

# BEYOND METROPOLIZATION

*Exploring new hybrids*

*10th International U&U PhD Seminar  
Eurometropolis Lille-Kortrijk-Tournai  
ENSAP de Lille, 28-30 June 2023*

## U&U SEMINARS

After successful editions in Leuven, Venice, Barcelona, Paris, Delft, Lausanne and Ghent, the 10th edition of the Urbanism & Urbanization International PhD Seminar will be hosted in Lille, France. The LACTH (Laboratoire de recherche de l'École d'Architecture et de Paysage de Lille) and the LAB (Louvain Research Institute for Landscape, Architecture and Built Environment, UCLouvain) are responsible for the scientific direction and organization of the Seminar.

U&U seminars seek to bring together students writing their PhD dissertations in urbanism, working within very different disciplinary traditions, combining historical research, design research and different forms of urban research. The community supporting this seminar series over the years shares an interest in work that tries to speak across the divide between urban studies and the city-making disciplines, seeking to combine the interpretation of the process of urbanization with the commitment and care for the urban condition in all its manifestations.

The seminar welcomes all PhD students working in this mixed field. The call for papers foregrounds a set of themes that will be given special attention. We invite students to respond to these thematic lines, however, papers addressing other themes and concerns will also be taken into consideration.

## HYBRIDIZATIONS...

It is increasingly difficult to use boundaries and perimeters to define 'territories', whether we are talking about physical or political, disciplinary or professional, economic or cultural ones. For these delimitations are constantly being overstepped and contradicted: by contemporary forms of urbanization, by the life, training and jobs paths of people, by the flows of resources involved in our economies, as well as the diversity of the 'circles' that now constitute our plural identities.

As a consequence, over the last decades, urban theories have already embodied three major paradigm shifts, even if they are percolating more slowly into the dominant practices and visions of urban policies. In the early 1980s, urbanized territories started to be analysed in terms of lines and *networks*<sup>1</sup>, rather than surfaces and *functions*; this was mainly about infrastructures, but more recently the role of network actors (such as those managing services, energy, water, waste, etc.) in the organization of territories has also been highlighted<sup>2</sup>.

At the same time, urbanism and urban planning research has also focused, in addition to *static* spatial descriptions, on *dynamic* approaches, investigating the trajectories of resources required by different urbanized forms, such as the territorial metabolism<sup>3</sup>. And consequently, we have become aware of the importance of the secondary effects that an urbanization process in *one place* produces *elsewhere*, sometimes very far away. The agglomerated city, a model of sustainability for some, in fact consumes resources produced in "operational landscapes"<sup>4</sup> on a global level, generating widespread interdependence on a planetary scale.

1 Dupuy G. (1991), *L'urbanisme des réseaux. Théories et méthodes*, A. Colin, Paris.

2 Vanier M. (2015), *Demain les territoires. Capitalisme réticulaire et espace politique*, Hermann éd., Paris.

3 Duvigneaud P. (1974), *La synthèse écologique : populations, communautés, écosystèmes, biosphère, noosphère*, Doin, Paris.

4 Brenner N. (ed.) (2014), *Implosions/Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, Jovis, Berlin.

In many fields, we are already thinking in terms of links, and interactions: *inter-disciplinarity* between two different defined scientific methods, cross-border cooperation between two distinct territories, short food circuits between urban and rural areas, partnerships between public issues and private finance, etc.

But beyond making the link, we would like today to question its result, what is produced as new hybrids, as "third terms", when we go for *trans-disciplinarity*. When ecology focuses on the *lisières*, or ecotones, it is because they put in contact distinct domains, but it is mainly because that allows hybridizations, thus biodiversity. Similarly, the richness of *métissage*, for the creole poet Edouard Glissant, is to generate new identities. And in the philosophy of science, several forms of hybrids have already been conceptualised, between the scholarly and the profane<sup>5</sup>, or humans and non-humans<sup>6</sup>, etc.

## ... BEYOND METROPOLIZATION

The crucial questions that our territories in transition are facing today - energy, mobility, health, water, food, soil artificialisation, access to healthcare, fair remuneration of work, spatial equity, etc. - are often envisioned in polarized models, that can freeze positions. In order to better address these issues, we postulate the need to dismantle categories, to break out of univocal patterns, to build new coalitions along different dividing lines. To this end, this 10th U&U seminar wishes to explore the potential of hybridization, between different theoretical models, between diverse urbanized forms, between various working methods, etc.

Metropolization particularly - as a process of political concentration, economic accumulation and spatial differentiation - has been the dominant urban model since the

5 Callon M. et al. (2001), *Agir dans un monde incertain. Essai sur la démocratie technique*, Seuil, Paris.

6 Latour B. (1991), *Nous n'avons jamais été modernes. Essai anthropologie symétrique*, La Découverte, Paris.

19th century. And in these three areas it created categories that today become problematic, for example in terms of spatial injustice or lack of representativeness. Moreover, this model has been able to develop thanks to a historical regime of abundant cheap energy, conditions which are now declining. What are then the alternatives to current trends? S. Marot<sup>7</sup>, for instance, identifies four scenarios which challenge our current categories, whether they be planning tools, urban strategies, practical action modalities, or societal paradigms.

This seminar therefore wishes to welcome contributions that explore the potential of different forms of hybridization (we suggest some possibilities below), grounded on the idea that, in light of the current climatic, energetic, geopolitical and economic crisis, urbanism and urban planning need to cross multiple thresholds. We believe that it is possible, in this way, to collectively contribute to renewing current theoretical models.

## TRACK 1 RURAL AND URBAN HYBRID

Nowadays urbanism necessarily finds itself dealing with a context where boundaries between city and countryside are not delineated, and where habitat, production, leisure, services and agriculture merge into a single landscape. While many works have already contributed to the description of these fabrics - *città diffusa*, *zwischenstadt*, *nebular city*, etc.<sup>8</sup> - today, actors are also considering them from the point of view of the project, whether on a local<sup>9</sup> or territorial scale<sup>10</sup>, or by soft densification.

Indeed, ecologists have shown that the forms

7 Marot S. (2019), *Taking the country's side. Architecture and agriculture*, Lisbon Architecture Triennale : *The Poetics of Reason*, Polígrafa, Barcelona.

8 Barcelloni Corte M., Viganò P. (eds) (2022), *The Horizontal Metropolis. The Anthology*. Springer Link.

9 Mariolle B., Léger J.-M. (eds.) (2018), *Densifier dédensifier. Penser les campagnes urbaines*, éd. Parenthèses, Marseille.

10 Cavalieri C., Viganò P. (eds.) (2019), *The Horizontal Metropolis: a Radical Project*, Park, Zürich.

of habitat in suburbs, mixing garden plots, vegetable gardens, backyards, crafts and small industries, are intermediate environments with much higher levels of biodiversity than those in the city or the countryside. The fact of increasing the contact line between inhabited areas and cultivated plots also makes it possible to facilitate local agriculture, in terms of production by growers (easier access to land), of local distribution through short circuits, and of education of the inhabitants.

This track welcomes papers that analyse the potential of mixed fabrics in terms of quality of life, ecological diversity, social opportunities, local economies but also what the costs are, and for which communities. By studying forms of values less clear-cut distributed between centres and peripheries, (economical, symbolic, cultural, political values, etc.), these papers explore alternative forms of metropolization, in the sense that the latter implies a selective policy that concentrates attractiveness in what are sometimes called 'poles of excellence', from which only spill-over effects are expected.

## TRACK 2 TERRITORIALIZING POLITICAL HYBRIDS

Inter-territoriality is an increasingly important issue, as there is nowadays a growing disconnection between the perimeters of public competences and life trajectories (professional mobility, multi-residentiality, multi-culturalism), or the flow of resources that are necessary for our lifestyles. For some authors, it is even the duty of political districts today to reflect on the modalities of a shared inter-territorial power, because "it is only in the complementary of the resources of each territory (...) that we will be able to be at the same time attractive (even competitive), equitable (even supportive), and economical (even sober)"<sup>11</sup>.

11 Vanier M. (2008), *Le pouvoir des territoires. Essai sur l'inter-territorialité*, éd. Anthropos, Paris, p.64.

Cross-border territories<sup>12</sup> in particular are interesting situations for experimenting with inter-territoriality because they raise all the issues at stake in an enhanced manner. Unlike the classic model of the metropolis, which organizes its relations with its neighbours in terms of dependence and decision-making hierarchy, these conurbations are living areas with horizontal inter-dependencies. They are places of opportunity (for trade, leisure, employment or services) and of negative externalities (waste deposits, different regulations, disconnection from networks, lawless areas), with no real citizen counterparts and no democratic representation in their governance.

In order to engage a project perspective, many of these hybrid territories, under the impulse of European programs, have used the “vision” as a tool for bypassing both policies and physical borders in order to promote a long-term image of the future. Nevertheless, how it can effectively guide the more traditional “strategic” and “operational” dimensions is still to be investigated. The urban project in particular is identified as a “blind spot” in cross-border cooperation.

This track is therefore interested in articles presenting and analyzing forms of experimentation, whether citizen or public action, proposing specific collaborative mechanisms for implementing joint projects, aiming to overcome the objective difficulties of performing policies and operational tools, in a situation of inter-territoriality.

### TRACK 3 RESOURCES HYBRIDIZATION

“Urbanizing in place” : some scholars<sup>13</sup> propose to consider urbanization no longer as a linear process of land consumption but as a process ‘in place’, cumulative rather than extensive. This is clearly also an alternative to metropolization, in the sense that the latter

corresponds to a mode of urban growth by sprawl, *a priori* unlimited, linked with the principle of constantly maintaining attractiveness.

This change of perspective implies keeping up the resources and grey energy that have been invested locally (infrastructures, cultures, constructions, work time, etc.), and valorizing them through circular approaches. Today, the application of the Zero Net Land Take directive (ZAN in France, Stop Beton in Belgium, etc.) raises questions throughout Europe, and one of the options announced (in the Flemish BRV, for example), is the hybridization of activities in the same space. On what scale is it fair to measure the “net” artificialisation balance? What should be considered as an artificialized area? How can we avoid the risk of suffocating already dense environments and blocking the development of others?

Another contemporary theoretical field that involves forms of hybridity is that of the commons. As described by Elinor Ostrom (1991), one of the *sine qua non* conditions for the sustainability of these self-organizing systems is the interweaving of actions (of appropriation, provision, monitoring, conflict resolution, etc.), but also the indistinguishable interweaving of everyone’s interests, and the interweaving of several complementary resources in the same system<sup>14</sup>. Still, this is also the principle of permaculture, not to exploit each resource in autonomous and parallel channels but to favour each one by the presence of the others, by interweaving their cycles, their inputs and their outputs<sup>15</sup>.

This track is therefore interested in works that analyse experiences in the organisation of territories, ways of life and production, which go beyond zoning, sectors and linear exploitation; it questions what a “permaculture”, applied to the fields of urbanism, could produce.

12 As for example the NWMA-North West Metropolitan Area or the conurbation Lille Kortrijk Tournai.

13 Dehaene M. (2013), *Tuinieren in het Stedelijk Veld / Gardening in the Urban Field*, A&S/Books, Gent University.

14 Grosjean B. (2018), “La huitième condition : l’imbrication. Usages du territoire dans les communs d’Elinor Ostrom”, *Les carnets du paysage* n° 33, Actes Sud, pp.131-143.

15 Holmgren D., Mollison B. (1978), *Permaculture 1 : A Perennial Agriculture for Human Settlement*, Corgi Books, London.

## TRACK 4 HYBRID DISCIPLINES

Town planning has always been interdisciplinary; it is historically grounded in economic, geographical, and social sciences. In the 2000s, urban and landscape designers find themselves working on the same scales and frameworks, blurring their boundaries, which has already given rise to the 'landscape urbanism', movement that some have already defined as a 'hybrid' of the two disciplines. Today, we can expect tools from new fields - pedology, hydrology, forestry, agronomy, archaeology, etc. - to structure urban planning, for example according to soil types, their water permeability, their topographical situation, their fertility, etc. And certain contemporary research objects, such as energy, can themselves be considered as 'hybrid' objects, since they belong to different regimes (material, virtual, organizational, socio-cultural, political).

But it is also the working methodologies that are now being hybridized in urban studies, by mixing different practices that have always been epistemologically sealed off until now, such as research and design, but also artistic research (video, narratives), collective action (associations, activists), fieldwork (self-construction), etc. This transdisciplinarity can be expected to produce new results, which each separate approach could not have achieved in isolation.

This track welcomes then papers working on transdisciplinary researches, coping with complex territorial structures urbanisms (environmental sciences such as ecology, agronomy, forestry, water engineering) and/or associating a variety of investigating practices, connected with action research, engaging communities, participative processes, etc. (social sciences such as sociology, anthropology, artistic research...).

## CALL FOR PAPER

The seminar invites *full papers* that present a coherent piece of research or a dissertation chapter, as well as *short papers* that address methodologies, research questions or articulate a starting point for PhD research. Both full (4000-5000 words) and short (2000-2500 words) papers will be organized in thematic sessions<sup>16</sup>.

Full papers typically cover a PhD chapter in the making. Short papers are fit for early-stage PhD students and are well suited to address the overall subject and central research questions of a PhD project. In addition to the seminar proceedings, a selection of seminar contributions will be published subsequently.

PhD candidates interested in presenting a paper should submit an abstract of maximum 500 words. The scientific committee, taking into account the relation to the themes, will select papers to be presented during the seminar, and will invite respondents in consideration of the subject to which they are most closely related. The language of the papers and presentations will be English.

Each abstract should include the following information (font Times New Roman, 10pt):

- full name
- affiliation
- email address
- thesis supervisor
- year of expected of thesis defence
- working title of dissertation
- full or short paper
- proposed session number
- abstract
- main bibliographic references

Abstracts should be submitted by January, the 27th, 2023 via email to: [UU2023@lille.archi.fr](mailto:UU2023@lille.archi.fr)

<sup>16</sup> Please note that additional information regarding keynote speakers, registration fees, venue, program, and other news will be announced soon

## TIMING

call for papers: December 15th, 2022  
abstract [extended] deadline: February 3rd, 2023  
notification of acceptance: March 6th, 2023  
full and short papers due: June 1st, 2023  
Phd Seminar: June 28-30, 2023

## CONTACT

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## MAIN LOCATION

Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Architecture et  
de Paysage de Lille  
2, rue Verte – F - 59650 Villeneuve d'Ascq

## PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

Wednesday, June 28th  
Afternoon: introduction (key-note speaker),  
Parallel Sessions #1, welcome cocktail

Thursday, June 29th  
Morning: Visiting Eurometropolis  
Afternoon: Parallel Sessions #2, Conference  
(keynote speaker), social dinner

Friday, June 30th  
Morning: Parallel sessions #3  
Afternoon: Round-up, General remarks  
(key-note speaker)

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

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