

Course PM, ARK641, Masters' thesis preparation course 3p Autumn 2021, Rurban transformations



Effects on the city and countryside, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Siena 1338

Description and aim of the track

This track works with the spatial transformations of *Rurban* areas where potentials from both rural and urban logics are combined and create hybrid conditions. The term *rurban* can refer either to a geographical location or to a spatial condition, or to both. An example of the geographical location is given by rural-urban fringes between the city and the countryside and towns in rural locations. These areas are often set aside from the mainstream, neoliberal architectural and urban planning and design focus on cities and urban areas. Nonetheless, the *rurban* can also refer to spatial conditions, and such conditions can exist: a) in more rural areas – where agriculture is no longer the main economic activity and ongoing infrastructure and landscape transformations create a situation of hybridity and indeterminacy in terms of space configuration and activities; b) in more urban locations e.g. Gothenburg, a city whose periphery is often characterized by a fragmented structure and a hybridity of infrastructures, landscapes and built-up areas that mix rural - e.g. agriculture, forestry, mining - and urban functions. In all such situations, new development opportunities can emerge and reinforce local and regional identities. Rurban areas are subjects for specific challenges and spatial approaches. But they also include a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, educational, agricultural and ecologically protected areas and land uses that offers unexplored potential for sustainable transformation (Keil and Young, 2009: 488).

Factors such as climate change, a renewed interest in locally produced food and bio-based products, the Covid-19 pandemic demanding for social distancing and a rediscovery of the local vis-a-vis the global, can help to promote a shift towards a "new rurality" (Rytönen, 2013). Here, the rurban concept is crucial, by introducing (and combining) urban functions and logics in rural contexts and vice versa. The aim of the direction is to critically explore and develop the potential of new rurban transformations and rurban conditions beyond an urban norm for sustainable futures. The direction welcomes projects that critically examine specific characteristics of spatial transformations that take place in rurban landscapes, intended as fringes, hybrids and fragmented areas in-between urban and rural landscapes. Given this context, the architectural thinking is used both to display current situations but even more to explore possibilities to model alternative future imageries.

Purpose and content of the preparation course

The purpose of the course is for the students to **develop and finalize their project plan, whose content falls within the topic of Rurban transformations**. The course prepares the students for their master's thesis under **the guidance of assigned examiner(s) and supervisor(s)**. It explores **specific theories** and/or design methods associated with a particular focus of architecture and urban design. It trains the students' **ability to use** design studies, precedent studies, context studies, material studies and/or theoretical texts **as a basis for formulating a design problem and/or research query**. **The final deliverance in the course is a project plan.**

Process and schedule

The course will be given digitally according to the following schedule:

- 7 October, 09.00-17.00, lecture and presentation
 - The teacher gives a short lecture
 - The students present and get feedback
 - Ideas, background and relevance to direction and get feedback
- 14th of October 09.00-16.00, Individual work
- 21st of October, 09.00-16.00, Individual work
- 11th of November deadline 09.00. hand-in for mid-critic on Canvas
- 11th of November 09.00-16.00, mid-critic
 - The students present their project plan and receive feedback based on the presentation
- 18th of November, 09.00-16.00, Individual work
- 18th of November, deadline 17.00, Hand in project plan
- 25th of November 09.00-16.00, Final presentation and feedback
 - The examiner has read the project plan and gives feedback
- 9th of December, deadline 12.00, final hand-in for the course on Canvas
- 9th of December, deadline 12.00, final hand-in for initiating the MT term
 - Deliver final project plan and registration form
 - There will be a folder in the reception on the 3rd floor
- 13th of January, deadline 12.00, Deliver a final project plan for the exhibition
 - Starting the master's thesis term
 - There will be a folder in the reception on the 3rd floor

Learning goals

The student should demonstrate the knowledge and capability required for undertaking independent work to obtain a Master of Science in Architecture. This independent work will be your Master's thesis project. The process of planning is important in the long run because it will make your thesis process smoother.

Submission requirements

We use Canvas for all our deliverances. As the course only has one Canvas page, please make sure you are uploading to the right direction.

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The project plan should contain

An abstract, a title; one page with background, aim and research questions; one page describing location/context; a list of practice-based inspirations from other existing projects; methods and process; delimitations; literature references; statement regarding competence and relevance to the Rurban question.

Evaluation criteria

Grading: Approved/not approved. 1. Specific relevance for the *rurban* question; 2. Anchored to a local context; 3. Explanation of how you are going to use a research by design approach; 4. Consistency and alignment, in your plan, between thesis questions, theory, methods, process and expected outcome; 5. Shown capability to undertake independent work in the next step, which is your thesis project.

Suggested literature and projects

- Banham, R. (2001 (1971)). *Los Angeles: The Architecture of four ecologies*. Los Angeles: University of California press.
- Björling, N. (2016). *Sköra stadslandskap – planeringsmetoder för att hantera urbaniseringens rumsliga inläsningar*. Diss. Göteborg: Chalmers tekniska högskola.
- Ernstson, H. and Swyngedouw, E. (2019) *Urban Political Ecology in the anthropo-obscene: Interruptions and possibilities*. Routledge.
- Gallent, N., Andersson, J., Bianconi, M., (2006) *Planning on the Edge*. London: Routledge.
- Keil, R. and Young, D. (2009), Fringe explosions: risk and vulnerability in Canada's new in-between urban landscape. *The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien*, 53: 488-499. doi:10.1111/j.1541-0064.2009.00270.x
- Lefebvre, H., (2014). *Dissolving city, planetary metamorphosis*. Environment and Planning D: Society and Space 2014, volume 32: 203-205
- Petrescu, D., Petcou, C., & Baibarac, C. (2016). Co-producing commons-based resilience: Lessons from R-Urban, *Building research and information*, 44:7, 717-736
- Reed, C., Lister, N-M. (Ed.). (2014). *Projective Ecologies*. New-York: Actar.
- Rytönen, P. (2013) Sweden – an emerging wine country – a case of innovation in the context of the “new rurality”, *Spanish Journal of Rural Development*, IV(4):79-88.
- Stan, A. (2013). Morphological patterns of urban sprawl territories. *Urbanism. Arhitectură. Construcții*, 4, 11–24
- Tietjen, A., Jorgensen, G. (2016). Translating a wicked problem: A Strategic planning approach to rural shrinkage in Denmark. *Landscape and Urban Planning*. Oct 2016, Vol. 154,

Exemplary thesis projects

- Anton Arnby (2020), *Rural Microarcologies. – a vision of resilient future architecture* https://projects.arch.chalmers.se/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/AntonArnby_CSP_thesis_2020.pdf
- Carin Edlund (2019) *Blå Länken, Bridging the mental gap between human and nature* <https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12380/257222>
- Henrik Wrennö (2020), Re-live the river. <https://projects.arch.chalmers.se/henrik-wrenno/>
- Anna Krassuski (2021), Metamorphosis of a river. <https://projects.arch.chalmers.se/anna-sophie-krassuski/>
- Maria Ekström and Siri Bjärhall (2021), Narratives of Bohuslän manifested in a public sauna. <https://projects.arch.chalmers.se/maria-ekstrom-siri-bjarhall/>

Direction faculty Marco Adelfio, Nils Björling, Julia Fredriksson, Ida Röstlund

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