A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING THE PORTUGUESE GENERATIONS

Portuguese Generations, Generational Analysis, Methodological Framework, Systems of Ideas and Values

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The text describes a multidisciplinary framework for the assessment of the Portuguese generations and presents a preparatory cohort structure to support the fieldwork. Generational segmentation represents an additional contribution to the definition of population groups with high levels of homogeneity; it is also a compelling tool to analyse, explain and predict values, attitudes and behaviours in several domains, such as marketing, communication, design, political behaviour, ageing, cultural practices, household dynamics and behaviour or prospective analysis.

Although preceding authors had developed rationales to approach generational analysis, modern empirical studies proceed from the theoretical contributions of Mannheim (1936). This author moved away from a positivist viewpoint – searching for an objective (external) historical rhythm – towards a formulation we have adopted: "the social phenomenon of generations represents noting more than a particular kind of location in all spheres, embracing related age-groups embedded in a historical-social process". This conceptualisation interprets individual world-view constructs and activities within the context of a co-operative process of group life experiences, in particular those acquired in an early stage.

In this perspective, the definition of generation as a unit of analysis moved from the one supported on specific biological paces in human existence, following the continuum demographics renewing, towards a concept of generational system of ideas, "truths", values, attitudes and behaviours related to the social, economic and historical situation from which they emerged. Each generation writes its own history of generations, giving origin to the adaptation of the notion of non-contemporaneity of the contemporaneous.

The essential problem which comes up from the empirical investigation of generations is whether to decide which kind of age relationship is specifically relevant, to identify the explanatory model and to delineate the boundaries of pertinent cohorts. In a broad sense, these problems are identical to those tackled by empirical studies addressing a continuum sample.

The paper discusses these methodological issues, in the particular context of the generational analysis: not all age cohorts develop the same level of generational self-conscience and perform identical role in the history of ideas; political and cultural events provide important generational markers; within a generational time-interval, central positions may be well-delineated and boundaries fuzzy and overlapped; demographic dimensions, educational level and technological developments represent expressive modulators. Methodological agenda articulates age, generation and life cycle stages.

The framework for assessing the Portuguese generations includes the following factors and its sub-levels of analysis:

Twentieth century historical process and events; Demographic dynamics; Economic developments; Household dynamics and behaviours; Education levels; Technological availability.

Concluding, the paper discusses not only the operationalisation of fieldworks and the methods for its implementation but also expected results.

MULTIGENERATIONAL POSSESSING:
PIECES OF JEWELLERY MEDIATING GENERATIONS

Portuguese Visual Culture, Trademarks, Archive, Design Intervention, "Sanjo"

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Pieces of jewellery are not always possessed by those who wear them. In *multigenerational possessing* the family or kinship possesses the piece of je-wellery, even when it is worn by one person at a given time. The current posses-sor has the legal rights for the piece of jewellery, but still, it is often felt that the piece of jewellery belongs to the family or kinship. The emotional attachments people have with their jewellery make them meaningful for possessors. The cur-rent possessor knows her unwritten laws to maintain the piece of jewellery and manage to hand it down to the next generation. In this paper, I will explore *why* meaningful pieces of jewellery have such long biographies and, *how* those bio-graphies have grown.

> *"I have inherited thick golden bracelet form my mother. The bracelet is my grand-mother's engagement gift from her groom. […]My mother as the first-born and as the oldest daughter inherited the grandmother's bracelet. I remember her wearing it in festive occasions. Also I, the third generation representative, am wearing the me-mento bracelet as festive jewellery especially in the family occasions like weddings, funerals, graduations and in family gatherings. I feel that this piece of jewellery con-nects me strongly into the chain of generations."* (Kaksipuoliset, Kronman, R.)

DESIGN AND SOCIAL INNOVATION:
A SYSTEMIC APPROACH

Responsible Design, Social Innovation, Creative Community,
Systemic Approach, Network

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Design, as an area of knowledge, is subject to changes that affect it through different approach-es, both theoretical and practical, and that qualify it as an activity in constant evolution. Its new approaches include matters related with responsibility, environment, social worries, and things alike. Commensurately, such contemporary aspects open room for social initiatives, which are conducted by people who look for solutions regarding these new challenges and which can be interpreted as actual social innovations. This scenario begins to be looked at, especially in local communities with strong traditions to be kept, and which use them as a tool to generate their income, or use it to launch new ideas, aiming to provide social benefits; these are the so called creative communities. Under such a perspective, the link between design and social innovation is of utmost relevance, especially in the contexts of local traditional communities and of cre-ative communities. Such proposal for a systemic approach of design is seen as a way to involve the stakeholders (interested persons) in the processes of investigation and of social innovation, which can decisively contribute for the development of traditional local communities. As a theoretical basis for the research, this paper outlines some especial features of design and social innovation, in their particular and in their complementary aspects, as well as in the way they relate with each other. Initially, it was found that a creative community and social innovations cannot be planned, and that design can stand as a link to identify and promote their develop-ment; a final answer to this question is to be given when the result of the research comes up.

MODELLING A DESIGN CYCLE USING AN EVOLUTIONARY APPROACH

Design, Evolution, Technological Changes, Socio-cultural Transformations,
Kondratieff Cycles

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Design is a creative discipline of projectual character that - through multidisciplinary and integrative approaches - is increasingly responsible for the conception and planning of our artificial world. Placed at a crossroad between art and technology, and with a profound impact on society's present and future quality of life, design seeks to respond effectively to the needs and expectations of society as a whole.

With its roots deeply embedded at the intersection of the arts, crafts and technical fields, as well as strongly influenced by the Renaissance's projectual culture of disegno, Design was born at the brink of the Industrial Revolution; its main objective at the time was to achieve a previously studied synthesis between the production and aesthetic qualities. However, only much later with the constitution of the Bauhaus School did Design turn into an independent discipline, and become theoretically cemented. From an economical point of view, subsequent developments in this subject area demonstrate that Design has become an essential part in promoting business competitiveness.

Despite the close and important relationships found between - on the one hand - design and technological reality, and - on the other hand - design and commercial reality; it is in its social dimension that design legitimizes itself. This means that, as Designers, not only is it important to understand which scientific, technological and cultural changes are taking place in society; but also become vitally aware of possible future realities. Only from this type of knowledge can design ensure what is so crucial to its discipline: to help improve the quality of life.

Based on this perception, the study of Kondratieff Cycles has proved to be as particularly relevant. In fact, to be able to confine design's evolutionary course in a broader perspective, and thereby gather evidence that supports a more informed, and thus, more effective design for the future of society seems to be - in the context of the present and actual knowledge - a reality that we should not look down on.