The Ecological Turn

21st–22nd January 2021

Design, architecture and aesthetics beyond “Anthropocene”

NEW DEADLINE 29th JUNE 2020

Alma Mater Studiorum
University of Bologna
Department of Architecture

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2021 – Bologna
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CALL FOR ABSTRACT

How does the ecological thinking affect architects, designers and the design culture itself? The Anthropocene is a geological event, but also a political one that lies in overcoming the idea of crisis. Acknowledging this change means rethinking the very ecology of the project in environmental and atmospheric terms.

The changes we face don’t depend on missing balances, but on compromises reached between conservation and exploitation. The Anthropocene is in our suggested reading the time of the end of our representations and the time of the beginning of other narratives that belong to a non-linear dimension.

The ecological mindset understood here will not be a generic reconciliation with nature, but a political project, a clash between narratives, a challenge to designers and architects, their materials and their design practices to rethink the way in which human beings define themselves, their images and relationships within the world in which they live. In other words, a renewal of conflicts: between classes, between nations and production models, between technological choices.

Anthropocene is a category which has the merit of challenging our conventions in an oblique manner by reconnecting the history of mankind with the history of the Earth. In this respect, design visions can be the tool for activating new relations.

Within this process of change, how do the figures of architects and designers rethink their role, their knowledge, experimenting with new design approaches?

The conference wants to explore these issues from different points of view, in particular the “socio-bio-geosphere in its uncertain becoming by making the disciplines of the project communicate and by varying the scale of analysis, from the molecular scale of the environmental effects on our heritage, to that of the world’s flow of goods and capital organized by the World Trade Organization, passing through the local scenarios of industrial sites or socio-environmental mobilizations” as Jean Baptiste Fressoz and Christophe Bonneuil wrote.

The questions that guide this talk are on two levels of reading:
1 - How to represent, imagine, visualize the Anthropocene through the design cultures?
2 - How can this political event change the design and production processes?

keywords
visual culture, strategic design, urban metabolism, feeling / thinking with
As Franco Farinelli argues, until 1969 the territorial government was adapted to the methodological limits of the geographical map, that is to the rules of the Euclidean metric and to its three fundamental characteristics: continuity, homogeneity and isotropism. Through these three properties the intellectual appropriation of the world of western culture took place, which was so rendered interpretable and therefore governable.

The Anthropocene is the scenario in which the designer is called to overcome the notion of nature as an object, something that can be controlled and disposed of, to explore the possibilities arising from new ways of interpreting, feeling and perceiving relationship between human beings and the territory.

Are non-anthropogenic visualizations possible? Which visual culture, which narratives, which forms and images can respond to the need to represent the flows, data and relationships of the earth system?

Possible arguments, suggestions are:

- representation models that go beyond the cartographic conception of territory towards narratives and images of non-anthropocentric urban metabolism;

- informative-narrative proposals of complex phenomena through new design approaches.

Resolutionist and heroic narratives are no longer sufficient to hide behind noble intentions such as “sustainability”, “environment”, “ethics” or “awareness”, design approaches that in reality still pursue selfish paths of destruction, consumption, extraction functional to the dynamics of a growth linked only to logistics capitalism.

Starting from the current demands of our time such as emergencies, climate change and local conflicts, the need for designers to rethink the very meaning of living and to renew the relationships between the shape of an object, the material that constitutes it and the context in which it is located spreads. Designing in the Anthropocene does not mean solving but gaining points of view where different disciplines contaminate and collaborate towards an anthropo-decentralized approach, from design to biology, from architecture to economics, from technology to humanistic knowledge.

Possible areas of reflection:

**Time.** If until today the contemporary project has responded to the needs of producing and consuming more and more resources, what materials, technologies, production models and processes open up to ecological living? How to rethink the project according to its own reversibility?

**Territory.** How to rethink the very meaning of living in an era where it is increasingly difficult to rely on consolidated categories and dichotomies, such as subject-object, natural-artificial? How will the intangible resources of a territory, the identities and relationships between communities be used to make project processes more responsible? In a system of interconnections and interdependencies, how can we imagine urban and rural areas and the relationships between public and private? How can design culture activate ecological design forms and new behaviors?


Eligible participants

Phd students, architects, designers, philosophers, planners or researcher interested in the topic are invited to submit their application.

How to apply

Authors are invited to send the abstract in English by **29th June 2020** (previous deadline 15th June) to the following e-mail theecologicalturn@unibo.it

The document must be in .doc format, including:
- authors, affiliation, email and short biography (maximum **150 words**)
- **title** of the proposed contribution
- **5 keywords**
- **abstract** (maximum **800 words**, bibliographical references excluded)
- **bibliographic references** with author-year citation system (see editorial rules)
- **an image** (.tif or .jpg format) **300 dpi** resolution, free of rights and with caption.

Participation is **free**. Texts are to be submitted in **English**.

The abstract will be subjected to a **double-blind peer review** procedure.

The authors of the selected abstracts will be invited to present their contribution during the second day of the International Conference in Bologna, on **January 22nd 2021**, in the manner that will be indicated.

Following the conference, the authors of the selected abstracts must proceed to send the **full paper** in a definitive form to be submitted no later than **February 5th 2021**. A selection of full papers will be published in a volume at a national publishing house. The editing rules to be followed for the definitive version of the full paper will be available on the conference website.

For more details on deadlines see the **Calendar** section on the website [https://eventi.unibo.it/theecologicalturn-architettura-bologna-2020/calendar](https://eventi.unibo.it/theecologicalturn-architettura-bologna-2020/calendar)
Compose the entire text in body 12 pt (Times New Roman or Garamond), line spacing 1.5.

**Titles** (chapter, paragraph etc.): write them in all capitals without applying particular styles, and separate them clearly from the body of the text.

The notes must consist of footnotes and must be numbered consecutively.

Authors will have to insert bibliographic references by adopting the author-year citation system. Examples of correct bibliographic citations are given below:

**a. Single author books:**

**b. Books with two or three authors**

**c. Books with more than three authors**

**d. Books with editor**

**e. Contributions on books not mentioned in the bibliography**

**f. Contributions on books cited in the bibliography**

**g. Articles**
The name of the article in italics must be indicated, the name of the magazine in round in low quotation marks and the volume number in Roman numerals in round brackets. The name of the magazine must never be preceded by “in” Rossi, M. 2001, *Title of the article*, “Magazine” (XV), pp. xx-yy.
The Scientific Committee is composed by the members of the Academic Board of the Architecture and Design Cultures Phd Program, of the Department of Architecture of Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna. Information: https://phd.unibo.it/architettura/en/people

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