

ezio manzini

# sustainability





# design

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started up in the 50s.

design was a nameless mysterious concept

through the 60s and onwards,  
it solidified into  
what we know  
it to be now.

and then presently, it goes through  
further development and

takes us onto higher planes

of knowledge  
and explorations.



# ezi o manzini

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engineer and architecture

professor of environmental design

director of CIRIS, an Interdepartmental Centre of Research on innovation  
for sustainability

coordinator of the "Dottorato in Disegno Industriale"  
(industrial design) at the Polytechnic of Milan.

one the world's leading experts on  
sustainable design; focused on

scenario making.

part of slowLab

> group of designers

exploring advancement of slow  
design thinking and practice, envisioning environmental sustainability,  
social harmony, and individual well-being as processes of products of  
good design; deep experiences of the world, meaningful and  
revealing relationships vs. fast pace life.

books >

The Material of Invention  
Artifacts: Towards a New Ecology  
of the Artificial Environment

Solid Side: The Search for Consistency in a Changing World  
Sustainable Everyday





5 9 8 1 6 7 2  
can change the world

"although the future may not be predictable, we can nonetheless try to design it."

Designing the future means identifying among the many possible futures the one that seems most desirable and then striving to increase the probability

that it will come about."

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obi-wan kenobi

Luke [your name],  
you must always use The Force for good,  
never for evil."

obi-wan kenobi

STAR WARS  
BEN KENOBI



# the material dimension.

generally accepted common goal has been  
growth in material production > more products  
+ more consumption would result in  
greater sense of well-being.

***"every current hypothesis about future implies,  
as a necessary condition, a reduction in the amount of material consumed.  
this is dictated by the requirement of environmental sustainability."***

currently: high value placed on individuality; dissolution of social ties for desperate  
search for identity through material means.

goal: seek social quality based on values of  
participation, shared responsibility  
and solidarity; creating together new forms of community  
for new forms of community identity;

## conviviality.



# the non-material dimension

the other end of the spectrum > non-material world of pure information and communication.

new cultural devices are needed to cope with a phenomenon whose positive possibilities are in danger of being swamped by the negative:

"what was intended to be a form of communication, and thus an interactive link, is changing into a new form of communication, and what was meant to be information is becoming just noise" ezio manzini

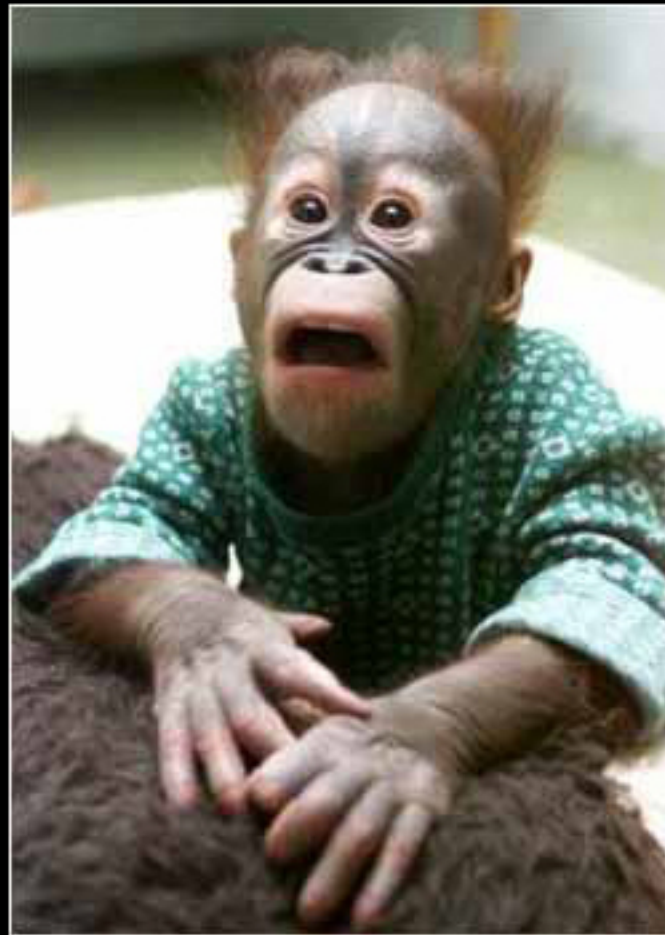
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## the non-material world

*can still be consumed and itself consumes resources  
in order to function \_ and  
in the form of info and comm. technologies,  
changes are disastrously fast.*



# huh?



if both material and  
non-material dimensions  
do not operate well theoretically then---

~ *huh?*  
what must one do?

ugh the future may not be  
the  
one that you design! Designing the future means  
you have to see the future as a series of  
choices and decisions, not a fixed path.





huh?

~ huh?



huh?

~ huh?

huh?! ~

huh?~



huh?

huh?~  
huh?!~  
huh?~

!

huh?~  
huh?!~  
huh?~



# towards sustainability

dead matter/waste | X | non-material  
world of info

*x = world of bodies, objects and images which  
change and modify themselves, but which do so a pace  
and in ways compatible with those of our  
deeper nature as human,  
living beings in an ecosystem of cultural beings  
continually seeking meaning.*

constructions of meanings and preservation of life/physical  
now is the transitional period.



# sustainability

sustainability > sustainable *system of production and consumption; act responsibly towards future generations; refrain from endangering the environment balance upon which is based the hope of ourselves and future generations for life on Earth.*

**environmental sustainability and**

sustainable society different;

environmental sustainability can exist only with a society

that promotes it, i.e. a sustainable society; environmental sustainability can in principle be numerically accessed; sustainable society not measurable and is a human construct, subject to continual modification and change.

ugh the future may not be  
are  
one the best design! Designing the future means  
no one has seen it  
from each  
it all



# first steps

starting point: dematerialization in the system of production and consumption

## not recognizing environmental issue

*as more important than social, economical, cultural problems, but that it is necessary for there to be a place physically for discussion to take place.*

what must one do?

**two extreme approaches of a spectrum to reduce consumption:**

hypertechnological: maintain people's perception of well-being as availability of more products and services but reducing consumption of resources via a sudden improvement in technology; unrealistic

hypercultural: cultural change will accept reduction of consumption of resources but maintain sense of well-being; unnecessary to have technological innovation; improbable to be effected voluntarily to the masses.



# compromise

the economic and productive dimension:

any social actor who acts rationally in economic terms should act rationally in ecological terms as well.

- aided by:**
- environment becoming more of a "scarce commodity",  
implying cost of raw material, non-renewable energy, the treatment of waste, and the occupation of space will increase naturally
  - away from products: instead of selling automobiles, mobility;  
not washing machines but the cleaning and maintenance of clothes; products vs. services
  - dematerialisation of products: meeting demands but utilising a minimum of environmental resources (e.g. going digital)
  - growth of current eco-efficient service and information (digital) economy helps to dematerialise the economy in general; power of information and communication technologies important (e.g. sense of well-being gauged by something digital vs. material goods)
  - industrial ecology: like that of natural ecology, create a cycle of renewable resources
  - location of production should depend more heavily on geographical nature and economic and productive issues (not cost to run, etc.). E.g. the resource is kept close, complementary activities located close to one another

what must one do?



# radical change

“‘voluntary transition’ can only succeed if a large number of individuals see the transition as an opportunity to improve their own degree of well-being...

there will need to be a change in the values and criteria by which people assess their level of well-being.

The culture which has prevailed so far will have to change radically.”

"Although the future may not be  
predictable  
we can no longer resist the design of  
the future. The future is being  
designed by the people who are  
not yet born."







# manzini Scenarios

**Co-housing:** integration of private space with a collection of shared facilities (kitchens, etc.); practicality and communion

**Laundry Bar/Restaurant:** laundry out of the home and into high quality facilities improving environmental and aesthetic standard of existing public laundries; a place of entertainment and socialization

**Distance Working Centers:** neighbourhood offices for people who work at home; workstations, meeting and teleconference rooms for use

**Community:** solidarity, reciprocation, and exchange (of goods and services, time and skills) between neighbours

**Surplus exchange:** excess produce from vegetable gardens sent to food bank

**Alternative mobility areas:** developing and creating a large variety of alternative transport systems; public vehicles, shared taxis, cycling paths, etc.

**Sustainable cities and districts:** integrating solar panels, wind generators, co-generational systems, and bioclimatic buildings with high standards of environmental performance

**Micro-enterprise:** promote micro-enterprises that favour bottom-up activities

**Others:** Community Vegetation Growing Gardens, Adopt a Tree/Hen, City Vegetable Gardens, Home Made Lunch Delivery

design >



# slowLab Scenarios



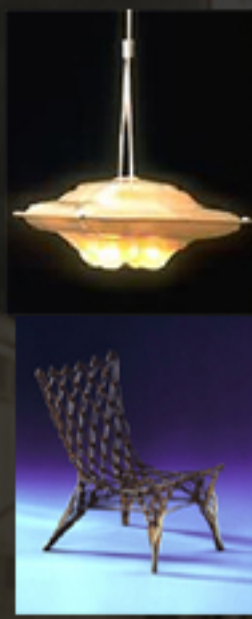
slow water

<http://www.slowlab.net/slow%20water.html>



recycled soundscape

<http://www.slowlab.net/architectsubtraction.html>



dry tech

<http://www.slowlab.net/DryTech.html>



tranny of the plug

<http://www.slowlab.net/dick%20van%20hoff.html>



highland idea competition

<http://www.slowlab.net/highline%20cj%20cs.html>

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deeper \$hit.

More in depth at <http://www.edf.edu.au/Resources/Manzini/Bibliography.htm>  
through Manzini papers.

In discussion with relationship to sustainable society:

- Quality of a product to client and environment
- limits and possibilities of ecodesign
- interview
- sustainable way of living
- well-being

Sustainable Everyday – Scenarios of Urban Life

[http://www.triennale.it/triennale/sito\\_html/quotidiano/eng/casi\\_.html](http://www.triennale.it/triennale/sito_html/quotidiano/eng/casi_.html)

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