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0. EDITORIAL #21

The Value of Design in the Mediterranean 006
by Andreas Sicklinger, Çiğdem Kaya & Reham Mohsen

I. MAKE

Intersections between Design and Science in the Mediterranean Food Landscape 022
by Carla Langella, Gabriele Pontillo & Roberta Angari

A Cup of Coffee between Tradition and New Cross-Cultural Experimentations 046
by Irene Caputo, Marco Bozzola, Claudia De Giorgi

Mediterranean Design: Action-Research on Capodimonte Porcelain 069
by Claudio Gambardella & Ilaria Masullo

Ceramic Design Culture in Kütahya and Reflections of Cultural Diversity 095
by Yasemin Kutlay, Necla İlknur Sevinç Gökmen & Burcu Akdağ Çağlar

The Reinvention of Tradition in Making and Exhibiting of Dowry in Anatolian Culture 125
by Aybeniz Gökmen & Fatma Nur Gökdeniz Zeynali

Genius Loci and Emerging Sustainable Fashion Strategies. Two Significant Case-Histories in Italy and Tunisia 153
by Gabriele Goretti & Sonia Chikh M'hamed

II. FOCUS

The Recovery of Vernacular Interior Design as a Value for the Modern Movement. Bridges between Le Corbusier, Gruppo 7 and GACTPAC 179
by Sara Coscarelli

The Impact of Crisis and Diaspora on Design Culture and Events 210
by Elena Vai & Lorela Mehmeti

Design for Responsible Innovation. Social Impacts of Products and Services 235
Laura Succini, Margherita Ascari, Elena Formia, Valentina Gianfrate & Michele Zannoni

Transition Design as a Tool to Achieve Sustainability in Product Design 256
by Osama Youssef Mohamed & Yasmin Mosad Hashem Sherif

III. PROJECT

Photography Testimony of Artisanal Values.
The Boat Project as a Historical Memory of the Mediterranean 282
by Antonio de Feo

Design Perspectives. Placebeing on an Island in the Mediterranean 307
by Spyros Bofylatos, Helen Charoupia, Vasiliki Nikolakopoulou & Paris Xintarianos-Tsiropinas

IV. BIOGRAPHIES

About the Authors 330

A Cup of Coffee between Tradition and New Cross-Cultural Experimentations

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Keywords
Intangible Heritage, Material Culture, Coffee Culture, Mediterranean Basin, Cross-Cultural Design.

Abstract
Welcoming someone with a cup of coffee is a symbolic act of closeness and sharing so unique that it has become one of the identifying elements of the *Mediterranean culture*.
Coffee is a raw material able to tell a constantly evolving world: a symbol of colonialism and neocolonialism, but also of Fair Trade.
Despite the passage of time, coffee rituals are still common all over the world and, in particular, in the Mediterranean Basin, where the *coffee culture* plays a key role in terms of identity and production, both artisanal and industrial.
The numerous methods of coffee preparation are strongly connected with the geographical, cultural, and social context to which they refer. The available materials and the craftsmanship, combined with environmental characteristics, aesthetic peculiarities, and other elements of material culture, have led to very different systems for preparation and consumption, rituals, and products.
This paper aims to analyse the adaptation processes, the traditional methods of coffee preparation and the objects and accessories connected to them.
The final intention is to reflect on how the design of these products is constantly evolving, through new cross-cultural explorations that often arise from the meeting between cultures or the combination of craftsmanship and industry.

1. Introduction

In the field of cultural heritage, as a system of rooted practices and works able to mark and to make recognizable the identity of peoples and communities, there are aspects of material and immaterial heritage that are spread and entrenched in a transversal way within different cultures. Products, materials, and techniques, starting from a common matrix, find specific declinations and create different traditions and customs, still connected by systems of shared values and narratives.

In this scenario, the world of design meets in the practices of preparation and consumption of coffee, and in its rituals, a very stimulating field of experimentation and production.

This contribution intends to highlight a dual role of the design discipline; the first is to be a strategic tool for analysing the material culture behind the traditional objects settled over time as the result of territorial community dynamics, the second role is to identify creative actions for the development of new products that can become a reason for meeting between different cultures.

From an economic point of view, coffee is one of the most important products on the international market, underpinning the commercial exchanges of many countries and representing one of the most traded commodities on a global level (Lemon, 2020). A world that, due to the geographical articulation of the production, trade, and transformation phases, represents one of the few truly *global* industries in the international scenario, and address both developing and developed countries, large trading companies and small local businesses.

From a cultural perspective, the coffee beverage embodies deep meanings of the tangible and intangible heritage of the

contexts to which it belongs. Various traditional coffee preparation methods are strongly connected with the geographical, cultural, and social context. They include rituals, brewing methods, objects and accessories, and different combination with foods. The material culture related to coffee, and the variety of the experiences created around it, establish strong and durable connections within users, on both rational and emotional levels (Chapman, 2005), generating a sense of belonging and continuity between the individual and the group, as well as between present and past (Ozge, 2012).

Since differentiation becomes less and less possible due to globalization, and personalization of objects depends strongly on differences, people find local cultures more unique and interesting (Moalosi et al, 2006).

The focus of this essay aims to explore the cultural system linked to the preparation and consumption of coffee in the Mediterranean basin, a geographical context in which the *coffee culture* is historically rooted and which has influenced many local traditions, going to deepen the relationship between the artifacts used (expression of the material culture) and the cultural-social system.

From the perspective of interpreting local habits and cultural heritage, this area is very rich for designers. How can the role of design be configured in the narration and enhancement of cultural specificities? Through what actions can design create new narratives of the different tangible and intangible heritages related to coffee, also in an intercultural key?

After exploring the theoretical dimension of this topic, a comparative analysis of traditional utensils and systems related to the preparation and serving of coffee in different cultures was

carried out. It was created starting from a cataloguing capable of highlighting the relationships with the technical, behavioural, social, cultural and symbolic aspects.
The different research phases involved a literature exploration, the identification and analysis of case studies through comparative criteria, the definition of design approaches and tools. Subsequently, an exploration of more recent projects and products for the preparation and consumption of coffee in an intercultural key, was performed to contextualize the topic and to indicate possible design approaches.

1.1. A Brief Overview of the Cultural History of Coffee

There are many dubious and fascinating tales about the first human consumption of the coffee plant. The most widespread, however, attributes its discovery to an Ethiopian goatherd named Kaldi. He noticed that, in the night, his flock became unusually frisky after grazing some red berries. So, he decided to try them too. He crushed or chewed the beans, fermented the juice, and made a wine he called *quahwa* – probable origin of the word *coffee* – and thus discovering their energetic effect (Bennett, 2001).
Once the Ethiopians discovered coffee it was only a matter of time until the drink spread through trade with the Arabs across the narrow band of the Red Sea, and it was thus that from the 15th Century the progressive spread of coffee arrived in Arabia, Egypt, Syria and Turkey (Pendergrast, 1999). Finally, starting in the 17th Century, thanks to some Venetian merchants, coffee arrived in Europe and coffeehouses soon turned in meeting places for intellectuals and artists (Tucker, 2011). Over time, through the joint efforts of the British East

India Company and the Dutch East India Company (VOC), coffee became a widely available commodity throughout Europe (Debry, 1993) and influenced material culture and consumer experiences at large (McCants, 2007).
The latter aspect is a key issue in the analysis of the history of coffee and its impact on a local and global level. If at first glance coffee carries with it a mysterious and fascinating aura, its colonial history has been less idyllic.
The expansion of European colonial powers, particularly Great Britain, France, and Holland, is inseparable from the growth of coffee production in tropical nations around the world (Topik, 2004). Coffee history went hand-in-hand with colonialism and its production required inexpensive manual labour. Smallholder producers generally had little access to political arenas, while colonial authorities often had greater possibilities of influencing policies in their own favour (Tucker, 2011).
Nowadays, although colonialism is an outdated concept, we can however note how new forms of neo-colonial and cultural appropriation can still be linked to the food industry (Ignatius K, 2019) and as well as coffee market.

On the other hand, the increasing awareness of consumers about the production and distribution dynamics around the coffee commercial chain has also led to the increasing spread of forms of Fair Trade, with the aim of guarantee a fair price to the producer and his employees, while also ensuring the protection of the territory.
However, thanks to its widespread distribution, coffee joined numerous local traditions all over the world, becoming a real structured and widespread cultural element.

This paper focuses in particular on the Mediterranean Basin, a territorial context in which the *coffee culture*[1] plays a key role in terms of identity and production, both artisan and industrial. In these countries, coffee is ever-present in private and public life as well, where coffeehouses acted in popularizing coffee and building a coffee culture. The numerous methods of coffee preparation are strongly connected with the geographical, cultural, and social context to which they refer. It is one of the beverages that has more associated ritual behaviours both in its preparation and in its service, incorporating symbolic and meaning dimensions.

2. Methodological Aspects: Material Culture and Coffee in the Mediterranean Basin

The available materials and the craftsmanship, combined with environmental characteristics, custom and beliefs, aesthetic peculiarities, and other elements of material culture, have led to very different systems for coffee preparation and consumption, rituals, and products (objects and accessories). Some analytical data relating to the traditional coffee preparation habits of Turkey, Syria, Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon, Greece, and Italy are reported in the following lines. They are of particular interest in the countries of the Mediterranean area, either for their historical value and for the design peculiarities contained in the artifacts. The order of analysis follows the chronologically spread of coffee in these territories (as introduced in the historical overview).

1 The concept of *Coffee culture* refers to rituals, daily practices, production and brewing techniques, meanings and associations of ideas that are structural part of specific cultural contexts regarding coffee.

From a methodological point of view, Table 1 explains a first mapping carried out and the selected parameters, analysed through the lens of three macro-categories (Technical analysis, Ways of fruition, Socio-cultural context), in turn divided into specific analysis criteria. Subsequently, the individual case studies were investigated also considering other specific design variations (for example, different systems of consumption or specific less widespread rituals).

Territory Reference		Turkey	Syria	Egypt	Tunisia	Lebanon	Greece	Italy
Objects								
Technical analysis	Traditional name	Cezve or ibrik	Rakwa	Kanaka	Zézoua	Raqwa	Briki	Cuccumella
	Form	Cylinder with a wide base and a narrow top + small long-handled pot with a pouring lip	Cylinder with a wide base and a narrow top + small long-handled pot with a pouring lip	Cylinder with a wide base and a narrow top + small long-handled pot with a pouring lip	Cylinder with a wide base and a narrow top + small long-handled pot with a pouring lip	Cylinder with a wide base and a narrow top + small long-handled pot with a pouring lip	Cylinder with a wide base and a narrow top + small long-handled pot with a pouring lip	Double cylinder, two handles, top lid, long pouring lip
	Materials	Brass or copper (traditionally) Aluminium or stainless steel	Brass or copper (traditionally) Aluminium or stainless steel	Brass, copper or aluminium Wooden handle (occasionally)	Brass, copper or silver	Brass, copper or silver	Brass, copper, or stainless steel	Copper (traditionally) Aluminium
	Relationship between the elements	The long handle joins the central body through a weld that embraces the upper part of the pot	The long handle joins the central body through a weld that embraces the upper part of the pot	In one point the central body is welded to the long handle	In one point the central body is welded to the long handle	In one point the central body is welded to the long handle	In one point the central body is welded to the long handle	Five elements that fit together interlocking Welded handles and pouring lip
	Fundamental elements	Central body Long-handled Pouring lip	Central body Long-handled Pouring lip	Central body Long-handled Pouring lip	Central body Long-handled Pouring lip	Central body Long-handled Pouring lip	Central body Long-handled Pouring lip	Two handles, lid, long pouring lip, water tank, coffee container, filter, drink tank
Ways of fruition	Accessories	Small porcelain cups (finjān), decorated in bright colours Serving tray	Manually coffee grinder Small porcelain cups	Small porcelain cups (finjān) without handles, totally white or adorned with a decorative pattern	Copper chiselled ceramic or porcelain demitasse with lid	Small porcelain cups (fanajīn), with or without handles Serving tray	Ceramic demitasse cup	Ceramic or porcelain demitasse
	Brewing technique	Ground coffee, water and sugar are added to the cezve and brewed slowly	Ground coffee, carda-mom, water and sugar are added to the rakwa and brewed slowly	Ground coffee, carda-mom, water and sugar are added to the kanaka and brewed slowly	Ground coffee, water and sugar are brewed slowly, finally flavoured with orange flower or rose water essence	Ground coffee, water and sugar are added to the raqwa and brewed slowly	Ground coffee, water and sugar are added to the briki and brewed slowly	Fill the two tank (with coffee and water) and brewed slowly since the water boils, then turn the bowl upside down
	Mode of consumption	The long handle and the spout on the left side allow to pour the coffee using the right hand	The long handle and the spout on the left side allow to pour the coffee using the right hand	The long handle and the spout on the left side allow to pour the coffee using the right hand	The long handle and the spout allow to pour the coffee	The long handle and the spout allow to pour the coffee	The long handle and the spout allow to pour the coffee	Pour the coffee by holding the coffee pot by the handle
Socio-cultural context	Social meaning	Welcoming Fortune-telling Turkish weddings	Welcoming Fortune-telling Grief (bitter coffee)	Welcoming Fortune-telling Grief (bitter coffee)	Welcoming Spirituality	Welcoming Recreation	Welcoming Recreation	Welcoming Recreation
	Place associated	Coffeehouses Home Relatives	Coffeehouses Home Relatives Stores	Coffeehouses Home Relatives	Coffeehouses Home Relatives	Coffeehouses Home Relatives Office	Coffeehouses Home Relatives Office	Coffeehouses Home Relatives Office
	Consumer occasions	Guests Marriages Meetings Leisure	Prenuptial meetings Marriages Purification rituals Funerals	Guests Social events Leisure	Guests Meetings Festive occasions Leisure	Guests Meetings Leisure	Guests Meetings Leisure Funerals	Guests Meetings Leisure

Table 1. Analysis of traditional methods of coffee preparation in the countries of the Mediterranean Basin. Credits: authors

2.1. Turkey

Turkish coffee culture and tradition goes back to the 16th century, when coffee started to be served at coffeehouses in Istanbul. The social representation of Turkish coffee is sig-

nificant because it is one of the mostly consumed beverages, such as a way of socialization, and coffee ceremonies have intrinsic value for Turkish culture (Özdemir, 2019).
Since its arrival, the consumption of coffee spread rapidly, conquering all social groups, and soon became part of everyday life. In a few years, the coffeehouses multiplied and from meeting and leisure places, some of them were transformed into culture and art centres (Yılmaz et al., 2017).
Turkish coffee combines special preparation and brewing techniques with a rich communal traditional culture. The freshly roasted beans are ground into a fine powder, with a manually coffee grinder. This procedure gives the opportunity to serve a coffee with intense aroma at all the times. Then, the ground coffee, cold water and sugar are added to a coffee pot and brewed slowly on a stove to produce the foam. This coffee pot is called *cezve* or *ibrik*, and it is a small brass or copper pot (nowadays, they can also be in aluminium and stainless steel) with a wide base and a narrow top. This shape is the trick to create rich foam without boiling the content of the pot. There is a long handle and a spout on its left side for pouring the coffee without spilling, using the right hand. Copper and brass are widely used due to the great experience of Anatolian artisans in the handcrafted production of tableware with these materials.
In the end, the coffee is served unfiltered in small cups (*finjān*), accompanied by a glass of water or sweeties. *Finjān* are traditionally widely decorated in bright colours, and they have the correct thickness of porcelain to perform the best serving task. Indeed, Turkish coffee has a high temperature – almost boiling point – due to its brewing method.

Figure 1. Turkish coffee. One of the oldest Turkish coffee preparation methods involves the use of sand. Credits: Gabriele Stravinskaite on Unsplash.

In many cases, these cups are made directly of copper or polished brass and hand painted with bright motifs from natural inspiration. These cups have a porcelain insert inside, useful for maintaining the temperature of the coffee and from which to drink.

Turkish coffee is usually prepared on the stove, however one of the oldest preparation methods involves the use of sand. In a very large copper container, sand is heated to extremely hot temperatures to brew the coffee. This method offers a more consistent, uniform heat than normal brewing in a pot directly over a flame (Fig. 1).

Figure 2. Dallah. *Kahwa murrah* is served in a traditional brass or silver *dallah*, typically ornamented with geometric patterns. Credits: Ashkan Forouzani on Unsplash.

2.2. Syria

The brewing technique and the traditional instruments (for instance, the coffee pot called *rakwa*) are similar to the Turkish coffee ones, but the coffee is boiled and made without the layer of foam, and often accompanied by a delicate aroma of cardamom (Dominici, 2017).

In Syria coffee is always served on important occasions: from weddings to purification rituals and funerals (Jessup & Riley, 1874). Traditionally Syrian coffee is made with sugared water, bitter coffee is reserved for funeral ceremonies. In these occasions, coffee is served in cups without handles that can be in white porcelain or decorated in gold.

Visiting private homes of older or more traditional Arab citizens, another type of coffee (*kahwa murrah*) is usually offered. This is an extremely strong, hot coffee served in a traditional brass or silver Arabic coffee pot, called *dallah*, typically richly ornamented, usually engraved with geometric patterns (Fig. 2). It is made with a long-curved spout and handle used for brewing coffee (traditionally used among Syrian nomads and in some parts of Saudi Arabia). When guests arrive at a home, tiny ceramic shot glasses come out, and a mouthful of this coffee is served to each guest.

When a coffee is offered, guests must respond appropriately with the word *Daïmé*, meaning *for always*, expressing the hope that the home at which the coffee was served will always be so generous.

2.3. Egypt

Coffee spread from Yemen to Mecca, then from there to Egypt thanks to the brotherhood of Sufi Islamic mystics, who

used it during prayers. This beverage quickly established itself in very broad layers of Egyptian society during the Ottoman era (Tuchscherer, 1992) and especially the coffeehouses (*kahvehane*) acquired a social and cultural role (Mostafa & Elbendary, 2020).
Egyptian coffee is similar to the Turkish coffee. It is prepared by mixing sugar and very finely ground coffee with hot water. This mixture is placed into the small metal *cezve* (called *kanaka* in Egypt, occasionally made with a wooden handle) from which it is poured into traditional Turkish small cups (*finjān*), totally white or adorned with a decorative pattern - which in many cases represents floral or natural motifs.
Also in Egypt, when ordering coffee, you also need to say how much sugar you prefer, because sugared water is used in the preparation. *Saddah* is coffee with no sugar at all and it is reserved for sad occasions such as funeral ceremonies.

2.4. Tunisia

Moving from the Middle East to North Africa, the culture of coffee gradually has given way to the tea culture, the favourite drink of the native Berber populations. Tunisia, however, makes an exception.
The Tunisian coffee pot (*zézoua*) is still very similar to the one introduced by the Ottomans in the 16th Century. Traditional Tunisian coffee pot is usually made in copper and silver. Over time, the ways of building the *zézoua* have changed, which once were handcrafted and finely chiselled by hand starting from a circular metal disc from which the bottom of the container was obtained and from a band, usually in brass, copper, or silver, which made up the body of the coffee pot.

Now, industrial-scale production uses the lathe from a copper disc that is moulded with a metal tip around a rotating shape. This is the technique that has evolved, while the fixing of the handle, the manual tinning with coal fire and the final polishing have remained identical to the past.
It's poured into copper chiselled ceramic or porcelain demitasse with lid. When ready, the coffee is flavoured with Andalusian-inspired orange flower or rose water essence and served with dates or pastries (Lavazza, 2012).

2.5. Lebanon

The presence of coffee in all aspects of Lebanese society is so prominent and it is served as an act of hospitality and welcome. The coffee is poured out in front of the guest from a traditional long-handled coffee pot (*raqwa*, that can contain very elaborate designs and can range from silver, copper through to gold type metals) and served in proper cups, about the size of espresso cups with or without a handle, on an elaborately designed serving tray and accompanied with a glass of water.
In Lebanon, the typical preparation of Turkish coffee is also accompanied by that of Arabic coffee, an influence deriving from the territorial proximity. In fact, a traditional profession closely linked to the world of Arab coffee has also survived for centuries, namely that of *kahwajes*[2] (Ghantou, 2018), who prepare coffee and serve it to customers in a decorative jug (*dallah*).

2 The word *kahwaje* derives from *kahwi* (coffee, in Arabic), meaning "the one who makes coffee".

2.6. Greece

Greek coffee (*kafes ellinikos*) is a strong brewed coffee similar to Turkish coffee. Indeed, this is what it was called in Greece too, until Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974, rekindling a surge of nationalism.

The place where it is possible to drink a coffee in Greece is the *kafenio*, a simple place of social gathering with a few tables and chairs where coffee, *tsipouro* (traditional Greek white spirit) and some basic *meze* (small plates) are served.

Greek coffee is made with a fine grind of coffee. It is boiled in a tall, narrow pot called *briki* – a metal utensil usually made of brass, copper, or stainless steel – and finally it is served with grounds in a ceramic demitasse cup. In some coffeehouses, coffee is brewed in the sand, as in the Turkish tradition.

Greek coffee – a rich, strong simmered brew typified by a creamy froth on top (*kaimaki*) and a sediment of fine grounds settled on the bottom of the cup[3] – is typically served with a glass of cold water and with cookies or *loukoumi* (traditional sweets).

2.7. Italy

In Italy, coffee sets the pace for every day. Its arrival - which took place roughly during the 16th Century - was the subject of a religious diatribe, linked to the Arab origins of the beverage, which was initially introduced in Venice through trade with the East (Evans, 2016).

3 The grounds form a sediment that has given birth to the Greek custom of fortune telling. The practice of reading coffee grounds is common to many territories where Turkish coffee is prepared.

The production of Italian coffee was developed in Naples, taking a cue from the Turkish preparation method. Indeed, in the beginning, the method of preparation involved the infusion by simple boiling, then came the use of the filter, also known as percolation. At the beginning of the 19th Century, overturning percolation was developed and the typical Neapolitan coffee maker (*cuccumella*) has become one of the symbols of Neapolitan culture and tradition. It was invented by the Frenchman Morize in 1819, it then spread throughout Italy as a tool used for the home preparation of coffee. Originally produced in copper, after 1886 the material, with which it is made in the traditional version becomes aluminium. Unlike traditional methods of brewing, the Neapolitan coffee maker is put on a flame with the spout upside down: as soon as the water boils, and a steam vent comes out of the hole in the tank, the *cuccumella* must be firmly taken and overturned so that the boiling water filters through the coffee blend.

In 1933 the *moka*[4], the Italian characteristic device to brew coffee invented by Alfonso Bialetti, was produced for the first time. The first model was called *Moka Express*, and it consists of four main elements in aluminium and had a Bakelite handle. Today, however, the *moka* is produced in steel, despite having the same operating mechanism as the first invented prototype (Fig. 3).

Espresso coffee[5] is the most consumed type outside the home.

4 The term *moka* originates from the Yemeni city Mokha, from which the first exports of Arabica Coffea began.

5 This invention was born from the technical evolution of an idea of 1884 by Angelo Moriondo, who owned a bar located in the historic centre of the city of Turin. Through this project, he tried to meet the needs of his customers to be served in the shortest possible time (the term *espresso* refers to the speed of preparation).

Figure 3. Moka Express. Modern *moka* that maintains the same operating mechanism as the first invented prototype. Credits: Eric Barbeau on Unsplash.

It is obtained from the roasting and grinding of coffee seeds, and it is prepared by machine according to a process of percolation under high pressure of hot water.
Also in Italy, coffee is a symbol of hospitality and generosity. The southern Italy tradition of *caffè sospeso* (*suspended coffee*) is an interesting example; when a customer orders a *suspended coffee*, he pays for two coffees while receiving only one. In this way, when a needy person enters the bar, he can consume the coffee paid for by a stranger. This initiative highlights how much, in Italy, coffee is a pleasure and an indispensable ritual, and it is unthinkable not to be able to benefit from it.

3. Discussion about new Intercultural Experiments and Conclusions

The material and immaterial culture of a certain community, however, although rooted, is not a static entity, whose symbolic systems are limited to *crystallizing* into timeless objects. A world in motion, made up of human migrations and shifting, also brings with it repercussions on value systems, on daily dynamics and also on the world of design.
Humans carry with them their intangible assets, their worldviews and, in some cases, even some objects of daily or symbolic use. The Mediterranean basin has always played a crucial role in this scenario, as a *middle sea* and a place of exchange and confrontation (Tosi & al., 2015).
In this section, we will discuss some case studies of cross-cultural projects to reflect about the strategies and the approaches applied by designers, who internalize values and meanings of cultural contexts and try to redesign traditional objects with their point of view (Ozge, 2012).

Indeed, it is possible to approach the most traditional artefacts with new perspectives and re-configure the existing product language through new experimentations that often arise from the alliance of craftsmanship and industry, or from the modernization of territorial production techniques. This is the case of experiences of intercultural design in the field of product developed through different attitudes and range from purely graphic or formal hybridizations to technical combinations aimed at new functional perspectives.

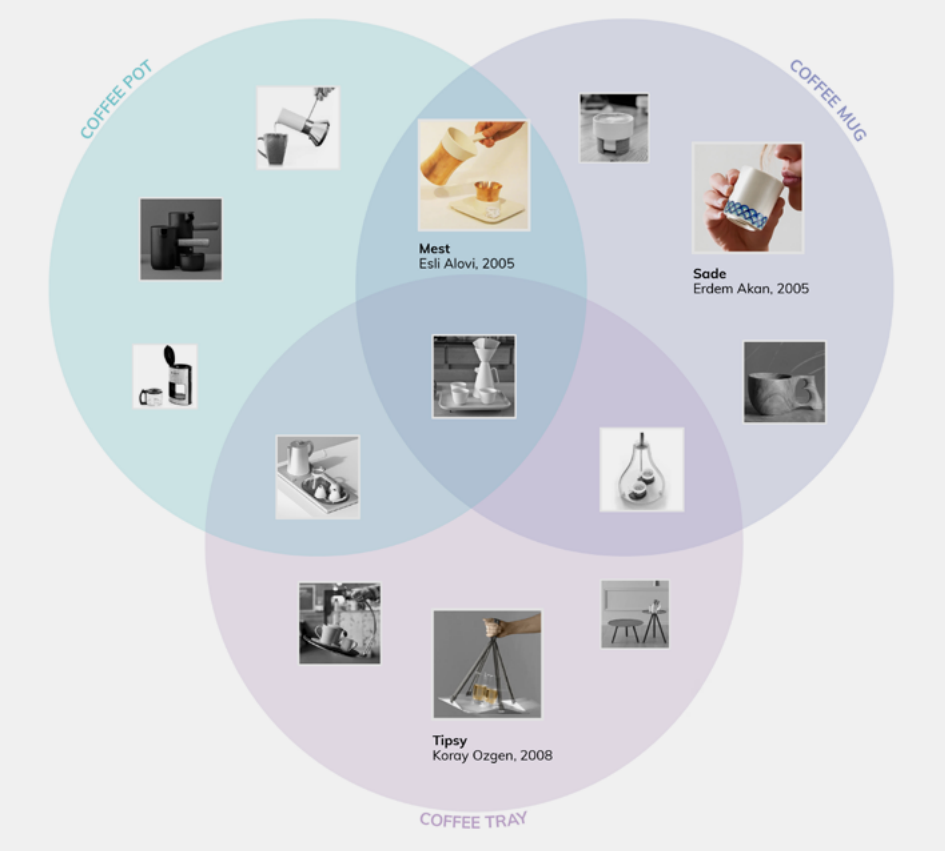

Figure 4. Collection and categorization of the various case studies analysed. Credits: authors.

A series of case studies of narrative artifacts capable of bringing different cultures together and making them recognizable to different users were collected and analysed and categorized according to tree macro-categories (coffee pot, coffee mug and coffee tray) (Fig. 4). Some of the most interesting and representative examples of the different areas of investigation are reported below in the Table. 2.
The analysis parameters present a summary of the structure adopted in Table 1 to which a reflection section on the intervention strategies adopted has been added.

Project		Mest	Tipsy	Sade
Objects				
Technical analysis	Informations	Esli Alovi 2005 Design competition	Koray Ozgen 2008 Ode Paris	Erdem Akan 2005 Maybedesign
	Level of action	Product design Tools, accessories	Product design Tools, lifestyle	Product design Tools, graphic
	Form and materials	Principal element: cylinder with a wide base and a narrow top + small long-handled pot with a pouring lip in ceramic and copper	Squared spillproof anodised aluminium tray with removable and foldable woven handle	Porcelain espresso mug with hand made ink decorations
	Fundamental elements	Central body Long-handled Pouring lip	Central body Removable handle	Central body Ink decorations
Ways of fruition	Accessories	Ceramic and copper mugs, without handles Ceramic burner, serving dishes and pitcher Serving tray	-	-
	Mode of consumption	The long handle and the spout allow to pour the coffee; the serving tray collects all the elements of the set together	The aluminum base is fitted to the handle and allows to bring the mugs into balance	The mug is taken directly from the central body And the heat?
Socio-cultural context	Place associated	Home Fragile and heavy set	Coffeehouses	Coffeehouses Home Relatives Office
	Consumer occasions	Guests Meetings Leisure	Guests Leisure	Guests Meetings Festive occasions Leisure
Intervention strategies	Research method	Employing material analogies and formal imitation	Employing formal analogies	Employing formal and material imitations and graphic allusion
	Design strategy	Combination of two materials, ceramic and copper, belonging to two different material cultures of coffee preparations	Variation of the basic shape of the tray Equilibrium limits	Combination of two reference visual and material cultures, the "cleaning" of the demi-stasse cups and the tratidional iznik tile decorations
	Approach	Substitution of materials Bisociative attraction (materials) Variations in visual and tactile patterns	Change the shape Substitution of materials	Variations in visual and tactile patterns Change the shape

Table 2. Analysis of some cross-cultural design projects related to "coffee culture". Credits: authors.

Finally, a specific focus was carried out on some critical elements that could be analysed to develop more structured projects. The table is followed by a brief technical description of the projects analysed.

The *Mest - Turkish coffee service* created in 2005 by Esli Alovi sees, on the one hand, a formal modernization of the designed system, on the other an explicit hybridization between a traditional preparation methodology (Turkish coffee) and an aesthetic taste halfway between North African and European. The design choice was in fact to combine two materials, ceramic and copper, belonging to two different material cultures of coffee preparations. The *ibrik*, the cups and all the associated accessories have a remarkable formal and expressive linearity, without seeking the visual and material perfection of serial production at all costs.
The *askı* is the traditional Turkish tea and coffee tray and consists of a metal base, usually copper, and a metal handle with three attachment points on the base. Its shape makes it an extremely practical element to carry, dynamic and with an extremely characteristic point of balance (Öğüt, 2009). *Tipsy*, designed in 2008 by Koray Ozgen, is an interpretation of this traditional tray through a more modern language in the use of shapes and materials. However, the addition of an attachment point between the handle and the base gives it much less balance than the traditional tray, which impoverishes the object of its peculiarity (Ozge, 2012).
The last project analysed is the *Sade* espresso cup, designed in 2005 by Erdem Akam. This is a set of cups without handles for both espresso and Turkish coffee. The traditional shape

of the espresso cup is flanked by a system of minimal decorations (expressed through three different graphic concepts) influenced by the traditional decorations of the *iznik* tiles, a ceramic of great value that was produced between the late fifteenth and seventeenth centuries in the west of Anatolia.

In conclusion, the extensive literature linked to culture-driven design and the examples reported here show how the world of coffee represents one of those particularly effective areas for the construction of a cross-cultural narrative. This is precisely due to its wide territorial diffusion and, at the same time, local variation and roots. Clearly, in the context of the enhancement of cultural heritage, the action of design must be guided by the correct knowledge of the cultural systems that are gathered around specific productions and social behaviours.
Today, alongside a necessary strengthening of the commitment to environmental issues, the main concept of sustainability is charged with new values of a social and cultural nature. In such a context, one of the challenges of contemporaneity is certainly represented by the confrontation between people of different origins and cultural traditions. The model of an intercultural society appears to be the most inevitable path to follow, and, in this context, the world of design can play a driving function towards this model, with the desire to contribute through an aware and culturally evolved design able to narrate identity and transfer knowledge through the objects that surround us.

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IV

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Her research aims to enable the emergence of a new design epistemology, based on concepts like post-humanism as well as on feminist and indigenous theoretical frameworks. This will be accomplished with small groups of people, within which co-creation will occur, following processes of participatory design.
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