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6<sup>th</sup> Bernardo Secchi Working Seminar  
**The Transition as a project:  
Space, Life, Politics**

*Call for contributions*

FONDATION  
BRAILLARD  
ARCHITECTES

**THE ECO-  
CENTURY  
PROJECT**

At the initiative of the Brillard Architects Foundation, Geneva, and the Habitat Research Center of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Lausanne, the **Bernardo Secchi Working Seminars (JBS)** were established yearly since 2015 as an international and interdisciplinary meeting, bound to debate the main issues related to cities and regions in favor of the ecological transition as a coordinated action in the context of climate emergency. Integral part of the Brillard Foundation's research and culture program *The Eco-Century Project*®, the Bernardo Secchi Working Seminar is dedicated to the memory of the planner and theoretician Bernardo Secchi (1934- 2014), Professor at the Schools of Architecture of Geneva and Venice. With his writings and projects, the internationally known and engaged urbanist has constantly promoted a **critical understanding** and **innovative action** for the just and optimal development of the urban realm.

In 2022, the 6<sup>th</sup> Bernardo Secchi Working Seminar will be dedicated to the transition (ecological, social, and spatial) of cities and regions, considering Transition as a project for space, life and politics.

« *The metaphysical and methodological commitment of modern western urbanism is towards conceiving the project of the city and the territory as being part of a vaster biopolitical action* ».<sup>1</sup>  
Bernardo Secchi

In his last text dedicated to European urbanism and its tradition, Bernardo Secchi drew upon the Foucauldian notion of “biopolitics” to qualify to Modern Planning. He argued that the entire European democratic culture could be considered as the field of a “vaster biopolitical action” that namely engaged, constructed, and transformed urban space, in view of protecting, educating, and emancipating its population. Accordingly, planning and design of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries were defined as techno-scientific and creative offspring of this tradition.

A never-ending list of crises, culminating in the recent health crisis and the upcoming global order crisis appear as precursors of increasingly violent economic, social, and environmental ones. The conceptual, intellectual, and disciplinary debate proposed here is therefore worth the challenge. It fosters the search for tools and methods of planning and design for an inhabitable, just, and healthy planet. To make this socio-ecological and spatial transition possible, a new project with a fundamental conceptual shift in favour of new articulations between space, time and politics ought to be invented. Within this project, human synergies and values should be enhanced including those of heterogeneity and diversity in the design of the inhabited realms.

1. Secchi, B. (2014) 'A tradição europeia do planeamento: culturas e políticas'. In E. Ribeiro Peixoto, M. F. Dernti, P.P. Palazzo, R. Trevisan eds., *Tempos e escalas da cidade e do urbanismo: quatro palestras*, XIII Seminário de História da Cidade e do Urbanismo (SHCU). Brasília: Universitã di Brasília.

## Three axes guide this interdisciplinary research

### – VALUES AND METRICS

Two degrees, zero tons per capita per year CO2 equivalent, within nine planetary boundaries: how do mere quantities create complex discourses, methods and scenarios converging in political action, assisted by spatial and biological knowledge? How can we devise the metrics of the ecological transition project?

### – SPACES OF EMANCIPATION

What other meanings can the climate emergency carry than the possible end of civilization as we know it? What socio-ecological ambitions can the Transition include when considered as a project? Are there spatial qualities with which to invest political emancipation of the living?

### – ECOLOGIES OF COEXISTENCE

How can we design new forms of co-existence of the living beings in the biosphere? How can the ecological transition be conceived as the indispensable multilateral diplomacy room among long-standing oppositions, under the pressure of the emergency signaled by the climate crisis?

## Conditions

– The 6<sup>th</sup> Bernardo Secchi Working Seminar invites scholars, practitioners and stakeholders working at the intersection between Space, Life, and Politics to propose papers discussing the vortex created by life sciences, political sciences and the disciplines of architecture and planning. Proposals are invited to move along one or more of the three guiding axes.

– Contributions can also build on the inaugural (online) debate organized on November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in the framework of the Venice Biennale's conferences "Meetings on Architecture" curated by Hashim Sarkis (MIT). Most of the panelists will again participate in the seminar itself.

– In this framework, written proposals (300 words) can be submit to:

[jbs\\_2022@brailard.ch](mailto:jbs_2022@brailard.ch)

**extended deadline**  
**June 10<sup>th</sup> 2022, 12 pm**

– Written in English, the selected proposals will be announced as of Monday, June 20, 2022. Selected papers are planned to be published during 2023.

## Steering Committee

**Panos Mantziaras**  
(Fondation Brailard Architectes)

**Paola Viganò**  
(Habitat Research Center, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne)

**Michiel Dehaene**  
(Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, Ghent University)

**The seminar will take place on Monday and Tuesday October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at the Pavillon Sicli, in Geneva**

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CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS | 6<sup>TH</sup> BERNARDO SECCHI WORKING SEMINAR | 2022

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