ADVANCED RESILIENT PRACTICES: DEMYTHOLOGIZING DESIGN HERITAGE

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ABSTRACT

This paper presents an international research, exhibition and forum project that has been developing since 2016. The project aims to demythologize design's consumerist Utopias and sectoral hierarchies as a series of temporary artistic and design interventions. By socio-historical analysis of politics of design, the project involves blurring the borders between exhibition, archival display, and action research. This involves pushing forward Pratt's "contact zone" as a technological site of embodied advanced practice of design critique together with the exercise of dissent foregrounding ecology of practices.

The present paper focuses on the project's methods and research outcome concerning the case of Finnish design and its post-war mythologization. With a method of revealing the precise emergence of sectoral myths, the project represents how consumers and designers who foster modes of resistance to ruling privileges and hierarchies, can be provided with care.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we aim to disseminate the theoretical grounding and methodological approach of the "Every Straight Line Bends by its own Weight"[1] project within the context of "care". The paper is confined with the Finnish design context which constitutes a certain section of the project that also extends to Italian and Turkish contexts. The paper's focus is laid on the project's initial aim that is the critical socio-historical analysis of the Finnish design mythology and questioning of present sectoral structures. Our understanding of mythologies specifically involves myths' foundational role concerning power related themes in design sectors such as status positions, actor roles, policy making and gate keeping. This role bears the potential to reveal how current sectoral powers and influences have become established and authorized in discursive forms as historical constructs. In the bodies of thought and practice of design, sectoral powers spawn a variety of structures from foundational individuals and institutions to archives and collections as well as to concepts and conventions in design. As all these interrelated structures shape the design discourse (including deeper patterns of attitude and behaviour, ways of thinking and acting, as well as regulatory and organizational frameworks), it is a difficult task to rethink designer roles or power positions liberated

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from the historical interplay of epistemological and hierarchical patterns of dominant discourses.

Despite the difficulty, such a liberation may mean care for subaltern characters in dominant discourses. A method for this difficult task could be dismantling of myths that justify the very foundations of design's sectoral network of thought and practice. It is argued in this paper that dismantling of myths can contribute to the questioning of any sectoral authority and prompt challenges to normative, conformist or hierarchical viewpoints and meanings in design.

In the context of Scandinavian design, stressing the "corrective" role of "alternative histories", Fallan (2012:1) argues that powerful mythologies, constructed by "marketers, promoters and historians alike", provide a "severely distorted image" of the regional design concept. The problem addresses not only stereotypical accounts and images of Scandinavian design history, but also points to the constructed realities of mythologies that swallow up counter narratives. The insight that underlies the argument here is that raising the voice of alternatives in history can prompt objections to discursive restrictions which manifest how design or designer should be like in a given context. For the benefit of this paper, this does not only concern strands of design historicism, but rather it involves implications on the current articulation of power positions in design and perhaps in general culture politics. Hence, what the term care addresses in this paper involves those who are affected by the execution of power and its certain kinds of knowledge irrespective whether they are designers, design managers or just consumers.

What is the role of mythology analysis in the provision of care then? Normative manifestations that seem to belong to the natural order, incorporate politically-privileged actor positions who execute deliberate choices of including and allowing, or excluding and refusing certain characteristics, voices and policies. Hence, decisions and choices made by powerful actors impose implications on the production of design discourse. Perhaps more particularly, design's sectoral constellations of interest are constructed selectively that compose knowledge and operate power by privileging manifestations instrumental to the market. Despite this gatekeeping role, such foundational and authoritarian structures' dominance or pervasion is likely to escape critical view. This is the moment where mythologies enter the stage, as they may account for this oblivion. Master narratives justify and appropriate the structures that envelope design in totality. By extension, myths can be linked to inertia, secured power positions and privileges in design sectors. This research's practical approach to demythologization resources on the notion of operative criticism that Manfredo Tafuri (1987) proposed for addressing historiography as a dialectical scientific project rather than a stratification of disciplines. The scientific notion is here referred as an intersection of two understandings. First, the Marxist underlining of an impossible neutrality within history as a social-scientific inconclusive project. Second, a recovery of the interdependent relation between *episteme* and *techne*; oppositional to the idealist tendency of establishing a subordinated hierarchy of craft towards science from which modern capitalism profits by pushing forward a one-dimensional conception of industrial progress: naturalization of business over estrangement of ecology.

An operative criticism grounds the Barthesian criticism towards bourgeois myths implying that mythical *signification* depoliticizes existing power relations and renders them "natural" even though these relations are the very products of the chain of artificial and political processes (Barthes 2000).

Barthes' approach can be read as an actualization in cultural analysis of Gramsci's (2000) theory of hegemony; as both assert the seizure of powers to be the operative function of radical critique. The authors of this paper acknowledge the revolutionary potential as a necessity within design to expand the democratization in means of production and

reproduction. Moreover, a contemporary analysis of this theory is required to temporary deviate its focuses from the rhetoric of governance —to move away from the classical notion of hegemony – and to engage with a multidimensional understanding of the limits of technology as a social capacity of caring. For this, a necessary demarcation separates revolutionary potential in design technology from the jaws of Fordism and Alter-Fordism that rely on a tacit dependency of industrial development on warfare economy. This aims to build an alternative understanding of design's *techne* as an embodied advanced practice of critique and a tool for the proliferation of ecologies of practices (see De La Cadena 2015).

In this context, demythologization can serve as a start point for mobilizing epistemic disobedience. This may include challenging whatever that looks natural (*i.e.* constructed privileges), and factual (*i.e.* power positions), in the sectoral structures of design as discipline. As well, it can mobilize the politics of the possible in design as a practice of imagination. Further, it may offer a possibility for expanding the imagination of design's limits of resonance and action to reconsider the urgency of othered knowledges and countercultural positions that remain "off-strategy" in the strands of current design politics, thought and practice. This embraces knowledges that contribute to the imagination and realization of non-capitalist, non-dominant futures.

MYTHS

For the benefit of this paper, contemporary myths may be conceived from two angles. The first is theorized by consumer research and marketing disciplines that are driven from Humanism studies' conceptualization of myths' in terms of serving formalizing and unifying function in great socio-cultural mechanisms (see Campbell 2008). This angle focuses on how such a function can be commercially exploited by media and business. A myth, in this realm, is roughly a symbolic story with core references to widely shared values in a society. Through their story

line, myths establish connection between the general accounts of life, ideas and the physical world. This serves social order by authorizing social codes and values in the collective mind of populations (Arnould *et al.* 2005). Such a social function is celebrated as a channel and platform for building consumer relations and commercial gain. This view does not hesitate to connect myths to ideologies in terms of narration and communication of ideological manifestations. An ideology is defined by Holt and Cameron (2010: 174-175) as "cultural constructs" that are "widely shared and taken for granted, naturalized" by populations as "truth". The mediation of truth, in this theory, functions as a compass point for social life where the everyday is constructed by masses collectively. The sense of truth becomes obfuscated by an imposition of master categories of meaning making. Degrees of impact of truth as collectively constructed registers of an event, are semantically filtrated according to how well these registers reproduce the dominant values. The role of a myth is the dramatization of truth which is a crucial process for ideological metaphysical concepts to "enter culture".

Beside the business-led theorizations that focus on the instrumentality of myths, the second angle highlights myths' harmful side. For example, Mead's theory of time (1932) provides a useful explication of the mythical dimension of the past. As conceptualized by Maines *et al.* (1983: 164) in a model of sociological import of Mead's theory, *the mythical past* refers to "symbolic creations" of the past that can be exploited by certain identifiable groups or authorities to manipulate present social behaviour for purposes of building privileged positions in society or securing structural interests in power relations. Myths are manipulative in "official legitimation systems" as "authorities who resist change, or who unilaterally attempt to create change, construct elaborate ideologies through the use of a mythical past" (Maines *et al.* 1983: 168).

It is important to note however, that myths' business value is driven from their fabrication

of the past. The study by Hudson and Balmer (2013: 351), founded on the sociological model by Maines *et al.,* for example, addresses how myths help brands extend their commercial muscles by creating idealised versions of corporate brand heritage. Fictitious pasts are translated into "projection or escape of consumers into imaginary worlds that relate to the brand" in consumerist contexts.

For a deconstruction of consumerist approaches, our project focuses on the harmful side of myths, especially on their naturalization effect serving powerful interests or hegemony by masking them. Barthes theorizes mythologies as a "type of speech" that goes beyond the content of the message.[2] For Barthes (2000: 129), "the very principal of myth" is the transformation of "history" into "nature" where the "motive" behind a myth is depoliticized and turned to a justifying "reason".

A series of distinctions between myths, metaphors, and fictions would be pertinent here. For the moment, without a deep elaboration into their particular distinctions in relation to their social function, a summarized argument can be proposed as the following. A myth tends to produce true conformism with a metaphysical explanation to the question of why something happens, ultimately responded as "because god wants it", or "because it is the way it is supposed to be". On the contrary, metaphors —as figures of speech– do not replace epistemological processes with ontological explanations, as they do not provide an ultimate answer, and rather render the degrees of subjectivity in epistemology tangible. Fiction has a different capacity. The fracture of temporality in the signification of experience functions as parallax presented always in reference to common sense, as a fugitive yet dependent relation to the lived reality able to trigger a complicit doubt, and — as for example in science-fiction– a social critique that is not solely literary.

If we apply this mode of operation to design's sectoral interests, we may assume that myths impose a similar depoliticization where sectoral interests that form discourses, appear neutral, and where subaltern actors become de-historicised.

Informed by this and endowed with the aim of challenging the constructed realities of design mythologies, our project's methodology involves historical research, exhibition, and forum that allow the research material to be seen, discussed and debated. Aware of the risk of mythologization that every exhibition might entail, a series of methodological operations were followed by constant exercises of self-critical displacements aiming to dissolve the separation of institutional frameworks. Definitions that museums rely upon, such as hospitality, intelligibility, temporal, permanent, changing, original, prototype, collection were constantly challenged through the forms in which the intervention evolved. This challenge included degrees of involvement governed by labour categories, such as artists, curators, researchers, guests, directors, technicians, experts and advisors. The intervention's first methodological operation was an ambiguity in terms of outcome, as the exhibition space was transformed into a constant work in process. Pratt's concept of "contact zone"[3] (1991) was instrumental for unveiling the traits of ideology that every form of doing research carries. Special attention was taken to use the situation of antagonism as critical operative material, rather than concealing moments of dissent. It was meant to signal the archive as a site of conflict and the situation of exhibiting as a site for rehearsing, questioning and performing with the archive. This framework involved also the configuration of new archives via research records, the

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[2] Speech is not confined to oral speech but includes all forms of representation such as photographs, cinema and books.

[3] The term refers to social spaces where the asymmetric relations of power are met without smoothing conflict.

documentation of new historical resources and embodied experiences.[4]

The grammar of the exhibition was also set into test as a never-neutral articulation. Therefore, the first unfold was to show the material elements that will shape the exhibition together with an invitation —the invitation for Finland's participation at the Milan Triennial (see figure 1). This served both as the invitation to the exhibition opening and as the opening case for this research. It could be said, that this first setting became a parafiction of an exhibition performing itself as an exhibition.
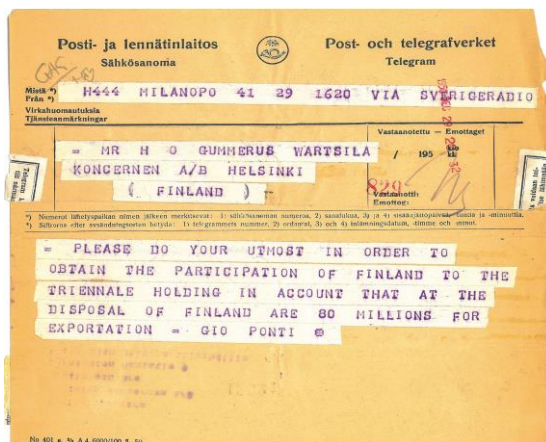

Figure 1: Telegram from Gio Ponti to H.O. Gummerus, 29.12.1950. Courtesy of Suomen Taideteollisuusyhdistys Arkisto.

Throughout the duration of this site-specific intervention, the grammar of display walked together with Warburg's (2018) applications to Burckhardt's (1979, 1999) non-aphoristic method for organizing history which focuses on the question of singularity instead of universality. This was combined with Didi-Huberman's (2008) study of the signification of images as a frictional process between positions, dispositions, compositions and interpositions. These processes addressed conceptual and physical transformation of

meanings through the exercise of displacement as constant re-contextualization.

Methods have provided the research collective with a theoretical framework for the elaboration of two notions. The first was the "exercise" as a self-critical capacity carried by the exposure to inquiry and a constant process of overpowering conformism. The second was the "nomadity" as an active praxis of moving knowledge across boundaries by studying transversally, reading against the grain, and by claiming the political space of research as the right to know and the right to imagine together.

As the triggering case, we have chosen Finnish design whose mythology was carefully crafted in the post-war period.

FINNISH DESIGN MYTHOLOGY AND DESIGN HEROISM

Finland has invested in becoming a central actor in the Nordic design culture where design has been a strategic apparatus serving promotion of diverse national interests. These interests include for example, crafting a distinctive national iconography and promoting cultural and political competencies in the global competitive arenas. In common with other Nordic countries, design's symbolic aspects are seen permeated to the entire Finnish culture (Valtonen 2007). This does not only reflect design's popular adoption in culture and industries, but also the potentially wide and deep impact as a form of mythology across social contexts.

The national institutionalization of design —in the frame of applied arts and crafts– can be traced back to the late 19th century when Finland was a Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire. The key institutions involving the promotion, unity and training of a domestic

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[4] For example, a map was drawn illustrating the history of Brand purchases of design industries associated with Finnish design classics. The map showed how the aura of nationalism remains, whereas the loyalties belong to various transnational corporations reporting that the biggest market for design classics are Finnish domestic consumers. In addition, this map included the rapid erosion of productions closer to craftsmanship, family run business and female-founded brands.

Gender asymmetry archive was indexed through screen shots of Finnish National Library, Helsinki University Library and Aalto University Library searches of the Finnish designers who were

awarded by the Milan Triennial, notating the amount of publications and quotations per author. As a graphic comparison of gender and geographical location of the designers' studio, notes were added to the previously mentioned map in order to emphasize the centralization of design discourse at the Capital city and patriarchy.

An archive of newspaper articles covering contemporary workers strikes at Finnish Classics' industrial design factories was compiled. The compilation included also newspaper articles covering the sales of entire factories and design loyalties.

design sector emerged within the context of a set of ambitious programs.[5] The emphasis on the era's applied arts and crafts was a patriotic attempt to develop industrial muscles for the nation's export capacities and for the growth of national economic capital (Korvenmaa 2009). These goals paralleled complex and intensive efforts to build a distinctive Finnish style in arts and crafts. The efforts combined folkloric and mythopoetic ideas taken from an imagined ancient past (centrally from the epic poetry *Kalevala*) with modern stylistic experiments inspired by the central European movements (Ashby 2010). In terms of abroad display of these works, Russia was the key actor and host. However, the Paris World's Fair in 1900 marked a "dramatically changed" political attitude, as Finland's pavilion was oriented towards distinguishing its own cultural territory, taking advantage of Russian nonattendance. (Korvenmaa 2009: 69).

The declaration of national independence took place right after the Bolshevik revolution and trailed by a bloody civil war between the Reds and Whites in 1918. During this transition the socialist project was heavily repressed. However, this did not end the politicization of arts, crafts and the increasingly popular concept of design; nevertheless, the nationalist agenda pushed towards mobility of the young republic's modern and industrialised country image. In the following decades, one can see that the Finnish national design depended less on its popular technologies, categorizing them as past folkloric references; but more on a progress-oriented modernism (Ashby 2010). In this context, the economic boom years of the 1930s helped a significant actor to emerge in the architecture scene. Alvar Aalto (1898-1976) received immediate international recognition after designing the Paimio Tuberculosis Sanatorium (1929–1933). This recognition embraced a hero role as the nation's "cultural ambassador" (Pallasmaa 2012). Aalto's ambassador role was further

strengthened as he was commissioned to design the Finland pavilions at the Paris and New York World's Fairs in 1937 and 1939. Moreover, in 1938, Aalto held an individual exhibition at the MoMA, entitled "Alvar Aalto: Architecture and Furniture"[6] which is a remarkable success and a clear sign to demonstrate the level of his international reputation. In 1939, during the New York World's fair he was able to be presented at MoMA's tribute exhibition to modern architecture, alongside the four iconic names: Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and Oscar Niemeyer (Menin 2012). However, when one analyses the number and content of exhibitions in relation to locations produced by MoMA during this period of time, one can conclude that the international reputation of young architects promoted by the U.S. was an early manifestation of cold war manoeuvres against Communism. Architectural promotions were not innocent, as the main focus in these projects not only responded to bourgeois aesthetics through the so-called International Style, but also became instrumental for the later U.S. satellite suburbanization as a strategy for urban segregation to dissipate ideas of communitarianism, domestic feminism, cooperative housekeeping in organic and social architecture (without going deeper, these could also be read as architectural influence streams of German Idealism). As Hayden (1981:21) expressed "the reorganization of American domestic life required more than rhetoric". Simultaneously, New Realism or American Realism was heavily promoted in Europe to counterpoise Social Realism.

Alvar Aalto, in this context, can be seen as the pioneer designer in the construction of the modern Finnish Design Mythology and the modern heroic designer. In the vein of individualist idealization, there is an aspect of Aalto's career that is generally overlooked in

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[5] Alongside the domestic industrialization efforts, foundation of key institutions followed each other. The design museum, for example, was founded in 1873, the Friends of Finnish Handicrafts Association in 1879. The Ateneum applied and fine arts training building was inaugurated in 1887 (commissioned in 1882).

[6] The foreword of the 1938 exhibition catalogue introduces Aalto as the creative genius whose personal form language adopts and expresses the national character of Finnish design (see: McAndrew 1938).

the historiography of Finnish design as Aalto attended Albert Speer's invitation to visit Germany in 1943 (Filler 2010).

Following the Winter War (1939-1940) against the Soviet Union and the Second World War (1941-1945), Finland encountered a dramatic change in the 1950s. The rapid urbanization that developed alongside growing national wealth and purchasing power, contributed to a burgeoning design industry with access to greater domestic audiences.

As the 1950s and 1960s marked the "golden age" of Finnish design, design's instrumentalization in the national promotion became stronger in the form of participation in international design events. The Milan Triennials between 1951 and 1964, the mobile "Design in Scandinavia" exhibition that toured twenty-four museums across North America between 1954 and 1957 can be shown as two significant examples with implications on both international promotion of Finland and domestic mythologization of Finnish design.

Following the first international exhibition success in Milan, for example, design began to receive increased government support (Kalha 2002). Omitted in Kalha's research however, our research exhibited that the government support was given through the Ministry of Education. It was surprisingly not through the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Could this be read as an early sign of neoliberalism? To emphasize on this question, it is important to mention that the funds given for Finland's participation to the 1951 Milan Triennial were funds recovered from Veikkaus (lottery tax).

The awards received by Finnish designers in Milan Triennials of 1951 and 1954 were broadly covered by the domestic media, making these awards resonate greatly with the Finnish public. For example, the Finnish media addressed both Milan Triennials as the "Miracle of Milan" and "design Olympics" (Kalha 2002: 28, 2004: 68).

In the mythologization, however, what is developing is not only the wider reception of designers' heroic social status, but also the reception of designed items. What Kalha

(2004: 68) describes here is the transformation of designed item's semantic value from a material to "an embodiment of objective cultural value and national achievement". This transformation, of course, is not the operation of media solely, but a co-construction of actors including designers who participated it in a self-conscious way. Via statements and stories about themselves and their work, designer interviews helped to leverage designers to "advocates of authentic Finnishness" whose designed items became a part of national identity (Myllyntaus 2010: 215). Designers' romantic link to Finnish natural landscape in their works consolidated the formation of national identity via design and legitimized this in the eyes of nationalist audiences (Davies 2002).

Exhibitions in Finland acted as a political tool in the climate of Cold War. The "American Home 1953" exhibition, for example, promoted the American lifestyle and consumer culture in Finland which received record-breaking number of visitors (McDonald 2010). Hence, design's mythologization affected the Finnish populace not only as a promotional narrative that is exported to the outer world, but also as a political and ideological message received from it.

THE PROJECT – CRITICAL ENCOUNTERS AS CARE

Similar promotional narratives were crafted by the Scandinavian countries too, such as in the context of "Danish Modern". Hansen (2006) analyses a "social network" that created and promoted "narratives" about Danish design. For him, this was a process in which the members of this network not only promoted a national design concept but also developed a sense of self-understanding. What makes Hansen's study inspiring is also his acknowledgement of the constraining role of such narratives in the long term. As he puts it, facing strengthening competitive conditions, the members of the network were constrained by their own narratives. They failed to renew the established narratives, the design language, production methods and technology that can catch the requirements of changing times. This

ultimately resulted in "the decline of the Danish Design" in the 60s and 70s.

Similar constraints may still prevail as evident in the context of Fallan's above criticism on the current role of design mythologies in perpetuating stereotypical accounts and images of Scandinavian design. Such stereotypes operate in a greater context shaping the design discourse affecting the network of sector actors. For example in 2016, the Design Museum in Helsinki hailed Eero Aarnio as a "design superhero" in a retrospective exhibition in which the designer's creative genius was championed as the main structure of the exhibition.[7] From the marketing point of view, this obviously brings up several advantages to promote national design capacities in the competitive tourism business.[8] From a critical point of view, however, the perpetuation of mythologies may strengthen the discursive forms that authorize sectoral power positions.

 A documentation station, hearing forum and open militant research process inside and with the Design Museum in Helsinki sculpted this project's intervention to the museum's permanent collection and its main narrative to provide a public exercise of dissent. As stated before, the conceptual framework was specifically geared to re-read and re-archive the histories as hirstories [*sic*. as queering history] for the activation of public use of memory. In this context, the project emphasized on what escapes the archive: the subjectivity of testimonies and anecdotes in the midst of struggles for power; as well the fragility of the means with which power conceals itself.

The exhibition in 2017 engaged photographic and documentary archival material in a changing setting for the period of four months (see figure 2). It firstly included a brief historical revision on how the mythologization of design and design actors helped developing an industry through traveling exhibitions and international fairs. The research process of the exhibition had been launched in late 2016 and involved a set of interviews and an extensive documentation of the archival material primarily from the Suomen Taideteollisuusyhdistys Arkisto, Design Forum, YLE, and Domus Archives. Focusing on the internationalisation of knowledge and expertise with the Milan Design Triennials as gravitational point, the exhibition embraced design as a politicized field and the Finnish 50's case as the core case study.

Figure 2: The exhibition was updated three times throughout the period of four months.

The presented material, for example, included a selection of the inner professional correspondence between the era's organisers, promoters, and designers. This framework was substantially enriched with the archive capital of the Finnish media such as the era's art, design, and lifestyle magazines as well as daily newspapers permeating the consumer imaginary. Emergence of sectoral hierarchies, industrial monopolies as well as the interdependency between modes of production, channels of distribution, and the zone-ification of local and global markets were revealed and exhibited.

The exhibition setting was operationalized as a research process on display and developed in a dialogue with the interviews, presentations, and encounters that organically grew alongside the exhibition. In addition, the exhibition produced a contemporary reflection of design ethos and stands that resulted in critical

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[7] The Eero Aarnio exhibition took place between April 8th and September 25th in 2016 (Designmuseo 2016).

[8] One should add that international Finnair (the national airliner) flights broadcast a documentary about Eero Aarnio, as part of their on-board passenger entertainment system.

findings surrounding the role of design within the neoliberalization process. The forum concept, in addition, provided further extension with valuable contributions from various academics, researchers, design practitioners, artists, students, and general audience in the form of public lectures and roundtable discussions.

The first roundtable discussion was carried out addressing design's museumification in Finland. Design historian Prof. Pekka Korvenmaa from the Aalto University, museum curators Leena Svinhufvud and Katarina Siltavuori participated the discussion. The discussion stretched across the drivers, mechanisms, and stakeholders behind the Finnish design's international achievements in the mid-century and developed a critical stance on the present design issues such as the museum's current role in the promotion of design and its cultural policies.

"Picnic on a Raanu" was the second event where public was invited to attend a picnic with their Raanu pieces inside the premises of the Helsinki Design Museum (see figure 3). The picnic event was designed to shift the focus of the research and exhibition from the heritage of modern design to what has been rendered as the Finnish folkloric culture. Engaging a feminist perspective, Prof. Kirsi Vainio-Korhonen from the University of Turku and artist Elina Juopperi discussed the role of knowledge-heritage transferred across generations of craft and household workers. They reflected on the importance of women and indigenous knowledge. The conversation concluded by signalling some contributions of early feminist networks to the construction of the welfare state. Using kapioarkku as a metaphor, the conversation also opened questions about other pieces of knowledge that are needed to be transferred and strategies to preserve them in contemporary times.
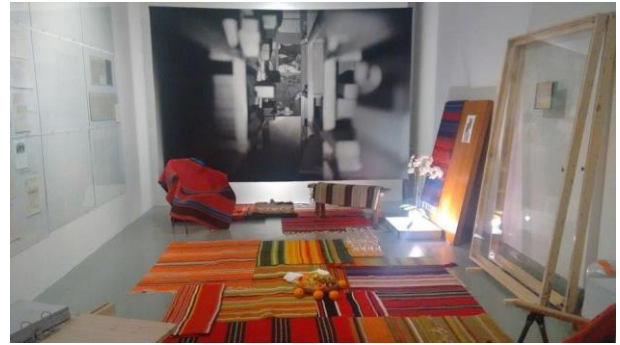

Figure 3: The Raanu event was set in the form of a picnic.

For the third public event, our project hosted Prof. Harri Kalha whose incorporation of the post-structuralist mythology understanding in Finnish design history writing was updated in his lecture.

In the final public event, the project invited a design historian, Prof. Tevfik Balcıoğlu, this time from Turkey whose historical, social, and cultural structure is distinct from that of Finland. The aim of this choice has been directing the shift of the research focus to a different design mythology context. Turkey is considered as a representative case of some very large, emerging economy segments. With its distinctive "radical modernism" history and current politically-motivated Islamist employment of arts and craft heritage, Turkey provides an interesting case to explore the untapped layers of design mythology and heritage. Prof. Balcıoğlu, in his lecture focused on how Turkey's historical capital is deployed and mythologised by the populist political discourse and ideological frameworks such as neo-Ottomanism.

This final event was planned to energise the development of knowledge fields through engaging dynamic inputs from a parallax of geopolitical standpoints[9].

These contexts propose further trajectories for nourishing the understandings and interpretations in design that do not only address culture but class struggle. Moreover, diverse critical perspectives are seen to be developed as a result of this exchange to trace influences and trajectories of struggles for a

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[9] As Turkey has not participated in previous editions until the 2012 event "Turkey: The Missing Star", this supports to suggest an inquiry of Milan Design Triennial as a myth.

seizure of power that otherwise remain concealed in the archive or pushed to oblivion.

FUTURE EXTENSIONS

The vision of cross-cultural examination of design mythologies brings forth potential research facets that can be seen as contextual extensions which can transit interrogations across the previous research stages. It engages with the place of contemporary self-critique and futurity: Where are art and design standing today? And what can/can't art and design still do? What are the formal and aesthetic implications within collective struggles debating between possibles and impossibles?

These questions stimulate further analysis of contemporary design mythologies in an international framework. New methods can be driven from re-walking through the ideas of "socially engaged design" and the role of design in the production of alternatives with notions driven from holistic thinking, class interrogations, political and ecological positions as well as philosophical debates on consciousness. This facet can focus on how the growth of design as a study ("discipline") —as much as its impact as an industry – triggered the need for an exploration of concepts such as imagination, utopia, sustainability to mention some; and in some cases, radical design and design activism.

Following the traces of "international" exhibitions, this research facet refers to the Milan Design Triennial which presents us a relevant case to delve upon around the '68 occupation claims a laboratory for socially engaged design; echoed by the demands of occupation at place. On this perspective, the project has already started to discuss the role of the university, the museum, and in the specificity of design education the role of the "Bauhaus" or similar enterprises in the dissemination of critical thinking through transversal trans-regional articulations of applied arts and design.

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