



AMPHIBIA

First General Thematic of the "Post Industrial Design" Postgraduate Program 2015-16

The term "Post-Industrial Design" describes a set of practices concerning the programming and design of objects and conditions of everyday life. The "everyday" as a definition aims to focus the scope of research and to avoid a more generic approach that simply includes everything. Thus, the practices of the post-industrial era - after the domination by industrial prototypes of the everyday - could be directed toward a field of reality that is today

of critical interest, especially for us in Greece, as we look at the international scene and simultaneously try to define ourselves within it, leveraging our own particular condition, our relation to geography and climate, and the traces of timeless dwelling on the very ground we walk on, act and speak.

AND AND SEA

Life between land and sea, in the way that it is experienced in Greece both by inhabitants and visitors, is often perceived as an idealized and partial -- within the course of a year -- everyday: the everyday of vacations during the summer months. But how can the conditions of "place" and climate, within a coastal context, influence a dwelling culture of everyday life as a whole? How can they inform the whole spectrum of production and re-production of life? The programming and production of the everyday fall within such a spectrum of life, interconnected with the globalized condition at the same time that it focuses on the horizon of the Mediterranean coastline extended towards the sea. Or could the contemporary everyday reverse this condition, with the subject gazing over the land from the sea?

ANIMAL AND MACHINE

"Amphibious", a term of Greek origin, describes animals and machines that are able to function both on land and in water (the sea). While "animal" (amphibian) and "machine" (amphibious machine) seem to narrow the conceptual scope of the "amphibious" the opposite is actually true. The cyborg subject, with both its animalistic and mechanical dimension, is enough to help us grasp the term "amphibious" in all its ontological depth. Amphi-bios (bios=βίος, "life" in Greek) is not only a life possible both on land and in water; it is a field of life and a field of action between the animalism of humans and their mechanical aspect, brought on by the involvement of machines in human intellect, emotion and bodily status. Thus, when one speaks about a research program concerned with the possibilities and practices of the everyday in an amphibious state, a question is raised regarding not only the experience of a coastal life but also its suspension between animal and machine. At the same time, the amphibious monster consists of even broader dimensions that may define it as a subject: how can we determine the identity of the amphibious creature?

DOUBLE, MULTIPLE SUBJECT

The very idea of the amphi-bios (amphi=αμφί, “bi-“ in Greek), implying a life both here and there, undermines any preconceived identification of the subject of everyday life with one locality, one homeland, one origin. Being here and being there, the amphibious subject of everyday life remains exposed to the vicissitudes of localizations both “here and there”, whether the “here” and “there” refer to home and workplace, one or another language of communication, or the “material” and the “immaterial/digital” fields. Furthermore the “here and there” of the amphibious questions gender identity. Male, Female and their performative roles are from the beginning undermined in an amphibious everyday. Even the political constitution of subjects based on their social status, or their spatial status as a tourist, nomad or refugee, is questioned in an anthropology of the amphibious.

THE MONSTER “AMPHIBIA”

Life on land and at sea; animal life and that of the cyborg machine; a life of suspended gender or an ambiguous national, political and geographical identity; these, in their extreme hybridization, open up a field of research: the amphi-subject and the conditions of its life production and re-production inspire every practice of programming and designing the everyday, which is going to be the focus of the Postgraduate Program of “Post-Industrial Design”. The term “Amphibia” is used in this form in order to allow for multiple definitions, either as the studied amphibious subjects (amphibians), the amphibious state or life, or just as “amphibia” itself.