier place to live in, thereby spreading joy and pleasure. Because designers are called to please the user, solve problems, generate solutions, and improve methods through criticism, there is a tendency among them to overlook the stages and workers involved in the design process, including production.

When a consumer obtains a piece of furniture, for example, they often appreciate the designer who projected it, the firm that developed and sold it and the qualities and origin of the materials. This paper will focus on the often-overlooked people in the early production stage of the design process that work with their hands to make a tangible reality of what initially only exists in the minds of the designers. These individuals are referred to as workers, operators, craftspeople, artisans and members of the labour force (Stansky, 1985). These labels can depend on the type of work they do and their level of status. The design and manufacturing industry must reassess the system so these workers who don't receive the appreciation and encouragement they deserve, could finally be achieved. It is important to mention that some craftsmen and artisans in wealthy and developed countries have indeed achieved good standards, markets and fair working and living circumstances, this group represents the model on how the conditions should be, and because of that, this paper would not be dedicated to them. It is also important to state that this paper does not refer only on craftsmen of developing countries. It is true that most of the workforce in the design process comes from developing countries (such as BRIC), but since the developed countries are the demanders, it is a shared responsibility that concerns both the consumers and the producers. With this it is meant that industrialised countries should look for incentivising more local production made by crafted ways and within their individual environments, this way these means of production would become more common, therefore more accessible and less luxurious. Also the developing countries that work as "factories" might increase the value and relevance of their crafted production in order to make more artisans and fewer workers. Society needs good quality and standards as much as good designs, but even more so, society must be willing to work toward achieving fair circumstances for all the people involved in the production and design process. More than a hundred years ago, William Morris said it aptly: *'An art made by the people and for the people, a joy to the maker and the user.'*

The literature survey included an analysis of key topics concerning the ideologies and methods of the founders of the Arts and Crafts Movement. Books including *The Stones of Venice* (Ruskin, 1981), *Hopes and Fears for Arts* (Morris, 1911) and *Signs of Change* (Morris, 2009) were included to examine the importance of hand craftsmanship and its relationship to dignifying the labour force. These books discuss political and social ideologies, which led to the analysis of additional texts to examine the connection between the socialist currents of the era and the working class

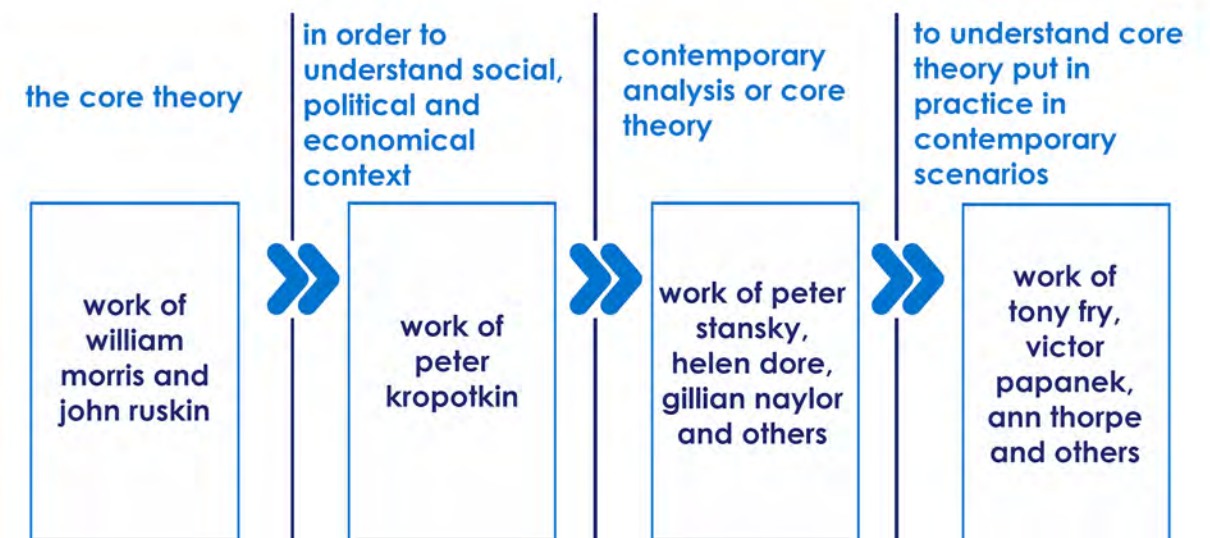


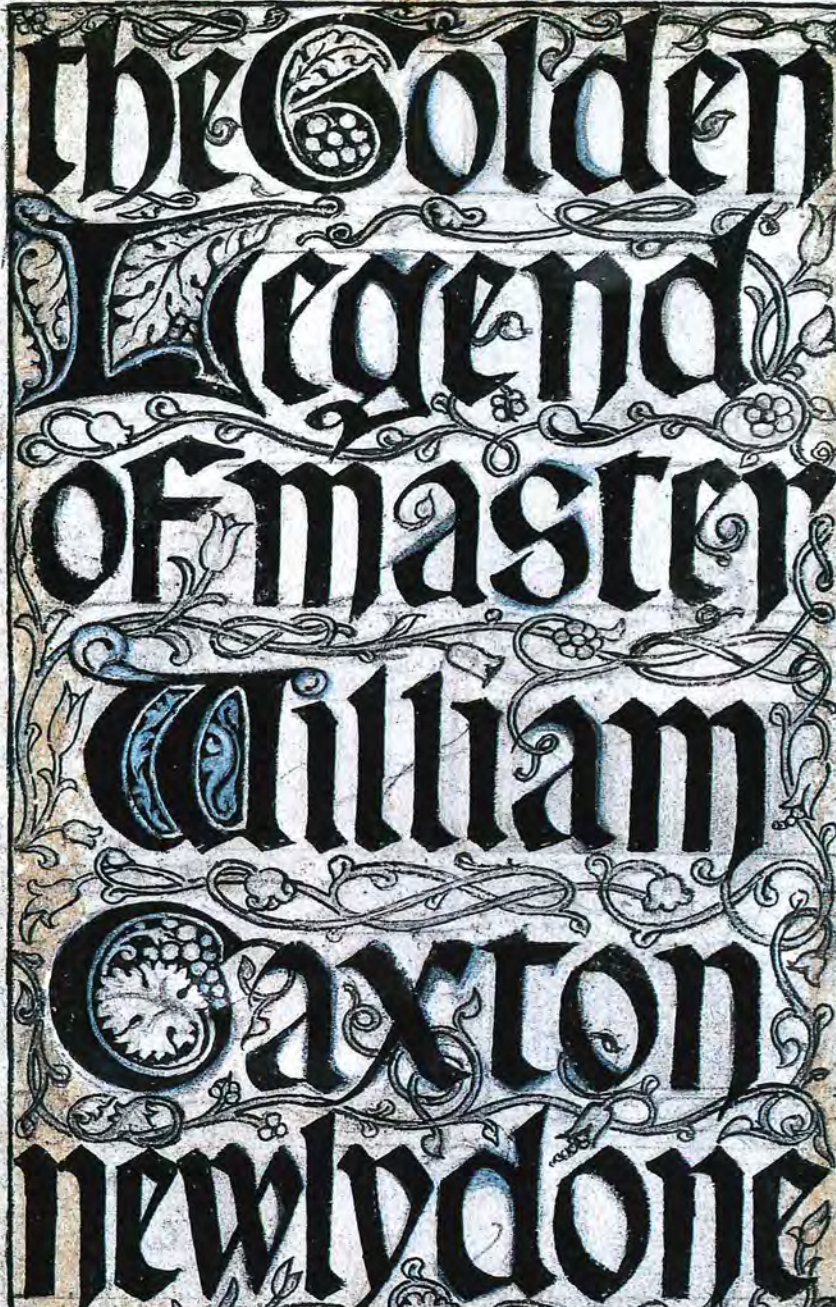
Figure of Guinevere

Drawing and watercolour by  
William Morris, c. 1858

This analysis included *Fields, Factories and Workshops* by Peter Kropotkin (Kropotkin, 1900). To evaluate the perspectives of modern thinkers, the literature survey incorporated texts written by the authors Peter Stansky (Stansky, 1985), Gillian Naylor (Naylor, 1971) and Helen Dore (Dore, 1990). These authors' works provided excellent information on modern theories and tendencies in the field of ethics and production methods (Melles, de Vere, & Misic, 2011; Papanek, 1971). Likewise, the review included works discussing the living conditions among people in some segments of the production workforce. Works by Peter Fry (Fry, 2009), Hans Weiss and Klaus Werner were consulted. Researchers also made a comparison of the theories and information gathered from both currents through a qualitative analysis of pattern matching, which identified similarities and differences (Maxwell, 2005; Yin, 2009). This literature review provided the foundation for the development of an interview format with a common pathway.

Two categorical theories were identified in the literature. The first category, represented by workers and craftspeople, explored the thoughts and concerns of people closely related to design, industry, production, labour and the workforce at the end of the 19th Century. At this time, John Ruskin (Ruskin, 1981), William Morris (Stansky, 1985) and Arthur Mackmurdo insisted that better circumstances for the people could only be achieved through a revival in craftsmanship. Those theories can expand the understanding of the situation in the workforce today. The second category of relevant literature consisted of reflections about the current situation and circumstances production workers industry and design live in today (Fry, 2009). This literature also discussed recent research on the problems of ethical conditions for the workforce and the perception of human resources (Papanek, 1971). These works debate new theories on how to improve the modern circumstances in the production segments to generate better conditions in sustainability, human rights, ethics in industry and fair trade (Melles et al., 2011).





The Golden  
Legend  
of Master  
William  
Caxton  
newly done

Original design by William  
Morris for the titlepage of The  
Golden Legend

#### 4.3.1 The Intrinsic Relationship Between The Worker, The Object And The Public

To learn how these two different categories of literature, which represent different approaches and subjects, might complement each other, this study first examines the categories of theories individually to find information on methods. Morris and Ruskin were aware of the state of the production workforce in the late 19th Century. They claimed that the capitalist system was making production competitive instead of cooperative, which was driving the workforce and quality of production into a struggle to maintain fair conditions (Morris, 2009; Ruskin, 1981). Both writers claimed that the quality of life of these workers was gradually worsening and would continue to do so unless there was recognition of equal importance in the intrinsic relationship between the worker, the object and the public (Stansky, 1985).

The researchers asserted that better conditions for the workforce would lead to a more homogeneous society with fewer divisions and economic differences, but also with similar tasks, responsibilities, rights and obligations. Ruskin said, *'In each several profession, no master should be too proud to do its hardest work. The painter should grind his own colours; the architect work in the mason's yard with his men; the master-manufacturer be himself a more skilful operative than anyone in his mills'* (Ruskin, 1981). Morris claimed:

*"Now as I am quite sure that no art, not even the feeblest, rudest or least intelligent, can come of such work, so also I am sure that such work makes the workman less than a man and degrades him grievously and unjustly, and that nothing can compensate him or us for such degradation: and I want you specially to note that this was instinctively felt in the very earliest days of what are called the industrial arts".* (Morris, 1911)

There was a generalised concern for workers among many groups in the late nineteenth Century, which was influenced by the emerging socialist philosophies. Many designers, including Morris, were attempting to merge the socialist doctrine with the design and production industries (Stansky, 1985). Considering this, two topics were held up as especially relevant. The first of these was the position of the machine in the workforce, and the second was the system of competition in which the means of production were founded.

These authors were not against industrialisation or automation of the production duties of workers; *'...life without industry is guilt, industry without art is brutality'* (Ruskin, 2001). They believed the essential purpose of the machine was to make the work of the people easier and more bearable, rid the industry of dull and repetitive toils and give workers a chance to apply their time and efforts to more fulfilling activities. Morris reflected on this idea when he established the separation between Mechanical Toil, Intelligent Work and Imaginative Work (Morris, 1911). He suggested that mechanical toil was the enemy of the worker, and imaginative work was the desirable end wherein the worker was able to enjoy the duties and provide better results. Nevertheless, despite these ideals, the machine has brought more and harder work to the people in many cases. The automation of tasks and the reduction of labour within those tasks have made work simpler. However, this has resulted, not in less work overall, but in more work in the same number of hours. Machine automation, then, has mainly served those seeking bigger profits. Morris and Ruskin argued against the people who used machines to get profit rather than to provide fair conditions for workers: *'But why is he the slave of machinery? Because he is the slave to the system for whose existence the invention of machinery was necessary'* (Morris, 2009).



Arthur and Lancelot cartoon  
by Morris and Madox Brown  
1852, for a window at Hardden  
Grange, Yorkshire

The second great concern in the industry of the 19th Century was the mind-set where production of goods was viewed as a war rather than a supply of needs. This system of consumerism and mass production created a deep chasm between the labour force and the 'owners' of that labour force, (i.e., the owners of the means of production upon which the unprivileged classes were forced to rely) (Morris, 2009). During that period, the differences between the labour force and those above it was seen almost as a kind of slavery: 'Our society includes a great mass of slaves, who must be fed, clothed, housed and amused as slaves, and that their daily necessity compels them to make the slave-wares whose use is the perpetuation of their slavery' (Morris, 2009). Though it was a drastic affirmation, the analogy to slavery increased awareness of the endless circle of poverty within which the production workforce was living. It also drew attention to the hopelessness of the situation in the absence of reform. Thus, a call was made to the society to treat each one of its members with the same dignity, 'No man would be tormented for the benefit of another—nay, no one man would be tormented for the benefit of Society. Nor, indeed, can that order be called Society which is not upheld for the benefit of every one of its members' (Morris, 2009).

Not only has the gap between workers and owners increased but it has also extended to new places; whole communities, societies and cultures now support the system of competition, while the segment that benefits is much smaller than the segment supporting it. Author Tony Fry explains that people have become too dependent on the artificial worlds they have designed, fabricated and occupied (Fry, 2009), and in order to improve, society must get rid of the idea of 'thinking in the moment'. His basic premise is that people should have greater power to choose the forms of the environments in which they live.

It may be relevant to mention that as it was in the time of Morris, today design naturally connects art and trade and provides a way for artists to make a living and for governments and manufacturers to support artistically valuable causes without losing their reputation for practicality (Stansky, 1985).

Nowadays it is possible to find two main divisions within the design process that occurs from the early stages of ideation till the physical ready-to-sell article or product; the first one of those is the creative process, which involves the conception of the product and sometimes, but not necessarily, the creation of the actual design process, this work is normally (and ideally) performed by designers or professionals within the design education segment. The second stage is the production process; this stage may result a bit more abstract or distant to designers, and in some cases may not even be performed by them, seeing their job done when the creative process is done and then letting the rest to other individuals involved. It is quite common to see products that are thought and developed in one place and then fabricated in another one, sometimes really distant geographically, culturally or economically speaking. And summed to this it is the essential and apparently irreplaceable and untouchable phase of the wrapping and packaging to then be sent, shipped or transported to many places around the globe, that is how a big amount of goods are manufactured and sold nowadays (Fry 2003). Therefore we recognise three places or "stages" during the entire design process: first the point A where the product is conceived, then the point B where the product is physically created, and then the point C where the product is finally sold.



Rural environment,  
Extremadura, Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2013

#### 4.3.2 Qualitative Information Trough Interviews

The literature studies demonstrated that people have made extensive efforts in many periods to create better circumstances for workers, but that there has been consistent failure to provide fair conditions in the production and distribution industries. Why these unfortunate circumstances have prevailed for more than hundred years, yet no one has been able to establish change, is an important question. The interviews in this present research were designed to expand knowledge in this area.

*Fair trade: a fashion or an ethical imperative?* One of the professionals interviewed commented that 'people do not really care about other people's condition; the need of cheap and 'good quality' production is more important than the fair treatment of the labour force, and it is because of the big importance we put in costs, that then we have to give less importance to other subjects.' He continued: 'People design in mass production because they want to achieve the bigger profit.' This respondent also pointed out that hand craftsmanship has become extremely expensive, and the segment of society that can afford these goods has been greatly reduced. Craftsmanship, then, has become a luxury instead of an activity of the people and for the people. He also said that the only way to give the workforce 'importance' was to incentivise fair trade. However, the interviewee noted that there is a risk that fair trade might not provide a better standard of living. Even the mere idea of fair trade could be difficult to instill in the consumer's mind, because people often see these kinds of ideas as 'labels' and 'fashion'. The respondent went on to say that, like every fashion, '... what seems to be relevant today might not be tomorrow.'

*Potential niche markets.* The second expert interviewee offered a more positive perspective. She affirmed that initiating change is a shared responsibility between the suppliers, including fabricants, companies, designers, workers and the market on one hand, and the common people, such as buyers and customers, on the other hand. These entities should all take part in providing and demanding crafted products: 'Many things ought to be done at the same time: educating people on a general level, as well as producers, marketing people, politicians and other stakeholders.' She suggested that the modern climate was well placed for this kind of change because more and more people are coming to appreciate crafted production. She went on to say that, 'It might grow into a more substantial niche market—or several different niche markets—as well as an expanded export. Our era of experience economy fits well with a better future for this kind of furniture.'





Urnes Stave Church, Sogn og Fjordane, Norway.

Photo: Andres Caro del Castillo, 2014

#### 4.4 DISCUSSION

One rather important consideration that should be taken into account for this project is that, since it is dedicated to provide a design methodology and not a specific product, the positive attributes of it comes in the form of ideas and propositions, rather than in aesthetical, visual or material qualities.

Another point that was emphasised is that innovation can be just around the corner: inventing a new radical breakthrough is not necessary to make a project innovative. Inspiration can come from work done by others in the past but implemented in different, new situations and visualised in new contexts, generating effective changes.

Another point that might be useful to address is the one that talks about the importance of being able to understand theory and what it means in current contexts; it might be that it's possible to track every single current of design throughout all our history in today's design and doings, and this can be by various means, it might be that some product in particular was conceived by getting inspiration on something previously made. Author Clive Wainwright states that architects and designers consciously and unconsciously apply past theories to their works even if they might have forgotten their influence and relevance. However it may be relevant to mention that even if this happens sometimes as an act of causality, it is desired that more frameworks and better knowledge would be provided to designers so rationality and choice would prevail from causality. It might be that these initiatives that might seem little, are the actual area of change and of opportunity for a greater change. If little efforts are summed up it might be possible to generate a big transformation.

Opinions on the subject of improvement in production workforce conditions were divided. All respondents and researchers acknowledged the need for change. However, one respondent suggested that, since there has been no change in the past 100 years, change would not come easily today. However, if society begins addressing these matters, people might grow more conscious of the problem and eventually begin taking a stand. A consistent positive mind set in regard to ethical change was evident in the literature (Fry, 2009; Melles et al., 2011; Papanek, 1971) and in the minds of the interviewed experts. This research revealed that there is an awareness that conditions are not good, which was also the case in the late 19th Century. The problem is that this knowledge has not been enough to inspire a change. This present study also showed that there is an overall acceptance of the current system because it benefits a segment of society; though this segment is not the largest it is the most powerful. It is worth mentioning that the literature and the qualitative interviews produced different data. To some extent, the literature offered more 'romantic' solutions, but the brutal reality keeps these solutions from flourishing.



Caceres, Extremadura,  
Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2014

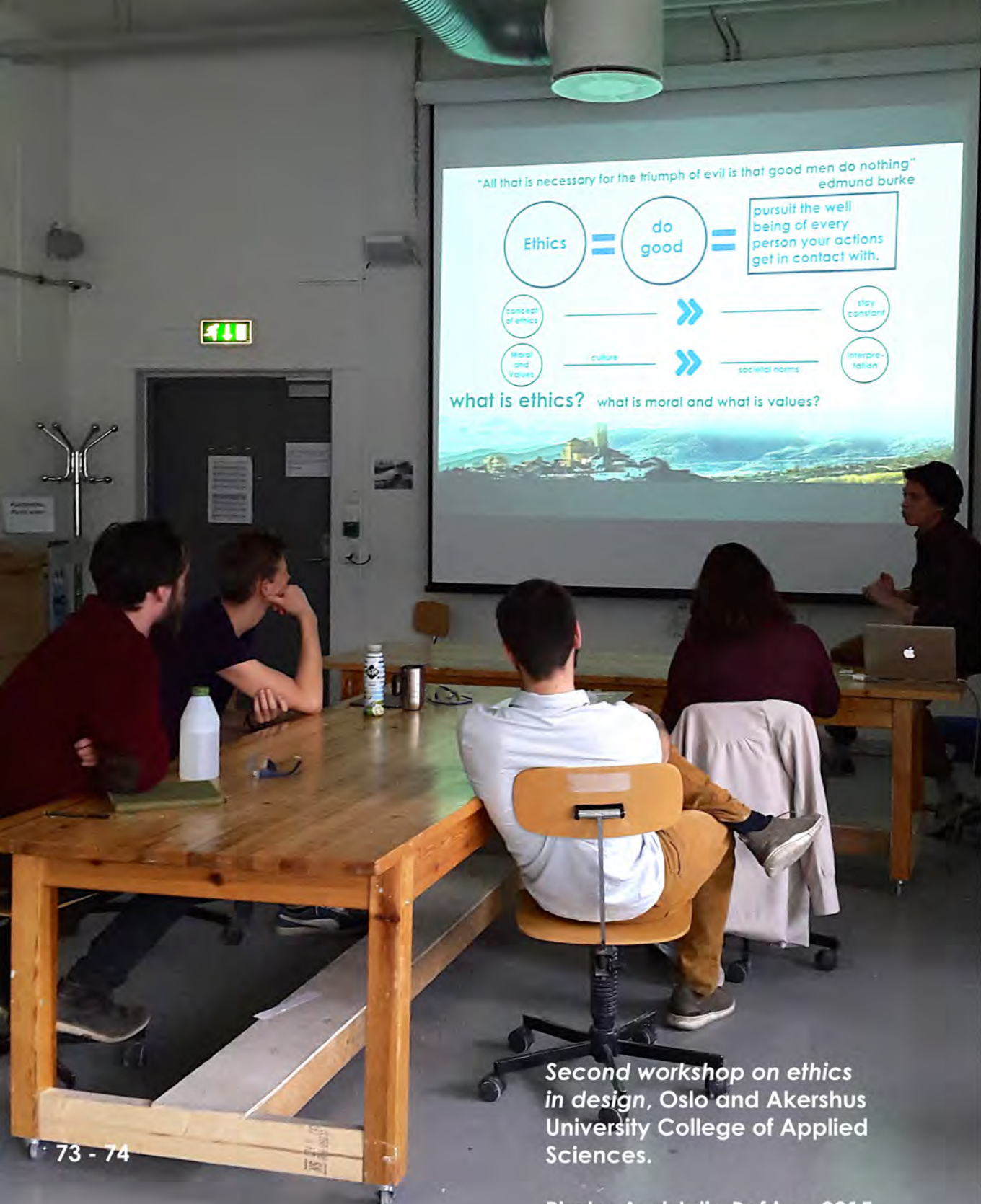
## 4.5 CONCLUSIONS

One of the aims of this work was to provide individuals related with design education or research with novel insights and discussions on the way Modernism, post-Modernism, and contemporary design can be perceived. It is an aim of this work to provide relevant considerations for further research and development of knowledge. Another aim of this paper was to provide students and practitioners within design spheres with knowledge and inspiration to perform their doings, it is thought that a wider understanding of history and theory will help to generate better and more conscious design.

Finally this work was intended to reach every individual related to design and state the imperative on addressing and generating appropriately sustainable and socially moral design, the utilisation of cultural sustainability as a mean to confer ethics in a design process is a topic that should be studied on a broader way and then implemented efficiently in order to achieve rather good. In this text the issue of cultural sustainability was addressed by the study of past theories and by unearthing the concept of incentivising the utilisation of more crafted means of production. It is desired that if more culture is imprinted not only on an aesthetical form of a given object, but on the whole process of design and manufacturing that precedes it, better social and environmental circumstances would arise.

In an encouraging trend, people have started to take action in various areas of design. Whether in the field of education, production, design development or research, we must find help in every tool we have at hand. This paper has shown ways in which designers can feasibly take 'past' theories as a basis for generating positive results, instead of generating completely new ideas from scratch. Doing this can be perceived as making new contributions and using a different approach that can be as useful and innovative as other existing approaches. Much work and knowledge has been generated throughout time, and designers need to unearth this, categorising what we can use and then using this and putting it into practice to achieve the greater good.

It is the responsibility of designers to consider themselves and the clients, but also the workers in the segments of production outside their own practice. This could set in motion the establishment of a system designed to make products and production and design processes friendlier for the people who fabricate the goods. If designers equally reflect on the people in the production stage and the income generated for the owners, the beginnings of change could emerge. This change in mind set could also contribute to corporate social responsibility (CSR) where businesses are positively branded in the market (Melles et al., 2011). A person involved with design can choose to take a stand in this matter of ethical values to contribute to making design a noble discipline (Fry, 2009; Papanek, 1971).



Second workshop on ethics in design, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences.

Photo: Aud Julie Befring, 2015

## 5 THEORY PUT IN PRACTICE: WORKSHOPS

Since this particular thesis is dedicated to the discipline of generating and subsequently spread new knowledge, one of the very important aspects of it is the way this knowledge is perceived, interiorised and put in practice.

Research has led this project to the understanding that the same person that generates the theory cannot be the one putting it in practice. This idea is sustained on the premises that the author fully understands this work and therefore an example made by himself would not contribute any further or provide relevant insights on how other designers and design students interpret and interiorise the theories explained in this work, and then put them in practice in order to generate design solutions by themselves. By the development and implementation of workshops with designers and design students, this work is acquiring its very purpose; to reach and enter into the minds of these previously mentioned individuals, and once there, be a subject of transformation that might flourish into an more ethical perception when it comes to social and environmental consciousness.

Two workshop sessions were developed and implemented in two different dates. These two workshops contained design students from varied academic levels and institutions.

The first workshop sessions was held the 12th of March and included seven Master students from Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences and the Oslo School of Architecture and Design. The session lasted for three and a half hours with twenty minutes extra for feedback and comments.

The second workshop session was held the 15th of April and included four Bachelor and Master studnets from Oslo And Akershus University College of Applied Sciences, the Oslo National Academy of the Arts and an exchange student from Germany. The session lasted for three hours.

The two sessions were planed and executed almost on an identical manner, the reason for developing two sessions follows the notion that the more this knowledge would be spread the better, and since one important aspect of this thesis consists on analysing the mental conceptions of students when presented with these theories, a bigger number of examples would bring better understanding of how they tackle the issues and characteristics presented on these sessions. It wasn't possible to develop more sessions due time limitations, since the interpretation of results is time consuming. The number of attendants responds to the amount of interested individuals within an academic group that was invited.



*First workshop on ethics in design, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences.*

*Photo: Wesal Khattak, 2015*

## 5.1 THEORY ON HOW TO PERFORM A WORKSHOP

Since the development and implementation of workshops is of important relevance for this project, appropriate theory had to be consulted on how to prepare, perform, analyse and document a workshop. A significant amount of the literature consulted and reviewed was rendered on the development of these particular workshops, it is also a certainty that some considerations were not possible to implement due the intrinsic characteristics of these workshops, the time given to plan them and implement them, and the number of attendants.

Workshops are considered to be expensive due the time and effort its put on them, they are also perceived by the attendants and the developers as focused and quite intensive, therefore its worthwhile to employ the proper amount of time on plan them in order to get the most of them (Clatworthy, 2014). In this case and for this project a series of points were developed as an easy tool to follow in order to generate these specific workshops, three books were selected for these purposes, first a book about creative thinking was consulted to get a general overview on the topic of creativity and how to be innovative when presenting ideas (Michalko, 2006), then two examples on workshop implementation were consulted in order to get a perspective on how people interiorise the knowledge and apply it on an actual workshop setting. The first one talks about generating mapping workshops (Skjelten, 2014), even if this is not the main focus the workshops performed for this project, it was relevant to analyse how certain tools can be universally applied for different kind of workshops. Lastly a compendium on how to generate service design oriented workshops was consulted (Clatworthy, 2014) for the same reasons previously mentioned.

- Sending invitations to the appropriate people or to the people you want to have on your workshops must be a priority, doing it as early as possible will increase the chances for them to attend.
- The documentation of the workshop form start to finish is a very important practice; it is possible to do it by taking pictures or video since you can use them later on. It is also a good idea to have someone helping the facilitator with that task, so he/she doesn't have to lose focus on the workshop in order to generate the documentation.
- Work with complex topics can be challenging, making the activities easy to understand and intuitive can help on reducing that feeling.



*Second workshop on ethics  
in design, Oslo and Akershus  
University College of Applied  
Sciences.*

Photo: Wesal Khattak, 2015

- It is of importance to read the attendants signs or listen to their insights in order to maintain a good flow throughout the whole session.
- When starting the workshop, it is important to lower the attendant's tension and increase their interest. This can be done with a lively introduction that will mention the expectations of the workshop and the day's goals.
- The whole workshop dynamic can be modified by the number of its participants, if more than five attend, the possibility to create groups is at hand, if five or less attend then it is recommendable not to create groups so more useful insights can emerge.
- Remind the attendants to create dialogue/discussion and share their ideas.
- Encourage the ownership of the participants regarding the workshop can be a good way to boost interest and create a better atmosphere. This can be achieved by letting them shape their own processes and interpretations.
- Assist the attendants on get rid of mental barriers, questions like "is this relevant?" "is this within the topic?" and "is this interesting?" can emerge, and its important to remind them that any input can be relevant.
- It is important that the participants feel comfortable with their ideas, try to remind that everything that might come into their minds is of relevance.
- Showing examples in the form of pre-made structures can give a good pathway to the participant's mind.
- Make the attendants feel comfortable with their deliveries, a masterpiece or a beautiful drawing are not expected nor relevant for these causes, so they shouldn't worry about those matters.
- State clearly when and upon which premises the workshop will be over.
- Can be of important academic learning to end up the session with a presentation of their work or findings followed by a discussion upon them.
- Document the findings of the workshop by taking pictures or video. Make annotations of relevant quotations or situations.



*First workshop on ethics in design, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences.*

*Photo: Wesal Khattak, 2015*

## 5.2 FIRST WORKSHOP SUMMARY

In this chapter an overview of the happenings and findings of the first workshop will be displayed followed by a conclusion in order to condense the whole idea of this first event.

### 5.2.1 First Phase Of The Workshop: Working With An Open Assignment

After the brief was given the participants were invited to decide if they wanted to work in groups or individually. The criteria for choosing a group was depending on if someone would show the same cultural characteristics as them.

Three groups were formed: Team A with three members, team B with two members and team C with one member.

TEAM A: AUD JUILE BEFRING, SAMAN ALAM, ASVEG MARIE JELLESTAD

#### REASONS FOR CHOOSING THIS GROUP

They mainly first identified for being the three women in the workshop. As they stated the aspect of sharing the same sex was the only reason for wanting to collaborate.

#### CONCEPT

This team developed a concept of a service that might help improve the conditions of women in India. Many women see themselves in danger when going outdoors to the toilet. This concept is conceptualised in order to empower them and make them harder targets of violence and abuse.

The first concept is a survival kit though to give better possibilities for women to survive either by the dangers of the nature and of perpetrators.

The second one is a service on which two persons get highly trained into survival techniques, then these two people are 'obliged' by moral values to teach their skill to another two, then these to another two and so on until a large spectrum of the society would achieve these conditions.

As seen this project is more based on a conceptual approach of a service, the reason this project was conceived to be put in practice in a country as India might be because one integrant of the group is of Indian parents, therefore this aspect influenced the whole group and the whole project.

#### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

Nothing is said about these matters on this project

#### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

This project has quite some cultural considerations imbedded on it, since it is important to fully understand the cultural bases of people in India, their motivations and actions

#### ON SOCIAL VALUES

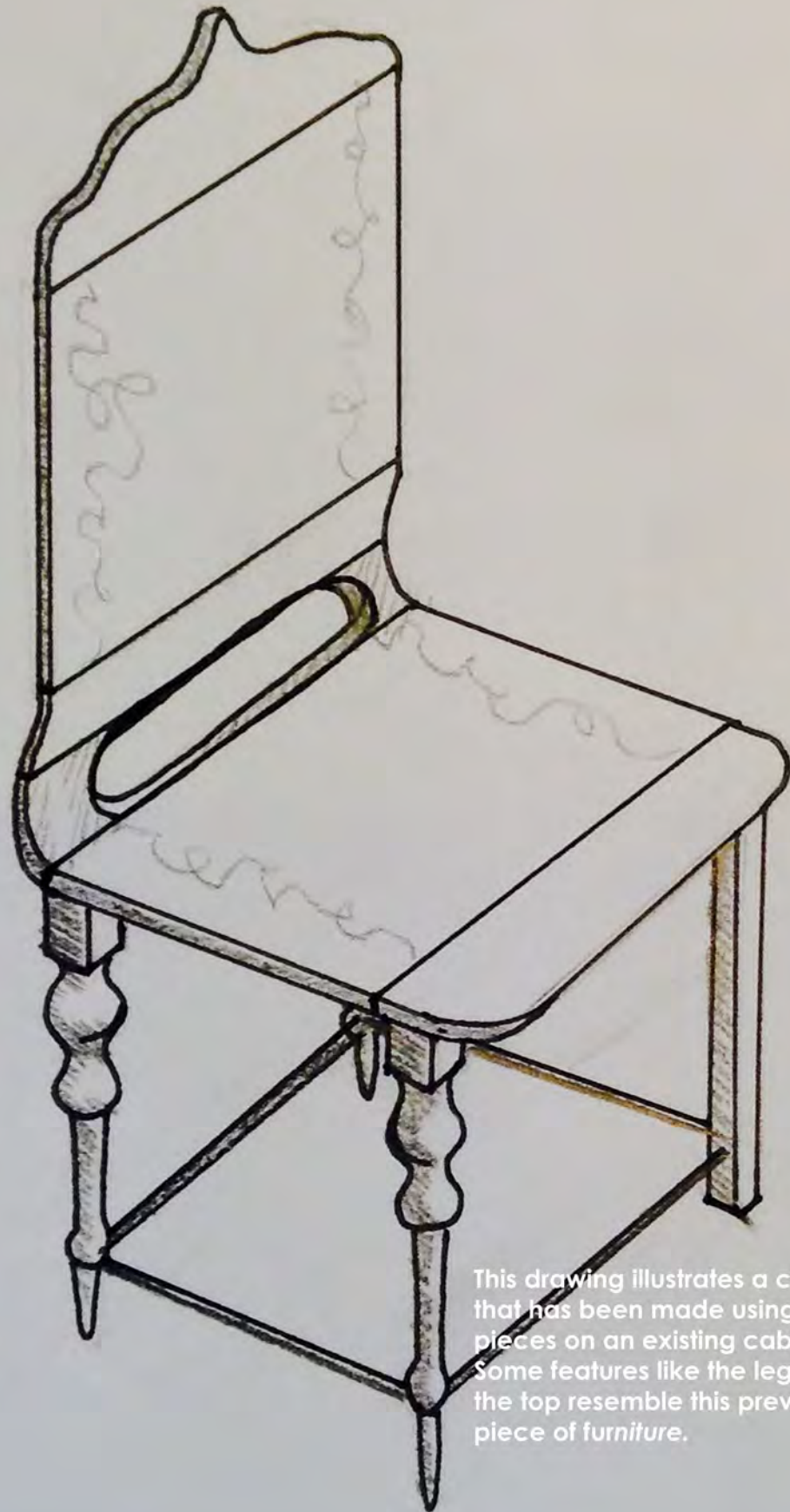
This project works well when it comes to social values because it gives a good alternative to enhance or empower some segments of the population that might be in disadvantage or danger. This project attempts to be highly valuable and rewarding for the individuals that get involved with it.

#### ON ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

This project does not state anything concerning this kind of values or give any option on how to address them.

#### ON ECONOMIC VALUES

This project does not state anything concerning this kind of values or give any option on how to address them.



This drawing illustrates a chair that has been made using pieces on an existing cabinet. Some features like the legs and the top resemble this previous piece of furniture.

TEAM B: WESAL KHATTAK AND ANDREAS KALLSTAD

#### REASONS FOR CHOOSING THIS GROUP

This group was formed by the curiosity from both members; they have never had the chance to work together so that is what this time brought them together.

#### CONCEPT

This project also goes on a more service-based approach and is explained as a company or firm that specialises on utilising old furniture that might be conceived as dated, in disuse or damaged to make new products with it. This way an old cabinet can be dismantled in order to create something new with new values on it, as for example, a chair.

This project is useful and interesting because addresses the topic of putting something new into the market, in this case the development of new products is replaced by the mere modification of the already existing ones in order to make them come to life again but with different shapes and different functions. As stated by the group, the manufacturing means in order to perform these transformations would take in deep consideration the skilfulness and craftsmanship of its makers, rather than rely on more rapid processes.

#### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

this project is essentially thought to be developed as a craft rather than as a mean of mass production.

#### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

This topic seem a bit blurred but the team mentioned that working with old Norwegian furniture in order to create new Norwegian furniture would be the optimum scenario for the project.

#### ON SOCIAL VALUES

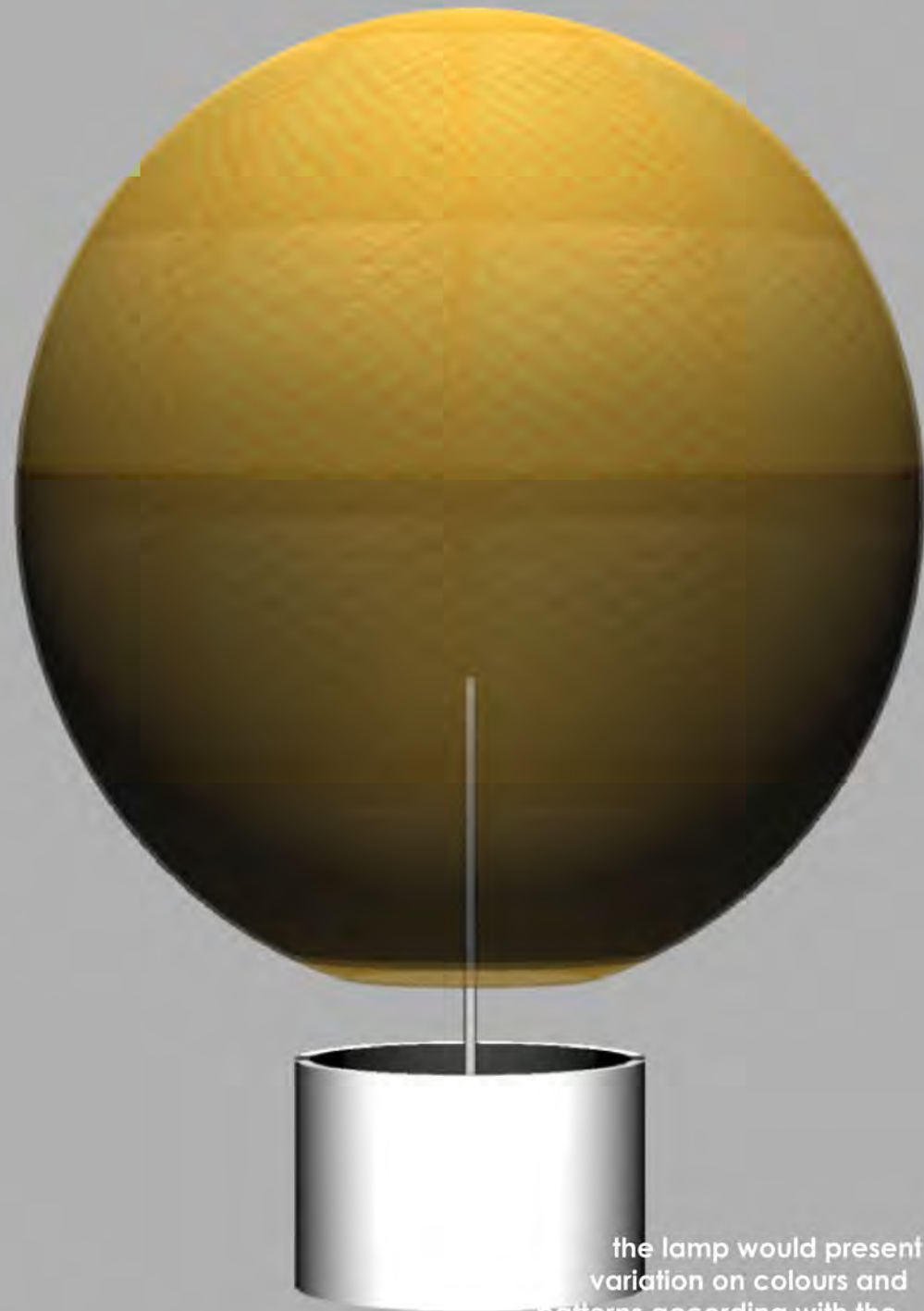
Utilisation of crafter means of production and taking the needs of the user is of great importance for this project.

#### ON ENVIRONMENTAL

Values: this project gets rid completely of the utilisation of new materials by using the ones that are already been used. Heedful processes in this transformation would assure minimum waste and no use of harmful substances.

#### ON ECONOMICAL VALUES

Since this is thought to be a small company based on crafted skills the economical values seem to be good balanced between the manufacturers, the owners and the public.



the lamp would present variation on colours and patterns according with the type of fish used and found in the region.

TEAM C: ALEXANDER ÅSGÅRD

#### REASONS FOR CHOOSING THIS GROUP

This participant was inspired by the brief since the beginning and generated an idea on his mind very fast. Therefore he wanted to prove it and only work on this.

#### CONCEPT

This is a lamp made on a very simple structure; it consists only of a base, wiring and a screen. The selection of materials seems quite interesting because it consists of local materials that might be perceived as waste. The base is made of ceramics and the screen is made of fish skin which is inside-out (the scales facing inwards). When the lamp is turned off it would be of white colour, but when it's turned on the scales of the fish will give it a unique variation of colour.

#### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

This project is thought to be manufactured in small batches and by crafted means, since the fish skin is found mainly in coastal rural areas it is desired to generate cooperation with them.

#### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

An interesting characteristic of this concept is the utilisation of fish skin itself. Since this material is available in many countries due to the fishing industry, it can be manufactured in many places, but it is also true that the type of fish and therefore the patterns and colour of its skin/scales might vary, giving different meanings and characteristics to the same design.

#### ON SOCIAL VALUES

This project is centred on the utilisation of craftsmanship as a manufacturing method. It is also intertwined with other disciplines as fish products and production and includes people like fishermen and fishmongers.

#### ON ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

The main material for this lamp is fish skin, a product that often is considered as waste, often the scales of a fish are discarded and the skin is removed in order to produce fish products. This product offers an interesting option on using a product that often goes to waste.

#### ON ECONOMIC VALUES

This project incentivises other areas of production and industry such as the fishery. If this project establishes efficient cooperation with local and small fishermen it might be a valuable cooperation and source of mutual benefit.





*First workshop on ethics in design, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences.*

*Photo: Wesal Khattak, 2015*

## CONCLUSIONS

This phase was really interesting and very useful insights were collected, one of the interesting findings was that some groups were formed by reasons that don't go along the ones presented in the brief; one group was formed for the premise of the members being women, and the other one for the curiosity of working together. This can be better managed on the brief, maybe putting more emphasis on considering cultural aspects only instead of personal attributes or perceptions.

Another interesting point to highlight is the fact that most attendants felt this first exercise was considerably difficult because of the open approach of it, when there is no pre-set boundaries or expectations, and designers can do everything they want, difficulties might arise and the complexity of the project increases. This can be better understood when the second exercise is explained.

Nevertheless the attendants demonstrated a high level of comprehension and engagement with the tasks and topics displayed. After the brief a small debate was formulated where some attends questioned the differences between the pragmatic and purist approach on ethics in design, this is very interesting because it is possible to see that some designers might have the conception that the only way to address ethics in design is by the purist approach, and on their point of view this doings might 'hinder' or 'slower' the design process itself. It was before explaining that a pragmatic approach can be followed and it is a task of every designer to find where does he/she stands within the purist-pragmatic line that some participants felt more comfortable and started to understand the meaning of the workshop, and at the end developed very interesting results.



*This quick mock-up demonstrates the function of the clock and the use of the hour hand. The magnet goes through the holes simulating a stone trough a surface.*

### 5.2.2 Second Phase Of The Workshop: Working With A Given Example

New groups were formed for this exercise. This time it was more visible that the groups formed represented in a better way the cultural characteristics of the members.

Three groups of two people each were formed.

TEAM A: AUD JULIE BEFRING, ASVEG MARIE JELLSTAD

#### REASONS FOR CHOOSING THIS GROUP

This group was formed on the premise of both members being from the west of the country. As they mentioned, this characteristic was perceived as a good reason to generate a better project since both are related, recognise and understand some aspects they wanted to imprint of their design.

#### CONCEPT

The project developed by this group was a wall clock inspired on the ways the glaciers forms and shapes the rock. Is in the western part of Norway where ice has had more interaction with the landscape and environment, formed intricate forms in the surface of the earth like carvings, patterns, holes, boulders, crevasses and even the fjords. This group took inspiration on how the ice has carved holes on the granite, when rocks enter these holes are grinded by the grit and ice until forming smooth balls of rock.

This clock is made of locally found wood and magnets that work as the hands. These magnets move without any apparent force imitating the rocks going in and out of the stone holes and moving independently trough the environment.

#### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

This project is thought on utilise artisans from the western part of the country to produce it, and since its shapes are very easy it might be possible to manufacture it with a low level of skilfulness and in few time.

#### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

This project is a very good example on how two designers apply a concept that might seem rather abstract, but merely because of their cultural background they fully understand. It might have been difficult for an outsider to analyse and understand the interaction the ice and stone have had in that specific place but they extracted the concept and put it in a product in a very efficient way. This might be because they both have grown with that awareness.

#### REASONS FOR CHOOSING THIS GROUP

The two members of this group were raised and born in eastern Oslo and this characteristic brought them to work together.

#### CONCEPT

This wall clock addresses the cultural considerations of locality in several ways of levels; these levels are stated as following:

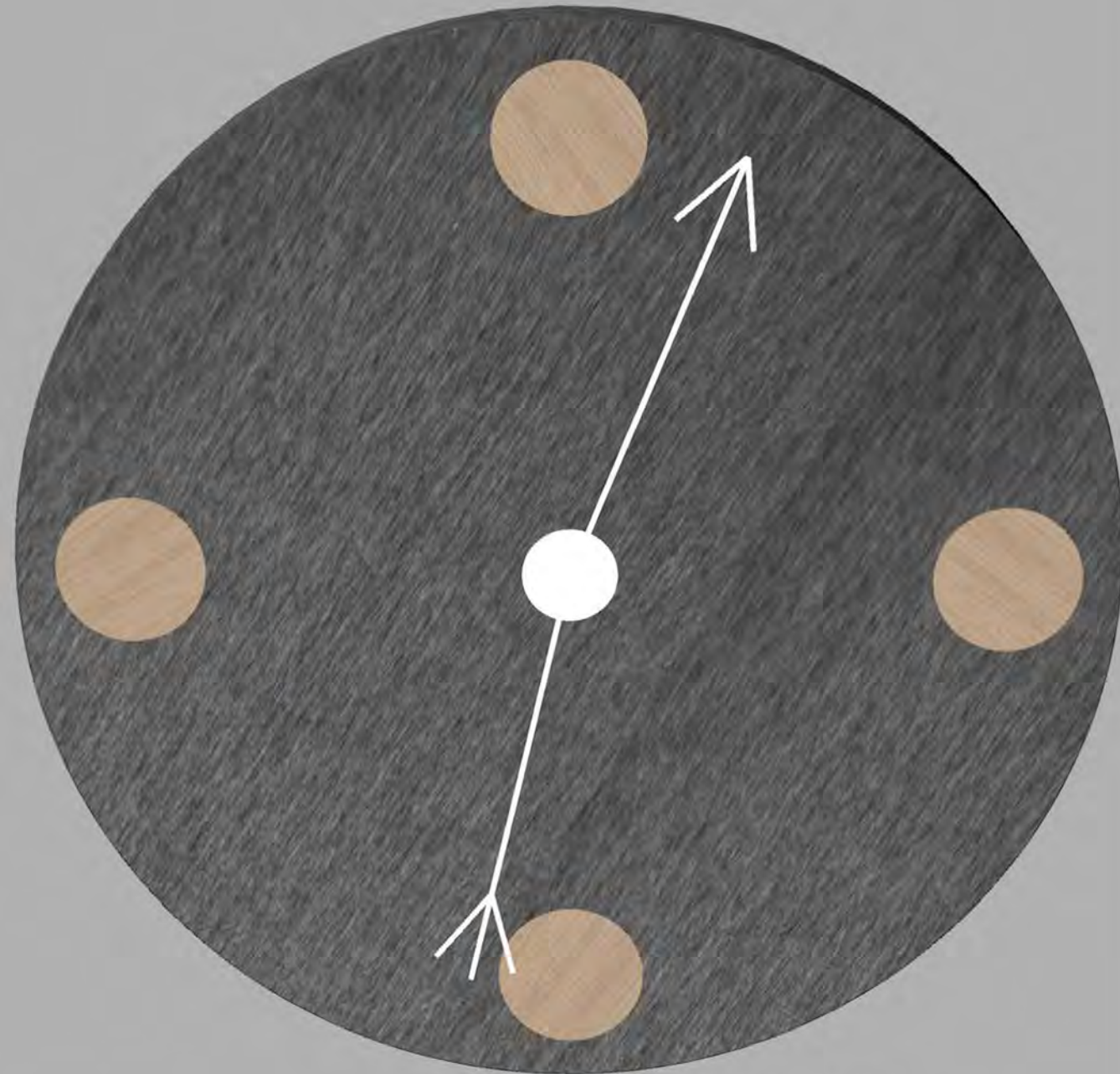
- This clock uses the same materials as the example for its face (wood and stone), but being the main material stone and the details wood (Norwegian black granite instead of Spanish red slate and oak instead of walnut).
- The shape is simplified in order to give a more Nordic look, following modern Nordic design standards.
- This clock looks for inspiration on the runic alphabet used by Norse people instead of the Celtiberic look of the example. Therefore the hands are two different runes, the hour hand is materialised by the rune that represents the sound T for 'time', hour in modern Norwegian. The minute hand is materialised by the rune that represents the sound M for 'minutt', minute in modern Norwegian.
- The name given to this project it's a wordplay itself. 'Urnorsk' means Genuinely Norwegian. However when you separate the word in two, 'Ur' means clock and 'Norsk' means Norwegian, giving also the meaning of 'Norwegian clock'.

#### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

This project is conceived to be produced by crafted means of production and in small batches utilising workforce in Oslo or Oslo area.

#### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

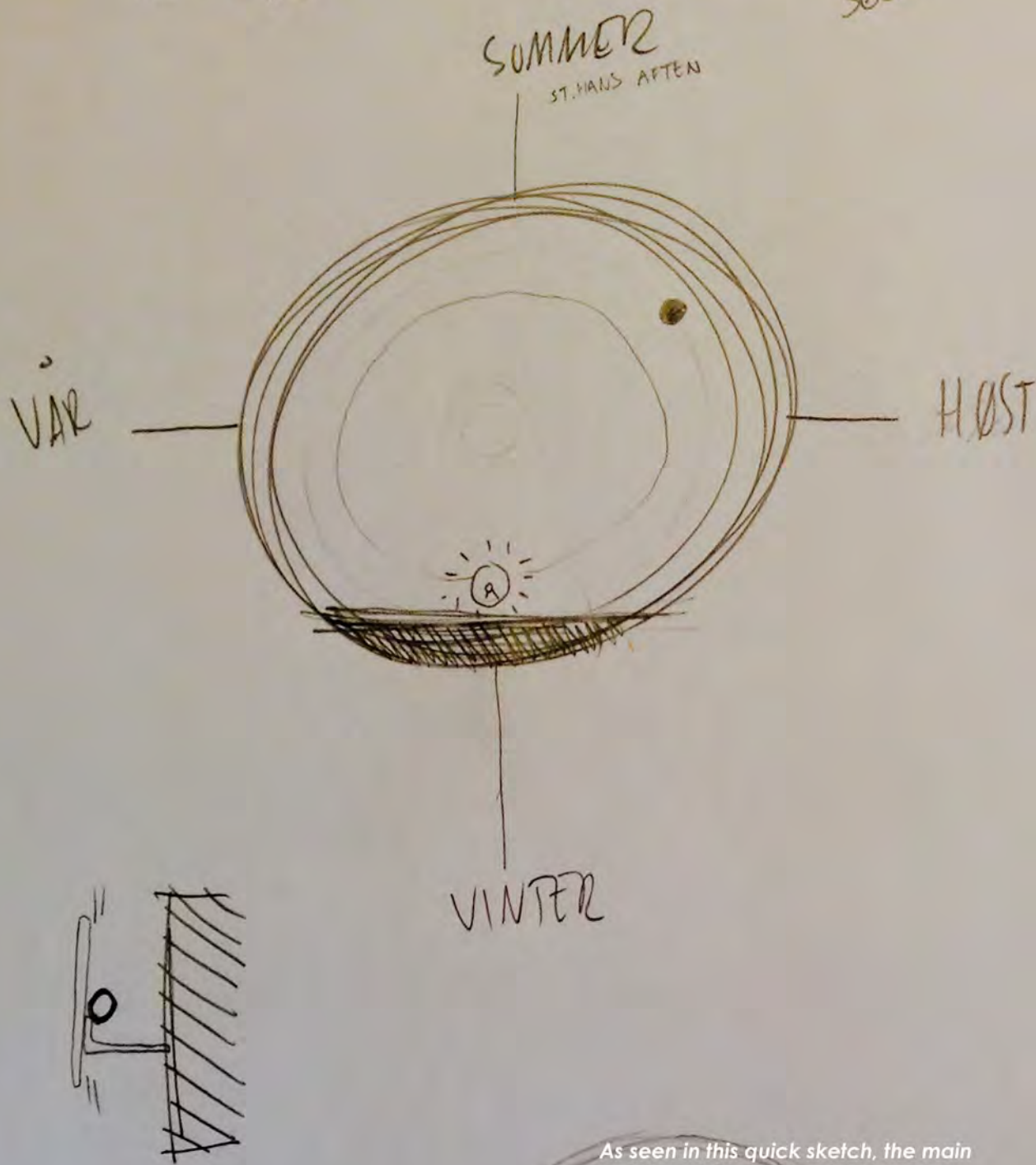
As it can be seen, this project follows really consistently the approach exemplified in the given example, it was very interesting to see how the designers kept almost every aspect of the example (local materials, craftsmanship and inspiration on agent cultures) but made a complete reinterpretation of it using local materials, local workforce, inspiration in local culture and history and even gave it a more 'Nordic' look that might please more the local consumers. As seen this project exemplifies very well the meaning of the workshop. The designers in this team not only fully understood the theory exemplified in the example but were very efficient on imprinting their own identity to it.



*The clock inverts the wood-stone use and simplifies the face and hands to give a more Nordic aesthetic. The hands are extracted from runic writing.*

TID + LYS

365



As seen in this quick sketch, the main function of this clock is to measure the year, seasons and the intervals of light and darkness. The measure of hours is also present but in a lower level of importance and displayed as an additional feature.

TEAM C: SAMAN ALAM, ANDREAS KALLSTAD

#### REASONS FOR CHOOSING THIS GROUP

This team was formed by a couple, even if they are both from eastern Norway, they share a big interest and passion for the northern part of the country, they have lived there for some time, they enjoy and recognise what this special part of the country has to offer. Therefore they dedicated this project to it.

#### CONCEPT

As stated by them, the north is more connected and involved with the periods of light and darkness the seasons provide, people is always enjoying the sun when they have it and missing it when they don't. This project rest on the premise that it is as important to measure the periods of light and darkness as it is to measure hours and minutes, or maybe even more important. Then this clock primarily measures the year, showing were people are in relation of the light and darkness, with this information the designers hope to bring the sense of knowledge to the user and aware if either he/she has to enjoy as much as possible the sun that is soon disappearing, or look forward to see it again because the period of darkness is about to end. This clock also measures hours but as an interesting description, it is not the main goal of the project and it is thought as a secondary feature.

It is of great joy to see that one of the members of this team actually put in practice the results of this exercise and he is implementing them in order to generate material objects on his own master thesis. This detail represents a major success within the implementation of these workshops because it proves the validity of it and demonstrates that useful and relevant ideas can be developed by these means.

#### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

This group focused more on developing the concept so no materials were proposed or selected. Even so they mentioned that since this is a clock designed specially for the people within these latitudes, these people should also create it.

#### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

This project is very interesting because it works with the mind, feelings, hopes and interpretations of a considerably restricted number of people, therefore the concept of locality is extremely present, maybe the premise where this project stands would be completely useless in other places of the earth where light and darkness are reached equally within a 24 hour span. This can be an extremely well exemplified example of design made, manufactured and used for a specialised segment of people within a given geographical region.



*First workshop on ethics in design, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences.*

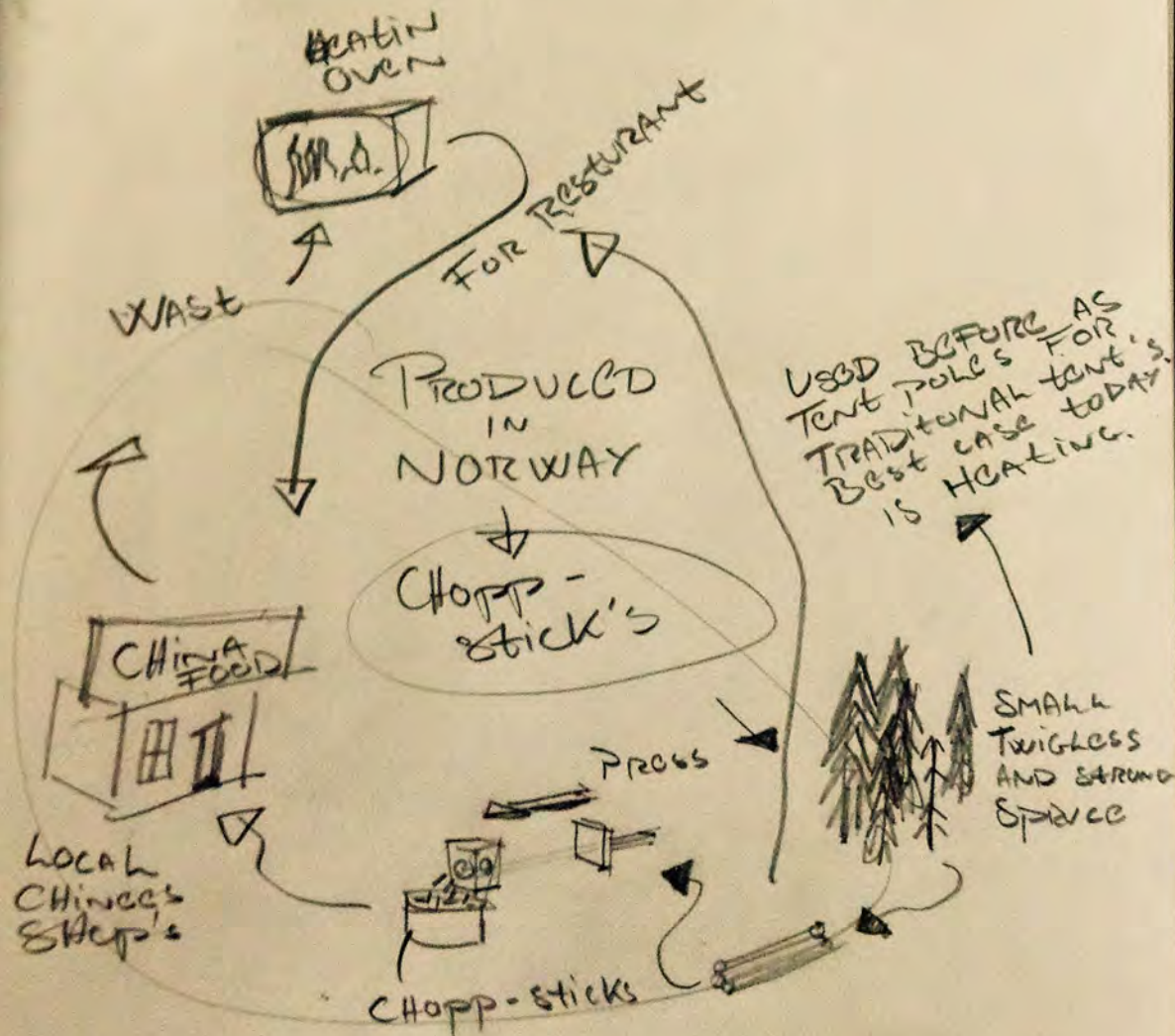
Photo: Andres Caro, 2015

## CONCLUSIONS

As stated by the attendants, this phase was more comfortable and easy to perform, they felt more motivated by working with a given example and then try to modify it or implement it in different scenarios. They also thought that this phase was more interesting and motivating. One thing that is interesting to highlight is that this time the creation of teams was more oriented towards cultural aspects and locality, having one team on which both the members were from the west, another consisted of people from Oslo, and the last one of a couple that share a lot of interests and motivations.

The results are very interesting and show that indeed designers can integrate and work with these theories in order to create useful and feasible solutions, some of the attendants stated that they indeed want to work further with the ideas they created for this workshop. This statement is really important for the workshop because it represents and summarises the importance of it, on not just to be considered as an isolated activity on where designers participate but an actual source of inspiration and work creation where usable ideas can emerge.

## ANDREAS Workshop - Ethical Design



Notes and sketches from the participant.

Photo: Andres Caro del Castillo, 2015

## 5.3 SECOND WORKSHOP SUMMARY

In this chapter and overview of the happenings and finding of the second workshop will be displayed followed by a conclusion in order to condensate the whole idea of this, the second and last session.

### 5.3.1 First Phase Of The Workshop: Working With An Open Assignment

In this occasion the structure of the workshop changed slightly due the number of attendants. No groups were formed but the participants worked by themselves, four persons participated in this phase.

PARTICIPANT A: ISAAC MANNING

#### CONCEPT

This attendant canalised his doings in order to provide an option to utilise waste materials from certain manufacturing process in order to develop utility objects of a small life span. He explains that a lot of waste is made when spruce pines are transformed into wood; a lot of branches and twigs, or even entire trees that didn't grow adequately go to waste when they can be gathered and used to make other by-products like for example disposable chopsticks. Then when these chopsticks are waste again and its short utilitarian life has ended, they can be collected and used as tinder or firewood to warm spaces or cook food. This attendant explains that objects like chopsticks normally end up in landfills as rubbish, and they can be used in some other ways to make the end of it life more useful.

#### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

Since this conception is directed towards industrialised processes it does not offer any insight within these matters.

#### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

This participant explains that oriental restaurants and food had become part of the Norwegian culture, therefore every person its somehow related to this cause. He also explains that it is a possibility to collect the chopsticks of a certain oriental restaurant and then use them there to generate heat or to feed cooking fires.

#### ON SOCIAL VALUES

This example is closely related to preservation of natural environments and reduction of waste, so the enforcement of social values is somehow not very visible, however this project surely speaks about social responsibility and in order to gather "waste" and then use it.

#### ON ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

This project criticise the core of how some manufacturing processes work and how they can be carried in a better way, it provides an option on how to use resources better and how to manage waster on a more optimal way in order to preserve natural environments.

#### ON ECONOMIC VALUES

It is stated that some segments of manufacture will be benefited by the better utilisation of resources, but his option does not provide in-depth insights on how to interact with economic values.

PARTICIPANT B: SUNNIVA MÜNSTER

CONCEPT

This participant felt quite inspired by her own master project, she tried to implement concrete in order to fulfil the previously mentioned values. She then developed a whole array of ideas that could help to generate social integration and consciousness on people. One concept included the idea of creating tiles that imitate the dance steps of different cultures in order to identify patterns, similarities and differences within this manifestation of culture. Another concept was a concrete stool that would imitate the traditional Norwegian "pinnestol" placed on a public space in order to generate social connections and interactions.

For her it was of big importance to integrate social aspects and characteristics into design development as a mean to understand other mind-sets and societies.

LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

Nothing is said about these matters on this proposition.

LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

This idea contains a lot of cultural characteristics imprinted on it, and since it is more a conceptual proposition it attains it on a different level. As stated by the participant, she understands and agrees with the notion that integrating culture in design is essential to make your projects understandable.

ON SOCIAL VALUES

This project prays of a closer connection between individuals from different societies, by enhancing the social aspects this project aims to bring design not only closer to the people but making design a tool to understand different expressions of culture.

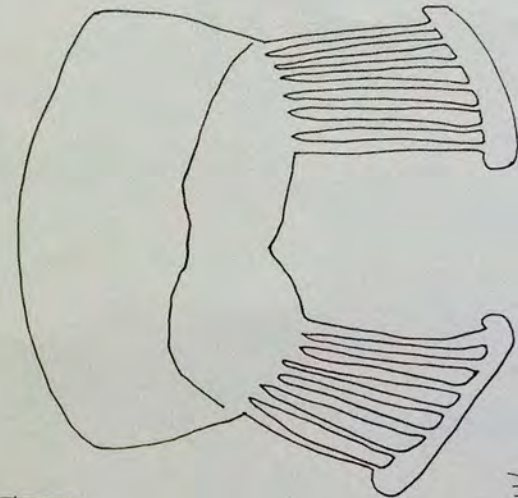
ON ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

This project does not state anything concerning this kind of values or gives any option on how to address them.

ON ECONOMIC VALUES

This project does not state anything concerning this kind of values or gives any option on how to address them.

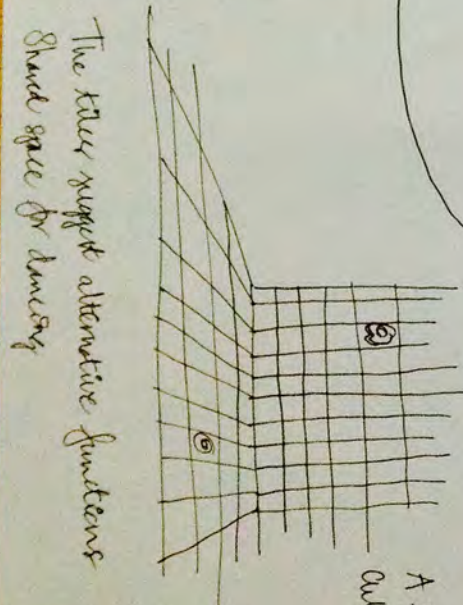
Industrial Factor  
Word  
Word  
Word  
Describe a method  
Material work  
Charitable  
ARTISTS  
Kunsthandwerker  
Word  
Tweelving + Charitable  
Kunststiftung: KAK,  
Scale  
Scale  
Scale  
2K



Concrete 'Pinnestol'  
Norwegian chair  
Archetype

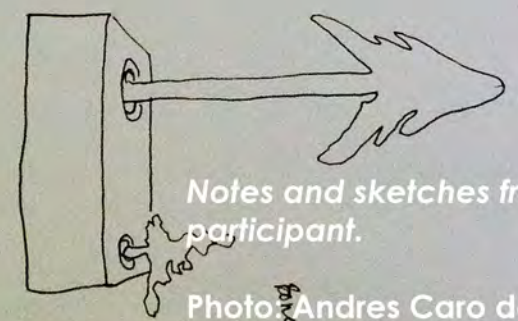
How can design in concrete be used to comment on social, environmental & economical values

Q: How can concrete design objects for public space be used to comment on social, environmental & economical values?



The tiles suggest alternative functions  
Shared space for dancing

A bench that unites cultures



Notes and sketches from the participant.

Photo: Andres Caro del Castillo, 2015

National Dance - Tlesystem  
Hallingdansen  
Visiting people from different cultures

PARTICIPANT C: SVERRE WIM BERG

CONCEPT

This participant canalised its project in order to develop a product that would contain no petroleum on its elaboration, relying instead on materials exploited on the industrial revolution like aluminium and steel. The way this attendant tackled the issue of locality is by implementing local and traditional Norwegian materials as wood, slate and stone.

For him the help that machinery gives to production was extremely important and he prayed for a crafted way of distribution and consumption but with a high level of automation and mechanical aid, he stated that technology should be highly implemented on manufacturing processes but more as a helper of the operative rather than a mean of enrichment.

LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

Crafted means of distribution, supply and purchase are desirable but he prays more for a craftsman highly aided by the machine instead of by the manual skilfulness of its intrinsic activity.

LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

He mentions that the machine and the industrialisation of labour are indeed imbedded characteristics of society and should remind that way.

ON SOCIAL VALUES

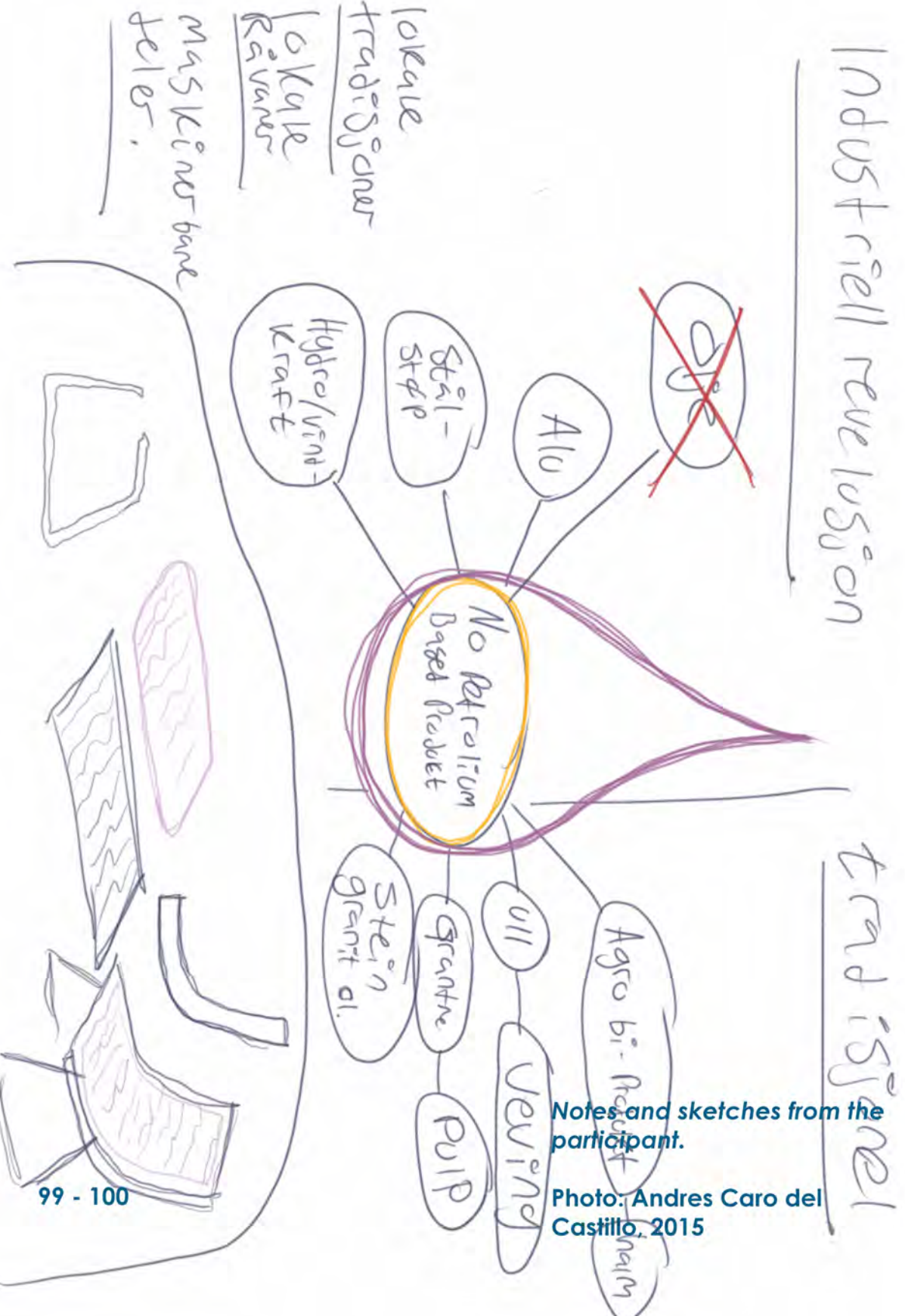
This concept does not offer insights regarding this section.

ON ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

Since local production and small scale distribution is desired, long and buy supply chains and shipping would be eliminated.

ON ECONOMIC VALUES

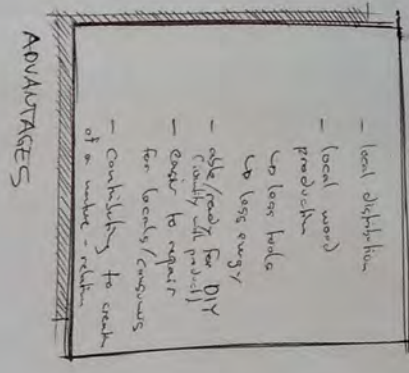
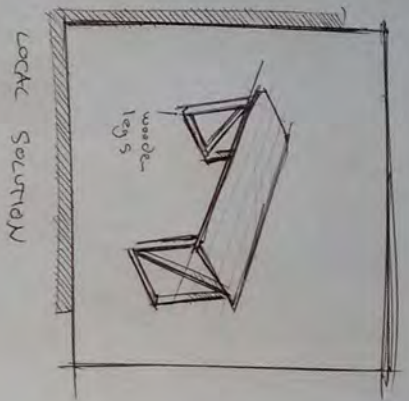
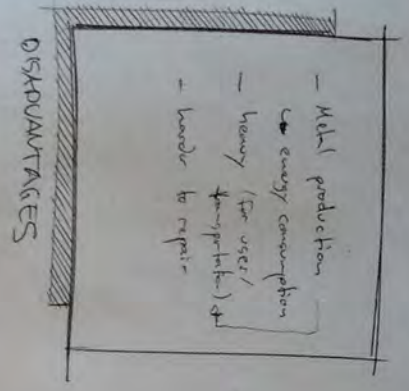
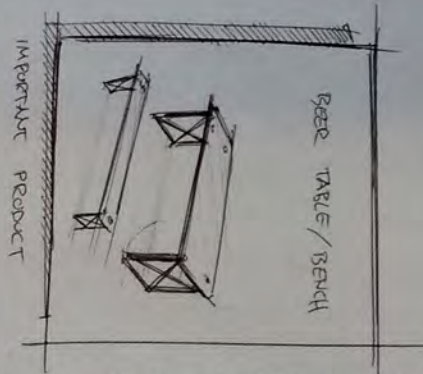
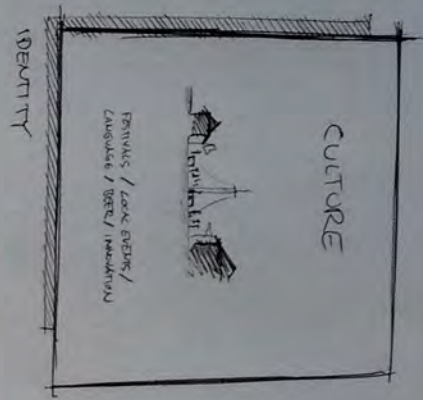
A very interesting aspect of this project lays in the premise to combine high level of industrialisation with fair economical distribution, taking technology as a true and actual helper of the operative instead just incentivise a financial end.





# ETHICAL DESIGN

VALUES  
SOCIETY/ENVIRONMENTAL/ECONOMICAL



## PARTICIPANT D: STEFFEN WEISS

### CONCEPT

This participant is German and therefore he addresses the whole development of ideation towards his own country. He states that Germany is a populated country and therefore has a lot of production, he also mentions that Germany has a lot of cultures within the country itself because it is formed by a conglomerate of many small nations, but one aspect that they all share is the love for beer and the gathering and interaction that this cultural expression drags with it. He explains that the beer table is a big example of German culture, mean of communication, gathering, and sharing. Therefore he utilises this piece of furniture as the center point of his project, aiming for a way to make it more environmental and easy to use on a regular basis.

### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

He states that the woodwork in Germany is something common and there are a lot of wood workshops all over the place that offer different products. He wants to use these wood workshops not only to fabricate the beer tables but to give them maintenance and care.

### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

Since this project is centred on a piece of furniture that is completely related to cultural expressions and that generate social interaction this point is well sustained, he aims to preserve these expressions and make the means of it more easy to find and use.

### ON SOCIAL VALUES

He adds that the manufacturing of these beer tables is normally held on a traditional way but sometimes the maintenance of it and reparation is not, so he prays for more involvement on craftsmanship regarding those matters.

### ON ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES

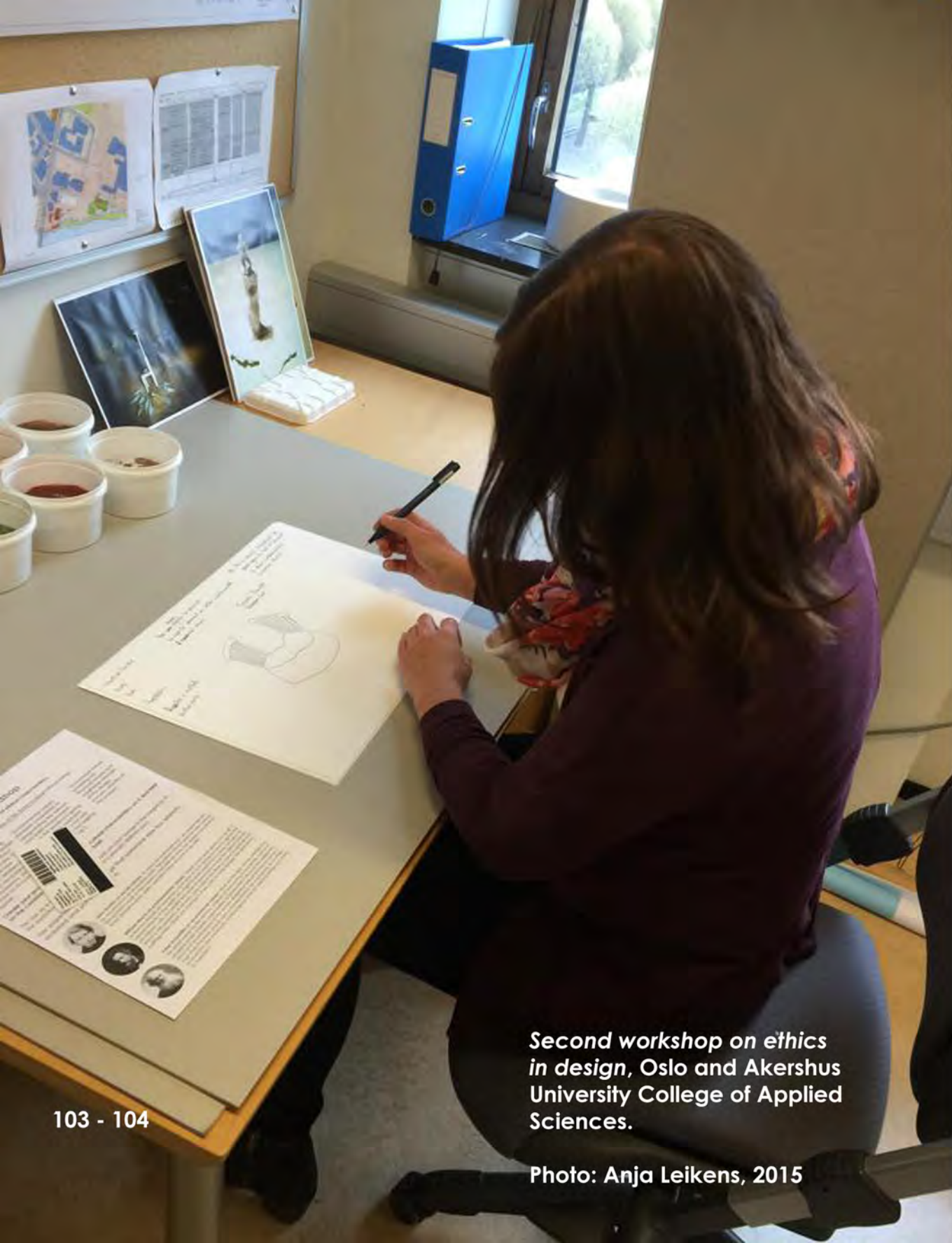
He also mentions that these tables are made of several materials, sometimes plastic, metal and wood can be found in one table, if this product could reduce the amount of different materials that can be found on it, a better environmental impact could be achieved.

### ON ECONOMIC VALUES

No insights are displayed regarding this level.

Notes and sketches from the participant.

Photo: Andres Caro del Castillo, 2015



*Second workshop on ethics  
in design, Oslo and Akershus  
University College of Applied  
Sciences.*

*Photo: Anja Leikens, 2015*

## CONCLUSIONS

This workshop session encountered some interesting characteristics. It was easy to perceive that there is a substantial difference between the way bachelor and master students perceive the theory presented and then the way they used. This time, being mainly bachelor students, less discussion, formulation of questions and dialogue was created, the attendants were more focused on taking the brief as a "lecture" instead as a forum for open dialogue and discussion (even if it was stated in the beginning that they should feel free to do so).. It is also important to highlight the fact that less "objects" were developed this time, instead the attendants focused more on the generation of systems and methodology to solve problems. Overall the workshop went on a smooth manner and the participants felt interested by the topic, but also stated that the complexity of them was high.

### 5.2.2 Second Phase Of The Workshop: Working With A Given Example

in this session it was not possible to generate groups due the number of attendants. Even that four persons attended the brief and the first phase of the workshop, only two could stay for this phase, apparently because they had to perform some other activities.

PARTICIPANT A: SVERRE WIM BERG

#### CONCEPT

This participant generated a clock inspired on the traditional Norwegian costume Bunad. He generated a generic body made of Norwegian black slate, which is a widely used material and very available across the country. Then the differentiation would emerge in the decoration of the clock and on both the hands. He took help and inspiration on the fact that each community of the country possesses a distinguishing Bunad, then the user could acquire the specific decoration that would make the clock suit the owner's location or the place he/she is from. These pieces of decoration can be put in an out to make a wide number of possible combinations and also to suit a wide range of demands. He also mentioned the possibility to make the hands and the decoration in typical Bunad materials, which are most of the time found locally.

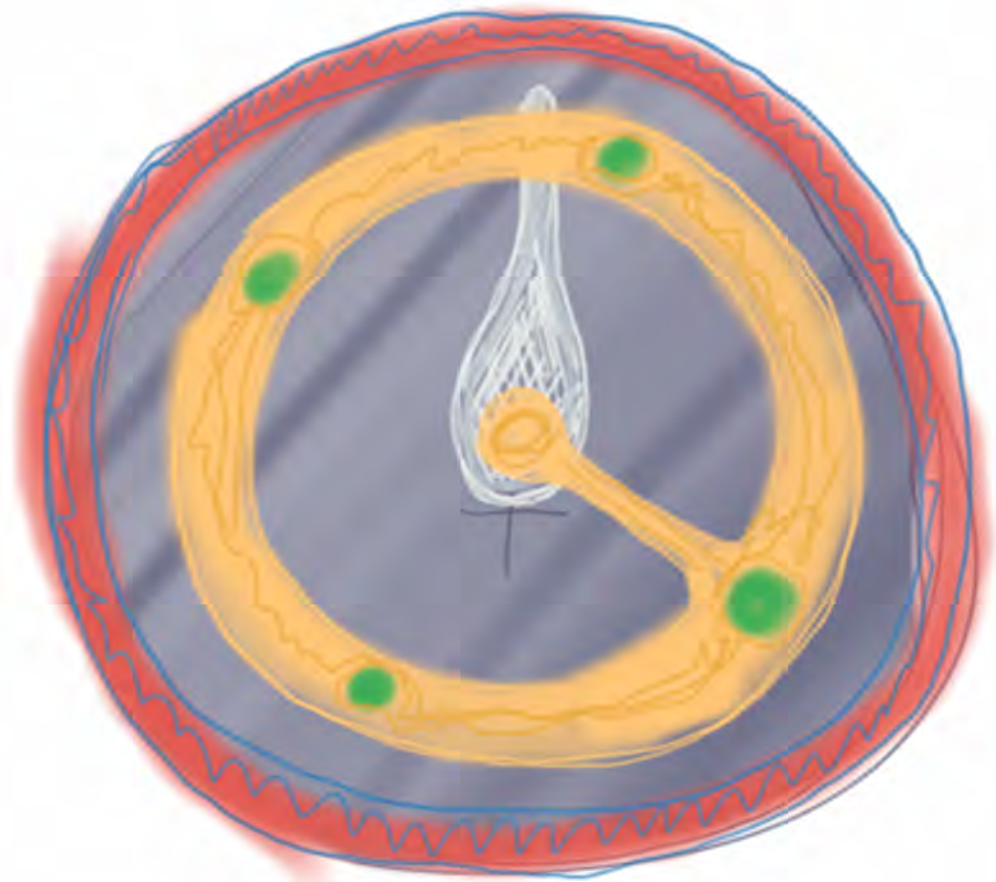
This project pretends to generate connection with the potential user in the mean that he/she could customise his/her clock to match his/her own Bunad.

#### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

Since the Bunad itself is made on a very traditional way, this clock is meant to utilise the skills of the Bunad makers as well as slate artisans.

#### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

This project is a good example on how to integrate deep cultural manifestations into a design project. It is a certainty that this product is mainly thought to supply Norwegian customers and Norwegian markets, and that is why the concept of locality is well addressed. This project not only utilises cultural connections to generate likeness but also incentivises and enhances a cultural manifestation consistently rooted in the country.



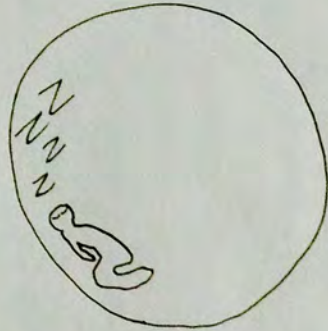
*Notes and sketches from the participant.*

Photo: Andres Caro del Castillo, 2015

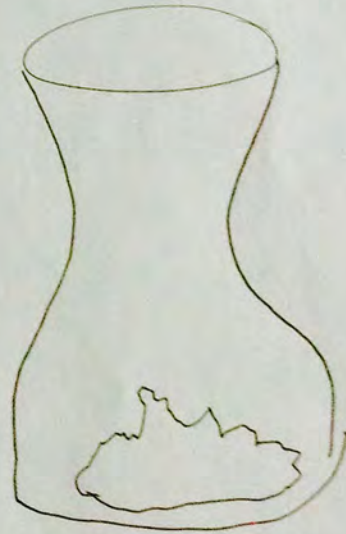
# Clock

Based on weather  
social situations  
rituals

Mood - Clock  
Biological Clock  
Season Clock  
Cultural Clock



Different for each  
culture, ie Siesta



Timeglass

Cultural Differences

CONCEPTUAL MATERIAL

Notes and sketches from the  
participant.

Photo: Andres Caro del  
Castillo, 2015

## PARTICIPANT B: SUNNIVA MÜNSTER

### CONCEPT

This participant created a clock that displays cultural moods, timetables and activities. She explains that some activities have different schedules in different countries and cultures, like for example the time when dinner/breakfast is served and the duration of it, nap times, working hours and time go sleep/wake up. Then this clock would exemplify those differences as a way to understand and analyse how people from other cultures perceive the entire day. It is intended that this might create more interest and understanding between individuals from different backgrounds.

### LEVEL 1: CRAFTSMANSHIP

Nothing regarding these aspects is given by this project.

### LEVEL 2: CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

As stated earlier this project aims on generating understanding and comprehension by contemplating how other people organise and plan their day based on specific societal and cultural norms. This is a good example to bring culture and cultural understanding to the people no matter their personal or individual background.



CONCLUSIONS

It is possible to distinguish differences on the way bachelor and master students conceptualise ideas and implement them to generate solutions. This time the attendants demonstrated a higher degree of uncertainty and commented that the level of complexity on this exercise was still significantly high. Nevertheless very interesting concepts emerged and both participants felt satisfied and content with their results and contributions. It is interesting to see that, since one participant was from the first year bachelor and the other one from the second year master, very different propositions emerged, that pointed towards very different areas and acted on very different levels. The first example acts on a very material level, taking help of very visible and tangible cultural expressions, taking them and then re-interpreting them to then be imprinted on a new object. The second example plays on a more abstract form and its related to societal forms and intangible cultural manifestations, its aim does not rest on the mere premise to create an object but to create a mean of understanding and communication.



Notes and sketches from the participant.

Photo: Andres Caro del Castillo, 2015

## 5.4 ABOUT THE OBJECT DEVELOPED AS AN EXAMPLE

The theoretical background of this object lays its foundations on the aim to manufacture, distribute and utilise goods in reduced environments and local markets. With this is desired that people as consumers would find help on local workmen, local manufacturing processes and local materials to generate products with high aesthetical value.

### 5.4.1 Concept

It is a wall clock with three main parts: body, minute hand and hour hand. The selection of materials follows a study that proof those are widely used and available on western Spain. The face of the clock is made in walnut wood, the markings for the hours and minutes are made in red slate (Pizarras del Ladrillar, Caceres, Extremadura). Both materials are widely found in the regions of Caceres and Badajoz. Both hands are made in matte-finish bronze; the availability of this resource is also at hand.

Also follows some manufacturing process that can be commonly found in the region; the craft of working with bronze and other malleable metals is widely spread in western and northern Spain and its normally taken to generate ornamental objects. The shapes and details of the clock are inspired in the Celtiberic cultures that inhabited the western part of the Peninsula before the Roman era

### 5.4.2 Source of Inspiration: The Celtiberic Culture

Spanish design has experienced an impressive development in the past two decades (Fajardo, 2008) and nowadays is considered as one of the countries that contribute the most regarding design, architectural development and innovation. Saying this, it is important to mention that inspiration has come from many angles and sources, some individuals have looked into the future to search for inspiration and some others in the past. This object that was generated in order to illustrate how the theory can coexist on a physical form took inspiration on a specific segment of the Spanish culture where history and geography meet together to bring relevance and aesthetical shape to the doings of the present.

The Celtic and Celtiberic people that inhabited the Iberian Peninsula during the Bronze Age and before the Roman period, contributed on an important matter to shape the cultural and artistic identity of the western and northern part of the country (Stierlin, 1984). The Vettons and Lusitanians inhabited the current provinces of Avila, Caceres, Salamanca, Zamora, Toledo, Segovia and eastern parts of Portugal. They generated a craft with metals and with stone between 2000 and 1000 BC. They developed rich pieces of ornamentation and sculptured idols that probably served as a mean to worship their gods (Stierlin, 1984).



**Physical object developed as an example for the workshop sessions.**



*Celtic torc in twisted silver,  
Carrion river basin, Palencia,  
Spain.*

*National Archaeological  
Museum, Madrid*

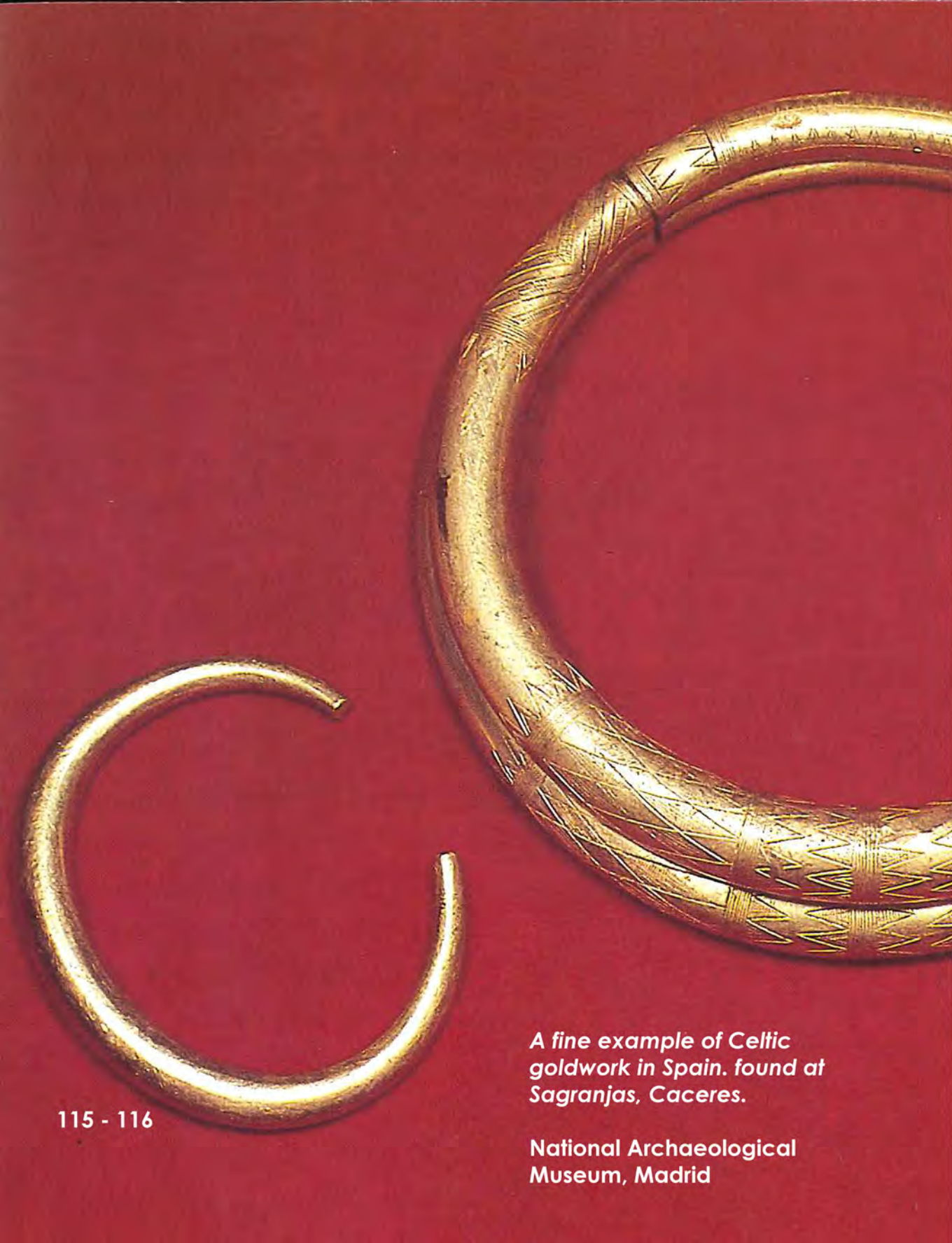
Not only these cultures mastered the fine craft of metal smith and small scale stonework, they also developed monumental sculpture and architecture, represented by dolmens that still can be seen on the rural landscape, funerary complexes in the form of tombs and caves, and the interesting and mysterious Verracos the Piedra; big stone megalithic monuments sculptured in the shape of animals such as bulls, boars and bears that can still be found interred throughout the vast countryside of the north-west, nowadays over 400 have been found.

#### **5.4.3 Level 1: Craftsmanship**

A production system that would take in greater consideration the resources of craftsmanship would also be benefited by the reduction of transportation, distribution, shipping, retail, and therefore intermediaries (Reid, 1986). If all these activities are cut off or reduced, it would be possible to talk about a simple and lean way to address a design process, by pursuing not only the abstraction of the form but the abstraction of the conception and formulation of the project itself. In addition, a re-consideration on the crafted means of production could contribute on bringing a critical viewpoint on designers about their own role on putting yet another product out there (Fry, 2009). This might be relevant in a world where day by day more and more products are fabricated with the finality of be sold in as many numbers as possible and in as many markets as there exist (Papanek, 1985). Finally, it seems natural and relevant that a systematic enhancing on the work made by hand, can be an important source on addressing ethical social circumstances to the design process. If a designer is aware and integrates on his/her doings not only the individuals who are going to purchase and utilise the outcome, but the ones that are going to physically fabricated, a true sense of ethical sense can emerge.

#### **5.4.4 Level 2: Cultural Sustainability**

The idea of simplicity and abstraction of the forms, as in the words of less material used, simpler forms, simpler lines, less combination of materials, less colours, less textures, simpler and more efficient ways of production, less processes. The sense of simplicity and abstraction that Modernism proposed can be used in order to confer fewer processes to products, therefore a saving and reduction on materials used, save of energy, time an human resources since simpler and less "elaborate" forms and figures require less of all these characteristics. Therefore, as following this idea of abstraction; it might be possible to include other novel characteristics like less distribution, less logistics, less shipping, distribution, retail and supply (Morris, 1911) (Kropotkin, 1906) (Papanek, 1985). It might be important to mention that with this its not meant to propose that the globalising tendencies would stop to supply goods from one side of the world to another, rather this work prays for a reduction or a systematic change on the way this is performed nowadays. Research has proved these characteristics are sustainable, and an ethical pathway of producing products (Thorpe, 2007).



*A fine example of Celtic goldwork in Spain. found at Sagrañas, Cáceres.*

National Archaeological Museum, Madrid

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## 5.5 FINAL COMMENTS REGARDING THE WORKSHOPS

This process of generating and implementing the workshops was certainly an experience of big learning. It was very encouraging to see the things the attendants developed and it was motivating to see tangible results out of the theory that as been previously developed. A feeling of gratefulness was developed towards the people that took the time to assist to these sessions, hoping that the utmost result and wish of them, which is the mutual learning, could be fulfilled. These to workshops, even if they were indeed very relevant for this specific project, need to be implemented in bigger scale, with more participants and with more time in order to extract better knowledge, the amount of workshop, the duration of them and the results retrieved are a reflection of the project itself and its boundaries concerning time, resources and reach. One thing that I have stated before and I will state again, is the big difficulty that recruit attendants represented; in the first session, more than fifty people were personally invited, being the total attendance of seven, in the second session personal and email invitations were performed/sent to more tan forty five, being four the final number of attendants. This phenomenon is worth be analysed as well and it might be a good opportunity for further research. Nevertheless the project was appropriately enhanced by the actual attendants and can be considered a success.





Sogn og Fjordane, Norway.

Photo: Aud Julie Befring, 2014

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

### A STEP BACK

This project has signified a step on a long and rewarding journey. Surely this whole project didn't start this semester as the Master thesis and it is strongly desired that it would continue after it. Saying this it may be possible to infer that one semester duration of this Master project is merely a phase or a step on this whole big project that tries to bring ethics into the doings of designers. Talking about the past, and as stated earlier, a lot of the work displayed in this thesis was developed throughout the whole duration of the Master program, and these six months served on a big manner as a catalyst or a tool to merge everything on an appropriate and coherent way.

### A STEP UP

It is enormously encouraging to see that the very foundation of this thesis is in fact knowledge already spread and published. By the mean that two articles are published on design and education-related journals, and a third one is on a very good way to it, gives proof and validity of the relevance of these topics. Two of these three papers have been exposed on international conferences generating very interesting discussions and exchange of ideas. With these doings this thesis is accomplishing one of its most important aims which is the generation of useful and novel knowledge and consequently its spread and diffusion within relevant spheres. It was of necessary importance for this project not only to lay as a scholar assignment but really push the boundaries, go outside the classroom and try its validity in the actual academic word, as some fellow students have attended to expositions/ exhibitions to show their products in the form of objects to the world, so am I have taken my products in the form of scientific articles and display them to the world, on a very different context, but a one that possesses the same amount of relevance.



Caceres, Extremadura,  
Spain

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2012

#### A STEP DOWN

However not everything has been a downhill journey, important challenges and difficulties have been experienced through the development of this thesis. Maybe one of the most important ones and certainly one of the most visible ones emerged while trying to impart the workshops to design students. A lack of interest and seriousness is highly visible and present when trying to recruit attendants. As stated earlier more than 110 students were personally invited and reminded by mail, being only 10 the total amount of attendants of the two workshops, even if some of them confirmed their attendance, but never showed up. This indeed creates demotivation and frustration, firstly because planning and generating workshop sessions is time consuming and requires an important amount of work, and secondly because somehow infers that students don't feel motivated or interested on these topics. Some instances on this Institution comprehended the relevance of this kind of topics and helped me on a great manner spreading the invitation through the students and promoting my activities, and felt as well concerned and (as stated by them) somehow sad because of the low response from the students.

This peculiar phenomenon deserves further research and has to be taken into important consideration. It might be that if students were put in contact with these kinds of topics from much earlier stages, they would understand them better and feel them more as familiar, and not as an abstract concept on which they have no connection or familiarity.

#### A STEP FORWARD

Further work and research is highly desired and at some point needed for this project, as stated earlier there is still a big area for further development regarding these topics. One way to keep this study further is by develop cooperative research with other Universities, Research institutions, professionals or experts. As the concept of locality has taken in account the countries of Norway and Spain, it would be relevant to perform cooperation with Spanish research institutions and Universities. It is believed that both geographical zones have a lot to share, learn and reflect upon each other.

Also is highly desired that this project could be taken further and be considered as or a part of a PhD programme. This way more time and resources would be given to the project in order to bring its capabilities and potential to a higher level.

Another way to give continuity to this work is by trying it on a more practical environment; if a design organisation would embrace this project and implement these doings on its design strategies, a great achievement would be reached. The Oslo based, not-profit organisation Design Without Borders has taken interest on this project and dialogue has started to see how these theories can be implemented on their doings in order to generate more ethically oriented design development. With this, the pragmatic orientation of the project would be enormously enriched and enhanced.



**Lillehammer, Oppland,  
Norway.**

**Photo: Andres Caro del  
Castillo, 2014**

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Local flora, Extremadura,  
Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2012

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Caceres, Extremadura,  
Spain.

Photo: Manolo Vega, 2012

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