



**EC[H]O – ENCOUNTER WITH THE OTHER
EDUCATIONAL PATHS WITH YOUNGSTERS
AND ADULTS**

MARIJKE DE KONING • TERESA VASCONCELOS

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Introductory note for the English translation

ECHO in English is the translation of the Portuguese word *ECO*. *Encontro Com o Outro* (*Encounter with the Other*) is the name of the Project we are writing about in this publication. **ECO** is composed by the initials of the words that constitute the name of the Project. We maintained **ECO** in the translation on these pages and only introduced the [H] on the title page - **EC[H]O** - in order to suggest that the name of the Project refers also to the word echo, like it does in Portuguese.

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Projects Supported in 2013 by Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

Given the large mobilization around the recruitment concourses of the Active Citizenship Program, EEA Grants, it was not possible to select a large number of applications with a high merit.

Due to a high demand in the 2013 Concourse, the Foundation Board of Directors decided to select and to support with its own resources the best projects (according to the selection used by the Program).



FUNDAÇÃO
CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN
CIDADANIA ATIVA



The Grail assumed 25% of the total cost of the ECO Project, which were financially sustainable thanks to the volunteer work of several members of the team who contributed in working hours with 12.5% of the total cost.

PREFACE

Unlikely partners or maybe not! This Project was born as a Grail initiative and has the School, the Municipality of Golegã and the farmers association *Agrotejo* as partners. For someone who is not aware, which means in this case, someone who does not know about the work of the Grail, this could make the person feel uncomfortable and raise questions about what a farmers' association has to do with the school, with the Grail...

Frankly, I was not surprised, people who know the Grail know that they can expect everything, and this literally means, "what really matters", what makes a difference, the breaking of boundaries, by creating contexts through intervention in society. So this was a good prognostic! That's why I immediately became enthusiastic! And what schools need the most is enthusiasm.

Currently teachers feel a lot of pressure and anxiety about numbers, averages, results, rankings and we can easily forget to see the students as individuals, to understand them in a holistic way. In order to be a good student, the individual needs to be happy! Although the citizenship theme is contemplated in the *curriculum* and we are aware that we must train citizens - individuals with consciousness, critical skills, supportive behavior, tolerance, being aware of the interdependencies - more often than not the aspect of citizenship has not been taught accordingly to its importance. And also, the impact the way we exercise citizenship produces on the person as a whole will have various consequences, including on the success in educational terms as well as in society.

Sometimes, in Portuguese schools we are confronted with a complaining attitude, a wail of fatalism that has a very negative effect on everyone, and this works as an impediment to change, to act upon. I am also not exempted from responsibility. I include myself in this group because sometimes I too, fall in the complaint mode. ... Teacher's complaints fall into two groups: school performance and behavior, and these two factors are interdependent. Often we spend a lot of energy listing behaviors - lack of interest, aggression, intolerance to difference, irresponsibility, lack of values, individualism, selfishness, lack of goals, of a life project, lack of critical spirit - and explaining the reasons behind all this - parents lack of time to be with their children, children's lack of affection from their parents, children with a "dictators attitude used to get their way and not used to hear no, spending too much time over computers and other gadgets... So, often we do not move from the phase of diagnosis to the next phase, which is to seek answers and act in order to solve the problems.

The - *ECO Project - Meeting the Other: Inclusive Affection and Active Citizenship* (a fortunate headline), perfectly registered in the matrix and in the goals of the Grail, is highly important, once it moves forward to the next step, acting to reach goals. It is a perfectly sustainable Project, suitable for a specific reality. We are not dealing with a "ready to wear", but rather a tailor made project, based on a survey about young-

ters of this community, being nevertheless aware that we are dealing with a complex problem with lots of implications, and in Gaston Bachelard's perspective, consisting in a web of relationships.

The methodology used is not the easiest one, it is demanding, in the way that participants were not supposed just to be seated and be passive listeners. On the contrary participants are invited to interact between them, think through and cooperate within the group where the interrelationships are being established. The emphasis was on the search process. In fact, the words - path, pathway, "traveling between the self and the Other" focus on the importance of the process and on the meaning of Antonio Machado's poem "caminante, no hay camino / se hace camino al andar". The encounter with the other, which implies first and foremost the encounter with oneself, requires a path and it must be said that the animators of the Grail were of utmost importance when it came to create the path.

Thus, the Schools of Golegã, Azinhaga and Pombalinho consider it a privilege to have been partners in this Project and believe that the seeds have been planted "in this *ground*" for the fruits to breed and grow, or with the words used in this book, that they echo.

We consider this "challenge-book" - the expression used by the authors Marijke de Koning and Teresa Vasconcelos - a good bedside reading, not to fall asleep.

Lurdes Pires Marques

Director of the Schools of Golegã, Azinhaga and Pombalinho

INTRODUCTION

[...] Only with constant reflection you can achieve your goal, always exceeding it. [...] The task opens up to what precedes it, and to what goes beyond it. To what was, and what shall be. [...] The truly human work and History are now an endless process, with an always unreached finality (Pires do Vale, 2012: 16-17).

The *ECO Project - Meeting with the Other: Inclusive Affection and Active Citizenship* - was an initiative of the Grail Movement, accomplished in Golegã during the years 2014 and 2015, with the support of Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and in partnership with the Schools of Golegã, Azinhaga and Pombalinho, the Municipality of Golegã, and Agrotejo, an Agricultural Union. In this project participated youngsters and adults from Golegã's community and also from the neighbouring municipalities.

The *ECO Project's* design was the result of a thematic research conducted during one year in the context of the Program *Roots, Ground, and Horizons. Pathways and Circles of Creative and Reciprocal Literacy*, on-going in the Grail Centre in Golegã since 2012.

The Project emerges from a survey and characterization of the local and regional context, focusing, in particular, on transversal social issues that manifest themselves within the youth cultures and in the experiences of the majority of the youngsters of this community. The problems found were formulated by the participants in the Program *Roots* in the following terms: violence in language, intolerance, violence in gender relations and the absence of a life project. The various dimensions of these problems constitute a complex social problem.

Complex problems are difficult to define with accuracy. They show interdependencies, are multi-causal and cross organizational boundaries. They are socially complex. They do not have a clear solution and the solutions attempted register a chronic failure and can lead to new problems (Marques, 2014: 6).

The *ECO Project* counted with the active participation of partner organizations, with a wide range of people and local organizations, which allowed a coordination and cooperation that went across the "organizational boundaries". In this "integrated governance" it was possible to work together for the achievement of the general objectives of the Project: the promotion of democratic values, tolerance and fight against discrimination among youngsters - from the 9 to 12th year - of the Schools mentioned above, involving other youngsters from Golegã and the neighbouring municipalities.

The work performed throughout the Project resulted in two publications, both in book and digital format translated into English, allowing diffusion beyond borders, through the international contacts of the Grail as well as other contacts. This publica-

tion is intended to reach people interested in reflecting and intervening in adults and youngsters education. The second publication¹ is created together with the youngsters who participated in the Project.

Because this publication is both a printed book and a digital format document, we have been including web references throughout the text. These web references aim to connect the texts with *links* in order to promote further research. These references were enclosed during the writing process and verified on September 1st 2015.

For more information about this Project and all the performed tasks, we suggest the following web *sites*:

- www.bit.ly/iWAXUHQ •
- on.fb.me/2iL7zts •

The following *link* contains a video dated October 17th, 2014 with a first review of the activities undertaken by the Project: • www.bit.ly/iLsAtUo •.

This publication is the systematization of an educational praxis of reflection and action, framed in a theoretical field that is always in construction. It is addressed to educational professionals and volunteers, interested in using our reflection and theories and perhaps discover some clues for their work. In this sense this publication can be considered to be a *challenge-book*. With this challenge-book we hope to contribute to the intensification and desire to improve the educational praxis.

This book is structured in a way that allows the reader to “open windows” and to make reading choices according to the personal interests and the work to accomplish.

There is an implicit methodology in the way we have organized this publication. We composed the text step-by-step, like if we were making a patchwork blanket, changing several times the possible combinations and interconnections. In the course of this systematization we found out that the need of working in this way reflects that in the *ECO* Project we were dealing with a complex social problem, namely the youth-at-risk-of-violence. This is not a problem we can approach in a linear way, but rather circular: we need to return many times to what we thought we had already deepened. Just like in the composition of the patchwork blanket: cut one more patch and put it in the most appropriate place.

This publication is organized into the following chapters:

¹ *Echoing... With and for youngsters that CREATE the difference.*

I. Context(s)

In this chapter, we present the context in which the *ECO* Project emerged - the Grail Movement in Portugal and the Grail Centre in the town of Golegã, where this Project took place. We have also included a short “historical incursion” of the work done with educational work with young people in this Centre in the eighties of the twentieth century, with the aim to delineate something of the evolution until nowadays, which shows a growing complexity in the educational work with young people.

II. The *ground* of the *ECO* Project and its “reasons to exist”

In this chapter, we “set foot on the *ground*” of the *ECO* Project and explore its reasons to exist in the perspective of the *between*, with the goal of highlighting how our roots are fixed in the soil, but at the same time are loose “in the air” of the multiple connections and transitions happening in the digital and global world.

III. From the discourse of “the youngster in the Centre” to *Co-Centrality* of the youngster in the Community

In this chapter, we debate the discourse on the human being (child, youngster, adult) “in the centre”. We focus on the origin of this discourse, address a set of concepts taken from the theory of activity of Wenger (1998) and Konkola (2001)² and propose a discursive shift: the *co-centrality* of the youngster in the community.

IV. *Be you: Create yourself* - structuring philosophy and methodologies of the paths taken with the youngsters

In this chapter, we try to theoretically justify the proposed methodology of work with the youngsters in the *citizenship art* workshops. This educational context has provided a space in which it was possible to experience, in a perspective of *artistry*, the circularity between individual and society. We present and reconstruct the conceptual pair of *citizenship art* in the light of *community art* and introduce the *thirdspace* concept. After this we re-contextualize a part of the texts we used in the workshop on *citizenship art* with the team and the partner entities.

V. Philosophy and methodologies structuring the journeys made with adults

How to keep on learning in adult life? In this chapter we present the philosophy and methodologies used in the workshops and in the training activities carried out with educational agents in the context of the *ECO* Project.

VI. Re-conceptualization of the structuring key concepts of the Project

Active citizenship, *inclusive affection* and *citizenship art* were key conceptual pairs in the *ECO* Project. The concepts *active citizenship* and *inclusive affection* are here retaken in order to assess the relevance and to create perspectives for the work with these concepts in educational practices with youngsters and adults. It is important to

² See the bibliographical references in chapter III.

reflect and act in terms of *next practices* and not only in terms of *best practices*. This means that we try to go beyond the good practice and strengthen the foundations of the “next practice”, in addition to a (good) model already produced and experienced.

VII. ECO-ing the present into the future: perspectives of action to explore

Already with our eyes set on the horizon and the continuity of the *ECO* dynamics, we will resume the openings that the project created: 1. Challenges for an *education-not-profit* in a *space-between* adults. 2. Challenges for voluntary work of youngsters and adults; 3. ECO-ing possible future paths. 4. *Finale*.

VIII. Annexes

In this last section we have put together some texts that relate to the issues addressed and that may be useful in other educational contexts.

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- www.bit.ly/iWxUHQ
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I. CONTEXT(S)

Text and context reflect and illuminate each other (Darcy de Oliveira, 2012: 21).

THE GRAIL

What surprises me is the new. What attracts me is the future. What entices me is the promise. (...) It was also this new seduction that led me to discover in the Grail the possibility of new ways of living culture and cult. I found there the capacity of innovation, the pioneer tasks, the gestures and the ideas of a new culture (Pintasilgo, 2005: 17).

The Grail is an international movement of women motivated by the spiritual search and committed to the transformation of the world into a global community of justice and peace, inspired by the symbolic meaning of the legend that gave rise to the name of the movement. It is a chain of ideas and initiatives shared by women of different generations and cultures, who unite their talents in a network that broadens the capacity to “change life”, responding to the signs of the times and to the reality of each place.

The general objectives of the International Grail are: to contribute to a culture of care, care for oneself, for the others and for the state of the world, where solicitude, justice and peace are the foundations.

The Grail arrived in Portugal in 1957 with Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo and Teresa Santa Clara Gomes. In Portugal the Grail is a non-governmental organization and since 1977 a Social and Cultural Association. In 1985 the Grail in Portugal was recognized as a Legal Person of Public Utility • www.graal.org.pt •.

Teresa Santa Clara was the person who always emphasized in the Grail the importance of “creating contexts” - contexts of learning, reflection and action, of intervention in society, of spiritual quest and celebration - with the aim of starting processes able to change life. In an interview with Cecília Barreira, Teresa Santa Clara perspectives the work of the Grail in Portugal in the following way:

(...) I think that in our country the Grail was a creator of contexts where many young women came to assume her condition/situation of women-as-change-makers (Barreira, 1993: 207).

THE FOUNDATION *CARING FOR THE FUTURE*

In 2001, the Grail Association created, by the initiative of Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo, the Foundation *Caring for The Future*: • www.fcuidarofuturo.pt •.

The main work done by this Foundation was the organization of the Pintasilgo archive, which can be consulted online: • <http://bit.ly/1QnA5Mt> •.

In addition to the organization of this archive the Foundation developed several research and action programs. The work performed in one of these Programs, *Literacy of Women for Leadership*, introduced new methodological perspectives in educational work with youngsters and adults in Grail contexts, especially in the *ECO* Project • www.fcuidarofuturo.pt/mulheres.html •.

THE GRAIL CENTRE IN THE COMMUNITY OF GOLEGÃ, CONTEXT OF THE *ECO* PROJECT

Between the past and the future is today where the meaning is revealed and created; a double movement (Pintasilgo, 1982).

Since 1983 the Grail Centre in Golegã was the context of countless national and international programs and initiatives.

Between March 1987 and October 1988 this Centre held four training programs with young rural women (from the north and centre of Portugal), within the *MODELO* project (Women are Organising for Local Development), held between 1985 and 1990 in the north of Portugal. After her participation in one of the programs, a young woman, wrote:

As always I am fighting for my dream, but in this village it is very difficult to achieve something. But **I'm not going to give up because I want this dream to become true.**

What was important at that time? We can distinguish two structuring themes in the educational praxis: "Relationship" and "Liberation".

By the time the training programs of the *MODELO* project took place, "Relationship" and "Liberation" were the keywords in emancipatory educational contexts of conscientization of adults and youngsters. However, already in the eighties of the twentieth century other ingredients were being prepared which would modify greatly the emancipator, liberating and solidary vision of the world of that time (Koning, 2014: 81-82).

THE WORLD OF TODAY

What has changed during the period of time since 1988? Carlo Strenger, an Israeli psychoanalyst with great political engagement in the peace process in the Middle East, formulates it well in his book *The fear of Insignificance* (2011): "Being touched by God has been replaced by the magical quality of being well-known and admired by the

masses" (Strenger, 2011: 67). The religious systems have been replaced by the *infotainment* system, information system for global entertainment. In this system people regarded as celebrities replace the saints and the prophets. The *Dunamis*, the inner strength that animated the desire for liberation, has suffered the corrosion of the message of the dominant *infotainment* system, *Just Do It*, which leaves no room for limits, suggesting the possibility to achieve everything • www.nike.com/us/en_us/c/justdoit •.

This ideology of *Just Do It*, introduced by Nike, seems to be the new "emancipatory" ingredient that reinforced the "self-centration". The two decades of *Just Do It* created a huge material wealth but, according to Strenger, gradually less and less equally distributed.

Thirty years after the *MODELO* project, what are the reasons of existence of the *ECO* Project?

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II. THE *GROUND* OF THE *ECO* PROJECT AND ITS "REASONS TO EXIST"

We use the *ground* metaphor for two reasons. First, the metaphor *ground* reveals the priority of the concrete reality. Having the feet on the ground and not ideas or desires disconnected from this reality. Secondly, the *ECO* Project emerges since 2012 in Golegã in the context of the ongoing Program *Roots, Ground, Horizons. Paths and Circles of Creative and Reciprocal Literacy*.

But there is a more fundamental reason. The metaphor *ground* is etymologically rich when we look at the translation of the word "degenerate" in Germanic languages, as in Dutch)³. Degenerate is a deviation from the "origin", from "being" of what can be or should be (always becoming). This deviation from the "being" of the human being, concretely of young people at risk of violence, is what we want to "plow" in the *ECO* Project.

COMPLEX SOCIAL PROBLEM

On the *ground* of our world, what moved away from its "origin", what was "degenerating"?

The *ground* of the *ECO* Project extends between local and global. On this *ground* is germinating a complex social problem of young people at risk of impoverishment, deriving not only from material poverty, but a risk of slow, corrosive human impoverishment, deeply rooted and difficult to detect. It's not a problem easy to solve because "it does not stick to what bothers us or to what exceeds us", but:

[...] only if we understand the perverse (wicked) nature of these problems, we can escape from one of two traps: not to recognize the complexity of some problems and thus act as if they were simple and linear with mechanical solutions; or, on the other hand, just give up when faced with this complexity, conditioned by the conviction that there is nothing we can do (Marques, 2014a: 7).

³ As one of the coordinators of this publication is Dutch-speaking, we propose a short "excursion" in this language in which "degenerate" is translated into "ontaarden". "Aard" means "genus". But in Dutch, the word "aard" has the same etymological root as the word "aarde" "earth" in its most ancient meaning of "aert", of "plowed land". From the meaning of "plowed land" ("ploegland") the meanings of "origin" and "genre" have evolved.

ROOTS IN THE *GROUND* OF WHICH WORLD?

In a span of about 25 years the context has shifted in an increasingly accelerated pace, as it is reflected in the following records from the thematic inventory done in the Program *Roots, Ground, Horizons. Paths and Circles of Creative and Reciprocal Literacy*, which defined the *ground* of the complex problem we propose to work in the ECO Project:

Monetary perspective of the global world. Debauchery; fashion adaptation; lack of inner formation. Appreciation of the individual for the sake of the individual; there is no awareness; people don't reflect, treat equally what is different. The emptiness.

Parents do not have time for children. Abandonment of children; zero time with parents. Loss of affective contact with their parents. Children don't know how to live with the "no"; parents say yes to everything. Each one does whatever he/she wants; lack of sense of duty (as part of the matrix). Being a mother is an immediate pleasure; there is no otherness; she is very permissive with the child.

Reproduction of the family (social appearance; stereotyped roles of boys and girls).

The School: we need to use the School; we are destroying our country. Apathy; Poor education; Children do not know the world; escape from everything that is annoying; nothing moves them.

Recently we entered in a computer store and were confronted with the following message: "Winning is everything" by Steel Series, a computer hardware and digital games brand, which invites us in a video "to rise to the challenge: it is all about dedication, obsession and passion" • <http://steelseries.com> .

What kind of challenges will we rediscover beyond the "challenge" of all of us becoming "winners" and "fat egos" by definition at the expense of others? The expansion of the *ego*, the *fat ego*, (Kunneman, 2005: 18), a consumerist contemporary figure, competitive, inward looking, is a perverted edition of the autonomous and free individual. The ego's unbridled expansion of "fat forms of autonomy" may lead us to forget about moral values such as solidarity, respect and tolerance.

By June 2013 the inventoried problems related with violence in language, with the appreciation of the individual by the individual, with permissiveness and lack of sense of duty, lack of dialogue and intergenerational and intercultural tolerance, structuring

themes of active and consistent civic participation in a perspective of global citizenship, led us to the *ECO* Project formulation, in order to get more output from the School through non-formal education in dynamic contexts of the Local Educational Community. Our intention was to develop the social web of the Municipality of Golegã in the human and cultural components, using as starting point the school community. We chose a particular focus on issues of *inclusive affection* and *citizenship art* - theoretical concepts explored during the experimental work in *citizenship art* workshops with young people as well as with adults, exploring the openings for a more active citizenship.

ROOTS IN THE AIR, LOOKING FOR HORIZONS

Roots in the air are an unusual liberation feeling (Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira, 2012:22)

Strenger notes that the *Just Do It* ideology prevented us to live our lives with meaning and, in the footsteps of Jaspers, he reminds us that it is the ability to face extreme situations that allows us to deal with the tragedies of our individual and collective identities. And this is what gives meaning to our lives.

Our existential situation is like an artist who never manages to acquire materials for its creation in accordance with a previous plan; but as one that does *bricolage* we should take the materials that we find around us and try to transform them in the creation of our life (Strenger, 2011: 115).

He mobilizes the term "active acceptance of oneself" which means "to accept the existential call to be what we can be" (ibid.: 134). Step by step, slowing down to think and act and not *Just Do It*.

What kind of dreams do young people have nowadays? Which are the conditions and the potentials of new learning journeys when today's world is characterized by a powerful global interconnection, which is the key for the construction of identities? In this world, so much less local - or so much more global - will we be able to create new forms of solidarity and build global citizenship? Which ethics can unite - in contexts that value the *local* ties - women, men, youngsters and children living in such a global space? Is there a place for the Other? How to relearn and reorganize without getting lost in the complexity? How to organize the learning of *inclusive affection* in order to be structuring in the ordination of a fair *polis*, ethically supported, not only by laws, but by a *Weisung* (Buber), a beneficial "indication", a fruitful help in guiding and building the life path of each one in the globalized local communities to which we belong, a life towards the Other?

The educational work done in the context of the *ECO* Project aimed at contributing to a liberating reflexivity. We enter a time of roots in the air, a fluid space-time where the transitions of our world-between-local-and-global are crossing each other, where we are looking for significant materials in the process of *bricolage* of our lives into works of art.

BETWEEN

In the *ECO* Project we bet on a methodological path traversed by the *between* dimensions, being in-between, in-between acting and *in-between thinking*⁴: Between past and future: recreating the sense of what drives us; Between people and entities: improvise and tune; Between local tradition and globalization: diversify and channel; Between me and the other: create closeness; Between me and the world: writing myself into being and plurality; Between acting and thinking: a new *ethos*; Between *Chronos* and *Kairos*⁵: make time for inspiration; Between ethics and aesthetics: transforming life into a piece of art. These are the ingredients of the reconstruction work of *active citizenship*.

In the *in-between* space we try to explore the existing synergies and rethink the space around us that often still works with limited boundaries which make no sense, particularly among organizations and people who have worked along as partner's entities, as in this *ECO* Project. The *in-between thinking* may find here a new context and provide inspiring dynamics.

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE BETWEEN?

It is necessary to address the *between* in a philosophical sense, meaning it as a space to be lived in a heartfelt and reflected way. Maria Helena Varela, inspired by Deleuze, like Rosi Braidotti, argues that the question to be put to philosophy is no longer the question of the origins, nor of destination, but rather would it be pertinent to ask "What is going on in the *between*?" (Varela, 1998: 503). The time we live in is by definition an *in-between* time. Rosi Braidotti questions, in 2010, at the end of a communication entitled "Cartographies of the present":

⁴ See Annex 1. *In-between thinking*

⁵ See Annex 2. *Between Chronos and Kairos*

How can we be worthy of the times we live in? How to engage ourselves in the present in the resistance mode? Resistance without negativity. How to rebuild the intimacy between us and the world we live in? • <http://vimeo.com/24517619> •

In the *ECO* Project our desire was to allow ourselves to be shaped by these big questions. What matters, still according to Braidotti, is “dropping (...) all desire of no change” (Braidotti, 2004: 69). If a person does not get out of the self, if she or he does not start moving towards the Other, unable to handle the *between* of the movement itself, if he or she doesn’t try to think the Other and doesn’t include the Other in the “web” of his or her affections, if he or she doesn’t allow to be challenged to get out of patterns of thinking and acting, then relationship is no possible.

THE *BETWEEN* AS THE FOUNDATION OF DEMOCRACY

The relationship of affection between people is the basis of democracy. Because it is in relationships of affection that people learn how they can relate with each other in an ethical manner with alterity. According to Luce Irigaray, in these relationships there is space to accommodate negativity and aggression. Tonja van den Ende argues that in order to increase our sensitivity to otherness, we must constantly negotiate with others. Tonja van den Ende still argues that Luce Irigaray opens up to us a large portal. If we do not stand this *between* there are no conditions for the construction of democracy.

According to Tonja van den Ende, Luce Irigaray tries to move away from the abstractions of the good life (in society) in order to get to the core of the conversation that makes it possible to start the reflection about the issues formulated above by Rosi Braidotti: “what does it mean for you and me to live well and how to do this together” (Ende, 1999: 10). “It is necessary to start ‘bottom up’, from concrete relations between individuals” (ibid.: 11). The ways of dealing with differences to reach equality form the basis of democracy. We must provide conversational spaces between very different people in order to redefine what constitutes the “human” (Koning, 2014: 144).

***BETWEEN* IMPROVISING AND TUNING**

In January 2013 we concluded in the context of the Program *Roots, Ground, Horizons. Paths and Circles of Creative and Reciprocal Literacy* that “we are at the end of a cycle, living in a pressure cooker, that it is necessary to prepare and live a new cycle” and we asked ourselves: Are we ready for a new policy and for participation in shared networks? Which new solutions are we looking for? We need to relearn how to organize.

Hans Boutelier, professor of Security and Citizenship at the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam, proposes ways of reorganization in an "Improvisation Society" (2011). Improvisation is the way of social order in a world without borders. The art of improvisation implies tuning as in a jazz music concert. It is necessary to define clearly the roles; cooperation does not make sense if everyone does the same thing. The social planning that allows the continuity of society develops itself in a multitude of practices and will have to be built from the complexity, in which horizontality and verticality structure the space. It implies light leadership, but also an ethic that provides the framework for the various attempts of improvising and tuning. The characteristics of this type of society are: the spontaneity introduced at the right time in an organizational structure; the identity related with a tradition; knowledge and skills in order to create excellence; the ability to create a sense of community.

The *ECO* Project was possible due to the ability of the promoter and the partner entities to enter into an "integrated governance" system, which means to overcome the clearly defined boundaries of its structures, avoiding "the traditional bureaucratic response in 'silos'..." (Marques, 2014b: 6). It was necessary to overcome the "heavy legacy of bureaucratic culture, difficult to dismantle, to which is added the protection of 'my farm', of 'my budget', the fear of losing power or the lack of knowledge of a global view on the complex problems" (ibid.: 8).

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III. FROM THE DISCOURSE OF "THE YOUNGSTER IN THE CENTRE" TO CO-CENTRALITY OF THE YOUNGSTER IN THE COMMUNITY

A NEOLIBERAL DISCOURSE

The present chapter focuses in a critical way, on the dominant discourse of the "person in the centre" – children, youngsters or adults, deconstructing this discourse that we consider to be neoliberal in the perspective of a critical and post-modern theory. This discourse has been imported from a certain Anglo-Saxon rationality. We suggest returning to the concept of the child/youngster/adult as a community member.

Through a set of theoretical concepts – "complex wholes", "boundary" and "relational agency" – we will demonstrate how the idea of "the youngster meeting the other" – in the case of this particular Project – makes sense when we speak of a youngster as part of a series of intricate interactions and responsibilities. Therefore we will replace the concept of "youngster in the centre" by "co-centrality of the youngster in the community".

A change of references in the pedagogical field is necessary. We need to question the dominant discourse of the educational practices. How can we conceive the place/role of each individual in society, including the youngsters so that they can become human beings-with-the-others instead of human beings-against-the-others, or indifferent-to-others?

Underlining the *co-centrality* of a youngster in the community – and not the "youngster in the centre" –, can constitute the problem that gave rise to this present Project: the violent resolution of conflicts between youngsters and the intolerance towards what is "different". It represents a subtle critique to the dominant ideology of the present societies, in particular in the Northern hemisphere, from where this discourse is being "exported" to the South, adulterating the healthy educational and cultural practices, based on interdependence, on the "encounter with the Other" and the construction of the community.

In the second chapter of the mentioned book, *The Fear of Insignificance: How to give meaning to our lives in the twenty-first century* (see chapter I), Carlo Strenger (2011) considers that it is important to maintain and revitalize the small community so there can be an interdependent connection with wider communities. Bruner (1996) considers that the greatest human creation is culture, stating that there is no culture without belonging to a community.

ADULTS WHO FRAME AND LISTEN

Today the development studies are considered as a cultural process with a double meaning: the development of the youngsters is cultural because they inhabit an environment of human endeavour built over centuries, in which youngsters are encouraged to participate in determined cultural ways - such as speech, behaving, thinking and feeling -, mediated by their relationships with the Other... and with the adult. Manuel Pinto affirms:

Both from the subjects point of view and his skills and abilities, as from the societies point of view where they belong to, as well as its demands and expectations, it is reasonable to consider that it is not indifferent, for example, to belong to the male or the female sex, to be three, seven, twelve or sixteen years old, as is not the same to be born in a rich or in a poor environment, to be raised in a developed society or in a third world country, in a urban or suburban area or in a hidden place of the mountain, in a big family or a single-parent family, being the only child or to have brothers and sisters, etc. (Pinto, 1997:63).

As mentioned by Manuela Ferreira while speaking about children (2004) - the youngsters as competent social actors in their own socialization process require from the adults:

a special attention to the relations of domination and cultural hegemony, produced by them in the [respective] contexts. If the goal is the promotion of the school and the community as an educational space of citizenship for youngsters, it is important that adults acquire a reflective sociological attitude allowing them to read the youngster's practices in their diversity as social knowledge objects [...]. In order to respect the citizenship rights of young people it is crucial to recognize their voice, but even to go further, which obliges us to involve them, inform them, consult them and listen to them, to their decisions relating to an important part of their lives, giving substance to their conceptions of young citizens of today and not as future citizens (adapted from Ferreira, 200: 415-416).

MOVING THE YOUNGSTER FROM THE "CENTRE"...

Putting the emphasis on the youngster (or the child), only on an individual level is an argument, "that may not be wrong, but just incomplete" (Vasconcelos and Walsh, 2001: 500). The cliché that "each child, every youngster, every adult is special and unique - 'the centre!'" - contributes to the loss of what has formed the human being for over more than 150,000 years of existence: the awareness of our interdependence.

We see the danger of a narcissistic pursuit of individual happiness, “having” rather than “being”. We witness the conditioning of the youngsters becoming voracious consumers of things: a dispersion causing each time more dispersion in a destructive spiral way. The immediacy of the society that we live in puts the “I want” in the centre of our lives, converting the “Other” only into an object that we see in terms of our own pleasure or advantage.

Is the youngster really “the centre” or is he or she part of a clearly “polycentric” universe? The youngsters are part of a rich universe of interactions that simultaneously stimulate and limit them. The *ECO* Project aims to help the youngsters to *de-centre* themselves. In the *ECO* Project a youngster is “co-central”, but not “the centre”. Adults listen and try to create contexts for them in the community.

AN EDUCATION CENTERED IN THE TEACHER

In the educational universe prevailed an education centered in the teacher with emphasis on mechanical learning processes, which permeated the educational universe for decades, abnegating the individuality of the child and the youngster. Reacting to this model the child or youngster was recognized as the centre of its own learning. Western psychology, with its various analysis schemes, was helping to explain the development of the human being. But Vygotsky opened the door to the notion of development in interaction. Sociology also started to pay attention to the existence of countless youth cultures and multiple contextual possibilities. But, as suggested by Strenger (2012), the pendulum has swung too much to the opposite side of the mere individuality, forgetting that it develops in interaction.

To put the child or youngster in the centre was a reaction to an education and a curriculum centered in the teacher and this perspective has dominated the pedagogy for many years. However, our argument is that the ideology of the child or youngster in the centre needs to be questioned in today’s societies, families, schools, and communities. A discourse focused on the community and at the same time not alienating the individual, offers an alternative way to the discourse focused only on the individual.

RETURNING TO THE COMMUNITY...

Complex wholes

Fernández (1986) speaks of “complex wholes” when discussing the concept of community in an anthropological point of view. According to Fernández, the “whole”, whatever it is,

is a state of interrelation - "a kind of conviviality experience" (p. 163). He quotes Blake (1969), which considers the community as "the intellectual **thing** par excellence" (p. 179).

If, in the context of the *ECO* Project, we want to question the dominant discourse of education "centered in the youngster", it is necessary to emphasize, in contrast, the discourse of community. Knowledge is created in the context of a social practice, in processes of negotiation and dialogue, in day-to-day life situations (Bruner, 1990).

Each member of a community of learners goes a step further because he or she learns in a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). Thus, we insist, that each youngster is co-central, but not the centre. Youngsters live in a world of interactions. The centre of the educational act is an intricate network of relationships to which youngsters belong.

Boundary zones

The *boundary zones* concept is important to grasp the dynamics of life in community. The proposal "to overcome the safety of an institutional shelter" or of "frameworks of reference" can lead to the recognition of youngsters and children's education as a project that helps to converge the different and varied ways of "seeing" and "knowing". It is a concept first introduced by the social and cultural anthropology, extended to sociology and more recently introduced in pedagogy (Vasconcelos, 2009).

According to Frazão (2014) the border metaphor corresponds correctly to the spirit of transit, at the same time light-footed and dramatic, that characterizes our time:

Transition from a unique centre to the multiple openings, from the definitive and complete to the permanently open, from the essential to be executed to the possible still to be invented, from the great universal history to the regional and biographical narratives, from the categorical to the procedural, from the meaning already given to the meaning to be constructed" (Frazão, 2014: 95).

Frazão states that "a single, fixed, finished, static centre, guarantee of all the meaning between origin and destination, ceased to be part of the great cultural and individual image we have of ourselves" (ibid.: 96). According to Frazão "the border that moved us away from the centre could be the place that suits us as our home" (ibid.: 130). This new "home" is an invitation to help the youngsters in borderline situations.

We believe that education is a privileged field of border crossing. We have much to do in a country where each service, department, education structure and even civil society organizations, live in its own "backyard", walled and well protected, without

ensuring the effectiveness of the action through a real “opening of frontiers” towards a more articulated and effective work.

Another important concept to understand this new frontier paradigm is the concept of *relational agency*.

Relational agency

According to Edwards (2005) *relational agency* is:

the ability to work with others, to expand the object in which the subject is working and trying to transform, recognizing and having access to resources that others bring, as they respond to and interpret an object. It is a capacity that involves recognizing that the other person can be a resource and that work needs to be done in order to get, to recognize and to negotiate the use of this resource so that the subject may align better in joint action with the object. It offers an enhanced and developed version of the sense of personal agency, which can be learned as capacity (Edwards, 2005: 172).

The *relational agency* opposes to the more limited concept of *agency* introduced by Giddens in the 80's, *agency* of an adult or a youngster only in a single perspective. The *relational agency* is a work that takes place through interactions, and only through them we can have an impact in the change of social situations. It seems to us that to be able to say that, in contrast to the image of youth in the “centre”, the *relational agency* suggests an accent on responsibility, on interdependence, on the community resources.

To the extent that we seek to “have access to resources that others bring in” and vice versa, it becomes possible to maximize the physical, human and institutional knowledge, in order to cultivate in our societies and groups this *relational agency*. Learning to work in a dynamic of relational agency and “giving ourselves” (Konkola, 2001) seems to us the only way to usefully work with young people.

A NEW CITIZENSHIP?

At the *ECO* Project we help youngsters to have a strong sense of themselves - that no child or youngster grows up with “clouds of inferiority in their mental skies”, as we heard an American educator say. But, at the same time, we have created conditions for youngsters to learn to be free through a *transformational* and *organizational citizenship* (Alarcão, 2013). This presupposes working the youngster's rights within a community of responsible adults and structures that serve the youngsters: this process implicates shared ways of organization and leadership.

We also tried that, in the *ECO* Project, the youngster learns the attitude of hospitality, as a way of receiving the other, affirming the differences - and not mere acceptance -. We also tried that the youngster learns to work, being able of *agency* and, simultaneously, able to develop a *relational agency*.

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IV. BE YOU: CREATE YOURSELF – STRUCTURING PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGIES OF THE PATHS TAKEN WITH THE YOUNGSTERS.

Hello!

Hi! You there! Hey? Are you listening to this *ECO*?

It is coming to you! Can you hear us? Can you here these voices together!

Yup! Is it you! We want to reach you!⁶

Why can a lamp or a house be an art object and our life can't? (Foucault, 1995: 261).

CIRCULARITY BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

To promote the *co-centrality* of the youngster in the community implies intensifying the “circularity between individual and society” (Pintasilgo, 2011: 374) and create educational contexts where it is possible to experience that it is in relating to others that a person “creates him or herself” and becomes him or herself, because, as noted by Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo:

[...] the isolated individual is an abstraction: its coexistence with others in the family, at work, on many occasions of exchange and trade in contemporary life, raises unprecedented gestures and perhaps new values and new ways of positioning the self (ibid.: 375).

And, according to Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo in her text “Messages to the future generations” - text worked on by the youngsters in a perspective of *artistry* in the *ECO* Project - it is necessary to create conditions so that people can “through their capacity to get organized” become familiar with the concept of Quality of Life (Pintasilgo, 2005: 59).

It has been an inherent and structural objective of *citizenship art* workshops with youngsters in the *ECO* Project to raise unprecedented gestures in order to promote quality of life⁷, both in personal life, as on the community level.

6 Opening words of the publication made with the youngsters who have participated in the Project. This second publication of the *ECO* Project entitled *Echoing... With and for the Youngsters that CREATE the difference*, illustrates the path taken with them.

7 The sustained improvement in quality of life, the respect for the earth capacity limits and caring capacity for the other were the objectives that inspired the vision of the Independent Commission on Population and Quality of Life, chaired by Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo. In 1998 the Commission published the report *Caring for the future. A radical agenda for positive change*. As stated by Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo in the Preface: “We would like also that this attempt at a fresh vision should stimulate action at all levels: [...] of those involved in education, to look for alternative concepts and methods [...]” (p. XII). This is what we also tried to do in the *ECO* Project.

ARTISTRY

Artistry is a concept developed in the context of the Sciences of Education by Donald Schön in his book *The Reflective Practitioner* (1983), in which the author proposes “to challenge professionals to rethink the technical knowledge’s role in the light of the artistic concept in the development of professional excellence”

• https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reflective_practice •

In his article “Artistry in education”, Elliot W. Eisner (2003) argues, as we can read in the article summary and in the link specified below, that

the primary mission of education is to prepare artists. The concept of art used here is not limited to visual arts, but is also used for everything that is done with quality. Objects, processes and ideas, whether practical or theoretical, requiring aesthetic judgment, rely on technical ability, demand attention and depend on the imagination. (...) These cognitive processes, so important to the arts, are extremely important for today’s life scopes. Because schools are marked by well-intentioned policies but often misinformed standardizing and homogenizing the schooling process, *artistry* can serve as an important remedy against the mechanization • www.bit.ly/iL3KzOx •

Artistry is an enlightening concept of what we wanted to develop in the *citizenship art* workshops of the *ECO* Project.

CITIZENSHIP ART = COMMUNITY ART?

Citizenship art is *community art*, but it is not equivalent. *Community art* is defined by the sculptor Jeannette Claessen (2012) as follows:

[...] an art that develops from a more or less intensive cooperation between an artist and a community [...] has roots in folk art [...] moves between two extremes. [...] The artist creates the project and at one point the community is involving itself in it (Claessen, 2012: 105).

According to this plastic artist, *community art* is presented as a *continuum* with two extremes: at one pole is the artist and at the other the community. The artist’s function is that of “the facilitator that deals with the project’s design and its development together with all participants” • www.bit.ly/iTcfWN8 •

The work of Jeannette Claessen with a small community in Spain is an example of *community art*:

- www.mosaica.nl/arte_comunitario-bijvoorbeeld-bayacas •
- <http://elarbodelavidabayacas.blogspot.pt/> •
- <http://liderancaspartilhadas.blogspot.pt/2010/10/el-arbol-de-la-vida.html> •

In the *ECO* Project we opted for an approach in which the artist and the *community* can start the artistic design together. We bet on a *community art* approach in which we do not value the distinction between the poles of the *continuum*, as Claessen does, but we consider the continuum a *space-between* where all move in a dynamic of *artistry*, which we have entitled as *citizenship art*.

CITIZENSHIP ART: INITIAL CONCEPTUALIZATION

In the conceptualization of the *ECO* Project we define *citizenship art* as follows:

Citizenship art is an art with local roots, built on a perspective of mobilizing the participation in the community, with waste and natural materials and respecting natural resources and the art produced in the area, including craft.

Citizenship art seeks to contribute to increase the quality of life and the social cohesion. It appeals to the imagination, broadens horizons and wants to touch people, making them discover that they can do better than they think, giving colour to life and making unexpected things happen. *Citizenship art* is guided by a collective perspective with priority on the process in which everyone participates. The final product is more than the different individual “products” because it is the result of the interaction between individuals and of these with the immediate environment in a transforming perspective.

RE-CONCEPTUALIZING CITIZENSHIP ART

Citizenship art is a form of *community art*, as defined by Claessen:

Art, in the context of community work, refers to all forms of creative expression as visual arts, dance, music, theatre, cinema, literature, etc., that have in common the challenge of free expression of the participants. Working through art, with the population of neighborhoods or participants from other groups, means using a lot of capacities which have not been experienced before. Because creative expression is direct and emerges

from the subconscious mind, the information generated is pure and authentic (Claessen, 2012: 105).

From our point of view, *citizenship art* distinguishes itself from *community art* as follows: in *citizenship art* the resulting art work is less important as a product, but is primarily relevant as a process of interaction amongst all people involved. It takes place in a dynamic relational agency (see chapter III). *Artistry* – knowing-how-to-do-it-with-quality, performing tasks with attention and affection, caring for the common good and not just for self-interest - is the core competency in the participatory process and a structuring attitude of *active citizenship*. The “artistic work” is in *citizenship art* the process of thinking and acting according to the quality of individual and collective life, inspired by an aesthetic sensibility and a desire to include the other and the different in our affections.

Communication can create or not create community:

Communication can include or exclude, invite or reject, create respect or disrespect, create compassion or hatred, create understanding or misunderstanding and charlatanism, can unite or divide, heal or hurt. So communication is very powerful within different types of relationships, groups and communities (ibid.: 103).

Citizenship art is an art of communication, in the *ECO* Project permeated by the *Encounter with the Other and Inclusive Affection*. In *citizenship art* it is impossible not to create community. Expressions of *citizenship art* move on a *continuum* between two poles: between *communication as art* and *art as communication*.

THE *ECO* PROJECT: A *THIRDSPACE*?

Citizen art means to promote *artistry* experiences and to create a meeting point that in Edward Soja’s perspective, professor of urban planning and cultural geographer, might be considered as *thirdspace* • https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Soja •

Thirdspace is a transcendent concept that is constantly expanding to include “an-Other,” thus enabling the contestation and re-negotiation of boundaries and cultural identity • https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Soja#Thirdspace •

According to Maaike de Haardt (2013):

Thirdspace is a way of looking and interpreting that contains both the real and the concrete dimensions of the city (*Firstspace*), as well as the level of imagination, symbolic images (*Secondspace*). Thirdspace exceeds the hierarchical contradiction between the Firstspace and the Secondspace and integrates both spaces in another reality, in another perspective. [...] The Thirdspace emerges in the margins of what is evident, in the unexpected. In the Thirdspace new links are made and new alliances are formed. A basis of solidarity is established and new bridges are built (Haardt, 2013: 115).

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF THE ART STUDIES FIELD

To describe the theoretical perspectives that supported the *citizenship art* workshops with youngsters in the *ECO* Project, we re-contextualize some texts from Lucinda Saldanha's master thesis⁸. There are multiple theoretical perspectives of artistic studies that inspired the work done in these workshops orientated by Lucinda Saldanha, Margarida Figueiredo and Julia Bentes. As mentioned above, the experience is reported in a separate publication, constructed with the young participants.

In the footsteps of Foucault: life as a work of art

What surprises me is that in our society the work of art has become something only related to objects and not with people or with life; that art is made by specialists who are artists or that art is something specialized. However, couldn't everyone's life be transformed in a work of art? Why can a lamp or a house be an art object and not our life (Foucault, 1995: 261)?

In *ECO* Project we tried to develop creative strategies that exemplify the possibilities for human beings to invent themselves, in the recreation of life experience, in the invention and construction of the self as subject able to use freedom and not submitted to the established power, the "norms" and bonds of existence. As Foucault states: "Since the 'I' is not given to us, I believe that there is only one practical consequence: we have to create ourselves as a work of art" (ibid.: 262).

⁸ In this section we use the texts organized by Lucinda Saldanha for the *citizenship art* workshop with the project team and the representatives of the partner organizations. These texts have been adapted from her master's thesis in Art Studies: Saldanha, L. (2012), *To Perform Full Age. The Parody of Life Project*. Faculty of Arts, University of Coimbra. (*Performer a Maior Idade. O Projeto Paródia da Vida*). Lucinda Saldanha was one of the monitors of the *ECO* Project and co-responsible for the *citizenship art* workshops.

In the *ECO* Project we tried to explore the creation of existence modes and lifestyles able to resist and escape to fixed models of individual identities, transforming life into a work that is created performatively and at each moment in an authentic way.

Aesthetics of existence

The *ECO* Project points at the need to cultivate the “self-technologies”, to “take care of yourself” present in the *aesthetics of existence* proposal (Foucault, 1984): the looking inside the self of the subject by reflection on a lived emotional experience; the expressive dimension in saying yourself using language and, finally, the narrative dimension in which the subject stands as a character of its own history, in an act of “writing the self”. The search for self-reflexivity manifests itself in this Project as a path of invention, announcing creative possibilities of transformation of the ways of living, within the uncertain limits and “against the forms of submission” (Foucault, 1995).

Body

People even don't remember anymore that their body is the threshold, the *atrium*, where they construct their universe” (Luce Irigaray, 1984, quoted in Ende, 1999).

In this perspective of Aesthetics of Existence we use a *polymorphic art model* in the *citizenship art* workshops, in which the various artistic languages are understood as expressive forms of creation and integration, privileging an experiential learning experience, *through the body*, in a *performative approach* of the social realities to be transformed.

In the *citizenship art* workshops, we start from a *body experience* and from a metaphor with multiple meanings, for example the Mandala metaphor, and then extend this experience to develop a critical awareness of the world and the reality we live in. Starting from the body, taking the Mandala as a central metaphor, stimulated us to critically understand what it means living in the “centre” and in the “periphery”, in personal and community life. As well as to understand different internal reasons that lead people to live “focused”, critically aware of where they live, centred and rooted, as well as to understand the consequences of individual behaviour in the community and society as a whole.

A “field note”, placed in the *ECO* Project page on June 5th, 2015, refers to the importance of *learning with the body*:



Memories of the ECO meeting from this week, June 3rd: we have been thinking about and feeling which could be: MEETING places that encourage our CREATIVITY!

Then, at the time of CREATION, we experience different strategies: relaxation, creative visualization and guided imagination, and then, using the MANDALA as a symbol of focussing and concentration. It was a very relaxing and lively MEETING, where we met with ourselves and had the opportunity to listen and learn with our body!

Aesthetics of daily life

In the *ECO Project* we tried to understand, inspired by Certeau (1996), the *daily life* as a “poetic construction” and as “invention”, without considering it only as routine or accommodation, but mainly as a *creative place of possibilities*.

This search for what is apparently invisible in the margin, overlooked and undervalued in a society marked by the ideology of *Just do it*, of consumption and spectacle, was our central option. Knowing the interstices of everyday life, the living material of existence and create it and integrating it in this artistic process, reveals a set of conditions that opened the possibility of transformation and change.

Event: disruption of daily life

The ECO Project was presented as a relational process of collective exchange, a process of building multiple meanings directly linked to events. Established as a *discontinuity* in the *daily life* experience this process can open the possibility of bringing the relations in daily life to the world of art and transform the seemingly trivial day-to-day event into something extraordinary, exploring how art can become significant in daily life experiences, and how the subjectivity of the subjects involved can be rebuilt.

Poor Art

Arte Povera (Poor Art), the artistic movement born in Italy in the second half of the 60's of the twentieth century, critically questioned the influence of modernism, of the industrial revolution and technology, by understanding that these contributed to destroy the importance of the subjective, unique and original human experience. Far beyond

the strictly rational and utilitarian answers to human existential questions, the *ECO* Project sought to deconstruct the “readymade” responses, by valuing the mystery and by deepening the attention for the simplicity of the process of discovery, despite the complexity. Introducing the perspective of “true art” in the apparent “banality of things” of daily life and routine, we can look at things in a new perspective, questioning the dichotomy between art and life.

One of the central characteristics of *Arte Povera* is the use of unconventional simple and natural materials, which show the banality, “futility” or poverty of daily life. Using craftwork, making direct contact and creating proximity with the materials, contrast with the rapid consumption in series of artificial uniform objects of the consumption culture.

Common objects were used to evoke a preindustrial era, such as soil, rocks, clothing, rags, paper, newspaper, bags, wood, rope, sand, meat and fruit. The interest in a more physical and material art, close to the daily life forms and materials, indicated paths for reflection in the *ECO* Project. The use of raw, ephemeris, and decomposing material helps to overcome the distinctions and dichotomies between art and daily life, as well as between nature and culture. It also helps to overcome the dichotomy between the natural rhythm of time and the rhythm of time artificially transformed by modern life.

The *artist*, as shown by this movement, is not presented in its distance from the world and from the others, neither as a technician or an expert, but as a co-builder of dialogical experiences, real and concrete; a creator of unusual and surprising situations, generated by the materials and objects found in everyday life, which stimulate the experience and the contradiction. The *artist* is a participative facilitator of human interaction, in order to provide a “full art experience” in the “performative sacrifice of the banal, of the common, of the object of daily life” (Celant, 1967)

• www.flashartonline.it/article/arte-povera/ •

Democratization of art and extended art

The whole process of living is my creative act.

Each person is an artist (Joseph Beuys, 1995).

The *aesthetics of existence* and the *aesthetics of daily life* suggest an artistic practice marked by great openness, proximity and democracy, which advocates that we are all creators and authors of our existence, immersed in our daily practice. We can use our existence as a creative work, using daily materials as stimuli. We can consider that the thought of Joseph Beuys is paradigmatic, because it points to a conception of “expanded art” which ignores the boundaries between the various life spheres. This was a central focus in the *ECO* Project. The Project sought to highlight Beuys’ thinking, valuing the experience as an action of artistic performance that questions the barriers between

artists and non-artists, reflecting on the perspective that all people have creative skills

· www.margencero.com/articulos/new/joseph_beuys.html ·

Relational art - an art of Encounter with the Other?

According to Nicolas Bourriaud (2006), contemporary artistic practices consider the human exchange as an aesthetic object on itself, as *relational aesthetics*, in which art only comes to life and form when it causes interactions, relationships and social processes. In this context, contemporary art becomes a relationship to be experienced, a reality to be lived. In other words “a form of art that is mainly based on intersubjectivity and togetherness as a central theme, a collective elaboration of meaning and a place of production of a specific sociability” (Bourriaud, 2006: 67).

The artistic process emerges from a negotiation, from sharing and starting a dialogue (Bourriaud, 2006). In other words, what we seek to develop in the first place are the relationships between people and the world, through aesthetic objects and lived experiences. Starting a “conversation” and a relational exchange, which will be revealed as performative work, unfinished and open: “it is not (only) what you see that is important, but what takes place between people” (Bourriaud, 2009: 89).

Utopia of proximity

The *ECO* Project tried to point to the “utopia of proximity” referred by Bourriaud (2006: 3), in a contemporary society characterized by a network of relationships each time more reduced, based on the eagerness of commercialization and consumption, within standardized and virtualized relational spaces, in subjects formatted by the homogenization of culture. How can the contemporary subject reinvent and produce new meanings and generate events that produce meaning?

Citizenship art as a community exercise in the Encounter with the Other

The *ECO* Project tried to revalue and evoke the past, the memory, the community, the close relationship and the human experience, beyond the modern industrial and technological paradigm and the technocratic society model. A project of this nature has a political potential, it can be a way to resist to the modern macro-narratives of art and break the artificial division between art and life.

The collective artistic process consisted of a community exercise in which it was possible to discuss and renegotiate the relationship between art and life, in the encounter with the Other. It is through the participation of the Other, whether in the collective community or in the Art institution, that relationships between art and life may prove to

be forces of formative and artistic action. These practices will question the naturalized spaces for art (museum and gallery), exploring alternative experiences and spaces, and especially spaces of everyday life, in a dynamic and unfinished process.

BRIEF NOTES ABOUT THE PATH FOLLOWED IN THE *CITIZENSHIP ART WORKSHOPS*

The methodology developed in this Project turned out to be an always open and unfinished process, in constant transformation, following the structural orientation that from the lived experience and its expression we would arrive to the creation of metaphors, revealing multiple meanings of the experiences, which may generate new changes and new creations.

The youngsters, in an involving and safe emotional environment, were challenged in each workshop first to experience in and with their body. Learning happens with the whole body (organic, visceral, sensory, psychological, interior, emotional), and in an integrated and holistic manner (thoughts, memories, experiences, feelings, emotions and actions). Starting from their own personal and unique experience - "listening to yourself / and to your body" - the youngsters were challenged to create metaphors, to "shape", express and communicate what was experienced. From these metaphors we went sharing around the symbol, in order to extend the lived body experience to the "body" of the group and then to the "body" of the community and society. Thus awareness of what happens to you and inside you is extended to critical awareness of what might happen with the Other.

FIRST WORKSHOP: *YOUTH AND APPEARANCE – BE YOU: CREATE YOURSELF!*

For this workshop we based on psychological, artistic and social postulates, which perspective the identity as a human construction developed in coordination with the various contexts and as a continuous and open process of dynamic creation, unfolding during the cycle of life as a narrative of meaning and significance. The workshop was meant to be a safe and ample space for sharing, interaction, and experimentation, promoting self-knowledge, awareness and critical thinking. The aim was to facilitate the emergence of subjects able to free themselves from domination and from the tendency to fix and close the individual identity in preformatted and normalized forms.

For that, we created a context of free, active, participatory, relational and collaborative creation, in a logic of art democratization, and of an intertwined relationship

⁹ In the book *Echoing... With and for youngsters who CREATE the difference* you can consult the plan and the objectives of this workshop.

and a renewed meeting between art and life. Questions such as “what are we? What do we want to show/what can we show? How to show who we are?” openly refer to the daily life experiences and to the autobiographical material.

The workshops were orientated in a perspective of *ethics and aesthetics of existence*, as proposed by Foucault (1984), who refers to the impossibility that the “I” can be given to us. These aesthetics challenge each human being to create him or herself, as if he or she was a work of art, in order to become a differentiated, singular and original subject through an open, always unfinished process of self-reflection and critical self-creation, a constant process of transcending the social categories.

In other words, what we tried to develop with the logic of relational art, were the relationships between the youngsters and the world, through aesthetic objects and lived experiences.

In this process, the youngsters were challenged to create ideas, thoughts, symbols, metaphors, which were constituted as a creative and integrating synthesis of what was lived in the workshop, expressed and communicated at a later stage in arts languages (music, theatre/performance, photography, *collage*, modeling, video/cinema, writing/poetry, installation, drawing/painting, recycling...).

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V. PHILOSOPHY AND STRUCTURING METHODOLOGIES OF THE JOURNEYS MADE BY ADULTS

FOLLOWING HANNAH ARENDT: TO PROMOTE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE *POLIS*

(...) In the city, the human being is not only the more or less attentive observer, often skeptical and indifferent, sometimes an occasional political analyst. The city (*polis* figure) is where the *human being emerges as a subject*.

So, speaking of action, I deliberately put myself following the philosopher Hannah Arendt. It is not through work that each person performs in his or her own domain but through action that he or she participates in the construction of the city as organized society (Pintasilgo, 2011: 208-209).

It is with words and actions that we are inserted in the human world; and this insertion is like a second birth in which we confirm and assume the original and singular fact of our original physical appearance. It is not imposed by necessity, such as labour, nor governed by utility, such as work. It can be stimulated, but never conditioned, by the presence of others in whose company we want to be; its impetus comes from the beginning, from the world when we are born and to which we respond starting something new on our own initiative (Arendt, 2001: 225).

Exactly because of the characteristic of self-revelation, the person who acts needs the public domain. Action cannot take place when it is hidden. (...) Hannah Arendt shows that the Greek *polis* (...), the public domain, has its origin in human beings acting together, in a "community of words and acts". To whom this space is sealed is taken away a part of the human reality, the reality of being recognized by others, of developing power together with others in order to give shape to 'human things'.

Action takes place within a network of human relations and life stories. Compared with producing things, with creating the material world, action is very vulnerable. It is not controllable or predictable; in acting we are always dependent on others and so the end result is never fixed. In addition, acting is unlimited; a small act, considered not important, can have tremendous and unpredictable consequences "(Achterhuis, 1998 quoted in Koning, 2006: 63).

It was with this philosophy of "action", of "participation in the *polis*", of the "second birth", of "starting something new", proposed by Hannah Arendt, that we started in 2014 the *ECO* Project in the community of Golegã, which constitutes the *polis*, the public

space where the Project took place and through which we hope to contribute to the emergence of human beings as subjects. It was in this perspective that we tried to use educational work methodologies with adults allowing this emergence in a praxis of reflection and action, as proposed by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire.

We have carried out in the *ECO* Project context the following paths with professionals of educational action, representatives of partner organizations and with the Project team:

- Three workshops of three hours each, with the Project team, representatives of partner organizations and others interested people of the Golegã community. In these workshops we covered the following topics: *Shared Leadership and Intervision, Inclusive Affection and Authentic Communication and Citizenship Art*;
- Two workshops of six hours each, with assistants of educational action. The first on the *Importance of affectivity in the approach to youngsters* and the second on the *Role of affection in education of children and youngsters*;
- Two training sessions of 30 hours each, with teachers of primary and secondary schools of Golegã and surrounding counties with the theme *Encounter with the other: inclusive affection, authentic communication and nonviolent language*;
- One workshop of six hours, open to educational professionals beyond the Golegã County, about the structuring themes of the project: *Encounter with other - Inclusive Affection, Citizenship Art and Active Citizenship*.

CONSCIENTIZATION

The promotion of participation is demanding and needs science (Rui Marques, 2014: 11).

Conscientization is the central concept in the educational philosophy of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire • http://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paulo_Freire •.

Paulo Freire's philosophy of *conscientization* constitutes an essential reference in the educational work with adults and youngsters in the contexts of the Grail Movement. All the action of the Grail is implicitly based on his educational philosophy and methodology and the initiatives only vary in originality, content and groups of participants.

Conscientization is the educational process that allows the individual to develop an active critical consciousness and to be part of a transformation action. According to Freire (1971), "*conscientization* is first and foremost an act of knowledge. It involves a gradual revelation of reality (...)". As the "true" word is action and reflection, it is necessary (to learn) to say the word so it can transform the world. It is a work that intends people to grow both in freedom as in assumed responsibility.

People are only free when they create their own key reference and act accordingly, moving inside a given force field. Therefore the obsolete character of ideologies and of simplistic adherence to formal codes (Pintasilgo 1985: 229).

As the *conscientization* process takes the individual from a state of naive consciousness (uncritical, submissive) to an increasingly more advanced state of active critical consciousness, it is an eminently cultural act, by the dialectic that the person establishes with the situation, in a reciprocal permanent transformation (Koning, 2005: 95-96).

LITERACY

More recently we have been using the formulation literacy rather than *conscientization*, particularly in the above mentioned Program *Roots, Ground and Horizons*, where, by building diversified *Creative and Reciprocal Paths and Circles of Literacy*, we try to contribute to another education, to a transformative praxis, to quality of life of the population and to the deepening of democracy.

This Program has the general scope to promote critical and creative participation of youngsters and adults in public spaces, to deepen values and to contribute to the discovery of talents, the development of knowledge, skills and capacities, often hidden and not mobilized. As mentioned above, it was during this Program that the *ECO* Project emerged.

Literacy indicates a fluid process of successive learning, a “permanent and continuous process of evolution” (Damasio, 2001: 127) in the acquisition of skills, not just reading and writing or other forms of representation, for instance visual and media (ibid.: 125), but also the political action competence in the *polis*, as an end on itself, by training skills of speaking, acting and thinking with others.

“Literacy is a technical and more embracing concept, but more ‘empty’ politically and philosophically” (Koning, 2009: 87). In a time of uncertainty and transition it may be more suitable as formulation than the *conscientization* concept, which proposes clear and defined objectives in terms of transformation of the world.

CONVERSATIONAL LEARNING

In the projects we have been working in more recently as in this *ECO* Project, we used the *conversational learning methodology* of Ann Baker, Patricia Jensen and David Kolb (2002): • www.bit.ly/1FJuYEU •.

The methodology of *conversational learning* is based on to the *experiential learning* model of David Kolb: [• www.bit.ly/iObgwIz •](http://www.bit.ly/iObgwIz).

It was with Ine van Emmerik of the Dutch training enterprise *Extravaleren* [• www.extravaleren.nl •](http://www.extravaleren.nl) and member of the Grail in the Netherlands that we started to use this methodology in 2001 in the European Lien Network [• www.bit.ly/2iJlS1o •](http://www.bit.ly/2iJlS1o) and from 2004 in the already referred Program *Literacy Women Leadership* of the Foundation *Caring for the Future* [• www.fcuidarofuturo.pt/mulheres.html •](http://www.fcuidarofuturo.pt/mulheres.html).

The *conversational learning* process provides a fluid educational space, however structured, an adequate space to deepen awareness, to undo preconceived ideas and make circulate new ideas. The *conversational learning* space enables people to “slow down”, to discuss and to reflect on their experiences. Talk in order to “find new meanings” and “to let emerge new knowledge” and develop a critical look at the reality, promoting the construction of innovative practices.

This methodology was tested in the project *Literacy for Gender Equality and Quality of Life Quality: Shared Leadership* (Koning et al, 2012; Múrias and Koning, 2012), in the context of the program, *Literacy Women Leadership* of the Foundation *Caring for Future*. The two publications resulting from this project are available online in the blog of Association *Espaços (Spaces) - Alternative Projects of Women and Men*:

The Workbook: [• www.bit.ly/iP8gGma •](http://www.bit.ly/iP8gGma)

The book *Shared Leadership*: [• www.bit.ly/iMLAmXE •](http://www.bit.ly/iMLAmXE)

The Association *Espaços* gives continuity to the project *Literacy for Gender Equality and Quality of Life: Shared Leadership*, searching

to define the horizons of utopian dimensions in specific intervention projects in which we question our action, we started feeling the need during multiple and shared reflection and action paths, to create a space “where people, ideas and practices could continuously cross to create new social spaces” (Koning et al: 2012) [• http://associacaoespacos.blogspot.pt/ •](http://associacaoespacos.blogspot.pt/).

BETWEEN *CONSCIENTIZATION* AND *CONVERSATIONAL LEARNING*

Baker, Jensen and Kolb (2002) make a distinction between dialogue and conversation. Dialogue, a central in concept in Paulo Freire’s philosophy and methodology of *conscientization* is characterized by the authors as “voices in opposition in the search for truth,” a definition that emphasizes speech, understanding and the exchange of different ideas. In the dialogue we explore all the complexities of thought and language. In the conversation the emotional aspects are more emphasized.

However, in both methods the focus is on human understanding, on the production of existential knowledge through voices in opposition while searching for truth; both methodologies focus on the emergence of the subject (young, adult) who objectifies the world around him or her, in the reflection that promotes critical insertion in the world through a transforming action (Koning et al, 2012: 27).

What primarily differentiates the *conversational learning* methodology from *conscientization* is, according to Eunice Macedo and Amelia Macedo of the Paulo Freire Institute, that the first focuses on “narrative formulation in the first person ”and not directly on “*conscientization* of an oppressed group, which members together assume the action for social transformation” (Macedo and Macedo, 2012: 234).

In the *ECO* Project we used *conversational learning* enhancing the verb “include”, as it is in relationships of affection that people learn how they can relate in an ethical way with otherness.

SHARED LEADERSHIP

Democracy is all the transformation of unequal power relations in relations of shared authority. Since such relationships go through the entire social structure, the task of democratization of society is immense (Sousa Santos, 2011: 108).

Authority of today is born there where it is shown to be relevant (Boutelier, 2011).

The *ECO* Project teamwork was carried out in a regime of *shared leadership* and *Intervision*. This *modus operandi* was returned “in mirror” to the youngsters team, to teachers, parents, workers, partners, searching for synergies and *co-creation* processes which ensured the implementation of the Project in *next practices* beyond its lifetime existence. In order to develop new forms of work organization we need to look for *next practices*, rather than thinking in terms of *best practices*. Best practices still are within the dominant paradigm, in ways of doing based on the already accumulated experience. *Next practices* are “less easy to copy” or to reproduce. It is “not about the ‘grand design’, but we are dealing with an evolution process that is built together with all the people involved” (Dijkstra & Feld 2011: 31).

The dominant paradigm of leadership focuses the attention on the leader and its qualities and capacities, while *shared leadership* values the process of group decision.

This generates more life, gives room to the new in places of work and citizenship, as well as in more private spaces:

In a system of shared leadership more information circulates. What differentiates it from other forms of leadership is the sharing of competencies and responsibilities. It is not necessary to end with the hierarchy. Equality does not have to end up with differentiated processes (Múrias and Koning, 2012: 42).

Shared leadership is a more laborious and time-consuming process but allows the increase of work quality. It is easier and faster to manage the existing spaces and reproduce a known working standard, than start new processes.

Marques speaks in terms of a demanding “collaborative governance”:

The additional effort necessary in a collaborative process, where each partner must adapt himself to the reality of the “other,” sharing power and prominence, requires that the gains from cooperation become clear so that partners are challenged to enter in this dynamic (Marques 2014: 10).

And he underlines the trust: “Therefore, the keyword for collaborative processes is ‘trust’: Without it, nothing can be built” (ibid.: 11). He defines the leadership concept of a collaborative model, as follows:

In this dynamic it is important to have leaders who are able to mobilize and inspire, to build bridges and to create a dream in the context of organizational models with greater demand for flexibility, agility, versatility, speed and work quality of its teams (ibid.: 11).

The expectations regarding inspirational leadership are still great, although most persons have trouble with people who claim to be their leader, unless it is a person of their own choice. Our proposal would be to stop talking about “leaders” “recognizing and valuing the hierarchical leadership functions, but trying to identify “leadership processes” and not “leaders”.

Leadership in the “Improvisation Society” (“model” of society proposed by Boutelier and referred to in Chapter II), is about proposing themes, preparing agreements, establishing links within and between networks, creating space for people to reveal themselves and organize cooperation (Boutelier, 2011: 20). Maybe on this way, and in this era of Global Space, leaders can stop to be “messianic or tyrannical”.

Are Leadership processes changing? Is there more room for the expression of collective will, for collaborative innovation, for assuming the risk of error, for co-creation? The way leadership was exercised in the last century became inadequate. In the

twenty-first century, all people can, at certain times, assume leadership tasks. One must learn to perform them and to drop them in order to make room for other skills that can be mobilized in order to increase the work quality.

INTERVISION AND WHITESPACE

It was also with Ine van Emmerik, from the above mentioned *Extravaleren* training enterprise, that we introduced in the methodology of our teamwork the dynamic of *intervision*. Ine van Emmerik relates the concept *whitespace* to *intervision*:

To promote literacy processes in the professional context implies developing skills able to cope with complexity, while we decelerate and ask the question "What are we actually doing?". With this question we start a nonlinear process of understanding, in which new insights can arise. Whitespace is a concept of literature that indicates the white between the lines that are part of the text. [...] it is a metaphor for the phase of transition between order and surprise that is inherent to the nonlinear understanding process. The *intervision* is the appropriate method to facilitate this process. It is a way of working in which the pairs, on a mutual basis, provide critical and supporting feedback in order to improve their professional skills. The facilitation of the *intervision* process is like conducting a conversational learning process, which also requires certain skills (Emmerik, 2012: 91).

Intervision consists in mutual advice in small groups of professionals (3 to 10 persons), in which work experiences are exchanged with the goal of finding solutions to problems and achieve continuous professional improvement.

The safe environment allows formulating new knowledge and developing alternatives for action resulting from the group members' points of view. Thus, *intervision* implies a willingness to learn together and assumes that knowledge is in the hands of all group members. It is a process of self and co-learning, not of training the other. It implies dialogue and reflection, which can result in personal and professional growth.

The implicitly multidisciplinary approach in *intervision* allows valuing various forms of understanding of a situation and so increasing the possibility to innovate practice. *Intervision* is not an appropriate instrument in contexts marked by hierarchical relationships. It requires participant's communication skills. The practice of *intervision* may prove to be a solid foundation in an enterprise or organization in an interconnected world, which make self-learning and learning in teams and networks the foundation of their growth. The *intervision* process can be facilitated by someone outside of the group or by one of its own members.

The methodology can be variable but always implies starting from questions/issues presented by group members that can lead to introspection and increase analytical capacities and capacities of problem-solving. It means learning with each other from situations experienced together. The focus can be on an individual issue of a person in the group or on the thinking and acting of a group of professionals.

When the *intervision* dynamics are respected whoever presents a problem in a session may have influence on the situation and power to indicate which direction to go, to take leadership at the right moment. Often the problem is a dilemma, which can be addressed and solved in various ways. The diversity of ways of resolving allows freedom of choice, choices that can lead you to innovation and quality improving. Being able to make a new choice is a typical result of an *intervision* process.

Like *shared leadership*, *intervision* is the basis for a new operating paradigm in a “Society of Improvisation”, in which the first task is to “tune” with the Other, in social practices guided by an ethic of wanting the common good

- www.performanceconsultancy.nl/artikelen/Intervisie.pdf •

AUTHENTIC COMMUNICATION

Through a non-violent *authentic communication* between people, a communication that enables their voices to be heard in community initiatives, it is possible to reduce the social risks, in case of the *ECO* Project, the risk of violence amongst youngsters.

In September 2010 Jeannette Claessen (see chapter IV) facilitated a workshop in the Golegã Grail Centre on *authentic communication*, which has been since then an essential reference and a practice always in construction in the way we work. In this workshop and for three days she worked this communicating practice with a diversified group of education and health professionals in which she relied on the *Nonviolent Communication* developed by Marshall Rosenberg, an American psychologist.

- https://pt.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Rosenberg •
- <http://bit.ly/iWWtaM7> •
- <http://bit.ly/iQtMKLV> •

CO-CREATION

Shared leadership (Koning et al, 2012: 49) is much more than knowing how we can lead in an effective way. It is a matter of the evolution of society and the interpretation of this evolution in new forms of work, of organization, of learning, of management and

leadership. Jelle Dijkstra and Paul-Peter Feld (2011: 10) state that what is important in this process is not to “find the holy grail” but what matters is “the search process itself”. In a *co-creation* regime all people should be able to contribute with their skills and talents, connecting with others to create added value for all and to give shape to innovation.

In an interview, Feld speaks of his experience at *Xerox Nederland* and of the innovative form of participation - *shared leadership* - of those who work in this company. In a world where work becomes increasingly complex, antagonistic thinking is, according to Feld, outdated, because the challenges in these times are too big to afford losing ideas and skills in a regime of win-lose. Therefore he proposes *co-creation* rather than negotiation. Negotiation requires that both parts are in confrontation, in which one part wins at the expense of the other. *Co-creation* means working together in order to find solutions • www.bit.ly/ij4oVO2 •.

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VI. RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE STRUCTURING KEY CONCEPTS OF THE PROJECT

The key area of the ECO Project, *Meeting with the other: Inclusive Affection and Active Citizenship*, (B11-200587) is the promotion of *active citizenship*, as we read on www.bit.ly/iL6JUd4 :

Trying to contribute to an *active citizenship* through alternative non-formal education approaches that encourage critical and creative participation of young people and adults in the public space and that promote inclusive practices, the project aims to contribute to the discovery of talents, by training a group of 15 youngsters in *citizenship art* and by stimulating the creation of a base for local entrepreneurship. [...]

The partners commit themselves to promote an *active citizenship* through non - formal education modalities that encourage critical and creative participation of youngsters and adults in the public space, exploring a number of innovative concepts in the areas of education and citizenship.

The concepts *inclusive affection*, *active citizenship* and *citizenship art* were considered key concepts in the ECO Project presentation document. In this chapter, the concepts *inclusive affection* and *active citizenship* are presented and resumed in a reconceptualization attempt. The presentation and the reconceptualization of the *citizen art* concept can be found in Chapter IV.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP: CONCEPTUALIZATION

Citizenship

There are multiple references to explore in order to find a satisfactory definition on the citizenship concept, which is the “quality of being a citizen”¹⁰. For example:

Citizenship is the exercise of civil, political and social rights and duties established in the constitution. A good citizenship implies the interrelationship of rights and duties are and the respect and the observance of both contribute to a more balanced society.

¹⁰ In the *Portuguese Language Dictionary*, Porto Editora, 5th edition, 1977.

To exercise citizenship is to be aware of rights and obligations and to fight to put them into practice. The exercise of citizenship implies following the constitutional dispositions. To prepare the citizen for the citizenship exercise is one of a country's educational goals. The citizenship concept is also related with the country where the person exercises its rights and duties • www.significados.com.br/cidadania/ .

Education for citizenship

In the article “Education for citizenship in Portugal: contributions to analyze its evolution in the Portuguese school curriculum,” Norberto Ribeiro, Tiago Neves and Isabel Menezes, from the University of Porto, show the progressive elimination of citizenship from School:

The fading away of the centrality of the education for citizenship, along with the emergence of the importance of other forms of education, of economic and financial nature, in the scope of the global crisis that has recently affected Europe, leads us to conclude that the cause of its subtle elimination is due to the fact that we no longer recognize in it a particular instrumental utility. [...]

Therefore, the education for citizenship is fundamental. Not only regarding the construction of learning (on the civic, political and moral level) for a free and democratic participation of individuals both in the public and collective space, as well in the private and individual space; but also on the level of the attribution of meaning in personal, social and cultural terms, to the academically structured knowledge transmitted by the school, as well as to the responsible use of those skills in the everyday civic and political life of the individuals (Ribeiro et al, 2014: 25).

Facing the subtle elimination of the citizenship education, we want to highlight and thank the Schools of Golegã, Azinhaga e Pombalinho for their vision and confidence in participating, with the promoter and the other partner organizations, in the “integrated governance” of the *ECO* Project, where *active citizenship* was one of the structuring concepts of the educational praxis with youngsters.

The *ECO* Project shows us that a reconceptualization of the *active citizenship* requires that the education for citizenship should not be considered as one more *curricular unit* introduced in the school schedule, but should be *transversely* learned in the context of all the units that comprise the curricular design. Thus, in the Portuguese Language or in History teachings, the education for citizenship issues are addressed (contents and forms of organizing the work in the classroom), as well as in Mathematics or in Science. Education for citizenship must be **experiential**, that is, learned through experience, lived as a democratic participation at all levels of school life: co-responsabilization for

monitoring of the younger ones, respectful relationships and courtesy with the older ones, with those who are different from oneself, learning to know them, parity in gender relations, non-violent communication, broad participation in school initiatives, autonomy and accountability for their own initiatives, learning to design and implement by mobilizing resources. Education for citizenship requires keeping the educational space aesthetically pleasing and welcoming, clean (classrooms, hallways and common areas, outdoor space, etc.), saving the common resources (water, electricity); to participate in school life management; to elect representatives to the various decision-making forums; to embrace and develop solidarity initiatives; etc.

Therefore, appears the conception of new citizenship: the young citizen in antithesis to the “separation of youngsters from the public”. The respect for the citizenship of youngsters is revealed in:

- Full social inclusion of all youngsters: from more vulnerable socio-economic environment, from different cultures and backgrounds; differences in gender, religion and ethnic background; youngsters with “special needs”;
- Interaction in common projects where each youngster can bring in his or her specific individual contribution;
- Institutions that respect the youngster’s interests and their need to participate in the decisions that affect them;
- Acceptance, recognition and encouragement of friendships between youngsters in a non-violent and respectful relationship with the Other;
- Special care and attention to youngsters who have more difficulty in making friends or who are victims of bullying;
- Encouragement of the youngsters to follow their own ways about what “makes sense” and to create their “theories” about things and about the world;
- Legitimacy of the *youngsters voices* in their participation in the city/*polis*, community, family, group of friends.

Re-conceptualizing: pieces for the composition of the *Active Citizenship* “patchwork”¹¹

We used the metaphor “patchwork” to reinforce the temporary nature of our process of *bricolage*, of the “cutting and sewing” of our work on these pages, which aims to build a possible framework of reference for the citizenship issues. It will be a re-conceptualization crossed by several dimensions.

¹¹ Annex 3: Challenge-Text for Active Citizenship

With the “patchwork” metaphor we also honor all handmade creation of the artists that we met throughout the Project.

The “patchwork pieces” consist in excerpts of texts that address compelling themes for the construction of a “citizenship-always-in-state-of-update”. By the end of each “piece of patchwork” we will refer something about the experience lived by the youngsters who participated in the *ECO* Project: a situation or a quote from something that was recorded. We invite our readers to join us in this process of *bricolage*.

Both the conference held in Oporto, *Brave New World. The future has arrived too soon?*¹² on June 12th, 2015, as the book *Dappere Nieuwe Wereld* of a group of 21 young Dutch researchers • www.bit.ly/iVGUGvv • refer - explicitly (for the conference) or implicitly (in the case of the Dutch researchers) - to the title of Aldous Huxleys book *Brave New World*: • www.idph.com.br/conteudos/ebooks/BraveNewWorld.pdf •.

From the book *Dappere Nieuwe Wereld* we extracted and translated excerpts from several authors to present a series of pieces of texts for the recovery of our *active citizenship* patchwork in three sections; **Ground; Bets/Proposals; Means**. After each piece of text we establish a connection with the *ECO* Project, using the Projects page on Facebook, • <http://on.fb.me/2iL7zts> • which worked as a “logbook” or a record of the activities and daily reflections of the Project.

Ground¹³

Between *Techno-polis* and local culture

The *Techno-polis* is the set of universal and unifying forces emanating from the process of modernization. It is the technical field of the environment, which enabled our material prosperity and the modern freedoms. At the same time it is the power that separates us from our natural and social environment. Traditional and natural relationships are under pressure, causing a loss of direction and a consequent human need for incorporation of two poles: the technological pole and the traditional culture pole, which is an opposing force and which has a more important role than is widely assumed.

In what sense the tradition continues not only to survive but also to bind itself to the universal modernization of structures? How can people continue to interact and change in this symbiotic relationship between traditional local culture and universal forces of

¹² See Annex 3

¹³ See chapter II for the reasons of the use of the “ground” metaphor.

modernity? How to maintain the dynamics of this precarious relationship as it is submitted to constantly changing circumstances? (Sheikh, 2011: 17-28).

In the *ECO* Project we deepened the knowledge of the traditional local culture:



It is with great pleasure that we invite you to be present at the next *ECO* meeting: “Conversations with Citizenship Art”, on Wednesday, December 10th, at 15th, in the Equuspolis building in Golegā.

It will be an afternoon to be together and talk, with the presence of some artists, about how the arts and culture change our lives and how they can contribute to the transformation of the world around us.

December 4th, 2014

Yesterday, December the 10th, we lived together another interesting *ECO* encounter: “Conversations with Citizen Art”, with the presence of different citizens and artists from several artistic languages. It was a very rich conversation, in which we thought about how much we put what we are and what we believe in, in what we do. We started from a video, we left attached:

• <http://bit.ly/1poYNDz> •

This video has challenged us to become more aware about the importance of magic, of persistence and of the learning path needed to turn our life in a work of art always to be up dated.

December 11th, 2014

No to the market “without moral”

As a result of the turning point in the eighties, the global economy was slowly stripped of her cultural background.

Growth became a goal in itself. [...] What could be the new shared framework of norms capable to structure the economic growth?

We will have to find a new framework for the market economy, where GDP as a benchmark should be replaced by a portfolio of social indicators and indices of a policy that ensures the sustainability of the economy, environment and society (Thomas, 2011: 137-148).

In the *ECO* Project we tried to contribute to a new perception of the economy, the environment and the organization of life in society, through reflecting on the importance of voluntary work, which can be carried out in contexts of diverse local institutions.



The *ECO* team has attended this last Wednesday, January 21st, two campaigns of awareness raising on the voluntary work of youngsters: “I am doing volunteer work! And you?”. We were present in two classes: Professional Agricultural Technical Course and in 9thA class, from the School Mestre Martins Correia. In this session we had the opportunity to share our desire to do volunteer work, witnessing the effect that these experiences can have on our lives. At the same time, we took with us a list of organizations/places where the young people of Golegã may involve as volunteers. Thank you all for the sharing and for the possibility to show how we have so many living spaces in our community that are waiting for our life!

January 21st, 2015

We continue with our *ECO* awareness raising campaigns: “I am VOLUNTEERING! And you?”. This Wednesday, January 28th, we were in 8C, the class of a young *ECO* group member, Cristiana Pimentel. Enriched by the life testimony and sharing of Cristiana's experiences, we talked about the importance of volunteering in our lives and in the community around us, we thought together and deconstructed preconceived ideas about volunteering and launched the challenge to participation!

It was a very productive conversation because on that same day 9 more youngsters, who participated already in our afternoon actions, joined our Team! What a wonderful morning for our project!

January 29th, 2015

Radical decentralization and the future Citizenship

Radical decentralization is possible due to the technological developments of the last twenty years and due to an increasingly educated population. *Do it yourself*, or: people and groups that solve themselves small and large problems, this will be how the future adult generations give shape to their citizenship. The bottom-up approach brings out the best in people and it is one of the most “empowering” forces of the future. The twenty-first century is not only from bottom to top but also horizontal. Most connections are from local order, as in the present moment, but the rest of the world is never as far as the distance of three connections. Knowledge is power, so citizens and businesses become more powerful if transparency prevails (Tabarki, 2011: 49-56).

In the *ECO* Project we tried to provide learning contexts, namely through voluntary work, allowing, “to bring to the surface the best of people”, causing a change in the “lifestyle”:



Testimony of a young volunteer participant in the *ECO* Project about the importance of volunteering in her life:

“Volunteering is like a lifestyle. We substitute the couch, the mobile phone or the computer by good actions that are at each one’s reach.

The desire is something that comes from within us and actually it costs nothing to give up our time for the benefit of others.

There is so much to do in a world where injustice and war persist day after day.”

February 3st, 2015

Bets/Proposals

Rather be happy than rich

We’ll have to adjust our ambition from “more and more” to “better, more fun and more meaningful”. Instead of the choice of ‘wellbeing’ meaning ‘to have a lot’ we have to say goodbye to a winning formula. Only when we recognize that economic growth does not make us happier, we will set new and more relevant targets. We do not need a timid economy,

but one that concentrates all its energy in a green and social economy in which people can mean more to each other and thus create 'added value' (Tilburg, 2011: 183-194).

In the *ECO* Project we explore the potential of social entrepreneurship, on one hand throughout the volunteer work of young people in various institutions and companies who care for others, for the environment and provide services to enhance the quality of life, on the other hand through information and debate sessions:



Thank you, inspiring José Dias, one of the founders of the Youth Association of Golegã - Cantar Nosso - for the interesting and dynamic sharing about the first steps of this association and by sharing life experiences and an intense spirit of association! To know the impact it had on people's lives with whom they contact on a daily basis in the Association Cantar Nosso made us feel more secure and confident, because we have a good rearguard and we know that the path is just to start!

February 26th, 2015

Daily Photography

Going and meeting... the community!

During the afternoon, we had the opportunity to experience the importance of mutual aid and sharing between the organizations of our town. Together we are stronger! We met in the Association Cantar Nosso and we split up into two teams, with the motto "Go and Meet" anyone on the street. In the meantime, we would also put up some posters to advertise an activity of this association!

It was a real discovery of the meeting places of our town: we went to cafes, shops... we found people on the street and... we DID ECO!

April 4th, 2015



April 15th: we had the opportunity to meet with FAJUDIS: Dr. Marisa and Dr. Barbara came to our MEETING and we participated in a youngsters Inquiry session, part of the Youth and Local Development Project! We had the opportunity to reflect on the issues of local development and about the youngsters' role in this development. How can we actively participate and contribute? We were also challenged to come up with ideas/proposals to our policy makers in several local development areas: education, transport, health, equipment...

April 17th, 2015

Diversity should be learned

We believe that in the near future diversity will be a given, rather than a problem. It will no longer be necessary to have debates on integration, but on inclusion, about knowing each other, about meeting the other. The society will be seen as a mosaic of cultures and not as a melting pot. It is a slow change, not easy at all and which much be prepared very early. By investing today in the intercultural education, already in primary school, we cultivate the global and empathetic citizens of tomorrow (Aanzi and Hul, 2011: 39-48).

In the *ECO* Project we value the learning of inclusion and *inclusive affection*:



The *ECO* Project - Encounter with the other - is still in action! This January, after the intensity of the last few months, we are devoting more time to the ENCOUNTER, to the presence of the Other and to the theme of Inclusive Affection in the relationship to each other, to know each other better and to take care of each other and of the surrounding community!

January 27th, 2015



In the *ECO* Meeting of Wednesday January 21st, we were together to share about what is the meaning for us of INCLUSIVE AFFECTION, in a period we were planning so many meetings with so many different people!
Many interesting ideas occurred, such as:
An affection that is felt amongst all! - An affection that doesn't exclude anyone...!

January 27th, 2015

Subtle citizenship

The role of the individual in society cannot be reduced to a merely formal participation in democracy, although this is important to rule the country.

Citizenship is much more. But what? Traditionally, the citizen is a political person. He chooses and can be elected.

Between the two extremes - the political citizen entitled to an active and passive vote and the citizen of the rule of law who must not suffer any risk - there is a more subtle citizenship. The world contains at the same time the entire planet as the nearest local place: the super-citizen is related both to the global warming problem as to any local problem around the corner. This citizen is able to relate the two. The super-citizen as a user is not a consumer but a "prosumer": use and creation are intertwined (de Groot, 2011: 69-80).

In the *ECO* Project we try to stimulate attention to local and global issues, for example not to waste resources, to be a "prosumer":



In yesterday's *ECO* session, October 22nd, we had the privilege of getting to know better the Social Responsibility Project of Agrotejo, "Restolho", and the Biosphere Reserve of Paúl do Boquilobo.

We thank Engineer Alexandra Fernandes and Dr. Marco Cardoso Pires for their availability and for what they shared with us.

We were excited with several ideas to put into action in the near future!

Keep on following us and you will see!

October, 23rd 2014

Means

Towards an education that is coming to our encounter

Generally speaking there were not many changes yet in the way we learn. Once Albert Einstein said: "It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education" and Mark Twain came with the statement: "I never let school interfere in my education. Will the School institution be replaced by the "world" of the student? So when we talk about the future of education it is important to use the expression "learning environment" (Leendertse, 2011: 195-204).

In the *ECO* Project we have broaden the learning experiences, by valuing the body:



May 27th, 2015 - The moment of CREATION of this week has been quite liberating: Dancing with silk ribbons! We reflected on our feelings, on the process of learning with the whole body and we felt what it means to free ourselves in order to be more ourselves and to communicate in an authentic and true way!

May 29th, 2015

To satisfy the need for "stories"

Without noticing we use many "container-concepts" [terms without a clearly defined meaning and subject to multiple interpretations], empty concepts, like "sustainability", "innovation", "leadership", "confidence" and "citizenship". But who refers to stories about what this could mean? Which stories do we tell? Is it enough to live with the MBA story (Master in Business and Administration), a story about "earnings per share" and about the "shareholder value"? We miss the language of imagination which is extremely needed (Zwieten, 2011: 215-224).

In the *ECO* Project we told other stories, for example by organizing a meeting about a Portuguese historical person - Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo¹⁴ organized at the School and in partnership with the Association Espaços. On March 4th a session was organized at the Golegã School, orientated by Liliana Lopes, followed by a reading session. • www.bit.ly/ihsJMvV • ¹⁵.



And now: we are pleased to share our *ECO* PRESENTATION, during 30 minutes of Reading Texts written by Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo, because we know that MESSAGES ARE INTENDED TO FUTURE GENERATIONS!
Because we believe "THAT NEW PARADIGMS ARE REQUIRED, ABLE TO GENERATE NEW VALUES FOR SOCIETY"
And because we bet on "BUILDING OUR OWN LIVES"

After an intense week of activities, here we share some moments - memories of our actions!

The first moment: "Making of" or the process of creation and recreation of the text:" These messages are intended to the future generations" by Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo, to be read and presented on March 4th as part of the Reading Week!

Amusing times of sharing and creativity!

March 6th, 2015

¹⁴ "History has given us Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo as a contemporary. [...] Maria de Lourdes, with a lucid awareness about the magnitude of the task that was in front of her made the planet her patria and her home, and in this trajectory she forged a global thinking, away from meanness and border restrictions. Her itinerant life was the metaphor of a restless spirit who took all the risks of her time" (Darcy de Oliveira, 2010: 181-182).

¹⁵ It was in April 2014 that the Association Espaços started in Porto the Cycle 'Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo in Conversation: Intervention and Actuality': Because she has always been a woman of her time, projecting the future, and because the circumstances in which we live today require us to mobilize the best of our citizenship heritage, democracy and social creativity rather than remember Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo "ten years later" [died in 2004], we propose to you a double challenge-invitation: - Look at the present and the future from her political social and intellectual legacy, and - To reframe our intervention in society from her thoughts and intervention; - After several sessions in Porto, Coimbra and Lisbon, Espaços decided to open this initiative to younger generations, namely students from primary and secondary schools.

To create our life as a work of art

No more, but better, non-linear, but cyclical and not the quantity, but the quality, not measuring the same, but the diversity.

What could be a guiding principle for both social and individual action? Three inputs: cyclic instead of linear thinking, quality over quantity and instead of a person being self-directed, being caring of the self.

According to Foucault, all eras had their own laws and regulations, always their own values and life ethics. Shortly before his death in 1984, Foucault observed: "Why can't we all create a work of art of our life".

Nietzsche also wrote extensively on the art of living. He recommends that people should address their lives as a work of art, where trial should be central. People should shape themselves (*styling*). This is much more than the choice of a superficial lifestyle. The self-care moral requires technique and discipline.

The new generation of decision makers should start living their own life in a consistent manner. A life with quality, not at the expense of the self, not at the expense of the others and not at the expense of nature. Only then we will be mentally able to make the transition to an economy, to a sustainable society and a sustainable personal life, as it allows us to calmly reflect upon new concepts in order to live up to the major transitions in which we find ourselves today (Berg, 2011: 205-214).

The work done in the *citizenship art* workshops consisted in providing educational and artistic dynamics that challenge the composing of life as a work of art, a work always in construction. Getting out of the daily routines, meeting the Other, including the Other in our affection, developing a *relational agency*, making a difference and, on this way, CREATE ourselves (see Chapters III and IV).

INCLUSIVE AFFECTION: INITIAL CONCEPTUALIZATION

It was in the context of the Conference Cycle *The Caring Dimension in the Re-signification of public space, with Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo in the background*, an the initiative of the Foundation *Caring for the Future*, held in 2009 at the University of Évora, that we launched the conceptual pair of *inclusive affection*.

Inclusive affection is constituted by a movement of expanding affections in which we let ourselves be aspired by our own desire and decision, into each time wider circles of affection, by the need of our own being-and-becoming and by that of other human beings around us (Koning, 2009).

It seems to be more “productive” to use in educational settings the conceptual pair *inclusive affection* instead of the word *love*, by the explicit dimension of acting contained in the word “*inclusive*”. There are at least two arguments against the use of the word *love* in contexts of learning. On one side the word *love* has a Christian connotation of self-sacrifice that can move away non-believers and non-Christian believers; on the other hand, the word *love* can sometimes have just a romantic connotation.

In the *ECO* Project we have experimented that in order to learn the practice of *inclusive affection* it is necessary to emphasize and to intensify the capacity of moving *between* the following “support” conditions:

- Continuously explain that affection is the essential substratum of humanizing action, shaped by care;
- Consider *inclusive affection* as the axis of a *continuum*, of which the poles are Emotion (Feeling) and Reason (Thinking) and carefully explore the available space (and without borders) between the two poles;
- Intensify the desire to like and to love, cultivating the ability to wonder and marvel;
- Train the ability to think, trying to build an increasing critical awareness;
- Make the verb *include* powerful by constantly adding more people, other living beings, landscapes, works of art etc. in the already existing affection, each time reconstructed and becoming more complex and dense;
- Organize learning spaces and environments in which we can experience that “to like” is good and possible and that this can bring joy to life;
- Introduce “whitespaces” into the learning contexts, in order to slow down and think about what moves and touches us, being whitespace “a metaphor for the transition phase between order and surprise that is inherent to the process of non-linear understanding” (Emmerik, 2012: 83).

Did *inclusive affection*, as a shaping strategy of the *conversational learning* methodology, a strategy which explores the *between* in learning contexts with youngsters and adults, contribute in the *ECO* Project for the reconstruction of the “intimacy between us and the world we live in” (Braidotti, 2010)?

- <http://vimeo.com/24517619> • (Communication “Cartographies off the present”).

RE-CONCEPTUALIZING INCLUSIVE AFFECTION

In order to re-conceptualize *inclusive affection*, it would be interesting to consider this conceptual pair in terms of *capability* (Nussbaum, 2011: 20), a concept that expres-

ses the possibility of not only having a capacity or competence but also to use it freely. What are *capabilities*?

They are answers to the question, "What is this person able to do and be?' [...] "Capability is thus a kind of freedom: the substantive freedom to achieve alternative functioning combinations." In other words: they are not just abilities residing inside a person but also freedoms and opportunities created by a combination of personal abilities and the political, social and economic environment" (ibid.: 20).

All people are in principle able to love, to like the other, but sometimes the context in which the person lives is so adverse to this feeling, that it does not allow him or her to feel affection. Therefore it is important that there is quality of life in the community where the youngsters are living and that "challenges" are presented to them in the local educational context.

With the approach of *inclusive affection* as a *capability*, we propose the following change in our definition of this conceptual pair, which has been structuring the work in the *ECO* Project:

Inclusive affection is constituted by a movement of expanding affections in which we let ourselves be aspired by our own desire and decision, into each time wider circles of affection, by the need of our own being-and-becoming and by that of other human beings around us. It implies the existence of an enabling environment in which human beings can act freely.

A copy of the chapter on capabilities of Marha Nussbaum is available online in PDF format: • www.ntrda.me/tYeZPgB •.

Martha Nussbaum's conference regarding this theme is available online:

• www.bit.ly/1oJlQS5 •.

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VII. ECO-ING THE PRESENT INTO THE FUTURE: ACTION PERSPECTIVES TO EXPLORE

[...] what happened continues to work within us [...] we are being influenced by it (Delfgauw, 1995: 80).

In this chapter we propose to design the future of the *ECO* Project, by outlining possible courses of action, reflection and community animation, both in contexts with adults as with young people.

In a *space-between*, an initiative taking place in the Program *Roots, Ground, Horizons. Paths and Circles of Creative and Reciprocal Literacy*, referred to in Chapter II, we try to explore existing synergies and rethink the space around us, which very often still functions with limited boundaries that make no sense, namely among people and organizations that collaborated in educational initiatives and community animation. The context of *in-between thinking* in groups, constituted by several educational agents in the community, may become an inspiring dynamic in the *ECO* post-Project that can influence the role of education, both in schools and at home, as in other spaces that are part of the educational community in order to outline new paths. According to Fernando Pessoa/Bernardo Soares pathways made of *feeling, thinking, dreaming, travelling, acting* define what it means to educate. These words constitute the unavoidable ingredients of an educational philosophy that does not abstract, but is rooted in the *ground* of everyday life, in the *humus*. Only this way the human being can be challenged to a greater humanity.

The local and pedagogical coordinators of the *ECO* Project are available, on a voluntary work basis, to support emerging initiatives.

1. CHALLENGES FOR A *NOT-FOR-PROFIT* EDUCATION IN A *SPACE-BETWEEN* ADULTS

The American philosopher Martha Nussbaum states in her book *Not for profit* (2010) that democracy needs Humanities and Arts, and alerts to the fact that education systems are slowly eliminating these curricular areas, devaluating education for citizenship, once:

the world market demands led us to consider the scientific and technical skills as essential, while the humanities and the arts are seen as useless fringes that must be cut in order us to be sure that our country [...] manages to keep its place in the world's competitive struggle (Nussbaum, 2010: 133).

In Annex 4 there are some excerpts from her book to be used among professionals of educational action¹⁶.

2. CHALLENGES FOR YOUTH AND ADULTS VOLUNTEER WORK

In 2007 the *ECO* Project's pedagogical coordinator had the opportunity to interview two young women, both with voluntary work experience, on how they define voluntary work and what is the meaning of this work for them. We believe that their answers are challenging texts for discussion among young people and adults in future activities in the post-Project¹⁷.

3. TO ECHO POSSIBLE FUTURE PATHS¹⁸

The *ECO* Project has manifested to be a "living organism": it continues to "be born" and to follow different "births" because it lives a dynamic process within itself, something like being on the way to, which experiences itself in the provisory dynamics, within the fragility and strength of the possible.

At this point, once we built several paths and defined several routes, the only thing left for us to do is to follow these "new births", closely tracking the new possible futures, trying to foresee and to anticipate some future possibilities that start to show up, in each of the structured Project dimensions.

POSSIBLE FUTURES

Network of Youngsters that Create the Difference

After the meetings among young people from different neighboring counties of Golegã, we believe this network's action can be defined and expanded, starting from the Youth *ECO* group, in a possible post-Project activity plan, integrating several moments of encounter between young people who are already making a difference in their lives. It is expected that these meetings can continue to encourage synergies and the joint

¹⁶ See Annex 4. For a *not-for-profit* education in a *space-between* adults

¹⁷ See Annex 5. Challenge-Texts for volunteer work

¹⁸ The third and last part of this chapter was drawn up by the monitors of the youngsters

organization of new activities, especially in the development of application proposals to possible funding programs and fundraising.

Youth Associations and Entrepreneurship: creating *living places*

We reaffirm our confidence in the youngster's association potential that has been revealed as a need and a desire: to create new places for meeting and creation - *living places*, using an expression developed in sessions with young people. The new generations are searching for new places, where they can prepare new ways of living, assume *shared leadership* and exercise their identity as citizens. These new places in process of definition arise as alternative spaces to the places where young people already move around such as school and family. They can be the places where those spaces cross, at the intersection of the public space and the community. In fact, several community actors have shared with the youngsters the need to create more association and assembly places for young people in the county.

We foresee the possibility to create in the wide horizon of the *ECO* Project, a youth association or an informal *ECO* group: a place where you can exercise and expand what was learned, the skills and the experiences lived in the *ECO* Project. A place like a glade: a freedom and meeting place, among other existing places, which can enlighten life as a whole and be the seed of integration between the various places of life where the youngsters can move freely.

We emphasize that this is one possibility among others, allowing an open door to the creative freedom of the *ECO* youth group. We have been trying to create support tools for incoming ideas, which we will describe:

Along this Project's path, a number of several organized laboratories of association were organized, in which we actively looked for creating meeting spaces and creative interaction with key people in the world of youth associations, in order to promote the contact and direct exploration of youth associations' dynamics in the Golegā and surrounding municipalities, with the aim to provide an essential set of structures and support (information, knowledge) for the development of a youth association.

These experiences lived in the young association laboratories encouraged us to create within the *ECO* Project what we call the "nest of youth association", taking into consideration the reflection that has been held with the youth group and the conclusions that have been presented on the advantages of union, sharing and cooperation in order to achieve future goals. As in a nest we have been looking for creating the necessary conditions for the incubation and to facilitate the maturation:

- Definition of a concrete and personalized space, where the capacity skills training sessions have been constantly and permanently performed throughout

the whole Project, based on the recognition that the youngsters need a specific, alternative, informal space, as well as a space of creativity where they feel safe and at home;

- Development of a creative and a relational mentorship process with some community key people, community entrepreneurs: each youngster is already in a getting to know process (meeting the other) of a certain person from the community who stands out by his or her participation and investment in family, community and civic life. In these meetings we expect these “mentors” to provide the youngsters with a psychological and relational support and a safe community structure which mobilize them for action and support them in the association activities. This proposal came out from the lived experience in the *ECO* Project, through which we realized the importance of learning and interaction among generations as well as the importance of privileged relationships with the community key actors.
- Organization of training activities and non-formal learning, in partnership with the Federal Youth Associations (how to create a youth association, how to submit an application) supporting the steps for the implementation, in the large horizon of *ECO* Project future possibilities, of a possible youth association and the development of its statutes and plan of activities. In the creation of this possible youth association, youngsters can have as a basis and reference the initial structuring concepts of the *ECO* Project, now already recreated: *Meeting with the other*, *inclusive affection*, *citizenship art*, *active citizenship*, and the emergent *entrepreneurisms* concept.
- Attendance by the Project team of the plan of activities of the future association or of the youngsters *ECO* group and support to its implementation;
- Support, through intervision, of some key actors of the youth association, youngsters a bit older than the youth involved in the *ECO* Project, with experience in project development and who already are in a process of creating a youth association in the community, in the fields of history and local heritage;
- Integration of *ECO* youngsters in the dynamics of this new association in the community, which is still in a process of creation. This experience may be relevant for the exercising and development of skills to be transferred and applied in the creation of their own association and or in the *ECO* youngsters group.

We underline that the *ECO* youngsters, at the end of this path, will freely choose their future possibilities. The possibility of a youth association appears on the horizon because it seems to be a way to give more formal structure to what will come. However, according to the Project's open logic, the *ECO* youngster group will choose the direction to follow even if, because of various factors, this may not be the effective and formal

realization of an association. In any case the information of this *ECO* journey will be the luggage they take with them.

Youth Voluntary Work in the Community

In terms of the experience of voluntary work:

- We expect the youngsters to go on with the experience they lived in the several community associations, deepening their commitment with them;
- We foresee that these youngsters may organize sessions of raising awareness and promotion of youth volunteering in the community and at school, as well as in different educational contexts and associations within and outside the community;
- We will try to celebrate in the community the Volunteer Day, organizing different activities, such as a Community Market: a meeting place to present the different opportunities of voluntary work in the several community organizations;
- Therefore we hope, that the Radio Program *Deixa a tua marca (Let your mark)* can develop and continue to promote the visibility of the volunteering experiences in the community of Golegã.

Thus, we will try that those contacts with possible contexts may already be established as well as the actions scheduled in the post-Project phase. Therefore we hope to intensify the relationships with the partners, even after the end of the Project, defining them as partners for the possible future youth association or as a support for the informal *ECO* youth group.

ECHOING STRUCTURING CONCEPTS OF THE *ECO* PROJECT

Encounter with the Other and inclusive affection

The encounter with the *Other* was the basis of the *ECO* Project: to develop human relationship skills, to take the initiative to meet the *Other*, to include the *Other* in our affections, to travel between the self and the *Other*.

We believe that these meetings have been the first steps to allow the relationships and links among different people and community organizations to grow and consolidate. We hope that networks of relationships may be developed;

We will also look for the maintenance of the *ECO* webpage through shared accountability strategies;

As far as the meetings between the families of the community is concerned, we foresee the possibility of creating relationship journeys, activities that can stimulate the encounter and the non-formal learning among generations, through the development of a Network of entrepreneur families, with those families we have been meeting with;

This need has been reinforced by several community actors. Therefore we expect we can define as a structuring dimension for the future the creation of non-formal educational spaces by the “*ECO families*”, as well as generational interaction and formation activities among them, like “affection walks” among other activities;

Still in the itinerary of this relational journey, we hope that the *ECO* youth group may participate in European and International Meetings, throughout the contacts with informal groups of youngsters and other youth associations with whom we have been strengthening ties.

Active Citizenship

Aware of the great importance of this dimension, here we list some of the *ECO* possible activities, linked with the political participation, in a wide perspective:

- After the contacts with the Youth associated in Political Parties of the Golegã county, we hope that the *ECO* youngsters group may organize meetings, in partnership with these associations, for sharing and clarification around specific issues with special importance for the Golegã county.
- We expect that the representatives of the *ECO* youth group may, on a regular basis, be heard and present their proposals in the Municipal Assembly Meeting and the County Parish Assemblies;
- We foresee the integration of *ECO* youngsters in the Youth Municipality activities and dynamics as well as the presentation of a proposal for the participation of one representative member of the group in meetings and dynamics of the Golegã Municipality Social Network.

Citizenship Art

We wish that the meetings among the *ECO* youngsters and the local artists may become stronger and more solid. We also expect these relationships and the new learnings about the different artistic languages to be like a “trampoline” to the organization of new activities, in which the *ECO* youth group may accomplish and implement their artistic knowledge developments, by organizing *citizenship art* workshops in different community contexts, mainly in those organizations where they are having experiences of voluntary work.

We foresee that the activity *Youth Experimentum*, the meeting and sharing between local artists and artistic experimentation, can take place at least once a year, allowing to initiate and stimulate new community dynamics.

4. FINALE

To finish the journey made in this publication, we should like to use a poem brought by a youngster as a challenge for a meeting in another Grail educational context and which underlines the importance of the “bumps” that truly educational spaces give us:

You will die soon.
It is incontestable.
And how much of the truth will die with you
without you knowing you knew it.
Only because you were not lucky enough that
in a simple encounter
or bump
someone did make it come to the surface

Vergilio Ferreira, in *Pensar*

In a simple “bump” the *ECO* youngsters brought a lot of truth to the surface. In the publication of the *ECO* youngsters we can read about this “bump”. This publication is also available in a digital format in the website of the Grail, such as this book.

Where will the *ECO* youngsters go? Maybe as a Finale and in a perspective of homage to artists, it would be good to remember the words of Friedrich Schiller in his poem *An die Freude*, where he desires that all human beings become *Brüder*. A poem put in music by Beethoven in his Ninth Symphony that inspired so much the desire to MEET THE OTHER: • www.bit.ly/1wcTHbK •

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WEBGRAPHICS

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VIII. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. *IN-BETWEEN THINKING*

In 2011 was created in the Netherlands the figure of the “National Thinker” (literally “Thinker of the Patria”), a new title on the initiative of the journal *Filosofie Magazine*, in cooperation with the Foundation *Month of Philosophy* and the newspaper *Trouw*. The use of the term “patria” in the formulation “Thinker of the Patria” may be read with a smile. It is not the aim to isolate the “Patria” inside walls, but rather to expand the *ground* of the territory, abolishing borders. It is up to the “Thinker of the Patria” to stimulate a reflection about the issues of the territory – the ancestors’ land and possible subject of patriotism and desire of exclusive property with walls all around – in order to think each time more in an inclusive, supportive and global dimension. To think in a way the *ground* of the planet may become the “patria” or “matria” for everybody.

The role of this figure is to connect the philosophy of life of different citizens, in order to promote a more critical reflection about complex social problems that affect the way we build our citizenship.

The philosopher and medical doctor Marli Huijter, named in 2015 the “Thinker of the Patria”, introduces the concept of *in-between thinking*, after the themes *thinking-against* and *thinking-with* exploited by her two predecessors in previous years. What is, according to Marli Huijter, the meaning of *in-between thinking* and why is it important?

In the *in-between thinking* a person thinks as much about the role he or she plays among others, as on how to structure the space between people. When something happens in the world such as the attack in Paris, generally we only focus on what is unsafe and chaotic. As a philosopher, I want to take an opposite approach. There are so many organizing mechanisms that make us feel at home in the world. Often we feel safer in environments where we know people. Talking to someone can do wonders. We need to [...] see how we can set up the public space so that fear does not prevail. This is very important: the Netherlands is increasingly diverse, but there is a tendency to stay in our own little space, while we should move together in the public space. Only then we can meet each other without prejudice • www.bit.ly/ijOeUri •

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• www.filosofie.nl/nl/artikel/42603/marli-huijter-wordt-nieuwe-denker-des-vaderlands.html

ANNEX 2. BETWEEN *CHRONOS* AND *KAIROS*

How to be available for the new, the future, the promise and how to take steps to face the convulsions of today's world? The Dutch writer and philosopher Joke Hermsen writes in her book *Kairos, a new inspiration*, how in the Greek culture the future is considered "not so much as something that is in front of us, but as something that pushes us in our back: 'the future comes from behind' is still today a well-known Greek say. Time is seen as a river [...] where we stand" (Hermsen, 2014: 19-20).

In her book Hermsen explores how important it is in today's world to transcend the linearity of *Chronos*, the practical time, reduced to a nomic time which organizes our agendas and leaves no room for *Kairos*, the time for inspiration, the time of the *between*, of the break "between the past and the future" as Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo said in a Grail conference: today's time "where meaning is both revealed and created; a double movement" (Pintasilgo, 1982). Where the past, the present and the future come together "in the fullness of a visionary moment", that for Heidegger is the "event", where the authenticity of *Dasein* is revealed, where the existence of the human being connects with the fullness of time (Hermsen, 2014: 12).

The time of *Kairos* opens up to the *between*, passing through the border-place-of-grace, as José Correia Frazão formulates it in his book, *Entre-tanto. A difícil benção da fé e da vida. (Mean-time. The difficult blessing of life and faith.)*

[...] for us, the border became the place of grace - we live on the border between times, between worlds, between experiences, trying to mediate, creating small points of contact between separated margins, places of opening and understanding, of mutual esteem, of possible agreements (Frazão, 2014: 90).

[...] the border metaphor - we could replace it by threshold or passage - corresponds well to the spirit of transit, simultaneously light and dramatic, that characterizes our time. Transit [...] from the meaning already given to the meaning to be constructed (ibid.: 95).

"How often is time our excuse not to invest in life, to perpetuate the failure in meeting life?" José Tolentino Mendonça asks in his book *A Mística do Instante. O tempo e a promessa. (The Mysticism of the Moment. Time and Promise.)* He also questions the "homogeneous *continuum* of time," the *chronos* time, that "does not know the rupture introduced by the surprising newness" (Tolentino Mendonça, 2014: 35), that does not allow the double movement of revealing and recreating meaning (Koning, 2014).

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ANNEX 3: CHALLENGE-TEXTS FOR ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Challenge-text 1

The first challenge-text is by Rosiska Darcy de Oliveira (see biography in: www.academia.org.br/academicos/rosiska-darcy-de-oliveira • where she puts our citizenship with the feet on the *ground* of the limits of the earth.

This text consists in excerpts of the new introduction to her book *Elogio da diferença* (*Praise of difference*), reedited in 2012: • www.bit.ly/iLyOlmo •.

• Between North and South: to share the planet earth •

[In 2002] the UN convoked in Cairo a new World Conference on Population, once the population growth would be representing a global threat. [...]

And if happiness was not the endless consumption of goods? How to be happy? We, especially us, born in the south of money, of power, south of everything, we educated in the idea of inferiority, in the idea of exclusion, in the run to compete with a partner who always wins, we, the ones that already understood the rules of the game and suddenly wondered if this competition is worth it.

It is true, we are many, and we will be too many for the limits of the earth, a huge population, aiming not only to be fed but also wanting a microwave and air conditioning. For the microwaves to survive, for not to feel so much heat, for the north to be the north - the true civilization - to be the world, we need to be fewer and then, for sure, there will be enough for everybody. Once again, women disagreed, looking at the world with a feminine look. They knew where that logic would culminate. [...]

The population in its human dimension, is not a technical problem, it is not a cold, inert object of study. The population is men and women whose life choices define their destination. People struggling with problems and those problems are for sure our objects of study: how to ensure everyone a dignified and happy life in a fragile and finite planet? If the consumption standards assumed nowadays as definition of happiness don't change, we will see countless poor people to be condemned to effacement. [...]

From an economic point of view, in a closed circuit, this world is possible. From the political point of view, it will not survive without increasing doses of violence and repression. From an ethical standpoint, it is intolerable. To live within it with a resigned silence means some complicity that disqualifies any intention of building a civilized human society to live in (Darcy de Oliveira, 2012: 25-27).

in Darcy de Oliveira, Rosiska (2012), *Elogio da Diferença. O Feminino Emergente. (Praise of Difference. The Emerging Feminine)*. Rio de Janeiro: Rocco LTDA.

Challenge-Text 2

The second text puts our citizenship “with roots in the air”, among the lines of the digital world, so structuring of the lives of the younger generations and therefore a challenge and an unavoidable issue in the educational work in the *ECO* Project.

• “ME DIGITAL” Login, so I exist? •

We spend a gradually larger portion of our time “online”, exchanging information with others and leaving behind us an increasing “digital footprint”. But in what kind of people do we transform ourselves when we are online? As citizens and consumers, we certainly gain some benefits from this exchange of information and its filing, which also has a huge potential for companies or public policies. However, it is necessary to evaluate the dangers for freedom, privacy, identity and safety.

in • www.ffms.pt/conferencia-online/62/admiravel-mundo-novo_

WEBGRAFIA

- www.academia.org.br/academicos/rosiska-darcy-de-oliveira
- www.bit.ly/iLyOlmo
- <https://storify.com/ffms>

ANNEX 4. FOR AN EDUCATION-NOT-FOR-PROFIT IN A SPACE-BETWEEN ADULTS

Distracted by the objectives of creating wealth we ask our schools to produce useful profit makers rather than reflective citizens (Nussbaum, 2010: 141-142).

In order to promote a healthy democracy, Nussbaum presents a set of recommendations for priorities in Schools: “to develop students’ ability to look at the world from the point of view of the other”; to teach that “fragility is not a shame”, students can develop “attitudes of cooperation and reciprocity” out of needs already identified; to encourage “compassion for the other’s condition, as much of those who live nearby as of those who live far away”; to show that it is not necessary to be afraid of or “feel repugnance for certain minorities”; to give information in order to “end up with any stereotypes and eventual repugnance generated by these minorities”; to encourage “personal responsibility” for children and youngsters, treating them as “beings responsible for their own acting”; “to promote reflexive thinking and the courage and skills to express a deviant opinion” (ibid.: 45-46).

Martha Nussbaum refers how Tagore, who criticized the Indian educational system, challenges us, as educators, with the following allegory:

Challenge-Text - The parrot’s education

A certain Raja has a beautiful parrot, and he becomes convinced that it needs to be educated, so he summons wise people from all over his empire. They argue endlessly about methodology and especially about textbooks. “Textbooks can never be too many for our purpose!” they say. The bird gets a beautiful school building; a golden cage. The learned teachers show the Raja the impressive method of instruction they have devised. “The method was so stupendous that the bird looked ridiculously unimportant in comparison.” And so, “With textbook in one hand and baton in the other, the pundits [learned teachers] gave the poor bird what may fitly be called lessons!” One day the bird dies. Nobody notices for quite some time.

The Raja’s nephews come to report the fact: The nephews said, “Sire, the bird’s education has been completed.” “Does it hop?” the Raja enquired. “Never!” said the nephews. “Does it fly?” “No.” “Bring me the bird,” said the Raja. The bird was brought to him... The Raja poked its body with his finger. Only its inner stuffing of book-leaves rustled.

Outside the window, the murmur of the spring breeze amongst the newly budded asoka leaves made the April morning wistful.

In Nussbaum, Martha (2010), Not for profit. Why Democracy needs the Humanities. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Disponível online em: • www.bit.ly/QHNqAw •.

ANNEX 5. CHALLENGE-TEXTS FOR VOLUNTEER WORK

Challenge-Text 1

• Volunteer work: service for and with each other •

I define volunteer work as unpaid professional work. I mean, acting with the skills we developed and that characterize our professional identity, but in a context that is not part of labor market logics, but rooted in a logic of gratuitousness and service for and with the other.

I see volunteer work as the free, intentional and highly political expression of my guiding utopia. Because it is as a volunteer that I take distance from the commercial dimension of my skills and knowledge, and it is as a volunteer that I choose with greater margin of freedom the meaning of my action, its times and contexts. As a volunteer I can also experience an integrative unity of my several dimensions, because I am not submitted to structural constraints that segment and compartmentalize knowledge and affections, convictions and expressions. The gratuitousness of volunteering is itself a form of expression of the utopia I refer to, an action only shaped by being in the world with the other, led merely by the will and the intention to be in construction with the other. *Be the change you want to see in the world.*

Challenge-Text 2

Volunteer work: a way of living fully

For me to talk about volunteer work means talk about a passion. And this is not an ordinary passion, like one that grew without knowing very well from where it came, as it happens with some passions that come up in our lives and afterwards start to fade away...

The presence of volunteer work in my life may have romantic features, but most of all, it all started with two major motivations: my desire to serve the other and to serve the world, and my consciousness that, as a person who integrates a society in which she participates and lives, I had the duty or the possibility to be an active part of this same society, and put me in motion, giving my - although small - contribute to its development.

Therefore, for me, volunteer work is one of the greatest faces of citizenship, and one of the most valid forms of fully living it. Thus, it is impossible for me to dissociate the concept of volunteer work from the concept of responsibility, because volunteer work involves a commitment with ourselves, but also with others and so it is essential to be

aware that volunteer work cannot be seen as “something to do when we have some spare time”, but should be understood as a serious commitment that must be honored. (...)

For me, volunteer work is more and more a way to be in the world, to position myself and actively intervene in the world as an agent of change(s) which, although small ones, can bme bigger if we grow in number as volunteers, and if the work we develop will be shaped by increasing levels of quality.

In Koning, Marijke de (2007), Trabalho voluntário, para uma cidadania que responsabiliza, in ex aequo, Revista da Associação Portuguesa de Estudos sobre as Mulheres n° 16. Porto: Edições Afrontamento, 11-19.



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