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University of Brighton DESIGN archives

DESIGN ASSOCIATIONS IN GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

On Sustainability Emerging During the 1960s and 1970s: New Reflections on the Role of Design in the International Debate

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INTRODUCTION

Design for sustainability is a contemporary challenge that emerged during the mid-1960s. Climate change, the exploitation of resources and humanitarian emergencies are issues that today affect more than ever our daily lives and that require, to be addressed, the collaboration of different actors, including designers.

Sustainability is a broad theme, often subject to conflicting interpretations, so much so that the very definition of what is sustainable regarding industrial processes and lifestyles has become one of the primary objectives of the world of design.

This MA thesis aims to address the issue of sustainability from a political, sociological and cultural point of view. This research has the hope of offering a new perspective on the true meaning of sustainable development and, above all, on the active role that design can play in this regard. In this volume will be reported some significant international events, linked to the international organizations of the past and the present, in order to trace new possible hypotheses for the design to take an active part in achieving a fair future.

This research is aimed to stress the link between design organizations and global governance for what concerns sustainable development. By analyzing the main **conferences of past** — especially the ones held by the **ICSID Association** — and by observing what is going on today on national and global level, the thesis will try to trace a path for the hypothetical future of **design collaboration on international debates**.

It will consequently interrogate the following: Can design and politics communicate? How? Can design change the actual global situation for the better? Further, which are the past and present responsibilities that Design has to address to itself?

The research behind this thesis paper was carried out mainly thanks to the support of the **ICSID Design Archive** and the **St. Peter's House Library** of the **University of Brighton**, England.

The theme that will be addressed in these pages presents many facets and complexity, especially as it is a field and an area in constant evolution and change. **Environmental protection** is in fact a topic that embraces every sphere of our society, more than ever today, it is linked to the themes of sustainable production in a world that nevertheless continues to follow the capitalist and consumerist model that has been on the rise since the first industrial revolution.

As we shall see, there are many personalities who have spent time in order to spread information about the serious consequences that the capitalist model of uncontrolled production would have caused in time. Nevertheless, **50 years after** the first international conferences and the first publications on the subject, the world is still struggling for the same problems.

1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a thesis research carried out thanks to the document collection done during a period of study abroad. In the University of Brighton we had the possibility to consult the ICSID design archive and to select the most relevant elements to support the crucial statement of the whole research. In particular, we analyzed the conferences held between 1960s and 1970s to investigate the addressing of sustainability issues.

1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.1 A Cross-disciplinary Approach

Today's world is characterized by a strong complexity, in which problems are often interconnected and therefore require an investigation and analysis that encompasses all the different facets of the subject.

The role of today's designers in fact no longer concerns exclusively the design of physical products but also and above all of entire systems aimed at improving the living conditions of users.

As G. Muratovski says in his book "Research for Designers", often this paradigm shift makes the designer become a thinker able to move easily between different disciplines and develop new skills of problem solving.[1]

For this research we tried to report notions belonging to different fields of research, although the work as a whole was carried out by a single person on the knowledge bases mainly belonging to the world of design. Other knowledge related to different fields from design has been acquired through the study of secondary sources — mostly scientific articles and volumes. Therefore, the final report could not benefit from the active collaboration of figures belonging to all the different research fields investigated.

The hope, however, is to encourage a future active collaboration among representatives of very different fields of study. Among the various objectives of this research there is also the promotion of a stable cooperation between design, economics and politics. The real goal is to achieve an open and fair dialogue in which not only economic and political interests are represented, but also the citizens' and the environmental ones.

Clearly, for the reasons mentioned above, a single discipline is not enough to address and solve global problems, as the degree of complexity of the latter requires the participation of different disciplinary areas. This research takes advantage of a point of view purely marked by design thinking, but the hope is to arouse interest in representatives of different disciplines, so as to enrich the discussion and make it even more complete.

The goal is to arrive at a form of "multidisciplinary design" and then further develop it to arrive at a type of approach that Muratovski defines as "transdisciplinary".[2]

In fact, if multidisciplinarity is characterized by the collaboration of various teams belonging to different scientific fields but committed to the pursuit of a single common goal, the transdisciplinary approach consists in the fusion of the different disciplines involved, without distinction. In this case the designer goes beyond his own disciplinary boundaries to step into those of other fields and work according to new methodologies and norms, "borrowed" from other sectors. This is the goal that today's designers should try to achieve, so that they can address and solve problems related to the complex system of today's society.

However, as Muratovski recalls: «a working model of how transdisciplinary design can be framed within design practice and design education is still not fully developed». This is obviously due to the fact that the preparation necessary to acquire such an amount of knowledge is complex to obtain, requires several years of study and dedicated educational programmes. For now, just starting to think about how to structure and obtain this type of training in the future is already a decisive step towards the development of this new concept.[3]

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1 Gjoko Muratovski, "Research for Designers: A Guide to Methods and Practice", 2016

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2 Gjoko Muratovski, "Research for Designers: A Guide to Methods and Practice", 2016

3 Ibid.

1.2 Historical Research

This research is based on a qualitative method, aimed at collecting historical data to trace a possible interpretation and meaning based on the information collected. This type of research examines both historical and socio—cultural elements with the aim of analyzing the phenomenon in all its complexity. The bases of the research in question are in fact original primary sources documents collected in specific archives related to international design associations and to international conferences held in the treated period by the non—governmental body of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design: the ICSID Association.

A fundamental contribution to the realization of this thesis was the participation in the program offered by the Politecnico di Torino of “Tesi su Proposta”.

After accessing the project, I was able to attend the University of Brighton, England, which houses the design archives containing the original material of the ICSID design association.

The aim of this research, therefore, is to collect and narrate the events related to the international debates on sustainability that occurred between the 60s and 80s of the 21st century in order to analyze the behavior of the various Countries involved and of the different disciplines about the central topic. The main focus is clearly on design but the discussion also examines the historical, political and cultural context of the period of interest, in order to deepen the reasons for the various events discussed.

Then we will come to the explanation of the final conclusions deriving from the analysis carried out in its entirety and complexity, in order to support the central thesis that — as already stated — concerns the proposal for active participation by design in international debates on the environment and on the safeguarding of biodiversity.

1.3 Data Collection

Within this paper are present numerous original documents whose publication rights have been granted by the **ICSID Archive** body **of the University of Brighton**.

In the ICSID Design Archive have been selected the most relevant elements to support the crucial statement of the whole research.

f1 ICSID Archive, University of Brigton Archive, October, 2022

2 THE SYSTEMIC ISSUE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is a complex and multifaceted concept that needs to be addressed according to a multidisciplinary and systemic approach, which analyzes the issue in a thorough and comprehensive way. Sustainable development has been addressed for a long time and involves the satisfaction of three complementary dynamics of different nature: economic, environmental and social.

2 THE SYSTEMIC ISSUE OF SUSTAINABILITY

As it has been anticipated, the issue is about reaching a truly sustainable society. But, clearly, we are a long way from achieving this. This type of problem, in fact, requires the collaboration of **several different fields** and a serious approach toward the achievement of the final goal. We are discussing an issue characterized by a **systemic nature**. That is why in these last fifty years of activism for environmental protection nothing really changed. It is not easy to face all the facets this massive problem involves, but we really need a drastic change, a **paradigm shift**.

If we go back in history of activism for the environment, we can notice that this battle started in the 1970s, that is, more than fifty years ago.[1] Indeed, the justification of the extreme exploitation and degradation of our ecosystem we still carry on from that period to nowadays in the name of efficiency is no longer acceptable.

All the fields — from production to advertising — have to assume their responsibility and clearly, designers have their faults as well.

During the "American Dream" period of those years, everything seemed possible to achieve and markets were more operative than ever.

Before elaborating any formulation or judgment, it is therefore fundamental to enter into the cultural, social and historical panorama of those years, taking into account all the elements and interconnections of the social background, from art to politics, in order to to find not the culprit, but to try to understand what did not work and why it still does not after half a century. We are also here to understand **which role design had** in the past for the battle in favor of **ecological sustainability** and what role it can still play in the future for the **paradigm shift** we need.

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1 Alastair Fuad-Luke, "Design Activism: beautiful strangeness for a sustainable world", 2009

2.1 About Sustainability

It is useful for the aims of this research to clarify what sustainability is. The concept has its roots in precursors such as **Thomas Robert Malthus** (1766—1834) and **William Stanley Jevons** (1835—1882), who for the first time in history, shared an interest in natural resources exploitation.[2]

With the rise of industrialization human beings forgot that in origin, — before the advent of mass production and capitalism — everything was in balance and all the elements — or "parts" — of the **"web of life"** were in the right place. All of them had their role in the system of nature, in our ecosystem.[3]

Later, as many scholars argue, humans began to differentiate themselves from the rest of nature, in a dualism that actually, from a biological point of view, does not exist.[4]

This started after the first industrial revolution, in which man—made products — from clothes to food — were no longer dependent on the rhythms of nature. We have really marked this distance in the last fifty years, empowering our technologies and continuing to draw without limits on natural resources believing them not only unlimited, but above all, to be our property.

In 1962 **Rachel Carson**, in her book **"Silent Spring"**, condemned the devastating effects of pesticide use on mammals and birds in the United States. This book is a real milestone for awareness of environmental protection issues and an unprecedented precursor.

During the Intergovernmental Conference for Rational Use and Conservation of the Biosphere held by **UNESCO** in 1967, the concept of ecological development was addressed for the first time.

Subsequently, **Paul Ehrlich** published in 1968 his book, **"The Population Bomb"**, in which he explained how human population growth, resource degradation and the environment were deeply linked together.[5]

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2 Susan Baker, "Sustainable Development", 2006
3 Jason W. Moore, "Capitalism in the Web of Life", 2015
4 Ibid.
5 Quoted in Alastair Fuad-Luke, "The Eco-design Handbook", 2002

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In 1972 the **Club of Rome** — a crucial NGO for the history of the ecological sustainability battle and which we will face again going on in this volume — published **“The Limits To Growth”**. The report scientifically addressed the issue of natural resources exploitation carrying out a trend forecasting for the near future and concluding that the production rhythms and emissions of the time were completely unsustainable for nature and that they would have led to ecosystem collapse, famine and war.

We can surely address sustainability as a modern systemic issue, as it is involved in every society field, that is, in the systemic web of interdependent parts we live in. Today’s socio-economic system was actually created when the dynamics of our planet were hugely different from now.

After monumental studies such as the one of **James Lovelock** and **Lynn Margulis** about the **“Gaia Hypothesis”** of the 1970s, we started to understand how the web of life was actually a perfectly balanced and deeply strong intertwining that we were trying to destroy. In those years finally the public started to notice how industrial pollution could pose a serious danger not only to the health of the planet but also to that of human beings. This slowly led to the need of the definition of a new economic development, no more efficiency-orientated but aimed at a fair and “sustainable” growth.

The concept of sustainability started to be officially addressed just in late 1980s and precisely in 1987, when the **United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (UNCED)** published the “Our Common Future” report, also known as **“The Brundtland Report”**, in which, for the first time, the concept of “sustainable development” appeared in an official international document and was finally defined. Furthermore, on that occasion, the interrelation between the social, economic and ecological

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facets of development were finally stressed.

The Brundtland report definition of sustainable development was:

«**A development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs**».[6]

Some environmentalists, however, argue that **“sustainable development”** can become a problematic and contradictory term, open to misinterpretations and voluntary misunderstandings, especially by big industries. In fact, this definition reveals an **anthropocentric point of view**, which risks underestimating the ecosystem value. It was clearly the first attempt to define what a fair development through sustainability was, as it shows the confusion between the terms “sustainable growth” and “sustainable development”.[7]

Because of these reasons, later the **World Commission on Environment and Development** defined sustainability as:

«A process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development and institutional change are all in harmony and enhance both current and future potential to meet human needs and aspirations».

In 1972, **The Club of Rome** defined three ingredients mandatory for the achieving of a sustainable development: the value recognition of the “free goods” represented by the natural resources; the incentivisation of ecological policies in the long term and the achieving of equity between today’s generations and the future ones.[8]

And then, in 2003, the United Nations Development Programme defined in the “Human Development Report” the “Environmental Sustainability” as:

«Achieving sustainable development patterns and

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6 The Brundtland Report, 1987
7 Alastair Fuad-Luke, “The Eco-design Handbook”, 2002
8 The Club of Rome, “Limits to Growth”, 1972

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preserving the productive capacity of natural ecosystems for future generations».

Clearly, as the very word “sustainability” suggests, the concept behind its meaning is “sustaining”, that is, something able to maintain itself in balance. But the concept of sustainability is not only about “sustaining”, but it is also, and importantly, about **“respect”** and **“equity”** in relation to future generations’ needs.

On the other hand, the economic field defines sustainability as **«a non-depletion of capital»** and they claim that following the path of sustainable development would cause economic growth to stop. But this definition has a deficit in the value it gives to natural sources which — according to **Ernst Friedrich Schumacher** first and to **Herman Daly** and **Robert Costanza** then — represent one of the 6 types of capital together with financial, infrastructural, human, social, and individual ones.[9]

That is why environmental economists — who are engaged with improving ecological efficiency — define sustainability as «the maintenance or non-depletion of the Earth’s ‘natural capital», that is, all the biotic and abiotic systems present in nature.

Others, like the architect **Janis Birkeland** from Melbourne University, prefers to use the term “positive” rather than “sustainable” as an adjective referred to the fair development in the planning field:

«Positive development refers to physical development that achieves net positive impacts during its life cycle over pre-development conditions by increasing economic, social and ecological capital».

Sustainability actually has many flexible definitions, depending on the context and the field of study.

But, as **Donella Meadows**, one of the authors of **“The Limits to Growth”**, has said, discussing the linguistic confusion surrounding the use of the word: «We are struggling for the language now for a whole set of concepts that are urgent in our conversation... It's a mess. But social transformations are messy».[10]

What is clear is that the focus has to be about the environment, and no more about the egoistic and unnecessary humans’ whims. Just as it is equally clear that future generations deserve a place in our thoughts every single time we decide to ignore the alarming signals coming from our planet.

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9 Quoted in Simon Dresner, “The Principles of Sustainability”, 2002

10 Quoted in Simon Dresner, “The Principles of Sustainability”, 2002

*SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS A «DEVELOPMENT THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF THE **PRESENT WITHOUT COMPROMISING** THE ABILITY OF **FUTURE GENERATIONS** TO MEET THEIR OWN NEEDS».*

"Brundtland Report" official definition of Sustainable Development, WCED, 1987

*«PROMOTING A MODEL OF **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** RECOGNIZES THAT EVERY **HUMAN INTERACTION** WITH THE WORLD BRINGS CHANGE, BUT IT CHALLENGES SOCIETY TO FIND WAYS TO ENSURE THAT THESE CHANGES ARE FOR **THE BETTERMENT OF ALL**.»*

Susan Baker in "Sustainable Development", 2006

focus **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

As we mentioned before, the theme of sustainable development has many facets and has begun to be discussed around the 1970s. Subsequently, the theme was discussed several times again until, in the late 1980s, the concept of "sustainable development" was finally mentioned and defined in an official document. In 1987 **Gro Harlem Brundtland**, at the time president of the **WCED (World Commission on Environment and Development)**, presented the report "Our Common Future", better known as **"Brundtland Report"**. This latter is still an authoritative guideline for a model of fair and sustainable development towards the planet and future generations.

The need for an alternative development model to the conventional one had already emerged in the early 70's thanks to the commitment and work of prominent personalities such as **Aurelio Peccei** or **Victor Papanek**. In those years they and many other scholars and thinkers of the time published volumes that have deeply marked the history of design and sustainability; in this case we are talking about the works **"Limits to Growth"**, 1972 and **"Design for the Real World"**, 1971.

The aim of the Club of Rome Report was to demonstrate how the development of those times had to be slowed down in order to avoid a collapse of the natural system and an irreversible depletion of natural resources. The basic assumption is that a world of finite nature cannot endure an infinite exploitation of its own resources, because they are destined to run out.

On the other hand, in his work Papanek, a supporter of socially useful and ecological design, had placed emphasis on the responsibility that the craft of the designer brings with it. As we shall see, the emerging theme of responsibility in that period started to be central both in the design

world and international debates. Papanek's criticism focuses on the irresponsible design practices prevalent in the United States at the time, such as the large consumption of disposable products or the use of substandard materials intended for an exaggeratedly short life cycle[11]. The volume deals with the theme of pointless aesthetics without a deeper meaning.

According to the author, the designer must assume his responsibilities in the realization of his ideas and the volume treats the macro-concept linked to a design based on the real needs of the world and not on those of companies or large markets. The message is therefore an exhortation to good design practices that are ethical and responsible from a social, moral and ecological point of view, in order to transform the discipline into a positive driving force for the improvement of society.

In this regard, the Brundtland formulation of 1987 has been the guide event that led in time to a gradual negotiation and governance practice about sustainable development. As Susan Baker sustains in her "Sustainable Development" of 2006 «The Brundtland approach is built upon a belief in the common heritage of humankind, trust in our technology, and optimism about our willingness to engage collectively in the protection of our common future. The normative principles that have come to be associated with sustainable development have led to the elaboration of specific rights and obligations for states, and they have acted as guidelines for international and national environmental regulations and laws».[12]

After the Brundtland report the "development" concept became a traditional economic and social goal and "sustainability" a traditional ecological one. Sustainable development is a model of societal change that, in addition to traditional developmental objectives, has the

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11 Victor Papanek "Design For the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change", 1971

12 Susan Baker, "Sustainable Development", 2006

objective of maintaining ecological sustainability.[13]

In the meeting was also addressed the real meaning and concept behind the idea of sustainable development concluding that:

[Sustainable development] contains within it two key concepts: the concept of "needs", in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which priority should be given; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.[14]

As Ezio Manzini and Francois Jégou sustained in "Sustainable Everyday: Scenarios of Urban Life": «sustainability is learning about living well but consuming (much) less; it is a social learning process and will involve moving from a "product-based well-being" to thinking about products, dematerialized products, services and enabling solutions to satisfy our needs».[15]

Regarding Global Governance and environmental issues, what has been done is «discounting the future» by considering the costs and benefits that accrue to future generations less than those of the present.[16]

As pointed out by the **Club of Rome**, in fact, one of the main causes of the crisis of sustainability consists in the attitude of large industrial companies to develop **«beyond the limits»** of the natural system. This is because, according to our international system, economic growth is considered the best measure to assess a government's performance. As the political science expert **Henry Teune** sustained: «an individually based secular morality cannot accept a world without growth».[17]

Nevertheless, after World War II already, the environmental community began to question the validity of the Western development model, based on consumption and exponential

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13 Sharachchandra M. Lélé, "Sustainable Development: A Critical Review", 1991, quoted in Susan Baker, 2006

14 WCED, Brundtland Report, 1987: 43

15 Ezio Manzini, Francois Jégou, "Sustainable Everyday", 2003

16 John O'Neill, "Ecology, Policy and Politics: human well being and the natural world", 1993

17 Quoted in David W. Orr, "Ecological literacy, education and the transition to a postmodern world", 1992

growth. Environmentalism then, as recalled by **Susan Baker** in **“Sustainable Development”** has always stressed how environmental degradation leads inexorably to social and political degradation, marking a deep fracture in global harmony and balances. As the author points out: «is no longer possible to see development in isolation from its ecological and social consequences».[18]

In addition, it is interesting to wonder why it is not sufficiently stressed, from an economic and financial point of view, but also from a social one, the innumerable advantages that the application of a sustainable model to the current economic and production systems would bring. The use of a different model, unlike what is claimed by most large entrepreneurs and the most aggressive economies, would not lead to a stop of economic flows but rather, an increase of possibilities towards new sources of income according to methods that include the use of renewable resources and alternative materials.

The world of **recycling**, like the one of separate waste collection and **alternative materials processes**, brings with it a huge share of the market, still largely unexplored. From the point of view of economic development, this is an economically viable and extremely attractive option for large industries.

The **ecological transition** and the **circular economy** bring with them numerous investment opportunities that could mark the beginning of a new phase for international economic development. The latter would be characterized not by unlimited growth aimed at mere economic gain but by an ethic relating to **environmental respect** and the **protection of biodiversity**.

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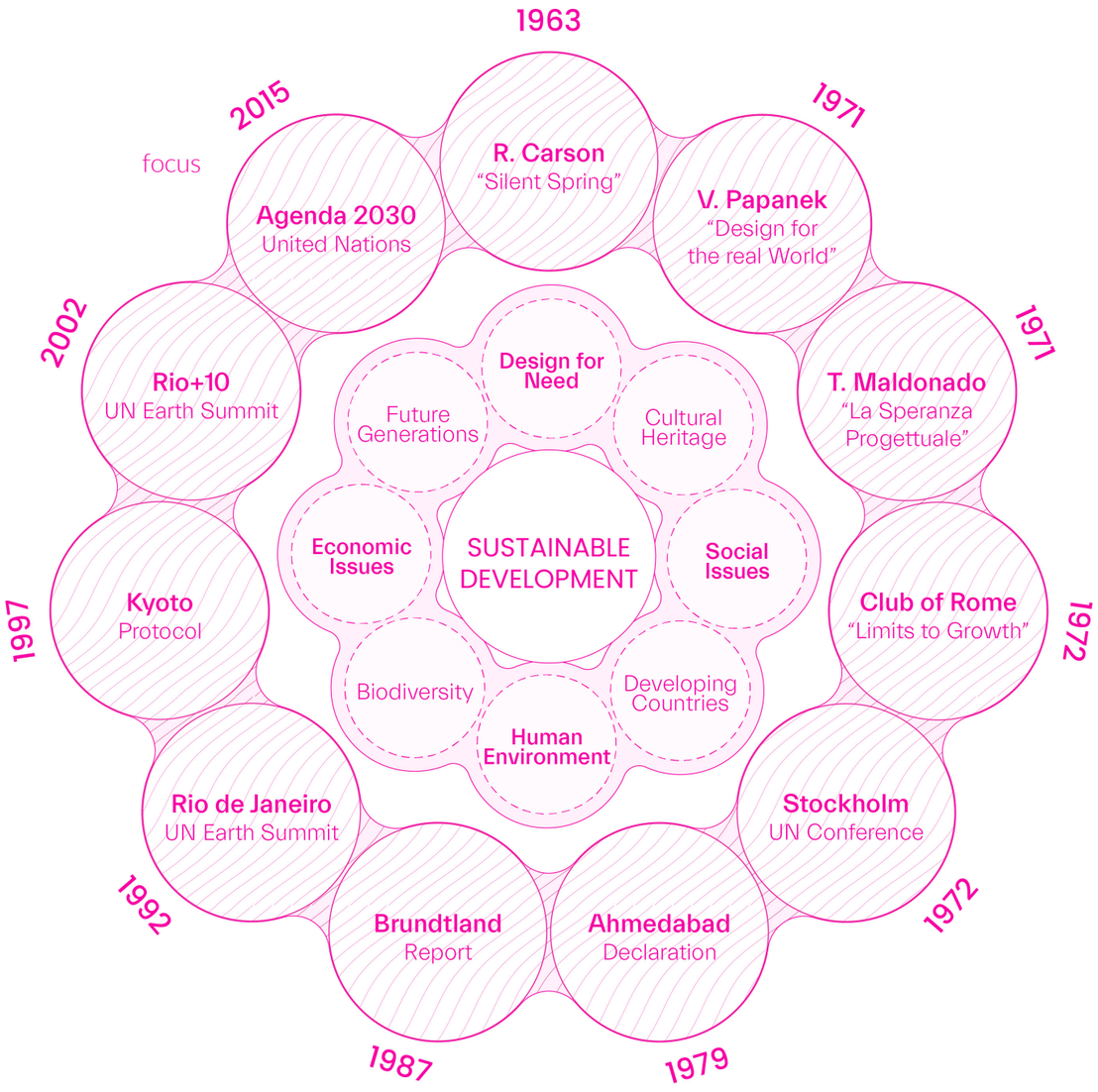
18 Susan Baker, “Sustainable Development”, 2006



2.2 Sustainability in the Global Perspective

The modern international system was created in a historical period in which global social and technological conditions were characterized by profound differences from today's ones. At the time of the **Treaty of Westphalia** of **1648**, the issues addressed by the document were strictly related to the territory, while today the proposed agendas on sustainability also concern issues of a social nature and respect for the limited availability of earth resources.[19]

In 1926, the publication of the volume **"The Biosphere"** by the Russian ecologist **Vladimir Vernadsky** marked a fundamental paradigm shift, characterized by the recognition of life on our planet as a dense and **complex interconnected system**, in which the sovereignty of the nation-state system was identified as a powerful risk for the safeguarding of its balances.[20]

One of the most problematic points for the resolution of environmental issues is linked to the nearly **dualistic nature of human progress and the habitat** he lives in.[21]

In a certain way we structured our society, as mentioned before, in order to make it a **giant parasite** for our ecosystem. Everything we do and produce for our "economic success" steals materials from the natural environment and exploits them until the exhaustion of the available resources. **The greater the exploitation, the greater the gain**, and the parasite grows disproportionately and without limits contaminating day by day the entire planet.

In this sense, living in a technological and industrial ruleless time makes the cohabitation of the time of ecology harder. We live in this globally super fast society and we expect nature to follow our crazy rhythms, while nature is obviously in no hurry at all and — most importantly — it can not keep up.

The problems linked to the international system are multiplying

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19 David W. Orr, "Ecological literacy, education and the transition to a postmodern world", 1992
20 Ibid.
21 Jason W. Moore, "Capitalism in the Web of Life", 2015

at such a rate that governments and the stipulation of regulations cannot keep up. According to political science expert **Andrew Scott** the only possible strategy for effective improvement consists in «an increasing amount of cooperation and coordination» and he also stated: «nations will need to focus less on state-centred interests and more on system-centered interests».[22]

It is as if there were two antithetical logics, the one of **evolution** and the one of **power**. The «nature machine», as defined by **Paul Ehrlich**, is a vast and interconnected network of relationships, biogeochemical cycles and energy flows.[23] While the system of power is based on unlimited progress aimed at territorial and material conquest without any consideration for the peoples and resources sacrificed in its name.

As stated by **Lyndon Keith Caldwell**: «during the years since the 1960s there has been consistent evidence of public concern over the quality of the environment and a willingness to be taxed and regulated on behalf of environmental quality, health, and safety. [...] If environmental quality is valued as highly as surveys in Britain, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Canada and the United States appears to indicate, why has it not generally been an issue on which candidates for Public offices are elected or defeated?».[24]

From a legislative point of view, the management and containment of the effects of human activities on the natural environment have entered the public agenda of industrialised countries since the 1970s. Following the **1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm**, the function of protecting the environment has been developed with the creation of competent administrative bodies and Members to implement the legislative guidelines.[25]

The United Nations Declaration on the Human Environment adopted

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22 Quoted in David W. Orr, "Ecological literacy, education and the transition to a postmodern world", 1992
23 Ibid.
24 Lyndon Keith Caldwell, "Between Two Worlds: science, the environmental movement and policy choice", 1990
25 Elisabetta Morlino in Luisa Torchia, "La Dinamica del Diritto Amministrativo: Dieci Lezioni", 2017

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in Stockholm in 1972 marks the transition from a national sectoral to a **cross-sectoral and international approach to the environment**. For the first time, the fundamental right to an environment that guarantees dignity, well-being and the duty to safeguard the environment for future generations was recognised.

This declaration was followed by many other international conventions of a cross-sectoral nature that have gradually defined the principles and standards of environmental protection.[26]

As already stressed, regarding Global Environmental Governance, what has been done according to **John O'Neill** is **«discounting the future»** by considering the costs and benefits that accrue to future generations less than those of the present.[27]

This is a paradox that was already evident more than 30 years ago. **L. K. Caldwell** from Cambridge University stressed in the 1990s how the apparent interests towards sustainability topic actually didn't have a feedback in political and social reality.

As Caldwell stressed, «in the United States, Ronald Reagan was twice elected to the presidency although his negative attitude toward the environmental movement was well known».[28]

This is important to be stressed for the aims of this research because the attitude of the American people towards the theme of sustainability in those years represents the starting point of what will become later the worldwide awareness of the real disasters caused by the superficiality with which the environmental issue has been addressed by international policies and citizens themselves.

Again Caldwell adds: «In the 1988 federal elections in Canada and the United States, "the environment" did at last emerge as a major issue. In 1989 parliamentary elections, governments fell in the Netherlands

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26 Elisabetta Morlino in Luisa Torchia, "La Dinamica del Diritto Amministrativo: Dieci Lezioni", 2017
27 John O'Neill, "Ecology, Policy and Politics: human well being and the natural world" 1993
28 Lyndon Keith Caldwell, "Between Two Worlds: science, the environmental movement and policy choice", 1990

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and Norway, in part a consequence of popular dissatisfaction with official response to environmental concerns. Ironically the head of the defeated government in Norway chaired the UN Commission on Environment and Development».[29]

So, as we can see, this is the period in which finally the environment emerged, not only in the international debates, but also in the citizens' values. These are the years in which sustainability started to have a real role on the political stage.

Other key declarations on the subject in those years include the **Declaration on Environment and Development** and the **Agenda 21** action programme adopted in **Rio de Janeiro in 1992**, which laid down key principles of environmental law such as the principle precautionary, the principle of the "polluter pays" and the principle of sustainable development, whereby States have common responsibilities towards the environment.[30]

The most important sectoral conventions include the **1997 Kyoto Protocol**. It deals specifically with emissions into the atmosphere, but it is also significant in the tendency to pursue environmental protection through the setting of **common and taxable standards for all states**. Its main objective was in fact the reduction of emissions of polluting gasses in the planet by an agreed percentage and within a prescribed deadline: 2012.[31]

More recently, thanks to the commitment of the **United Nations**, the **Agenda 2030** for **Sustainable Development**, signed by the governments of the 193 member countries of the organization, was drawn up in 2015. This includes **17 "Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs)**, in an action program consisting of 169 total goals. As reported in the official document of 2015 concerning the planet:

«Siamo determinati a proteggere il pianeta dalla degradazione,

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29 Lyndon Keith Caldwell, "Between Two Worlds: science, the environmental movement and policy choice", 1990
30 Elisabetta Morlino in Luisa Torchia, "La Dinamica del Diritto Amministrativo: Dieci Lezioni", 2017
31 Ibid.

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attraverso un consumo ed una produzione consapevoli, gestendo le sue risorse naturali in maniera sostenibile e adottando misure urgenti riguardo il cambiamento climatico, in modo che esso possa soddisfare i bisogni delle generazioni presenti e di quelle future».[32]

Within the Agenda there is also a clear reference to international collaboration that states:

«Siamo determinati a mobilitare i mezzi necessari per implementare questa Agenda attraverso una Collaborazione Globale per lo sviluppo Sostenibile, basata su uno spirito di rafforzata solidarietà globale, concentrato in particolare sui bisogni dei più poveri e dei più vulnerabili e con la partecipazione di tutti i paesi, di tutte le parti in causa e di tutte le persone.

Le interconnessioni degli Obiettivi dello Sviluppo Sostenibile sono di importanza cruciale nell'assicurare che lo scopo della nuova Agenda venga realizzato. Se noi realizzeremo le nostre ambizioni abbracciando l'intera Agenda, le vite di tutti verranno profondamente migliorate e il nostro mondo sarà trasformato al meglio».[33]

Some decades later, today we face the topic everyday, we discuss **taxation** for polluting industrial processes and methods, but the **paradigm shift** is far from being achieved. Something still does not work as it should, we can try to understand what it is and why the **socio-political scenario** still does not change its priorities.

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32 "Agenda 2030" Official document, United Nations
33 Ibid.

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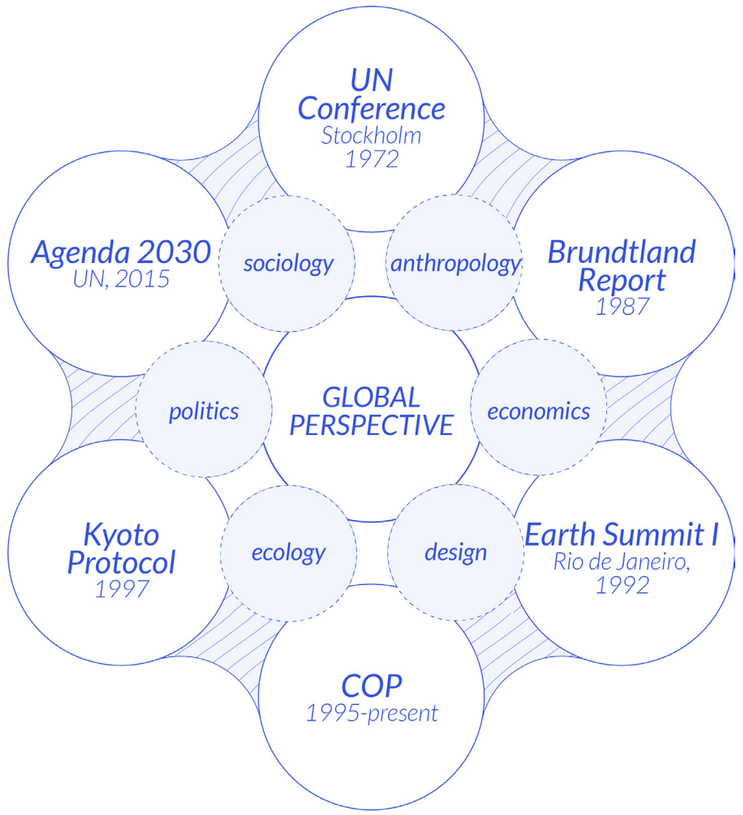

2.3 The Issue of Global Governance for Sustainability

In jurisprudence, the discipline of the environment is **multi-level**. Rules drawn up by international and supranational bodies coexist with national disciplines.

The reasons for this multi-level production concern both the object of the regulation and the particular structure of political and economic interests that revolve around the exploitation of natural resources.[34]

According to **Young**: «Global environmental governance is the establishment and operation of a set of rules of conduct that define practice, assign roles and guide interaction so as to enable state and non-state actors to grapple with collective environmental problems within and across state boundaries».[35]

As already mentioned earlier in this discussion, the best results achieved in the field of Environmental Global Governance have been achieved thanks to the efforts of international organizations and in particular of the United Nations one.

However, as **Susan Baker** argued in her book "Sustainable Development", although the United Nations played a crucial role in the rise of **Global Governance for the Environment**, the work of the organization is not devoid of controversial aspects that deserve a deeper consideration. In her book, S. Baker highlights the difference between «governance structures» and «governance processes». The author argues that the former — born and developed mainly thanks to the commitment of the United Nations — are severely limited by the latter in the attempt to promote a concrete form of sustainable development. In fact, while the intervention of the IGOs marked the beginning of an effective debate on environmental issues, the results lack concreteness and effectiveness.[36]

The most radical environmental movements claim that the United Nations has bowed to the big markets by acting as a mere management tool through which they can find a shortcut in order to avoid their responsibilities related

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34 Elisabetta Morlino in Luisa Torchia, "La Dinamica del Diritto Amministrativo: Dieci Lezioni", 2017
35 Young 1997a quoted in Susan Baker "Sustainable Development", 2006
36 Susan Baker "Sustainable Development", 2006

especially to the methods of production adopted and their impact on the environment.

In this case, the noble intentions perpetrated by international associations would take on a darker connotation, in which their actions would prove to be in favor of a limitless and irresponsible capitalism.

For this reason, already in 1986, in the **Brundtland Report** there was a clear exhortation to «good governance practice», that is, a form of governance characterized by the fair and equitable division of power in respect of individuals, future generations and environment.

As stated by **Elisabetta Morlino**, the subject matter of the environmental regulation are by nature transboundary. In fact, the most dramatic episodes of alteration of the ecosystem that have raised public awareness and brought out the need for global regulation are precisely those that have crossed national borders such as the Chernobyl disaster, toxic discharges into the Rhine, the deforestation of the Amazon or the production of greenhouse gases by industrialized countries. «These are alterations of the ecosystem with limited geographical origin but with global impact».[37] For this reason, regional or global problems have required regulatory solutions resulting from bilateral or multilateral agreements. Moreover, the pressure and the difficult coexistence of conflicting political and economic interests linked to the exploitation of natural resources have made it essential to regulate these phenomena on a transnational and multilateral basis.[38]

In light of this, we want to reiterate the central thesis of this research, according to which **the participation of independent organizations in international debates could be decisive**. The figure of the designer, in this sense, is particularly suitable for the role, precisely because it is **detached from the economic and political dynamics** that representalmost all of the representation within these meetings.

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37 Elisabetta Morlino in Luisa Torchia, "La Dinamica del Diritto Amministrativo: Dieci Lezioni", 2017
38 Ibid.

2.4 European Promotion of Sustainable Development

Also in the period of the 70s, when the socio-cultural ferment related to environmental issues was particularly active, events within the European Union have been particularly significant for subsequent developments in sustainability.

In **1971**, a **European Commission memorandum** appeared in which, for the first time in European history, **environmental protection** appeared as a common goal to be pursued by all the Member States.

As has already been said, 1972 is a decisive year, especially if we consider the European scene. First of all, in **Stockholm, the First World Conference on the Environment** was held by the United Nations, and later that year, the European Community undertook a common environmental policy. Soon after, the Commission was instructed to set up an administrative structure dedicated to the environment field and to draw up legislation on the subject.

Later, since 1973, five **European Action Programmes (EAPs)** have been adopted as general, non-legally binding guidelines, to outline principles and objectives on the basis of which new environmental policies can be implemented.[39]

However, it was only with the **Single European Act of 1986** that environmental protection became part of European policies and was explicitly regulated in the Treaties. With the Single European Act and the subsequent **Treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam of 1992 and 1997** respectively, the principles of prevention, precaution, correction of damage at source, the «polluter pays» principle, the integration principle and the subsidiarity one entered fully among the guiding principles of the European and national institutions in the field of environmental protection.[40]

What emerges is that the European Community has actually understood, as early as 1973, the need for a radical change of course from the conventional development model adopted so far.

As the economist **S. Baker** reiterates, there are diverse key points that differentiate the European attitude from the one of other international policies.

Firstly, Europe has understood that sustainable development is a crucial element for international economic growth and that it can really be a major earning opportunity. Moreover, in order to achieve a new development model, it is also clear that the existing rules must be reviewed and analyzed through a multidisciplinary and more complex approach.[41]

Furthermore, the promotion of a model of sustainable development has to do with the responsibility of individuals and with the common good; it is a moral obligation that politics and economics can no longer escape. The common good is in fact a value that governments should hold in higher regard as bodies of public organization and management of citizens and of their activities. Sustainable development is not only about the environment, it is also about social issues, including health and food safety. Ultimately, it is important to highlight that addressing national problems is an indispensable step towards achieving broader goals, such as resolving international environmental issues.

At the national level, recently the Italian government has prepared the plan of the **PNRR** (National Recovery and Resilience Plan), aimed at facing the socio-economic crisis through a conscious use of funds deriving from the initiative Next Generation Eu. The main interventions were classified through 6 pivotal missions including the green revolution and the ecological transition, the infrastructure for sustainable mobility and issues related to social cohesion and inclusion.

The government has estimated an impact of the PNRR on the Italian economy pairs to an increase of **+0.8%** initial until a rate of increase potential of **+1.4%** in the last year of performance. It is foreseen, among

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39 Fondazione Micheletti Website
40 Elisabetta Morlino in Luisa Torchia, "La Dinamica del Diritto Amministrativo: Dieci Lezioni", 2017
41 Susan Baker "Sustainable Development", 2006

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other things, the implementation of new reforms aimed at responsible innovation in the country and the application of a new dedicated decree law.[42]

However, it is clear that this type of commitment — although useful for achieving greater awareness of environmental issues within the European Union — is not sufficiently effective and needs to be strengthened and implemented. In fact, this commitment must be shared and lavished not only by the highest levels of government but also and above all by large industries and, last but not least, by end consumers.

In any case, it is fair to stress that the commitment shown by the European community surely remains a good and right path to go, because, over the years, there have been numerous achievements thanks to the initiatives and mobilization implemented by the Member States.[43]

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42 Openpolis Website

2.5 Sustainability and Design

In the design field, the very first manifestations of interest towards the "natural" and "environmental" topic was actually in the 1930s with the arrival of **"Organic Design"**, aimed to emphasize the concept of beauty enclosed in natural, biomorphic and organic forms. In this north-European movement, for designers such as **Alvar Aalto** or **Frank Lloyd Wright**, the environmental context was the path to follow to give form to projects and spaces. The project followed the environment and was supposed to melt and to be fully integrated in it.[43]

In the period between 1945 and mid-1950s the post-war crisis led to a design rationalization perfectly expressed in the famous axiom «less is more».

In the 1960s, under the influence of crucial society transformations such as the emerging hippie movement, new design forms appeared such as the **"Design for Need"** field, of a strongly social nature, aimed at communities in difficulty and the enhancement of the local context.[44]

Later, in the 1970s — a decade that, as we will see, deeply marked the sustainability's history — the new **"Alternative Design"** took the scene, introducing today's crucial concepts such as recycling, redesign and alternative manufacturing methods.[45]

In 1971 **Victor Papanek** wrote and published his **"Design for the real world"** book in which he faced the topic of designer's responsibility related to big markets' demands. This volume marked the history of design for sustainability and it was translated into twenty-one different languages.

Specifically, in April **1976** the conference **"Design for Need: The Social Contribution of Design"** was held at the Royal College of Art and the Imperial College of Science and Technology in London.

This reflects the growing interest of the organizations in the sector towards issues related to the social and environmental consequences of production and consumption

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43 Alastair Fuad-Luke, "Design Activism: beautiful strangeness for a sustainable world", 2009
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.

methods linked to the model of unregulated capitalism.

This congress was organized by the **ICSID (International Council of Societies of Industrial Design)** with the participation of other English and international actors. Some of the speeches delivered during the conference were published in book form by Pergamon Press edited by **Julian Bicknell** and **Liz Mcquiston**.[46]

Subsequently, after the "New Design" movement aimed to promote a production that was independent of industry, in the late 1980s the **"Design for the Environment"** came. As the reader can suppose, this one was — and is — aimed at the reduction of impacts on the environment promoting responsible practices and ecological production processes.

From this first overview it is clear how the 1960s and, above all, the 1970s, strongly marked a change of cultural and social paradigm regarding the mass awareness towards the theme of environmental protection.[47]

That is why it is precisely from this historical period that this research will take its first steps towards the understanding of the environmental issues addressed in the international political debate and of how design can make the difference so that things really change and society can finally call itself committed to achieving an ecologically sustainable culture and production.

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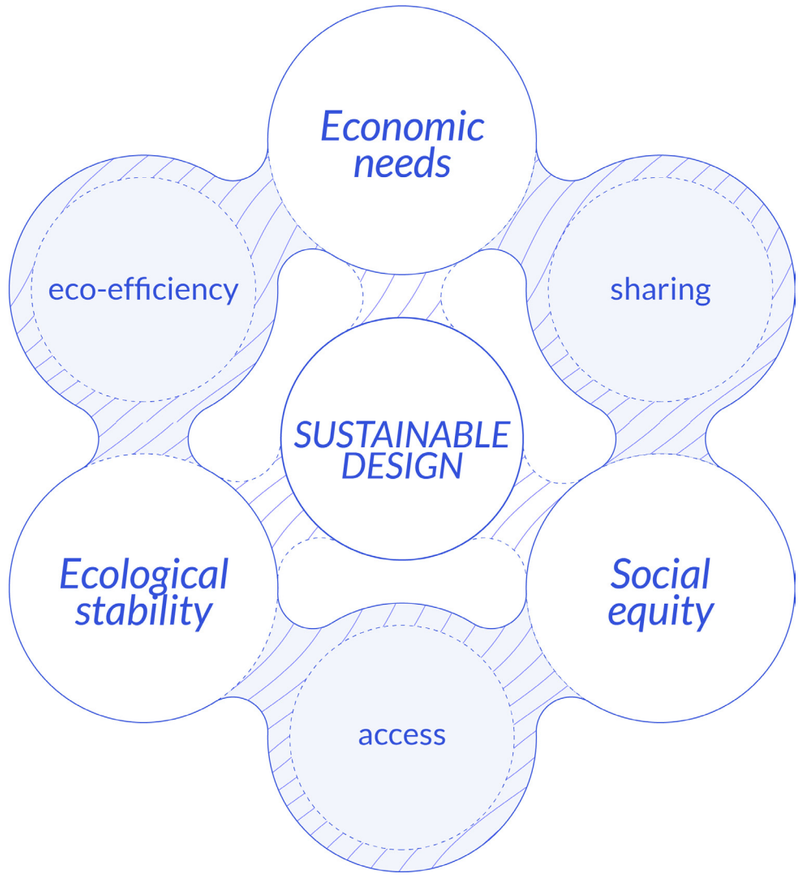
46 Quoted in Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022

47 Alastair Fuad-Luke, "Design Activism: beautiful strangeness for a sustainable world", 2009



*«**SYSTEMIC DESIGN** DRAWS ON THE EXTANT BASE AND EVOLUTION OF IDEAS IN **SYSTEMS THEORY AND COMPLEXITY** AS RICH SOURCES OF **TRANSDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE** AND DISCOURSE. UNIQUELY IN DESIGN STUDIES, SYSTEMIC DESIGN STARTED IN EDUCATIONAL AND EXPERIMENTAL APPROACHES TO DISCOVERING A "REQUISITE DESIGN" WITH POWER TO NEW SERVICES AND SYSTEMS IN **COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTS**».*

Systemic Design Association

focus SYSTEMIC DESIGN THINKING

Let's now go in-deep to introduce the problem solving approach that better fits this kind of socio-cultural issue.

As we said, **sustainability is a systemic issue**, that is, a complex challenge that includes many facets enclosed in different fields of action.

In recent decades, the concept itself of design changed multiple times, switching from a practice aimed to realize physical things to one aimed to the resolution of **socio-cultural issues**. Nowadays design crosses different ranges of subject fields and disciplinary borders and is manifest in all facets of contemporary life. Systemic Design is deeply linked with the concept of **relationships and context** and marked in history a radical **paradigm shift** consisting in translating the thinking focus **from «objects» to the «relationships»** that bring them together.

Now, we can all agree on the fact that sustainability and, in particular, ecological sustainability, regards more than one sphere of action. That is why — following the precepts of Systemic Design Thinking — the thesis sustains that designers should actively take part in the international debate remaining in a super-partes position compared to political and commercial forces of the day.

The founders of the Systemic Design Thinking are the architect and professor **Luigi Bistagnino**, the physician **Fritjof Capra**, the biologists and sociologists **Humberto R. Maturana** and **Francisco J. Varela**, the entrepreneur **Gunter Pauli** and the biologist **Ludwig von Bertalanffy**. This is a design approach in which the outputs of a system are recovered and transformed again into inputs that can be used again in a **circular economy** point of view aimed at social, cultural and material sustainability.

In this regard, if we try to broaden the concept of the system to apply it not to physical phenomena but to socio-cultural ones, we can translate the focus of interest from

a productive chain to a **social chain**, therefore related to our society and our customs. The world we live in is actually an **extremely complex system**, which includes actors, activities, movements — and so on — in an interconnected network where each element depends on and influences others. In this sense, not without difficulty, we can come to understand, even just from a theoretical point of view, that the problems that today afflict the less wealthy communities, such as those that concern environmental degradation or rampant consumerism, affect each other.

As stated by **Tony Fry**, design theorist, «taking design beyond current limits means another kind of design thinking and practice. (...) move one was to extend the scope of design beyond the remit of existing design discourse, practice and practitioners (...) move two was to acknowledge that humanity at large is entering a third movement of worldly habitation: the age of unsettlement (...) move three comes from the way a line has been drawn under existing institutional politics».[48]

To find the weak link — or the various weak links — present in the huge feedback system of global society is certainly not the purpose of this research, but we can try to make the reader reflect on the concept related to the importance of analyzing in a wider systemic way the various critical points of the topic in order to attempt to solve concretely issues of global and systemic nature.

The s**ystemic approach**, is a missing element in the **current political and decision-making landscape** and it should be implemented thanks to the collaboration of **systemic designers** in the first place, but also new **multidisciplinary actors** that can analyze aspects ignored by the highest levels of government and decision-making.

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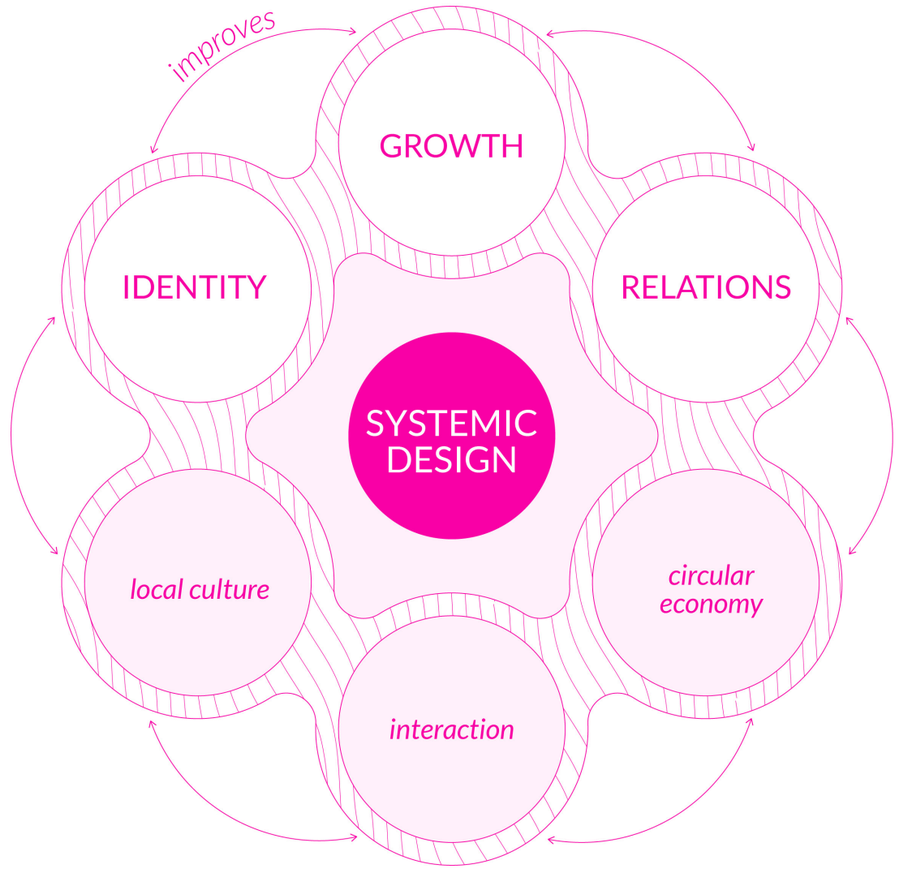
48 Tony Fry, "Design as Politics", 2011



2.6 Design and Politics

Environmental and economic problems are engaged with social and political factors. Everything is deeply interconnected, just as economic well-being directly affects psychological population dynamics, that again affects criminality, public safety or the socio demographic structure of households and many other facets of the entire global society.

So, in the giant web that our society is, this research is aimed to sustain the value that design as well can have in socio-political issues resolutions and the fundamental role that a design needs oriented can play in global scenarios.

As we will better explain later in this volume, the first attempt of design to take the world stage started right after the end of the Second World War, with the aim of achieving a social recognition of the designer position.

In this sense is deeply significant the action of design **INGOs** that in the post-1945 decades assumed a more international role, such as the **International Council of Societies of Industrial Design** (ICSID) of 1957 or the **International Council of Graphic Design Organizations** (ICOGRADA) of 1963.[49]

In the twenty-first century such aspirations re-emerged formally with ICSID's re-designation as the World Design Organization (WDO) in 2015 and Icogradas recasting as the International Council of Design (Ico-D) in 2013.[50]

As Tony Fry wrote in 2011: «Designing has to be grasped and made present as an activity that extends beyond the rubric of designers».[51] In his works, T. Fry argues that a political revolution can be implemented and that the latter have to include designers as a crucial key point necessary for this cultural and political transformation.

As addressed by **J. M. Woodham** in the volume «International Organizations»: «during these years, members of ICSID/WDO's Executive Board sought to become ambassadors for design in developing economies where they could meet politicians to demonstrate how design could become a tool for national economic and cultural growth».[52]

In recent years, the will of design organizations to tread the steps of Politics has resulted in the stipulation of documents such as **“ICOGRADA Design Education Manifesto”** of 2000, the **“Cumulus Kyoto Design Declaration”** of 2008 — supported by ICSID, BEDA (Bureau of European Design Associations), AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts) and EIDD (Design for All Europe) — or the 2017 “Montréal Design Declaration”.[53]

However, the question remains open as to the practical and effective application of these proposals. For more than fifty years, the efforts made to propose valid solutions, not only by the world of design, but also by the most widely recognized international organizations — such as the United Nations or the European Union — have remained largely ignored.

The thesis supported in these pages is based on the conviction that the international collaboration between the great diplomatic realities must be valued and supported also by the contribution of bodies belonging to other spheres of competence. However, without the active and open participation of the political and economic forces in this dialogue, any attempt at improvement and progress towards a better future will remain, in fact, only an attempt.

The presence of **humanistic reflections** also within more scientific disciplinary areas such as politics and economics, is fundamental for the elaboration of future solutions and scenarios that include all the different dimensions of today’s social fabric. As **John Dewey**, an American philosopher and pedagogue, argued, the humanistic point of view must penetrate every aspect of society

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49 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell “International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values”, 2022
50 Ibid.
51 Tony Fry, “Design as Politics”, 2011
52 J. M. Woodham, “Cultural Diplomacy and Design in the Late Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries: Rhetoric or Reality” 2017, quoted in Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell “International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values”, 2022
53 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell “International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values”, 2022

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and culture, including science, art, education, morality and religion, as well as politics and economics.[54]

The active participation of design organizations in international debates could actually add value to discussions often moved by economic interests or the desire to obtain political favor by the population instead of by the real needs of the planet and citizens. In this sense, the **a-political** and **interest-free** collaboration of a designers' team could really make a difference. It would be — in this case — a more complete dialogue, in which the role of the designers would fulfill the function of representing the interests of humanity and of our ecosystem, without interests deriving from economy or politics.

However, it must be stressed that design has not always worked for the right causes, losing itself in the promotion and sponsorship of attitudes and production models often **harmful** from a social and ecological point of view. It can be said that design itself today is undergoing a new phase of **transformation**, towards an active collaboration more aware and ethically valid than in the past. The frontiers of a large part of the design sector today open up to **new objectives**, less focused on mass industrial production and much more on the design of entire systems of services aimed at the sustainable improvement of **human living standards**. The sector has become aware of the past about what could be the real potential of its work, now enriched with new values inherent in efforts for the social and the environment.

Precisely for this reason, the world of today's organizations and education are mobilized daily towards the management and organization of initiatives aimed at the dissemination of these ideals and their concrete realization.

Quoting Tony Fry's work again: «the argument presented by design as politics has designated

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54 Quoted in Tony Fry, "Design as Politics", 2011

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a limit of design, but in so doing it has also marked a beginning from which design starts to be re-created, but other than it was. Thus **re-created**, design can return with a major increase in its efficacy when mobilized against structural unsustainability.»[55]

That is why, as mentioned before, this thesis sustains that designers should actively take part in the international debate representing the real human needs in an independent position from political and commercial forces of today.

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55 Tony Fry, "Design as Politics", 2011

3 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

In this chapter we will try to introduce the two kinds of organization we will take in more consideration within this volume. Our interest will focus on **NGOs** (Non-Governmental Organization) and **IGOs** (Intergovernmental Organization) — with particular reference to the **ICSID Organization** and to the **United Nations** reality — in order to underline then the nature of their relations in the historical period treated, that is, between the 1960s and 1980s.

3 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

3.1 Intergovernmental Organizations

According to the Harvard Law School definition, the term **intergovernmental organization** (IGO) refers to an entity created by treaty, involving two or more nations, to work in good faith, on issues of common interest. In the absence of a treaty an IGO does not exist in the legal sense. IGOs that are formed by treaties are more advantageous because they are subject to international law and have the ability to enter into enforceable agreements among themselves or with states.[1]

They are, therefore, organizations established by means of international treaties with a legal value which have their own independent legal capacity. These are made up mainly of high-level government figures and have consultative legal status.[2] Some examples are the United Nations and the World Health Organization. It often happens, however, that some of these organizations are also composed of actors of different natures, such as NGOs. Historians have pointed out that the presence within international organizations of actors that are also very different from each other, has encouraged a more heterogeneous and complete exchange and dialogue.

As stated by **B. Simmons** and **L. Martin**: «An international organization or intergovernmental organization, is a stable set of norms and rules meant to govern the behavior of states and other actors in the international system».[3]

Organizations such as the **European Union**, the **African Union** and **NATO** instead, referring to circumscribed geographical areas and possessing limitations for admission to the partnership due also to political reasons, are called **"regional organizations"** while maintaining their own legal capacity and an intergovernmental nature.

Since the 2000s, many fields of research have stressed that international organizations have represented — particularly during the period under consideration — a fundamental **bridge** between the different **policies** and international **cultures**.

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1 Harvard Law School Official Website

2 "consultative status" concept defined in Article 71 of Chapter 10 of the United Nations Charter

3 Beth Simmons, Lisa Martin "International Organizations and Institutions", 2002

3.2 Non-governmental Organizations

The non-governmental organizations were founded according to the concept of an "international culture" needed to be shared and discussed in favor of the common interest. The post-World War II cultural climate — where new technological discoveries were beginning to favor a more agile global communication — encouraged a cosmopolitan feeling where international collaboration was perceived as a beneficial and constructive novelty.

Actually, INGOs were born long before, in 1910, thanks to the decision of the International **Law Association (LA)** to give a "super-national" status to international organizations with diplomatic intentions with no governmental influence and no profit. These are independent organizations of government involvement that operate on a global level.

As the design historian **Penny Sparke** writes, the creation of professional associations and international events throughout the 1950s and 1960s assisted their efforts to position themselves as educated professionals, and provided them with forums in which they could exchange ideas.[4]

There are two different typologies of NGO: **advocacy** NGOs, aimed at influencing governments with specific goals and **operational** NGOs, which provide services.

Usually NGO's mandates are involved in environmental protection, human rights promotions or women rights.[5]

The term "NGO" appears for the first time in **1946** in a **UN Charter**, these are non-governmental organizations that address a large number of extremely different issues. In general, these are groups of individuals who discuss issues related to human activities, from economics to culture, from religion to science.[6]

The **ICSID Design Association**, which will be widely considered in this discussion, belongs to this type of international organization. In the case of the ICSID, as we shall see

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4 Penny Sparke, "An Introduction to Design and Culture", 3rd ed., Abingdon: Routledge, 2013, 152

5 Dictionary of trade policy terms, Walter Goode, Cambridge University Press, 2007

6 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 2018

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in more detail below, the historical period in which the activity of the organization took hold has marked a decisive initial direction not only towards the promotion of the role of the designer and the recognition of the industrial design profession, but also and above all the conclusion of international partnerships of a diplomatic and professional nature felt particularly urgent because of the political climate of the time, characterized by the **Cold War** and the relative increasing tensions between West and East.[7]

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7 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 2018

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8 Brian Urquhart, "Looking for the Sheriff", 1998

3.3 The United Nations

The United Nations is an intergovernmental peace and security keeping organization. Its role is that of a diplomatic body mediating between the various interests of the different regions of the world, in order to find fair solutions that meet the needs of all citizens and the planet as a whole.

3.3.1 Foundation

The first step towards the foundation of the organization was made in August 1941 during the **Inter-Allied conference** that led to the **London Declaration** between the Allied powers during **World War II**. That same year, the United States, led by President **Franklin Roosevelt** and the United Kingdom, led by Prime Minister **Winston Churchill**, signed the Atlantic Charter, defining the world's goals to be achieved at the end of the war. The **United Nations Declaration** was therefore drafted by the two superpowers in **December 1941** at the White House and concerned the four main allied countries of the United States, England, the Soviet Union and the Republic of China.[8]

The term United Nations was introduced by F. Roosevelt and appeared for the first time in the official document of the UN Charter in 1946.

The founding of the United Nations came as a result of negotiations between the four Allied countries and took place in April 1945 in San Francisco — during the UN Conference on International Organization — where the United Nations Charter was signed.

The first meeting of the General Assembly took place in January 1946 in London, with the participation of 51 nations. New York City was then designated as the headquarters of the organization, whose construction was completed in October 1952.

3.3.2 Vision and Mission

The main objectives to which the United Nations wishes to respond concern the maintenance of international peace and security, respect for human rights, economic

development and humanitarian assistance.

For the purposes of this research, however, we want to focus on the 1972 formulation of the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**, which marked a fundamental step in the development of ecological thinking on the international governmental stages. In fact, since the 1970s, environmental issues have become increasingly central to the organization's agenda.

3.3.3 United Nations Environment Programme

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has been working since **1972** against climate change in favor of environmental protection and the sustainable use of natural resources.[9]

UNEP is a specialized agency of the UN and its headquarters are located in Nairobi, Kenya, and it is made up of experts in the environmental sector to face climate emergencies and to decree environmental policies based on emerging needs. Among its main objectives are the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development.

UNEP is currently working with **193 member states** and representatives of **civil society**, business, and other key actors in order to address the challenges of the environmental crisis through the UN Environment Assembly, one of the highest bodies for international environmental decisions.

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9 ICSID Archive, Box 12/32 "International Organization", University of Brighton Design Archive

3.4 The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design

The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design is a design association created with the aim of promoting the role of designer and industrial design.

As we shall see, the association was born in a historical period characterized by strong changes, in the midst of an ideological paradigm shift marked by the end of the Second World War and the emergence of new technological, political and economic possibilities on a world scale. Design was at the time a discipline not fully recognized from a professional point of view, for this reason, its first purpose was to raise the authority of the figure of the designer and to promote the importance of the subject by adopting an international perspective.[10]

The true values that lay beneath the fabric of the ICSID association — as mentioned before — were related to concepts such as **cooperation**, **mutual understanding** and **tolerance**. The aim was to co-build a renewed **network of relations** between the countries of the world just after the Second World War.

ICSID's international nature is testified by the fact that its executive board grew from **210 delegates** from the beginnings to **1000 delegates** in the 1980s. ICSID had also a **diplomatic role** during the period of the Cold War and acted as an international council in which many countries can exchange ideas and opinions about their respective national socio-cultural dynamics.[11]

The tension between the **United States** and **Russia** was higher than ever and while the first one tried to apply containment strategies, the second one wanted to assert its emerging authority and to stress its power and its independence from western countries. In this context, the rhetoric of the **"One World"**[12] and the feelings about collaboration between different politics and geographical areas were fueled by the fear of another global conflict. Initially there was no shortage of friction between the leaders of the group, divergent

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10 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 2018

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

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both in objectives and ideologies. However, the efforts made to standardize the field of design and regulate discipline have over time led to great achievements both in the profession and in the affirmation of its role in the world.

In fact, during the first period of activity, ICSID has rapidly enlarged its zone of influence by creating relationships with numerous worldwide Design Organizations and by trying to reach also the higher spheres of influence such as the **United Nations** and the **European Commission**.

Today the community created by the WDO has a leadership role in design for innovation to solve some of the most pressing problems of this historical period. Climate change, rampant urbanization, water scarcity and population growth are just some of the issues that members are trying to address and try to resolve.[13]

The association wants to demonstrate how the power of design can actually make a difference in the world when this is elevated to a **business model**.

Many institutions also support the association's mission to promote industrial design as an engine for innovation towards a better world, while partners are committed to promoting the concept that good design is the basis for good business.[14]

The relationship between economy and design is extremely close, that is why the community is committed to proposing solutions that also respond to market needs. For this reason the members come from very different disciplinary areas, such as urban planners, engineers, ergonomists, environmentalists, or architects, just to name a few. They work together in order to create positive partnerships in a world that is increasingly complex, requiring transversal and multidisciplinary intervention strategies.[15]

The main concept supported by the **WDO**, therefore, consists in the equitable collaboration between different countries and professional areas aimed at solving contemporary

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13 WDO Official Website
14 Ibid.
15 Ibid.

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problems in a transversal design that fully meets not only the needs of citizens, but also those of the big economy. In short: good design can be a good business model.

In light of this, we report the current **definition of "Industrial Design"** disclosed by the association through its official channels:

«Industrial Design is a strategic problem-solving process that drives innovation, builds business success, and leads to a better quality of life through innovative products, systems, services, and experiences. Industrial Design bridges the gap between what is and what's possible. It is a trans-disciplinary profession that harnesses creativity to resolve problems and co-create solutions with the intent of making a product, system, service, experience or a business, better. At its heart, Industrial Design provides a more optimistic way of looking at the future by reframing problems as opportunities. It links innovation, technology, research, business, and customers to provide new value and competitive advantage across economic, social, and environmental spheres».[16]

3.4.1 Foundations

Many design organizations have their origins in the post-World War II period. At the time, in fact, the professional role of designers was not recognized and the desire of the community of designers was to carve out a space that was equal to other official professions.

In this sense, the advent of the **ICSID** and other design organizations such as **ICOGRADA** (International Council of Graphic Design Organizations) and **IFI** (International federation of Interior Architects/ Designers) marked a decisive step towards achieving this goal.[17]

In 1953, French designer **Jacques Vienot** showed his first interest in establishing a representative body of industrial designers during the international congress "Institut d'Esthetique Industrielle's".[18]

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16 WDO Official Website
17 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022
18 Ibid

3.4.1

In June 1957 in Paris the French authorities officially registered the association and the following day, In London, the first official meeting was held during which the foundation of the ICSID Association was inaugurated under the name of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Designers. The meeting is chaired by **Misha Black**, the first founder together with **Pierre Vago**, **Peter Muller-Munk** and **Sigvard Bernadotte**. During this meeting were present the most important figures of the design landscape of the time including: the National Association Danish Craft, the National Association Norwegian Applied Art, the Italian Association for Industrial Design (ADI), the Swedish Society of Crafts and Design and the Dutch Institute for Industrial Design.[19]

Only in 1959 will the first General Assembly of the association take place, in Stockholm, Sweden, where the constitution of the ICSID will be stipulated and the first definition of the Industrial Design will be decreed.[20]

Today the association is called WDO, that is, World Design Organization and in 2007 it celebrated its 50 years of activity. Many things have changed since its foundation, within this research we will try to better understand this complex and enormously multifaceted reality.

3.4.2 Vision and Mission

As already mentioned, the first objective of the founders of the organization — Pierre Vago, Misha Black, Peter Muller-Munk and Sigvard Bernadotte — was to **confer authority** on the community of designers and the profession of industrial design. However, the growing ambition of the group, fueled by the numerous **partnerships** established at international level over the years, has meant that soon the aims of the association were broadened towards broader goals, of a strongly international character, until finally taking on a role of «authoritative non-governmental global advocates»[21] for design.

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19 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022

20 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 2018

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The **goals** of the organization were decided at the **first meeting in 1957** in **London**, where Peter Muller-Munk and Misha Black were elected as the association's president and vice-president respectively. Each Member State was entitled to three maximum representative societies and had a maximum of six votes — divided evenly between its representatives — for formal decisions.[22]

During his presidency, **Peter Muller-Munk** often insisted on the importance of the skills of the design industry in order to achieve efficient modern planning. Actually, the basis of this idea was a strongly Western vision oriented to the American model of excellence, usually proposed as the highest goal to be achieved.[23]

The **Western design vision** is actually a notable point to stress in this discourse, because — as we will deepen in the course of this volume — in that years happened a sort of **cultural conialization** by ICSID organization and other Western groups, which often received a strong opposition as a reply and the will — from less developed countries — to stand for their **local identity** and methods.

It's also interesting to stress how some member countries focused their effort in sharing a **cultural and artistic point of view** while others preferred to promote their actions in a deeply **commercial and financial way**. On the other hand, what was common in all the countries' representatives and from the very first time since ICSID was founded, was the attempt to value the profession of designers in order to gain an **official and recognized status** useful to reach a true **political influence**, both national and international.

Misha Black's presidency, however, was strongly influenced by his relations with the **Council of Industrial Design** (CoID) and with **SIA** (Society of Industrial Artists), which he wanted to place at the heart of the organization. Like Muller-Munk,

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22 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 20182

23 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", Bloomsbury, 2022

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however, he also believed that he must retain the professional side of the organization as the core, in order to give value and visibility to the role of industrial design. In fact, in the first constitution of the ICSID, he chose to sectionalize the aims of the group, limiting them to questions of a practical and professional nature.[24]

At the beginning of its journey, in fact, the association was not particularly interested in the theme of **sustainable development**. In fact, despite the **ICSID's participation as an NGO in the United Nations Conference in 1972** — a crucial congress in the history of environmental awareness — the course of the conference did not satisfy the delegates who attended it.In fact — as documented in the original correspondence — they argued that the **industrial design theme had remained marginal** and that they had not had the chance to promote enough the activities the association was involved in, showing in this way that they had very different priorities than those which the **Stockholm Congress** had tried to promote.[25]

In relation to this it is useful to remember the commitment of designers as **Victor Papanek**, who first placed the emphasis on the concept of designer role's responsibility in society. He assumed that design profession risked to putting «murder on a mass-production basis» and denunced designers as «a dangerous breed» because of their conscienceless ambitions deeply linked with consumerism and characterized by a lack of social interest.

Clearly, in the very first period of activity, ICSID's aims were far from the "fair" idea we have today about design for sustainable development and social effort toward the better. They were, instead, strongly focused on the **Industrial Design promotion** necessary to give prestige to the designers' community and to the profession.

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24 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 2018

25 ICSID Archive, Box 07/3, University of Brighton Design Archive

*«WE STRIVE TO CREATE A WORLD WHERE DESIGN ENHANCES OUR **ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, CULTURAL**, AND **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF LIFE**.*

*WE **ADVOCATE, PROMOTE**, AND **SHARE KNOWLEDGE** OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN DRIVEN INNOVATION THAT HAS THE POWER TO **CREATE A BETTER WORLD**».*

WDO Association

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*«AN **INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER** IS ONE WHO IS QUALIFIED BY TRAINING, TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE, EXPERIENCE AND VISUAL SENSIBILITY TO DETERMINE THE MATERIALS, MECHANISMS, SHAPE, COLOUR, SURFACE FINISHES AND DECORATION OF **OBJECTS** WHICH ARE REPRODUCED IN QUANTITY BY **INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES**. THE INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER MAY, AT DIFFERENT TIMES, BE CONCERNED WITH ALL OR ONLY SOME OF THESE ASPECTS OF AN INDUSTRIALLY PRODUCED OBJECT».*

Definition presented during ICSID's 1959 General Assembly by Misha Black
Source: ICSID, "Projet de Status", 1, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton Design Archives, ICD/01/1/1

focus ADDRESSING THE IDENTITY ISSUE IN 1959

Design Role in Society

The organization's first general assembly was chaired by **Sigvard Bernadotte** and held in **Stockholm** in **1959** at Hotel Foresta. 209 delegates from 18 different countries participated and the organization was up to the Society of Swedish Industrial Designers.[26] Visibility was fundamental to the expansionist aims of the ICSID and much emphasis was placed, as demonstrated by **Polly Miller**'s statement published in "Industrial Design", on the idea of mutual understanding, friendship and collaboration between Member States:

«Delegates from member societies all over the world discovered common bonds of experience and outlook that transcended national differences and linguistic barriers. They may have come singly as strangers. But they parted united and friends».[27]

However, behind these words rich in fraternal and benevolent sentiments lay the far more practical need to obtain the cultural and, above all, economic support of as many Member States as possible, in an attempt to give depth and authority to a discipline that at the time did not benefit any official recognition. The economic and commercial perspective is particularly clear especially at the beginning of the ICSID's activity, where partnerships and international visibility were the primary objectives to be achieved in order to pursue the most difficult goal of effective professional recognition of the discipline.

During the Venice congress in 1961, **Tomas Maldonado** spoke about the discipline in this way: «it is still an immature profession, because until now it lacks that which characterizes maturity: the capacity to recognise its own limits».[28]

These considerations referred to the high degree of **disorganization** perceived at the time between the different points of view of the various delegations. As already mentioned, in fact, one could say that there were two very distinct sides. On the one hand there were countries like

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26 Misha Black to Joseph Burke, 21 Jan. 1960, ICD/10/2/3, quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

27 Polly Miller quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

28 Tomas Maldonado, "Industrial Design: Trainings and Alternatives of a Profession", Venice Congress, 1961 quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

France, Scandinavian area and Italy that believed in a fruitful **cultural exchange** aimed at enrichment and dialogue between equals; On the other hand, countries like the United Kingdom and the United States were more interested in the possible **trade relations** that being part of an international organization could facilitate.

So, the first general assembly in Stockholm stressed the first problems about ICSID's **authority** and **identity**. Again, the issue regarded principally the administrative and political transparency of the association, due to the strong **Europeism** on which the network of the entire group was based. **Josine des Cressonieres** — a famous Belgian designer and a crucial personality of the time — became the general secretariat of the group after she ran for the place together with the Russian designer **Yuri Soloviev**. It was reported by **Franco Raggi** that many attempts were made in order to make Des Cressonieres' win and in this way, to guarantee the control centralization in the European area.[29]

Furthermore, the first attitude of the association seemed to be about an **educational role** and **cultural regulation towards developing countries** more than an equal exchange of ideas between different identities. In a certain way, ICSID wanted to spread **European values** worldwide in order to achieve a clear economical advantage for each new group that has joined the association.

This **controversial** aspect has characterized ICSID's methodology in the first period, receiving numerous criticisms from several prominent personalities of the time.

Anyway, despite the various frictions, in 1959 ICSID started its journey by having **17 Council Members** coming from **12 different countries** and many crucial topics to face.

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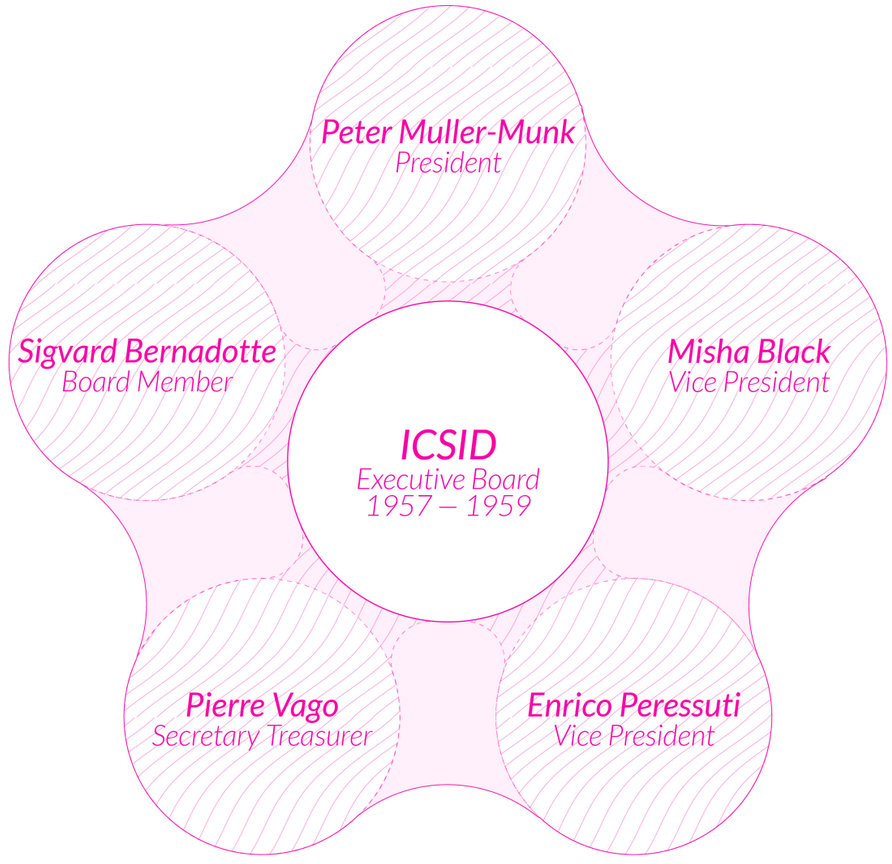
29 Franco Raggi quoted in Tania Messell, 2018



focus THE HUMANITARIAN SHIFT IN THE 1960S

New Complex Challenges

Unlike the early years of activity, the **cultural ferment** that occurred during the 1960s profoundly influenced ICSID's goals and expectations towards its own activity. Starting from this period, in fact, the sphere of competence of design has expanded towards horizons no longer merely commercial but also and above all social and aimed at improving the living conditions of the human being.

As underlined by **J. M. Woodham**, globally oriented design organizations such as ICSID «have increasingly sought to promote themselves as agencies for positioning design as an important means of enhancing social and cultural well-being across the globe».[30]

As argued by **Tania Messell**, from the late 1960s to the close of the 1970s, **anthropology** and the **social sciences** coalesced with industrial design, transforming design from a practice whose aesthetic discourse was largely dominated by industrial rationalism, to one of critical intervention with a social agenda.[31]

In this sense, the **consultative status** received in **1962** by ICSID by the specialized agency of the United Nations, **UNESCO**, played a decisive role. This has led the ICSID to operate in new spheres of expertise, relating to interest in developing countries and the benefits that could be brought by the designer figure.

In this period ICSID Association made a big step forward by intensifying its relations with **UNIDO** —the United Nations Industrial Development Organization — and opening a new chapter in its path as a non-governmental organization. In these same years the concept of a design for development based on **anthropological precepts** arose, stressing the new blended cultural atmosphere that characterized that design history period. As we mentioned in the introduction of this volume, the 1970s marked the

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30 J. M. Woodham in Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022

31 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022

real starting point toward the global awareness about sustainability issues. In these years design movements such as the **“New Design”** one or **“Design for Need”** emerged, in this new cultural setting in which human development through collaboration was the central idea that characterized intellectual discourses.

«The coming together of social science (more specifically anthropology) and design by the late 1970s evolved into formal policy within the international industrial design profession».[32]

In these years the organization enlarged its field of intervention by establishing initiatives such as the **Working Group Disaster Relief**, and the **Working Group Design for Disabled**, and by initiating a close collaboration with the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), through which it aimed to promote — as we anticipated — the advantages of industrial design in developing countries.

The figure of **Josine des Cressonnières**, General Secretariat of the association in those years, is central and decisive for the realization of this shift in perspective.

From the documents examined it is also clear how much her diplomatic activity and communication with the various member countries of the association have made the difference for the rapid development and the rapid growth of the group.

Despite this, during the sixth congress of the association, held in **1969** in **London**, the first doubts emerged about the role that design should assume within the professional panorama. The Nobel Prize winner **Lord Blackett**, who was involved at the time in the British Labour Party, argued that designers should «carefully avoid giving an impression that they intend to invade verbally large areas of industrial and national management, economics, sociology, operational research and in fact, planning in general».[33]

The exhortation of the political leader would therefore seem to be to

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32 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell “International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values”, 2022

33 Lord Blackett quoted in Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell “International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values”, 2022

redefine the discipline’s boundaries and to not invade the skills belonging to other scientific fields. It would seem that the perception of the outside world regarding design was that of a profession without foundations and without real objectives, which placed unrealistic expectations on itself, bordering on arrogance.

According to this vision, it is clear that design activity has always been undermined by uncertainty about its **real potential** for intervention and by the **lack of recognition** by the scientific community. However, it is clear that design really has to do — and today even more than before — with most of the disciplines mentioned by Blackett. Yet the question of the actual **level of competence** that the sector has in comparison with the major and officially recognized disciplines remains open.

Moreover, as evidenced by the 1969 London conference first, but also by those of **1971** in **Ibiza** called **“Design in a Changing Society”** and of **1973** in **Kyoto** called **“Soul and Material Things”**, the ideas regarding the role that design should assume on the global stage were also contradictory within the discipline itself, with great **differences of position** influenced by the culture and philosophies of the various regions of the world.[34]

What has been also stressed, in fact, is that, despite the great aspirations possessed by the association and the design world in general, «over two decades after Papanek and Bonsiepe first conveyed their ideas of design for Third World societies [sic], the social and economic condition of these societies has not changed much if one compares them today with thirty years ago [...] The idea of design for the third world advocated by either Papanek or Bonsiepe did not really work because they lacked political dimensions in their implementation».[35]

It is therefore clear that the **lack of legal capacity** and the support of adequate **policies** for the realization

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34 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell “International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values”, 2022

35 S. Amir, “Rethinking Design Policy in the Third World”, Design Issues 20, no. 4 (2004): 69, quoted in Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell “International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values”, 2022

focus

of the ideas supported, both by the design world and the ICSID in particular, has effectively represented a **huge limit** in the affirmation of design associations as a decisive and politically active body on the international scene.

focus

4 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES OVER THE DECADES

In this chapter we will analyze the main events that occurred between the 1960s and 1970s in the field of sustainable development and awareness of the problem. Through the archival documents we will recount the path of the ICSID association towards the achievement of its personal objectives and towards the goals related to sustainability and social equity. Thanks to the analysis of 9 conferences in which the association took an active part, we will try to retrace the history of design in this field.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES OVER THE DECADES

4.1 The Sixties: First Attempts

In the Sixties ICSID association was in its earliest years of activity. However, it is precisely in these years that the **cultural ferment** and the growing concern about the issue of environmental sustainability have caused the association to begin to change considerably its scope of action. These are the years in which **UNESCO** confers **consultative status** to the ICSID, marking a decisive step towards the association's greater involvement in international dynamics for social and development.[1]

However, this collaboration was undermined by numerous ideological **discrepancies** both between the ICSID and UNESCO, and within the ICSID itself, divided since its foundation on what should have been the objectives and focus points to be devoted to.[2]

As already mentioned, the differences in the world of design mainly concerned the **ideological clash** between the **Western and Eastern point of view**. The first in fact was characterized by a strongly **practical and material** approach to the discipline, while the second focused its reflections on the **philosophy and culture** that were hidden behind the profession.

The discipline of design, moreover, was perceived from the outside as a fluid subject, between art and science — as many conferences speeches held in this decade show — and for this reason it was difficult to be defined in an exact way even by the designers themselves.[3]

Indeed, between 1964 and 1968 the ICSID organized four seminars held in Belgium, Germany, the United States and Argentina to examine the issues surrounding the **emergence of the profession**. Academic standards and the limitations of the industrial design profession were discussed in order to regulate the subject. In **1969**, then, the association adopted **Tomàs Maldonado's vision of design**, about which we will discuss later in more detail.[4]

Clearly, the vast possibilities of design applications, yesterday as now, has always hindered

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1 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022
2 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis", University of Brighton, 2018
3 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022
4 WDO Official Website

the effective affirmation of the profession, which effectively draws from multiple disciplinary areas in order to propose solutions to multifaceted and complex problems.

The design of the 60s was however a very troubled design, at the height of a political and socio-cultural revolution, seduced by the incredible possibilities offered by **technological progress** and at the same time tedious by the emergence of new and more complex problems such as those of a **social and environmental** nature.

In **1962**, **Rachel Carson** published the first official book of denunciation against the use of DDT pesticides on American crops and in **1967 UNESCO** held the **"Intergovernmental Conference for Rational Use and Conservation of the Biosphere"**. Again, in **1968 P. Ehrlich** published **"The Population Bomb"**, in which for the first time, before the monumental report "The Limits to Growth" of 1972, the growing global demographic rate is considered as a real threat to the preservation of the biospheric balance.

The **hippie movement** of the **1960s** also questioned consumerism, promoting new lifestyles centered on the concept of returning to nature against more impactful industrial activities. In the end in Europe, many designers began to approach alternative creative forms and the use of recycled materials to minimize the negative consequences on the environment.[5]

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5 Alastair Fuad-Luke, "Design Activism: beautiful strangeness for a sustainable world", 2009

4.1.1 Historical and Cultural Background

From a cultural and historical point of view, the 1960s were a period of great ferment. On November 1960, **J. F. Kennedy** came to the power of the United States, inheriting the complex task of political relations with the Soviet Union and the constant threat of a third world war.

Latent tensions between the two superpowers affected all areas of international relations, including culture, technological development, industry, and commerce, throughout the **Cold War**.

In this same year two of the most catastrophic earthquakes of the twentieth century occurred: the one in Agadir in Morocco, which decimated the population and the one in Chile, whose consequent tsunami reached the coasts of Japan.

This period was also characterized by anti-racial protests by the **American black community** under the support and initiative of pacifist leader **Martin Luther King** but also of the violent movement of the Black Panther Party.

In 1962 **Watson**, **Crick** and **Wilkins** won the **Nobel Prize** in Medicine for their discovery of the double helix structure of DNA, while in 1963 **Giulio Natta** received the **Nobel Prize** in Chemistry thanks to the invention of the “moplen” a type of plastic that we still use today.

Following the tragic death of J.F. Kennedy, **Lyndon Johnson** was elected, who continued to spread liberal ideals in the Country, but aggravated the international situation marked by the direct participation of the United States in the Vietnam War.

Other important **protest movements** concerned students in university campuses, who were opposed to American participation in the Vietnam War and to the methods by which it was communicated to the public by the mass media.

From an artistic point of view, it is an important decade for both music and cinema, thanks to the creation of masterpieces such as **“Psyco”**, **“The Graduate”** and **“The Birds”** or the advent of **“British Invasion”** in music thanks to groups such as **“The Rolling Stones”**, **“The Who”**, **“Pink Floyd”** and **“The Doors”**.

In 1969, the historic **Woodstock** gathering took place, where the hippie community organized a concert that would go down in history.

4.1.2 ICSID Activity

As T. Messell quotes: «while international governmental organisations and states were central actors in shaping the agenda during the 1960s, now known as the UN Development Decade," NGOs expanded their scope of action and gained visibility in the process».[6]

At the end of the 50s, as previously discussed, the association of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design was founded in Paris by a group of international designers. It is the same period in which awards such as the **Compasso d'Oro** or the **Signe d'Or** were established by **La Rinascente** in Italy and **Josine des Cressonières** in the Benelux countries — both chaired by international juries.[7]

The themes of globalization and cosmopolitanism were in fact new concepts, born from a renewed hope for international collaboration against the disastrous consequences of the War. This feeling, however, was perhaps less authentic than the personalities of the time wanted to imply and still maintained deep roots in the Western supremacist thought against the East and the poorer communities that often had no say in the international debates.[8]

In fact, the involvement of designers belonging to the less industrialized areas of the globe will take place only later in the history of the ICSID and it will open new interesting reflections on the associative character of the association.

In addition, it is interesting to highlight a particular profile among those who formed the core of the organization, the one of the American designer of Jewish roots **Peter Muller-Munk**. In fact, during the Cold War years, he was particularly involved in **American strategic containment policies** — like most American designers of the time. This gave Munk a wider sphere of action but also a tendency to elevate the American technological

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6 Marc Frey et al., 'Introduction', 8, quoted in Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, 2018

7 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022

8 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, 2018

model as an example to follow and to ignore the possibilities offered by more active collaboration with the Eastern countries and especially with Russia. In fact, he often proposed to exclude Russian representation from the organization, because, as **Misha Black** also argued in 1959, he believed there was a deep ideological gap in terms of **design vision** between East and West. As we shall then see, the inclusion of the Soviet Union in the membership of the association will only take place in the mid-1960s.[9]

Thus at the beginning of its activity, the ICSID did not operate solely as a professional organization, but also and above all as a catalyst of **commercial opportunities** and as an ideological symposium in which Western sovereignty assumed political contours and clear positions arising from the open conflict that was taking place between the two macro factions of the United States and Soviet Union.[10]

However, as we shall see, the 1960s represented for the ICSID an extremely dense period of events and internal transformations between the members of the association themselves. The deepening of relations with the United Nations and in particular with the **UNESCO** body marked a decisive change of direction towards broader spheres of action that also concerned social and environmental protection missions.

In this regard, a fundamental figure for the development of the humanitarian objectives of the association was that of the Belgian designer **Josine des Cressonières**, «derived from her interest in answering shifting concerns amongst designers, particularly younger generations, while elevating the organisation's status and expanding the use of designers by state and industry».[11]

The Belgian designer had a fundamental role in raising the discipline of design and in trying

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9 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022

10 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 2018

11 Ibid.

to establish links of international character also with the spheres of decision-making and government.

Des Cressonières had a vision of design strongly influenced by the tradition inherited from the school of Ulm and one of its greatest exponents, Tomás Maldonado, of whom the secretary general of the association was a great friend. In fact, the Belgian Design Centre of which des Cressonières became founding director in 1964 assumed the definition of design presented by Maldonado at the ICSID Congress in Venice in 1961, while the ICSID accepted that definition only a few later, in 1969.[12]

Here is the definition of Industrial Design according to **Tomàs Maldonado**, expressed for the first time in **1961** at the **ICSID congress** in Venice:

«Industrial design is a creative activity whose aims is to determine the formal qualities of objects produced by industry. These formal qualities are not only the external features but are principally those structural and functional relationships which convert a system to a coherent unity both from the point of view of the producer and the user. Industrial design extends to embrace all the aspects of human environment, which are conditioned by industrial production».[13]

The figure of Maldonado certainly deserves a separate speech. Born in Buenos Aires on 25 April 1922, he was an extremely multifaceted and eclectic theorist of architecture and design and was the father of the concept of "design discourse". His thought influenced all the design disciplines, also through the publication of his works that marked the Italian and European culture of the second half of the twentieth century. The volumes of **"La speranza progettuale"**, 1971, **"Industrial design: un riesame"**, 1972, or **"Memoria e conoscenza"**, 2005, highlighted some of the themes most

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12 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 2018

13 Minutes of ICSID's VIth General Assembly, London, 8-9 September 1969, p.22, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton Design Archives, ICD/02/4/2 quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

shared by Maldonado regarding the role and responsibilities of the designer towards environmental issues. **"The problem of all problems"**, as he used to call the question of **sustainability**, has always been at the center of his discussions. In the 1960s, he introduced the concept of **environmental design** and he officially incorporated it into the teaching curriculum at DAMS in 1976.

Maldonado's design vision was based on a transversal and **multidisciplinary scientific approach** that included points of view belonging to different fields of research. It is a **systemic approach**, aimed at a deeper understanding of the problems faced, in order to propose more precise and effective solutions.

4.1.3 ICSID and UNESCO relations

As anticipated, in **1963** the ICSID received the **consultative status** from UNESCO, the specialized body of the United Nations for **education, science and culture.**

The agency was founded in 1946 and is aimed at promoting cooperation between the various activities of intellectual organizations and at holding positions dealing with international education and culture issues management.

Already in 1953 **Jacques Viénot** had tried to establish a sponsorship with the United Nations organ, but without success. The real step forward was in fact made by **Pierre Vago**, who obtained consultative status for the **UIA architects' organization**, in which he worked as General Secretariat between 1948 and 1968.[14]

Thanks to Vago's previous contacts with the body, in fact, the collaboration of ICSID with UNESCO was certainly facilitated.

Another important action was that of **Misha Black**, who in 1960 proposed to **Vittorio Torinese**, then **General Director of UNESCO**, that the ICSID would become the leading international body in the field of industrial design as the United Nations agency at that time had shown strong interest in the promotion of the arts.[15]

Following this request, UNESCO agreed to support the activity of the ICSID but suggested to setting up a commission aimed at promoting **social and cultural responsibility** of design and changing its name in order to emphasize the profession and not the individuals behind it.

Moreover, as **Dard** noted, "ICSID's inclusion of **mixed societies** (which included both designers and non-designers), and the potential duplication of societies committed to design, led him to believe that ICSID might be the only organisation representing **design internationally**".[16]

Once again, the real strength that led UNESCO to consider the ICSID as a valid association to represent

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14 Wolf Tochtermann, L'UIA et les OIG, ed. International Union of Archiects, L'UIA, 1948-1998 (Paris: Epure, 1998) 166 quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

15 UNESCO, Minutes of Executive Board meeting, 1962, Vol. 51, 61st Session, UNESCO Archive, Paris quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

16 Michel Dard to Rudolf Salat, 11 June 1959, UNESCO Archive, Paris, BRX/ ONG. 1/22 quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

the world of design at a global level was precisely the **multidisciplinarity** identified among its members. If the association had welcomed among its ranks representatives belonging to the sole sphere of design, probably it would not have been recognized that international and transversal character that instead earned it the partnership with the specialized agency of the United Nations.

ICSID was thus admitted as a **Category B** organization by **UNESCO** and granted consultative status in May **1962** by a clear majority in favor of its annexation.

congress “DESIGN AND COMMUNITY” ICSID CONGRESS

Vienna, Austria, 1965

From a professional point of view, the 1960s was a period of high productivity for designers due to the evolution of the consumer cult in industrialized countries such as Europe or the United States. So much so that the academic world began to question the responsibility of designers for the design of mass products required by the large market and the consequences that these could cause within the new society that was emerging in those years.

In fact, the **growing relationship between large industries and designers** is one of the most emphasized critical points of the design activity of the period if related to environmental protection. It is in fact undeniable that for many years the figure of designers has embraced the aims of **mass consumerism** and has even encouraged its proliferation on a global scale due to the creation of products for **irresponsible consumption** and campaigns advertising aimed at promoting non-essential consumer goods.

Issues concerning the **role of the designer in the modern society** were also addressed by ICSID in **1963** during the Third General Assembly, where it was established that the only way for design to make its own contribution in the social sphere was to be admitted to the highest **decision-making spheres**.

Indeed, in **1963** the sphere of competence of the ICSID was widened to new horizons thanks to the closer collaboration with the **UNESCO** body, just faced in the research, which granted it consultative status within its own organization.

As ICSID communicated in its **News Bulletin** in **1963**:

«Recent relations with UNESCO [and] the ILO [...] promise for ICSID a mission far greater than being merely an association of societies. By centralising the enormous potentialities of mind and activity generated by designers throughout the world, ICSID is able to assist the disabled, help countries in course of

development, and to work towards the finding of solutions to many human problems».[17]

In this period, when communication between the various regions of the globe was encouraged by the new technological discoveries, the will to exploit the moment in favor of communication and international relations emerged in a strong way. In fact, the historical moment, while not without political and ideological conflicts, offered an unprecedented opportunity for professionals of any fields — to communicate and to meet easily despite the great distances.

The post-World War II period, moreover, was a time when the atrocities of the two past wars made us fear more than ever the possibility of a further conflict. For this reason, in many of the speeches and letters of that period, we can see how the concept of friendship and brotherhood is strongly emphasized, in order to seek a meeting point also between countries characterized by a conflictual and tragic political history.

As **Muller-Munk** shared with the members of SID in **1953**, regarding the international coordination committee:

«I am deeply convinced that individually and collectively we have only two choices. We can erect walls and barriers behind which to live in seclusion in imaginary protection of our safety. We can even prosper for a while yet behind an intellectual and creative Maginot line; but I do not believe that our peace, our safety, and our prosperity will last very long in such isolation. It is my conviction that we must go out and meet each other, that we must expose ourselves to new ideas».[18]

In the same years, the **1965 conference** marks the first form of ICSID's official opening from a perspective of mere sponsorship of the profession towards broader goals such as **political participation** and the handling of new **humanitarian issues**. Before this conference, **Josine des Cressonières** wrote to **John Reid**

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17 Josine des Cressonnières, presentation at Seminar Fabrimetal, 15 Dec. 1962 quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

18 Peter Muller-Munk, 'Report on International Coordinating Committee of Industrial Design Societies', IDSA Archives, Box 68 quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

suggesting that the **Working Group Professional Practice** insist on the theme of the responsibility of design to serve the community in defining the **Design Code of Professional Conduct** that would be presented during the **Vienna Congress**.[19]

As already mentioned, in fact, des Cressonnières' determination to raise the status of the profession and of designers played a crucial role in those years, even when her vision clashed with those of other exponents of the sector.

As reported by the French architect **Claude Parent**:

«The last Vienna Congress served only to confirm the growing aspirations of design. A discipline which claims to embrace all aspects of modern artistic activity — thought, philosophy, creation — design is now bidding for its place alongside the powers that can affect our daily lives».[20]

These aspirations were often judged as **unrealistic** and extremely **pompous** by other scientific fields, often skeptical about the actual skills of designers, who often aimed to broaden their horizons to other fields and spheres of action.

Despite this, the strong interest of design in the possibilities of expansion offered by new **social and humanitarian objectives** is well expressed in the words of **Henri Vienot**, Jacques' son, in reference to the issues addressed during the Congress of Vienna in 1965:

«it is particularly interesting to have begun to explore this field of activity, as it can bring new possibilities of expression for designers, and renewed marks of prestige to the profession».[21]

Also for this reason, from 1960 onwards the **International Design Conferences in Aspen** (IDCA) began to address the issues of environment, responsibility and resources in conferences such as **"Environment"** of **1961**, **"Directions and Dilemmas"** of **1964** and **"Sources and Resources"**, **1966**.[22]

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19 Josine des Cressonnières to John Reid, 2 Dec. 1964, 1CD/06/7/2 quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

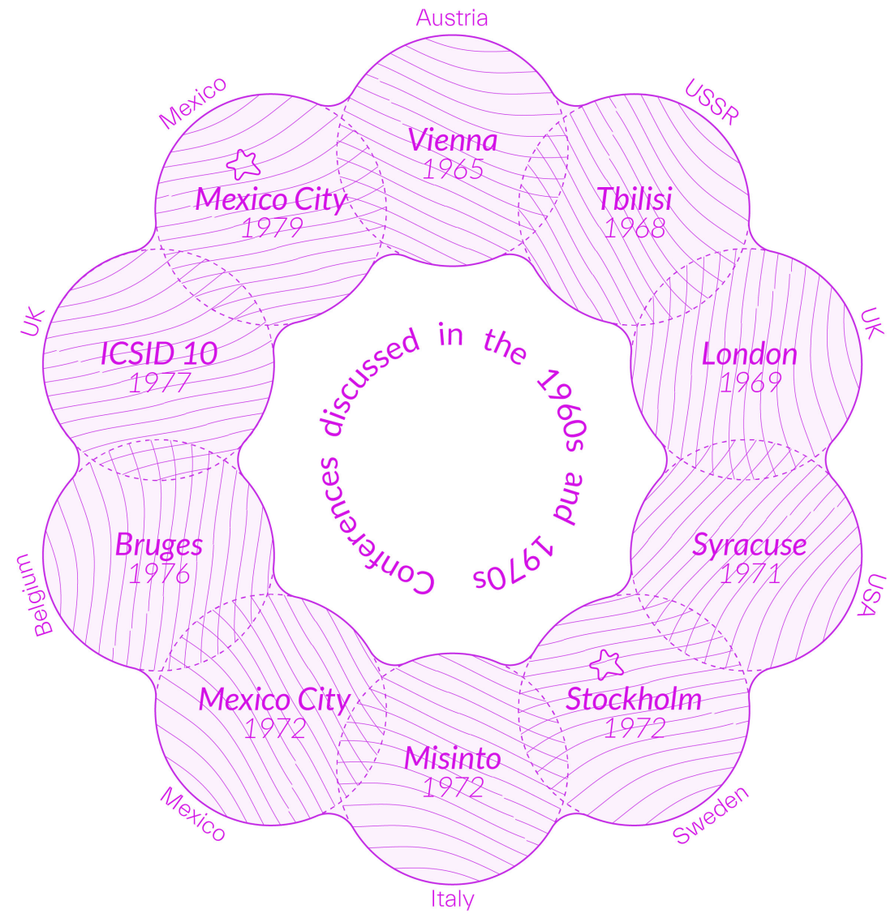
20 Claude Parent, Réponse de Claude Parent', Esthétique Industrielle, 78-79 (1966): 25 quoted in Tania Messell, 2018

21 Tania Messell, University of Brighton, 2018

22 Ibid.

The various facets that characterize the world of design can often result as **controversial** but equally **fascinating** to the purposes of this research. In fact, the nature of design has changed multiple times throughout history and even today, the subject has not reached a unitary character. Design actually regards all the human spheres, that is why it embraces many **different areas** and has **different objectives** according to the specific function of its different branches.

Everything that surrounds us hides behind it a designer or a team of designers who have dedicated themselves to the study, the design and the realization of the final product. Be it physical, digital or service. This makes clear how the **individual choices of designers** are strongly linked to the **responsibility of influencing**, yesterday as today, the **global society**.



congress “SYMPOSIUM ON TECHNOLOGY AND ARTISTIC CREATION IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD”

Tbilisi, USSR, 1968

Despite the new cultural ferment around the role that design had to assume within society, during the **Tbilisi** conference held in **April 1968**, were touched on themes related to the ancient dilemma, son of the Arts and Crafts movement, relative to the **dualistic nature of the design world**, always straddling **art** and **science**.[23]

The themes addressed at that time were in fact the interrelations between arts and sciences, the interaction of art and technology in industrial design and the new scientific discoveries regarding the use of new materials and processes.

It is a Conference of a practical nature, aimed at the divulgation of new ideas among the professionals of the field worldwide. However, the event takes on a different light if we think about the background and point of view of the founders of the association and in particular of **Peter Muller-Munk** and **Misha Black**. Indeed they were heavily involved in American containment policies during the Cold War and at the beginning of ICSID’s activity they were not favorable about the decision to admit the USSR into the ranks of its members.[24]

From an official document of the time, however, we see how the participation in the conference was nourished by great personalities of international representation, such as the English founder and past president of **ICOGRADA W. M. de Mayo**, the American curator of the department of architecture and design of the **MoMA** in New York **M. Constantine** and internationally renowned designers such as **Henry Dreyfuss** and **Arthur J. Pulos**.[25]

The participation of many American representatives at the conference was therefore a sign of renewed hope for the collaboration of design professionals able to overcome the political controversies of their countries of origin in favor of a fair dialogue in which the voice of all could be listened to.

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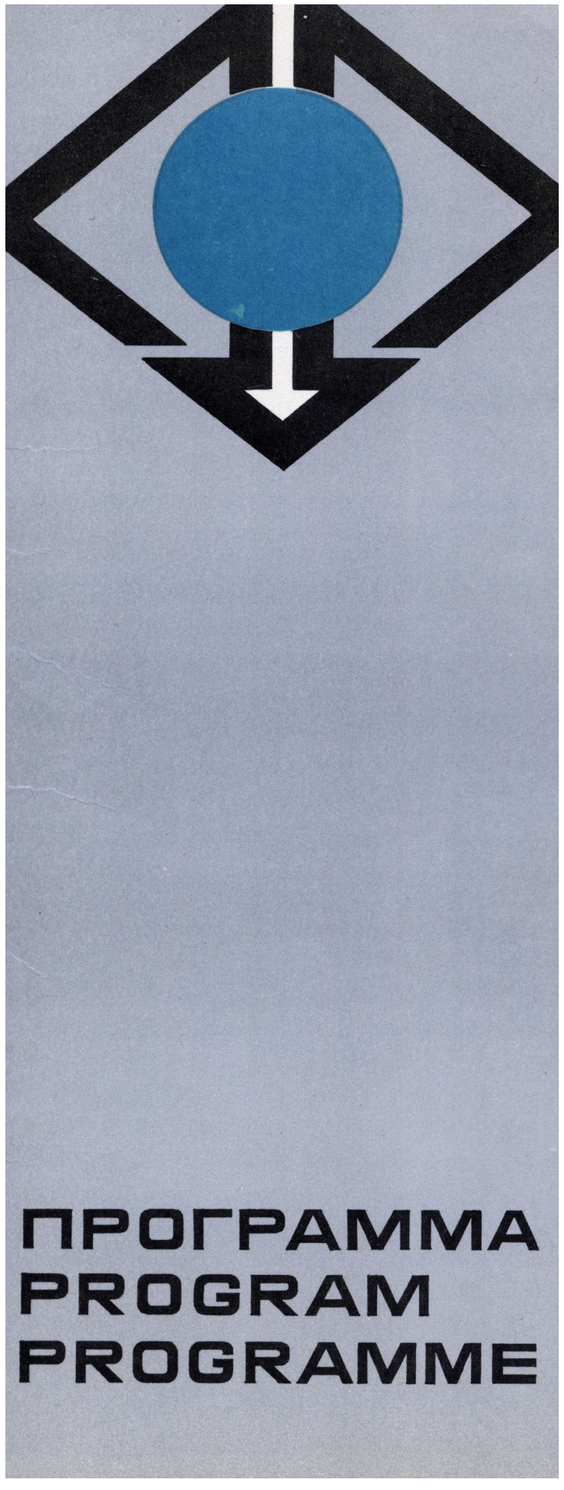
23 ICSID Archive, Box 07/3/1 “Seminars, Exhibition, Congresses, Conferences”, University of Brighton Design Archive

24 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell “International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values”, 2022

25 ICSID Archive, Box 07/3/1 “Seminars, Exhibition, Congresses, Conferences”, University of Brighton Design Archive



Tbilisi Congress Flyer, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3
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AGENDA

I. Opening of the meeting

II. Election of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur

III. Adoption of the agenda

IV. The inter-relationships and inter-influences between arts and sciences:

1. Historical views: the relationships between arts and sciences in traditional art forms like crafts, architecture, music.

2. Present view: twentieth century trends and development.

3. Future perspectives; future directions in arts and science fields and existing potential for interrelationship as the result of such new technological phenomena as the computer, automation, atomic energy, synthetic materials...

4. The scientific discoveries and invention of new materials and processes which alter and expand art forms.

5. New methods of reproduction and dissemination which affect the arts, the artist and the public.

6. The visual and dramatic arts as they are transformed through the mass media.

7. Scientific processes and products which are affecting the scope of architecture.

8. The union between the arts and technological sciences within the context of industrial design.

9. New forms of music produced by electronic and other technological media.

10. Adoption of the report.

11. Closing of the meeting.

9 April (Tuesday)

15.00–17.30 Session of the meeting
17.30–20.00 Sightseeing in Tbilisi
20.00 Reception in honour of the participants of the meeting

10 April (Wednesday)

10.00–13.00 Session of the meeting
15.00–18.00 Session of the meeting
18.00 Leisure

11 April (Thursday)

9.30–13.00 Session of the meeting
15.00–17.00 Session of the meeting
19.00 Theatre

12 April (Friday)

9.30–12.00 Session of the meeting
14.00 A trip to Mtskheta, Georgian ancient capital, and seeing the architectural monuments of the VI–XII centuries

13 April (Saturday)

11.00–13.00 Closing of the meeting
15.30–17.00 A visit to the Museum of Arts and the exhibition of N. Pirosmanishvili's paintings
17.00 Leisure

Tbilisi Programme Flyer (en), ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3
f3

ПОВЕСТКА ДНЯ

I. Открытие совещания

II. Выборы председателя, заместителей и докладчика

III. Принятие повестки дня

IV. Обсуждение взаимодействия и взаимовлияния между искусством и наукой:

1. Исторический обзор: связь между искусством и наукой в сфере традиционных форм искусства, таких как ремесла, архитектура и музыка.

2. Современное состояние: тенденции и направления развития в XX веке.

3. Перспективы: направления будущего развития науки и искусства; существующие возможности для взаимодействия между ними, возникшие в результате последних достижений научно-технической мысли в таких областях, как электронно-вычислительная техника, автоматизация, атомная энергия, создание синтетических материалов и т.п.

4. Научные открытия и разработка новых материалов и процессов: их влияние на изменение существующих и возникновение новых форм искусства.

5. Новые методы воспроизведения и распространения; их влияние на искусство, художника и публику.

6. Преобразование визуальных искусств и театра под влиянием средств массовых коммуникаций.

7. Влияние достижений науки и техники на развитие архитектуры.

8. Взаимодействие между искусством и техническими науками в сфере дизайна.

9. Новые формы музыки, созданные электронными инструментами и другими техническими средствами.

10. Принятие решения.

11. Закрытие совещания.

9 апреля (вторник)

15.00–17.30 Работа совещания
17.30–20.00 Осмотр г. Тбилиси
20.00 Прием в честь участников совещания

10 апреля (среда)

10.00–13.00 Работа совещания
15.00–18.00 Работа совещания
18.00 Свободное время

11 апреля (четверг)

9.30–13.00 Работа совещания
15.00–17.00 Работа совещания
19.00 Посещение театра

12 апреля (пятница)

9.30–12.00 Работа совещания
14.00 Поездка в древнюю столицу Грузии Мцхету, осмотр памятников архитектуры У1–Х11 вв.

13 апреля (суббота)

11.00–13.30 Закрытие совещания
15.30–17.00 Посещение Музея искусств и выставки художника Н. Пиросманишвили
17.00 Свободное время

Tbilisi Programme Flyer (ru), ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3
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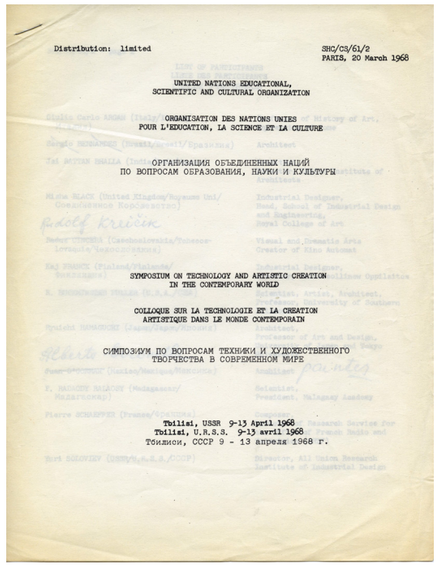


Distribution: limited

SHC/CS/61/2
PARIS, 20 March 1968

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

ORGANISATION DES NATIONS UNIES
POUR L'EDUCATION, LA SCIENCE ET LA CULTURE

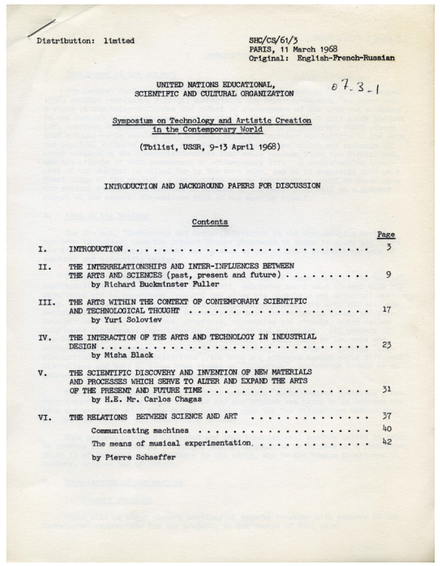
ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ
ПО ВОПРОСАМ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ, НАУКИ И КУЛЬТУРЫ

SYMPOSIUM ON TECHNOLOGY AND ARTISTIC CREATION
IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

COLLOQUE SUR LA TECHNOLOGIE ET LA CREATION
ARTISTIQUE DANS LE MONDE CONTEMPORAIN

СИМПОЗИУМ ПО ВОПРОСАМ ТЕХНИКИ И ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОГО
ТВОРЧЕСТВА В СОВРЕМЕННОМ МИРЕ

Tbilisi, USSR 9-13 April 1968
Tbilisi, U.R.S.S. 9-13 avril 1968
Тбилиси, СССР 9 - 13 апреля 1968 г.



Distribution: limited

SHC/CS/61/3
PARIS, 11 March 1968
Original: English-French-Russian

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL,
SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

07-3-1

Symposium on Technology and Artistic Creation
in the Contemporary World

(Tbilisi, USSR, 9-13 April 1968)

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR DISCUSSION

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Tbilisi Congress Report and Contents, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3

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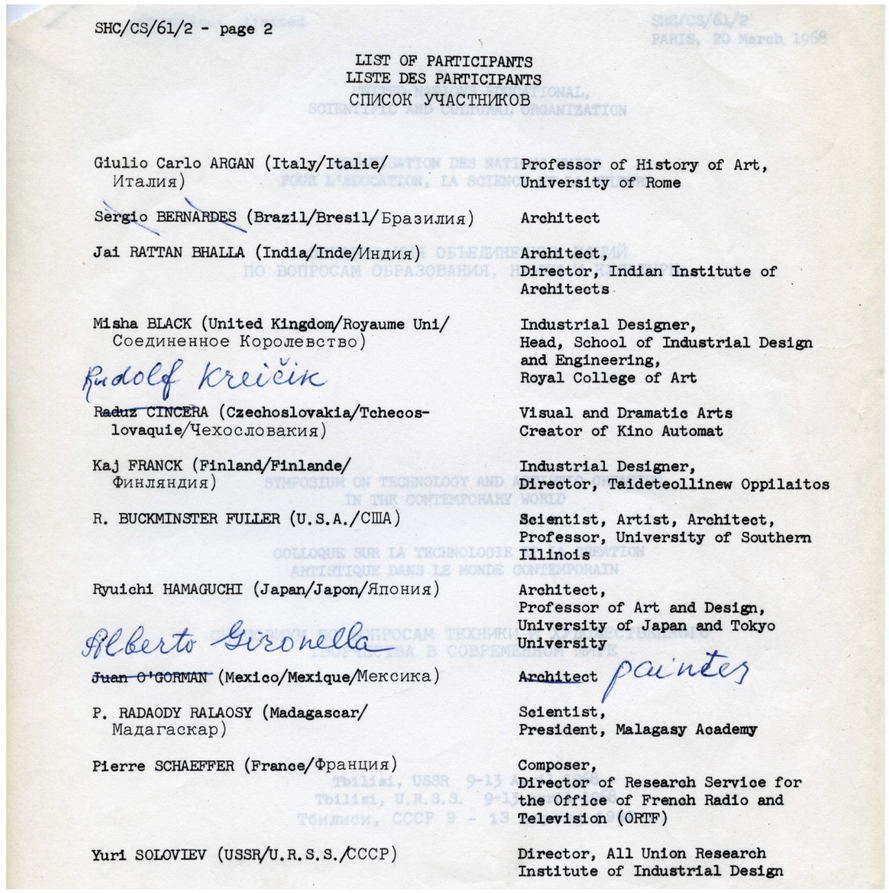

SHC/CS/61/2 - page 2

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS
СПИСОК УЧАСТНИКОВ

Giulio Carlo ARGAN (Italy/Italie/ Италия)	Professor of History of Art, University of Rome
~~Sergio~~ BERNARDES (Brazil/Bresil/Бразилия)	Architect
Jai RATTAN BHALLA (India/Inde/Индия)	Architect, Director, Indian Institute of Architects
Misha BLACK (United Kingdom/Royaume Uni/ Соединенное Королевство)	Industrial Designer, Head, School of Industrial Design and Engineering, Royal College of Art
Rudolf Kreičik	
~~Raduz~~ CINCERA (Czechoslovakia/Tchecoslovaquie/Чехословакия)	Visual and Dramatic Arts Creator of Kino Automat
Kaj FRANCK (Finland/Finlande/ Финляндия)	Industrial Designer, Director, Taideteollinew Oppilaitos
R. BUCKMINSTER FULLER (U.S.A./США)	Scientist, Artist, Architect, Professor, University of Southern Illinois
Ryuichi HAMAGUCHI (Japan/Japon/Япония)	Architect, Professor of Art and Design, University of Japan and Tokyo University
Alberto Gironella	
~~Juan O'GORMAN~~ (Mexico/Mexique/Мексика)	Architect painter
P. RADAODY RALAOSY (Madagascar/ Мадагаскар)	Scientist, President, Malagasy Academy
Pierre SCHAEFFER (France/Франция)	Composer, Director of Research Service for the Office of French Radio and Television (ORTF)
Yuri SOLOVIEV (USSR/U.R.S.S./СССР)	Director, All Union Research Institute of Industrial Design

Tbilisi Participants List, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton. Box 07/3

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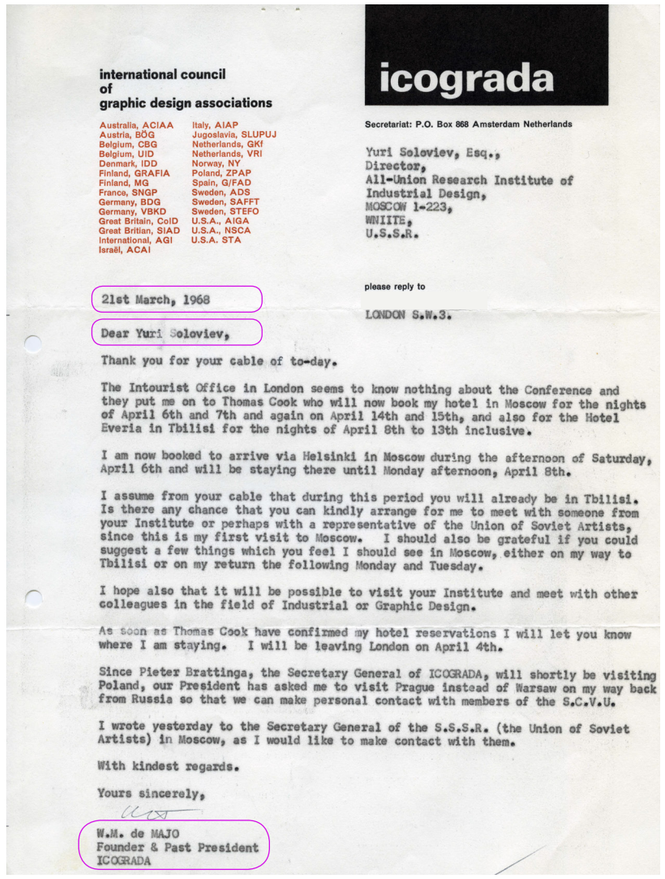

international council of graphic design associations

Australia, ACIAA
Austria, BÖG
Belgium, CBG
Belgium, UID
Denmark, IDD
Finland, GRAFIA
Finland, MG
France, SNGP
Germany, BDG
Germany, VBKD
Great Britain, CoID
Great Britian, SIAD
International, AGI
Israël, ACAI
Italy, AIAP
Jugoslavia, SLUPUJ
Netherlands, GKf
Netherlands, VRI
Norway, NY
Poland, ZPAP
Spain, GIFAD
Sweden, ADS
Sweden, SAFFT
Sweden, STEFO
U.S.A., AIGA
U.S.A., NSCA
U.S.A. STA

icograda

Secretariat: P.O. Box 868 Amsterdam Netherlands

Yuri Soloviev, Esq.,
Director,
All-Union Research Institute of
Industrial Design,
MOSCOW 1-223,
VNIIITE,
U.S.S.R.

please reply to

LONDON S.W.3.

21st March, 1968

Dear Yuri Soloviev,

Thank you for your cable of to-day.

The Intourist Office in London seems to know nothing about the Conference and they put me on to Thomas Cook who will now book my hotel in Moscow for the nights of April 6th and 7th and again on April 14th and 15th, and also for the Hotel Everia in Tbilisi for the nights of April 8th to 13th inclusive.

I am now booked to arrive via Helsinki in Moscow during the afternoon of Saturday, April 6th and will be staying there until Monday afternoon, April 8th.

I assume from your cable that during this period you will already be in Tbilisi. Is there any chance that you can kindly arrange for me to meet with someone from your Institute or perhaps with a representative of the Union of Soviet Artists, since this is my first visit to Moscow. I should also be grateful if you could suggest a few things which you feel I should see in Moscow, either on my way to Tbilisi or on my return the following Monday and Tuesday.

I hope also that it will be possible to visit your Institute and meet with other colleagues in the field of Industrial or Graphic Design.

As soon as Thomas Cook have confirmed my hotel reservations I will let you know where I am staying. I will be leaving London on April 4th.

Since Pieter Brattinga, the Secretary General of ICOGRADA, will shortly be visiting Poland, our President has asked me to visit Prague instead of Warsaw on my way back from Russia so that we can make personal contact with members of the S.C.V.U.

I wrote yesterday to the Secretary General of the S.S.S.R. (the Union of Soviet Artists) in Moscow, as I would like to make contact with them.

With kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,

W.M. de MAJO
Founder & Past President
ICOGRADA

W.M. de Majo to Y. Soloviev, March 21, 1968 (VNIITE), ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3

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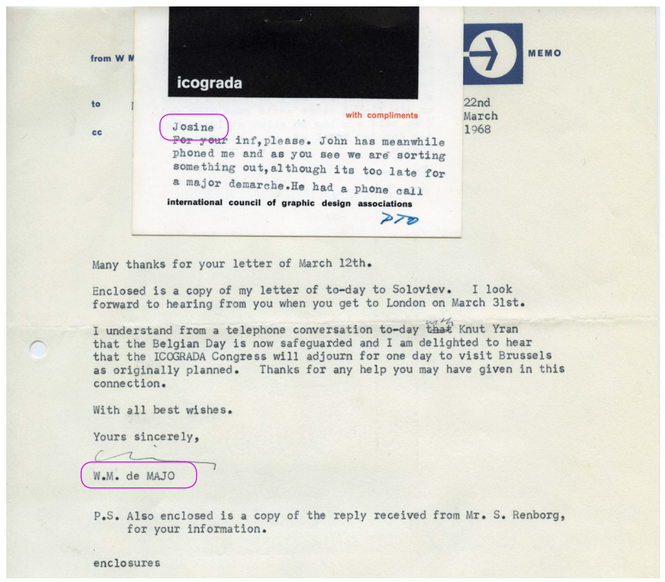

from W M

to

cc

icograda

with compliments

MEMO

22nd
March
1968

Josine
~~For your~~ inf, please. John has meanwhile phoned me and as you see we are sorting something out, although its too late for a major demarche. He had a phone call

international council of graphic design associations

Many thanks for your letter of March 12th.

Enclosed is a copy of my letter of to-day to Soloviev. I look forward to hearing from you when you get to London on March 31st.

I understand from a telephone conversation to-day that Knut Yran that the Belgian Day is now safeguarded and I am delighted to hear that the ICOGRADA Congress will adjourn for one day to visit Brussels as originally planned. Thanks for any help you may have given in this connection.

With all best wishes.

Yours sincerely,

W.M. de MAJO

P.S. Also enclosed is a copy of the reply received from Mr. S. Renborg, for your information.

enclosures

W.M. de Majo to J. des Cressonnieres, March 22, 1968, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3

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*«INDUSTRIAL DESIGN IS A CREATIVE ACTIVITY WHOSE AIMS IS TO DETERMINE THE **FORMAL QUALITIES OF OBJECTS PRODUCED BY INDUSTRY**. THESE FORMAL QUALITIES ARE NOT ONLY THE EXTERNAL FEATURES BUT ARE PRINCIPALLY THOSE **STRUCTURAL AND FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS** WHICH CONVERT A **SYSTEM** TO A **COHERENT UNITY** BOTH FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE PRODUCER AND THE USER. INDUSTRIAL DESIGN EXTENDS TO EMBRACE **ALL THE ASPECTS OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**, WHICH ARE **CONDITIONED BY INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION**».*

Tomás Maldonado Definition of Industrial Design
Source: Minutes of ICSID's VIth General Assembly, London, (8-9 September 1969), p.22
ICSID Archive, University of Brighton Design Archives, ICD/02/4/2

congress "DESIGN SOCIETY AND THE FUTURE", ICSID CONGRESS

London, United Kingdom, 1969

During the London Congress, the definition of **Industrial Design** elaborated by **Tomás Maldonado** was signed and the issues of social and environmental sustainability were discussed in detail. It seemed that the growing cooperation between the ICSID and the organs of the United Nations had brought great ferment among the community of designers and that they had really begun to spend their energies on **social and humanitarian areas**.

Surely, the United Nations was crucial to raising awareness for sustainable and respectful development through the world's less affluent communities. For this reason in those years specialized agencies such as the **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development** (UNCTAD) and the **United Nations Development Programme** (UNDP) were established in **1964** and in **1965** respectively.[26]

It is in this cultural climate, following the consultative status obtained by the ICSID for **UNESCO**, that some exponents in other fields began to conceive design as a discipline that was trying to overstep its boundaries, by assuming levels of expertise that were not recognized from the outside.

This is the case of **Lord Blackett**, a member of the **British Labour Party**, whose words have already been mentioned in this debate.

He stressed issues relating to less technologically developed communities, implying that the association was not sufficiently discussing their problems and that it was focusing only on the needs of the more industrialized countries.

Actually, the ICSID had discussed, during the General Assembly prior to this Congress, the pressing needs of the poorer countries by setting up a Special Commission in this regard in order to devote due space to matters relating to these aspects.[27]

The conference, not without resistance from the Executive Board, was also attended by **students**

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26 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980", University of Brighton, 2018

27 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022

engaged in the field of design who were also particularly critical of the way this was addressed.

They claimed that: «since the true causes of the evil we are in are essentially political and have a name i.e. exploitation of man by man, and on a more acute level, exploitation of underdeveloped countries [sic] by rich countries, this is the level where the discussions should have taken place».[28]

After the conference, also the monthly magazine **“The News Section of Design”** published in England by the Council of Industrial Design, described the London conference as an **elitist gathering of gentlemen** rather than a moment of discussion among professionals looking for valid solutions for the improvement of the living conditions of people in difficulty.[29]

Therefore, the congress did not exceed the expectations of the critics, nor those of its participants. It should also be noted that the Board did not take kindly to student participation in its congresses, which was questionable and widely disputed. It appears that the **Education Commission** of the ICSID had proposed to set up a Commission of Students to ensure their active and independent participation during the meetings, but this proposal was declined.[30]

This aspect is perhaps one of the most controversial within the general organization of the association. As the words of the group of young people above show, in fact, their contribution appears to be smart and reasoned and could certainly have enriched the discussions faced by the association by encouraging a greater exchange between the views of different generations. This matter sounds even more paradoxical if linked to an event whose name mentions **“Design, Society and Future”**, and which is therefore related to the hopes and possible future prospects of which young people, nearly excluded from the

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28 Quoted in Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, “Constructing a ‘United Nations of Industrial Design’: ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980”, University of Brighton, 2018

29 Tania Messell, PhD Philosophy Thesis, “Constructing a ‘United Nations of Industrial Design’: ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980”, University of Brighton, 2018

30 Ibid.

speech, would have been the direct protagonists.

In conclusion, both with regard to social issues — not addressed in sufficient depth — and for the resistance shown towards the **new generations of students**, the work of the ICSID relating to this specific event is particularly deficient and deeply **blind to the possibilities of intervention** offered by social and environmental issues for a better future.

4.2 The Seventies: Sustainability Emerging

As previously argued, the sixties laid the foundations for a first form of interventionism towards the issues of environmental and social sustainability that have seen a further and more concrete development during the 70's.

At the beginning of this decade, concrete initiatives towards global awareness of the issue both among the most powerful decision-making spheres and in the world of design.

These are the years of the publication of the volume **"Design for the Real World"**, of Victor Papanek in **1971**, of the United Nations Conference in **Stockholm** in **1972**, of the Publication of the report **"The Limits to Growth"** of the **Club of Rome**, but also of the establishment, also in **1972**, of **UNEP**, the United Nations Environment Programme, with the aim of representing an authoritative support for the environment at a global level. The mission of this agency, still active today, is to improve the organs of leadership and encourage new partnership for the protection of the environment and populations at risk, both because of pollution and the impacts caused by the exploitation of natural resources.[31]

Also in **1972**, **WERC**, the World Environment and Resources Council, was founded thanks to the interest shown by lawyers, engineers, scientists and designers towards the environmental issues "concerned about the often negative impact of an isolated disciplinary approach".[32] As we shall see, the WERC was commissioned by the Belgian Government to organize in 1976 a conference entitled "The Environment of Human Settlements" in Brussels, aimed at providing points of reflection for the next UN Conference to be held in Vancouver a few months later.[33] Among its sponsors will be the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, which will hold a further conference in Bruges, dedicated to the exhibition of the results obtained by some of his workshops, called by the ICSID as

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31 UNEP Official Website
32 WERC Report of Activities, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 06/10Quater
33 World Environment and Resources Council (WERC) "The environment of human settlements", conference (Bruges, 1976) Texts, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton Design Archive, Box 06/10/14

"Interdesign", selected according to the main theme, the "Human well-being in cities of today".[34]

Following this collaboration, we quote some crucial phrases from the private correspondence of 5 May 1976 by **Mr. Laconte**, President of the WERC to **Carl Aubök**, Past President of the ICSID: "the Bruges session has illustrated the key role of the design professions in the environment" e ancora «I suggest that ICSID would become member of WERC what would give to ICSID a seat in the board of governors and the right to participate to its policy».[35]

As pointed out by Tania Messell in 2018, the 70s marked a period of strong collaboration and not only between the NGOs, but also between the latter and the government organizations.[36]

As regards to the ICSID, this growing relationship responded to the need expressed by the members to carve out a decision-making space among the highest international spheres and even to the future hope of being able to develop specific policy rules on design.

Following an internal survey conducted between 1976 and 1977 among the members of the ICSID, the then Past President Carl Auböck reported the common thought that had emerged: «ICSID does not have the experience, ability or totality to carry out assistance independently as the professional skills contained within the membership of ICSID cannot be applied directly to problems of developing countries without involving economic, social, educational and industrial planning, and ICSID is not qualified to advise on these wider aspects».[37]

It was therefore clear that the association wanted to avail itself of the support of new spheres of intervention belonging to the world of politics, economy, education and social development.

This same desire had also emerged previously, as witnessed by the decision of ICSID to tighten and formalize relations with **UNESCO** already in **1963**.[38]

However, although ICSID had

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34 World Environment and Resources Council (WERC), Texts, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton Design Archive, Box 06/10/14
35 WERC Conference (Bruges, 1976) Correspondence, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton Design Archive, Box 06/10/15
36 Tania Messell, 2018
37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.

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succeeded in its attempt to bring international spheres closer together by marking a decisive step towards the recognition of its authority and towards the definition of the social role of the designer, the association has often not been sufficiently ready to grasp the incredible possibilities and opportunities that presented themselves in front of itself.

In fact, its need to validate the role of the design profession and to spread on an international scale the western vision of it, has meant that the emerging theme of sustainability, both social and environmental, It was often used as a pretext to sponsor its activities and intervene in less developed areas, called at the time "Third World", without an effective realization of the proposals submitted. The main aim therefore seemed to be to affirm the Western approach in less industrialized areas, without taking into account the important cultural, economic and political differences between the Western world and the technologically developing nations.

For this reason too, during those same years, the relationship of the ICSID with the UNESCO body was weakened, mainly because of the deep ethical and ideological gap, now evident, between the focus and objectives of the two international organizations.

Despite this, in **1976** ICSID obtained consultative status from two new international bodies, **UNIDO** (United Nations Industrial Development Organization) and **ISO** (International Organisation for Standardization). In addition, it was part of the **UNCTAD** (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), **GATT** (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and **ITC** (International Trade Centre) — as well as **UNESCO**, as already mentioned several times.[39]

In the matter of the relationship with **UNESCO** and **UNIDO**, it is interesting to note the subsequent interest of ICSID also towards

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39 Tania Messell "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

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another emerging United Nations initiative, that of **UNU**, namely, the United Nations University. In a private correspondence dated 12 May **1977** between **Carl Auböck** and **F. R. Lockheimer**, Information and Cultural Affairs Officer for The United Nations University, we can read: «I am especially interested in all aspects of environmental and industrial design, not only personally but on behalf of the school of design in Vienna where I teach, and equally on behalf of ICSID" e ancora "I would be happy if the United Nations University would consider a cooperation (...) I am certain that ICSID would be ready and prepared to assist in every possible way it can».

In the same letter, the past president of the ICSID stresses the urgency of dealing, also from a university educational point of view, with humanitarian issues such as hunger and poverty in developing countries through concrete aid to populations in difficulty «in order to avoid all the mistakes which so-called developed countries have made in their process of industrialization».[40]

The end of the decade, finally, is crowned by one of the leading works for the history of sustainability and ecology of all time. It is the **Gaia Hypothesis**, formulated in **1979** by the English scientist **James Lovelock** and co-developed by the microbiologist **Lynn Margulis**. This hypothesis is the basis of the systemic theories, of which a branch of today's design still makes use, and puts the emphasis on the dense network of relationships that characterizes living organisms and inorganic components. According to the Gaia hypothesis this network of relationships, through a synergistic and self-regulating mechanism, guarantees the necessary balances for the maintenance of life on Earth.

This thesis has been strongly criticized over the years, as accused of excessive vitalism and teleology for being a scientific theory. But criticisms aside, what interests us to emphasize is the systemic nature recognized to the biosphere

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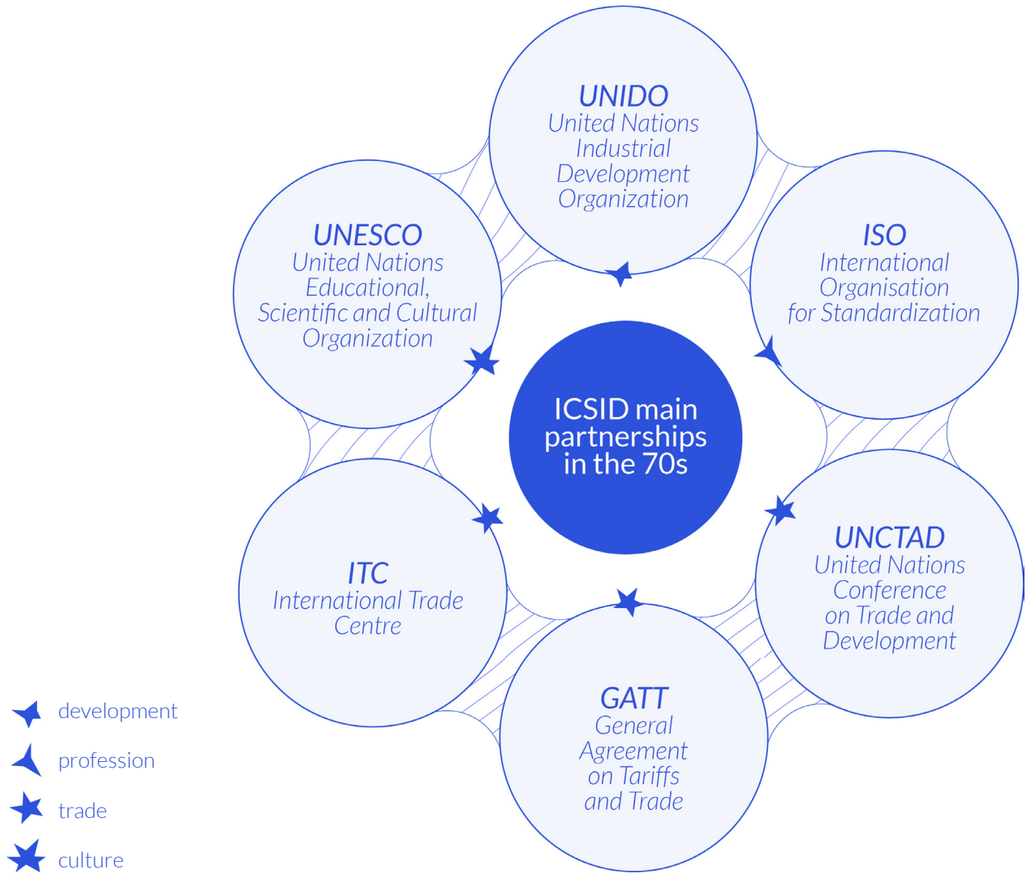
40 ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 12/32

and its hypothetical ability to autopoiesis that highlights the close interrelationship between humans, animals and natural elements in a huge sensitive **network**, characterized by the presence of **retroactive feedbacks** that can self-regulate and develop greater forms of resilience according to the emerging needs and with the ultimate aim of always preserving life. The concept behind this theory, which has been mathematically confirmed thanks to the **“Daisy World”** experimentation, endorses the validity of the systemic approach as no effective solution can be formulated without taking into account the whole complexity of the relationship network.

Every element is influenced by and influences in turn numerous other parts of the system. This greatly complicates the task of the designer or of the problem-solver in general, but it is the only way to analyze a problem in a complete way and consequently to draw valid solutions. The s**ystemic approach**, in this sense, is something that is missing in the **current political and decision-making landscape** and it should be implemented thanks to the collaboration of **systemic designers** in the first place, but also new figures that can analyze aspects ignored by the highest levels of government and decision-making.

In this section we will delve into the events of the 70s that, as we will see, will represent the **real turning point** in the field of sustainability, and we will investigate more in detail the theme of **international and transdisciplinary collaboration** occurred in those years with the common objective of addressing the complex and numerous problems relating to **social and environmental issues**.



congress

“THE STATE OF THE ART AND SCIENCE OF DESIGN”

Syracuse, USA, 1971

In this particular context, the conference held in Syracuse, USA, stands out among the archival documents. This conference was attended by numerous participants and held in the same year in which V. Papanek published one of his most incisive works: **“Design For the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change”**.

In his work **Papanek**, a supporter of socially useful and ecological design, had placed emphasis on the responsibility that the craft of the designer brings with it. The theme of **responsibility** seems to be central in these years, as we will also see in the topics discussed during the conference in Syracuse. Papanek’s criticism focuses on the irresponsible design practices prevalent in the United States at the time, such as the large consumption of disposable products or the use of substandard materials intended for an exaggeratedly short life cycle.[41] The volume deals with the theme of **pointless aesthetics** without a deeper meaning. According to the author, the designer must assume his responsibilities in the realization of his ideas and the volume treats the macro-concept linked to a design based on the real needs of the world and not on those of companies or large markets. The message is therefore an exhortation to good design practices that are ethical and responsible from a social, moral and ecological point of view, in order to transform the discipline into a positive driving force for the improvement of society.

Many of these crucial issues will be addressed during the conference **“The State of the Art and Science of Design”** in **Syracuse** in **1971**. The topics of this meeting deserve greater attention, as they reflect the growing concerns of the Design field towards serial design and production in an increasingly technological and consumer world. The meeting was structured in such a way as to provide for a **fair exchange**

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41 Victor Papanek “Design For the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change”, 1971

between the representatives of the Faculty of Design, PhD students and undergraduates of the University **Campus of Syracuse**, in an open dialogue mediated by different personalities. Some were selected according to the topics of the various debates, others, such as **Arthur J. Pulos**, president of the Design Department, **Lawrence Feer** and **James J. Pirkl**, both Associate Professors of Industrial Design, presided over each meeting.[42]

The conference was divided into 4 main seminars: **“the methodology of design”**, **“the aesthetic of products”**, **“the conscience of objects”** and **“the fit of things”**. For the purposes of this research, we would like to stress the importance of Seminar number II and III and the related debates held during the conference.[43]

In fact, in the **II seminar** “The aesthetic of products”, topics such as the quality of objects designed in relation to their aesthetics are touched on.[44]

We can see how the themes introduced by Papanek were therefore of common interest and were also discussed in areas related to the training of young designers of the future.

In the **seminar III**, however, the theme is even more specific and opens the discussion towards dialogues on the responsibility of designers, the rights and duties of consumers and the future of consumerism. On the subject of liability, almost all the participants agreed that the designer could and should oppose market demands that undermined the health of consumers, while admitting that doing so would damage their career, Although for the noble purpose of pursuing a truly ethical conduct. Morris Kaplan, Technical Director of Consumer’s Union di New York claimed during the debate: «(...) you have to talk about changing the climate in which we work, changing the whole value system, talking about what constitutes good and fair and right. If you’re not prepared to do that, then

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42 ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3/1
43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.

you have to work within the system and take what’s there» — e ancora in relazione al tema della sostenibilità e dei prodotti impattanti — «What do you do if the manufacturer demands that you make an unsafe product or product that can’t be disposed of or that pollutes the atmosphere or something. (...) You can do something perhaps or nothing or just quit the job. But there are lots of situations where it is just as easy to make a safe product as it is to make an unsafe product. It’s just that nobody thinks about it, nobody concerns themselves about that question or hasn’t until recently».[45]

In the Report the question of the responsibility of the designer towards the products appears particularly heated and debated among the various points of view of the participants. There are many voices in the choir, but we want to give space to the contribution of **Michael Ange Panzini**, **Graduate Student** of the Campus, who underlines: «If he’s [the designer] more aware of his role in society by his competence he can bring much better products on the market and if he built his competence to certain point where he is conscious on what he can do in a society, then I think things change. I don’t think the **manufacturer** will change unless strict rules are applied to make him change, but I think the **designer** has this possibility to change the system because he has the power to change it through his competence and his awareness of the problems».[46]

Once again, therefore, the concepts linked to a **dysfunctional society** and to the danger deriving from the **indefinite role of the profession** of designer in the global market emerge overbearing. In addition, the designer is not relieved of his responsibilities, but rather, new ones are recognized, related to the task that he could assume thanks to his skills and awareness, in the radical **paradigm shift** that the society of time requires.

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45 ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3/1
46 Ibid.

Big companies are also mentioned, and the **harmful demands** that they often make in the name of greater gain, without taking into account the social and environmental consequences that its products could cause.[47]

We could open a much wider discussion on these issues, especially deepening the theme of large industries, which for over 50 years have been operating undisturbed polluting and destroying the planet. But that is not the purpose of our discussion. However, we should like to take this opportunity to point out that many large productions have circumvented the problem of sustainability by declaring false, advertising itself as “green” companies and environmentally friendly without any evidence of their ecological commitment neither in their philosophies nor even in their productions. Today this phenomenon is more widespread than ever and is called “green washing”. The irresponsible attitude shown by the huge multinationals in recent years is unacceptable but it would be unfair to lift the designer from all blame, which actually, although often almost forced by career reasons, he had to accept the heavy compromises of the most irresponsible companies.

In relation to the **design-market relationship**, it is also interesting to mention the reflections that Syracuse had on the sphere of **consumerism**, which were discussed in the fourth session of Seminar III. The main points for discussion were issues such as: the possibility of the US Federal Authority introducing more controls on products in order to put an end to environmental hazards; widespread misleading advertising; the effects of technological development on the environment and the social alienation of new generations as a possible cause of the expanding technology. The reflections cover different disciplinary areas and reflect the growing interest of the design community in more

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47 ICSID Archive, University of

complex **cultural**, **technological**, **sociological**, **economic** and **psychological** issues.

The subject of the advent of consumerism has been widely treated in literature.

In **Jason W. Moore**’s 2015 book **“Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital”**, the author emphasizes the advent of capitalism as the result of a **“crisis of perception”**, a concept that had already been introduced in the works of **Fritjof Capra**. He identifies the pattern created by new technologies and organizations of power as a result of a great systemic crisis, taking up the precepts previously mentioned, linked to the conception of the world as a large network of interconnected relationships.

He tries to define the “mosaic” of relations that constitute capitalism and their relationship with the natural world and calls this connection type “the double internality”. He argues that capitalism and all that comes with it is a human product and that its roots can be traced back to the neoliberal revolution after the 1970s.[48]

What happened according to the author is a **capitalization of nature** as a commodity of exchange between peoples and a source of gain and supremacy.[49]

In fact, even today, peoples who possess a vast availability of natural raw materials are enriched deeply by making money from them. In fact, natural resources are the most valuable and profitable goods for international trade. Moore points out that with the advent of the capitalist system man began to perceive himself as something distinct and separate from the rest of nature, as if he were not part of it, by carrying out risky behavior towards it and not taking into account that the negative consequences would impact also and especially on men.[50]

This **dualism** also concerns social dynamics, as capitalism aims to exploit not only natural resources,

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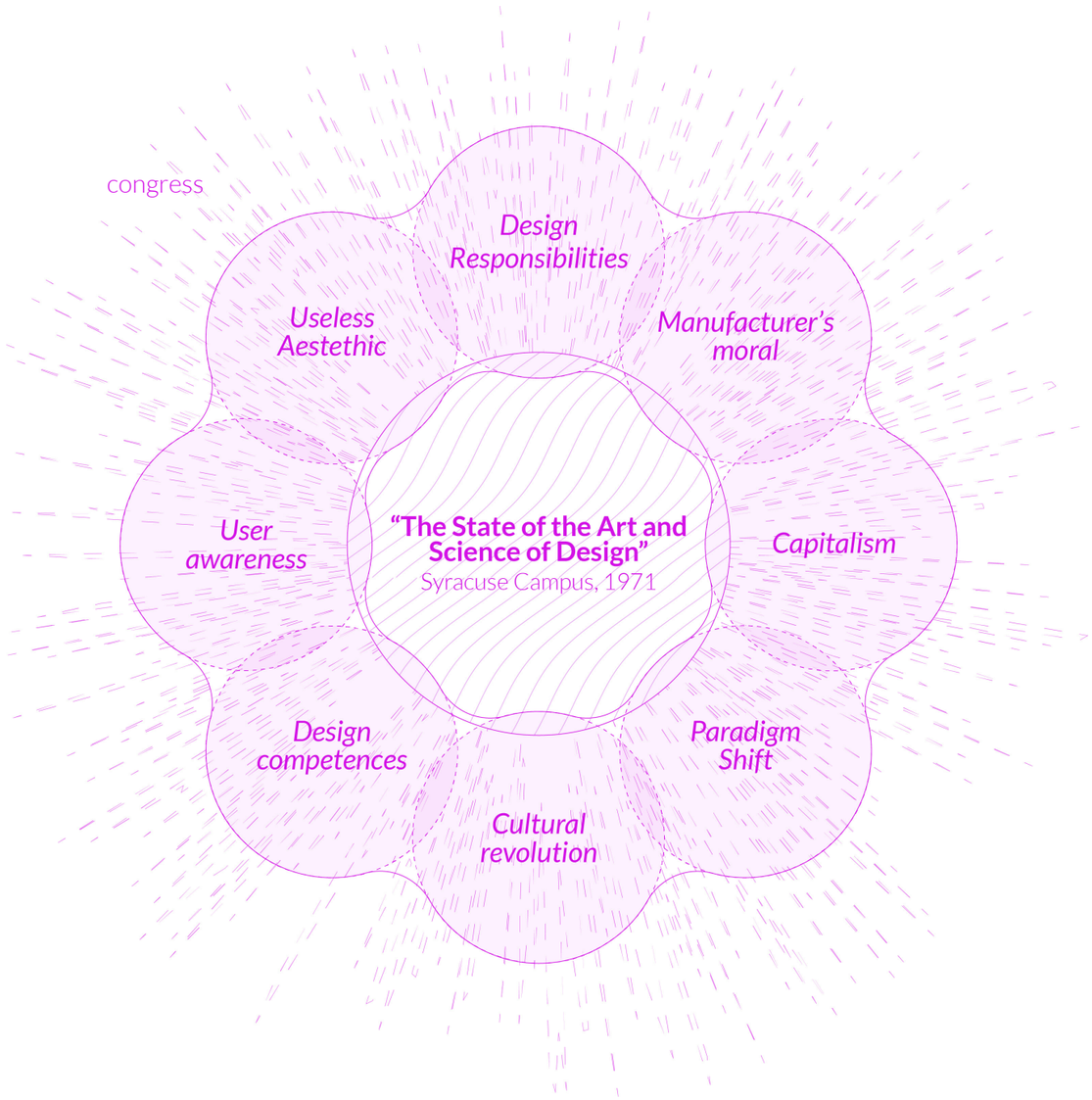
48 Jason W. Moore “Capitalism in the Web of Life: Ecology and the Accumulation of Capital”, 2015
49 Ibid.
50 Ibid.

capitalizing them, but also the workforce, driven to follow the rhythms of increasing modernity and work at unsustainable rates. In this sense, the issues raised in Syracuse in 1971 regarding consumerism and alienation caused by the man-machine relationship are more relevant than ever.



Syracuse Congress, Seminar III Cover, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box
f9 07/3/1

Syracuse Congress, Seminar III, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box
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Syracuse Congress, Seminar III, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box
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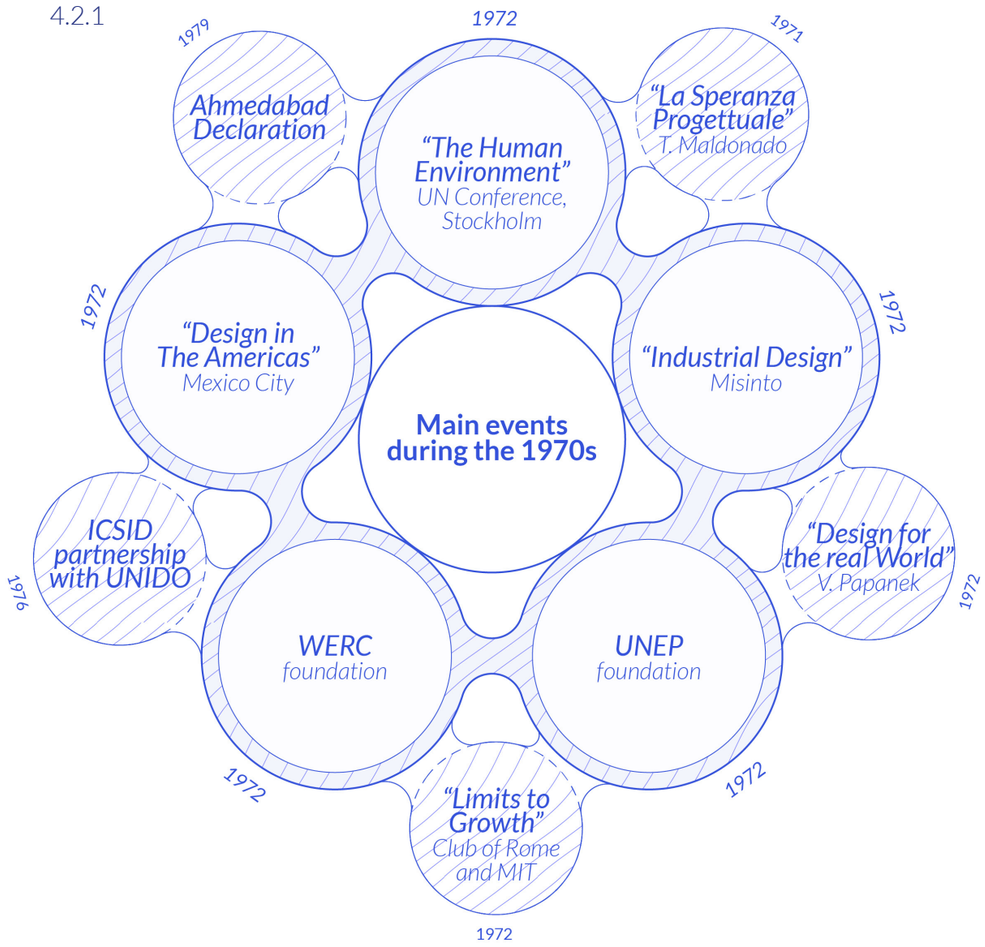
4.2.1 The 1972: a Milestone for Ecological Thinking

As we shall see in the next sections, some of the most decisive events for the future development of the concepts of social and environmental sustainability will take place in 1972.

We will start from the analysis of one of the most important conferences in the field of sustainability, the one organized by **Maurice Strong** in **Stockholm** for the **United Nations**. We will also talk about the publication of the epochal report of **“The Limits to Growth”** and the foundation of crucial agencies such as those of **UNEP**, (United Nations Environment Programme) and **WERC** (World Environment and Resources Council). Subsequently, two ICSID conferences will be discussed, both of which took place in 1972. The first in **Misinto**, Italy, in the province of Milan and the second one in **Mexico City**.



congress UN CONFERENCE “THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT”

Stockholm, Sweden, 1972

In **June 1972**, the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was held in Stockholm, Sweden. There were **113 States** and there was an active participation of many ngos who met in parallel meetings with the government. The ICSID participated through the representation of **Sigvard Bernadotte** and **Ulf Hard Segerstad**.

We read in a letter prior to the conference sent by President Henri Viénot to the two members of the association: «We have difficulties at the present to be recognized as NGO and your participation on the Human Environment will certainly help us»”.[51]

During the conference, **Indira Gandhi**, Prime Minister of India, in her speech said: «It is clear that the environmental crisis which is confronting the world will profoundly alter the future destiny of our planet. No-one amongst us, whatever our status, strength or circumstance, can remain unaffected».[52]

The conference was attended by **1200 delegates** from 113 nations and Stockholm was packed with observers from around the world. The Swedish government took care to provide all the necessary space for the needs of the incredible number of participants, even providing an old disused airport space. Among other things, 200 bicycles were provided to allow participants to move around the city in an ecological way, against the habit of offering, during these events, Swedish cars of the latest model.[53] The official conference was held in three separate buildings and the entire city was filled with parallel events. Some of these, such as the **Environment Forum**, were open to everybody by registration, including citizens.[54]

Paul R. Ehrlich, ecologist and professor of biology at Stanford University, said that just four years after politicians and citizens became aware of global pollution issues, the work of Maurice Strong, who had organized and made possible the event, was a miracle. He also added that: «we have to be extremely

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51 Henri Viénot to Sigvard Bernadotte correspondence, Henri Vienot to Ulf Hard af Segerstad correspondence, October 2nd 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3/3

52 UN Environment Programme Official YouTube Channel “1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment - Full Video”, October 18, 2021

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

critical of the point of view that simply turning the old economic crank faster is going to somehow close the gap between the rich and the poor. We've tried that particular game, we've tried now for 20 years or so and proportionally the rich keep getting richer and the poor do not catch up».[55]

Indira Gandhi stressed the **cynicism** of contemporary society and argued that modern man should re-establish lost contact with nature and life. Referring to an ancient Indian thought of past centuries, she reiterated that man can take from the earth and the atmosphere only as much as he is able to return in equal measure, appealing to the responsibility of individuals.[56]

Maurice Strong, UNEP's first Executive Director, and Secretary General of the Stockholm meeting, said about the conference: «I think the lasting message of the Stockholm conference will be the realization that man come to one of those seminal points in his history where his own activities are the principle determinants of his own future».[57]

Following the United Nations event, on 4 September 1972 Henry Vienot wrote again to Sigvard Bernadotte:

«It was very fortunate for ICSID that you could devote some of your time to the UNO Conference. It is excellent that ICSID could be represented and so well» — and — «I am afraid that little attention was paid to industrial design or to allied considerations. Even if you only have negative conclusions to draw, a short comment will be of help for our future relations with the UNO».[58]

Later, **Sigvard Bernadotte** will deliver his report on the Stockholm conference, in which the member of the association expresses his disappointment at the outcome of the conference as «being predominantly ecological there was no opportunity for a discussion on Industrial Design». Bernadotte adds: «We covered the most important of

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55 UN Environment Programme YouTube Official Channel "1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment - Full Video", October 18, 2021

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Henri Viénot to Sigvard Bernadotte correspondence, Henri Vienot to Ulf Hard af Segerstad correspondence, October 2nd 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3/3

the General Plena and the meetings of the three big official committes, but also some of the stimulating unofficial activities (...) organized by Environment Forum, Black Mesa, Hog Farm, Dai Dong, IIEA and other organizations».[59]

The attitude of the ICSID thus shows a certain disinterest in the importance of the issues addressed in Stockholm. As already mentioned several times, the association's aims towards **economic and professional goals** have undermined the effective possibility of the group to assert itself in crucial realities such as that of the United Nations and its related specialized agencies.

Now, we do not want to condemn the work of the design organization; on the contrary, the Stockholm Conference seems to be a **missed opportunity**, in which the ICSID could have left a more significant imprint and established itself as the first international Design organization in the world to also be involved in international environmental and social issues.

This research aims to underline how design can really make a difference on the international scene in terms of sustainability, but also, with a critical look, analyze the **weaknesses of past attitudes**. This is precisely why the Stockholm Conference appears, 50 years later, to be a missed opportunity to broaden the scope of the ICSID organization and its recognition as a valid and worthy body for humanitarian debates.

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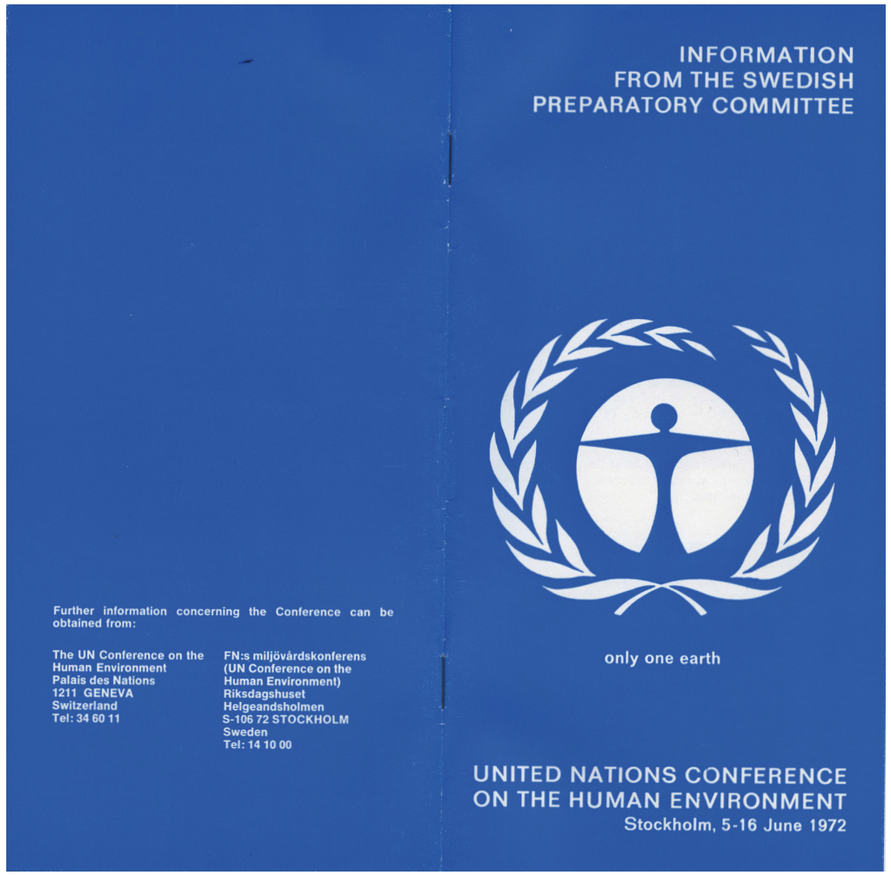
59 The Stockholm Conference Report, ICSID Archive document, University of Brighton, Box 07/3/2



Stockholm UN Conference Flyer, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f12** 07/3/2

Stockholm UN Conference Flyer, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f13** 07/3/2

Dear Maurice,

Many thanks for your letter of 12 April. Unfortunately I will not be able to attend the Stockholm Conference. It coincides with a meeting in Edmonton of the National Design Council of which I am Vice-Chairman. It is a rather important meeting and I feel it is my duty to attend. I am rather sad to miss Stockholm because I am convinced that your Conference can be the beginning of a new era and it would be fascinating to see it take shape.

Enclosed you will find some background material on an organisation called ICSID (International Council of Societies of Industrial Design). The National Design Council is a member of this association and because of this connection the President of ICSID has written to me asking me to approach you as to whether, even at this late date, they could be invited to send an observer to the Stockholm Conference.

One of the reasons stated that no application was made at an earlier date is that ICSID lost its consultative B status with UNESCO last year because of the failure to reply in a satisfactory way about its activities in South Africa. I understand that its position at the moment is being reviewed but is not yet settled. Because of this problem, ICSID had taken no action to apply for any representation at the Conference. At a recent meeting its Board regretted this.

I am familiar with the work of the organisation and the fact is that its members are deeply involved in the problems of the man-made environment. Last October I attended their Congress in Barcelona as Chairman of the Canadian Delegation and I was impressed by the attitude of their members to plan a meaningful advancement of design based on economic, social and environmental resources. Visual pollution was one of the main subjects.

..2

Thomas Bata to Maurice Strong, April 27, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f14** 07/3/2

Mr. Maurice F. Strong

27 April 1972

Probably the late date makes it impossible to do anything for this organisation, but if there is a possibility to accept last minute observers maybe one of your assistants could study the enclosed information. The Secretariat of ICSID is Rue [redacted] 1050 Brussels, Belgium, telephone 48.59.70. The President, on whose behalf I am writing to you, is Mr. Henri Vienot, who lives in Paris but is very frequently in Brussels and can be reached through the above address.

Realising how busy you must be at the moment, I feel rather guilty asking you to consider yet another problem. If I did not feel that it was a worthwhile organisation, I would not do so.

With the very best regards,

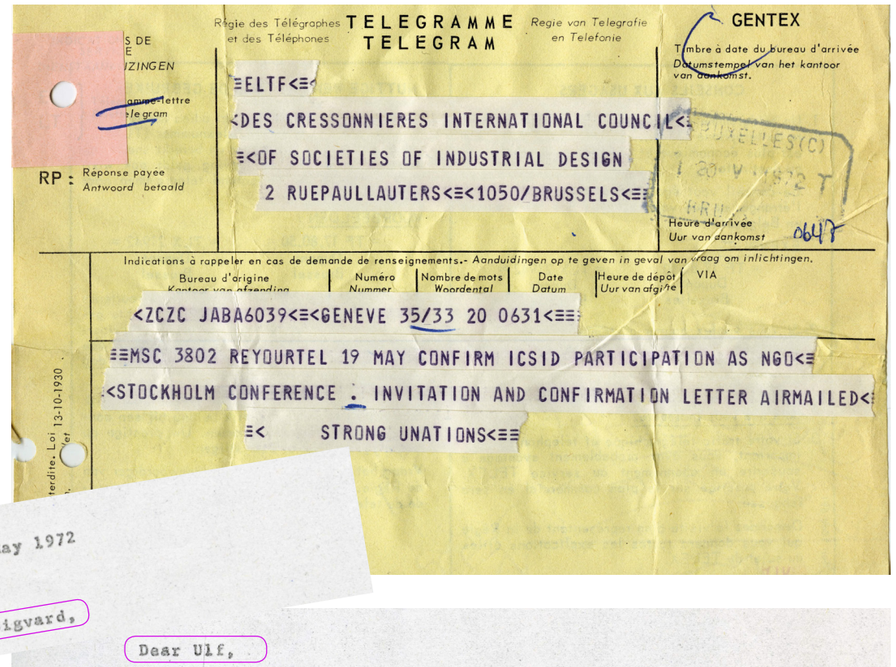
Yours sincerely,

Sara

(Mrs.) Thomas Bata

Thomas Bata to Maurice Strong, April 27, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f15** 07/3/2

Josine des Cressonnieres, Telegram, May 19, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f16 07/3/2



Régie des Télégraphes et des Téléphones
TELEGRAMME
TELEGRAM
Regie van Telegrafie en Telefonie

GENTEX

Timbre à date du bureau d'arrivée
Dateumstempel van het kantoor van aankomst.

RP : Réponse payée
Antwoord betaald

Heure d'arrivée
Uur van aankomst 0647

Indications à rappeler en cas de demande de renseignements.- Aanduidingen op te geven in geval van vraag om inlichtingen.

Bureau d'origine	Numéro	Nombre de mots	Date	Heure de dépôt	VIA
		Woordental	Datum	Uur van afgifte	

≡ELTF<≡
<DES CRESSONNIERES INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL<≡
≡<OF SOCIETIES OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN
2 RUEPAULLAUTERS<≡<1050/BRUSSELS<≡

<ZCZC JABA6039<≡<GENEVE 35/33 20 0631<≡≡
≡≡MSC 3802 REYOURTEL 19 MAY CONFIRM ICSID PARTICIPATION AS NGO<≡
<STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE . INVITATION AND CONFIRMATION LETTER AIRMAILED<≡
≡< STRONG UNATIONS<≡≡

25 May 1972

Dear Sigvard,

Dear Ulf,

Good news ! ICSID is allowed to send two delegates to the UN Conference - you and Count Sigvard Bernadotte.

I cabled your address to the organizers and you will shortly receive all the relevant information and documents.. You will not be required to make a speech but "upon the invitation of the President or Chairman, as the case may be, and subject to the approval of the body concerned, representatives may make oral statements on questions within the scope of their activities".

We are most grateful to you for having accepted to represent ICSID at the Conference and to sparing us some of your precious time. It is really essential that "Industrial Design" be present at the Conference.

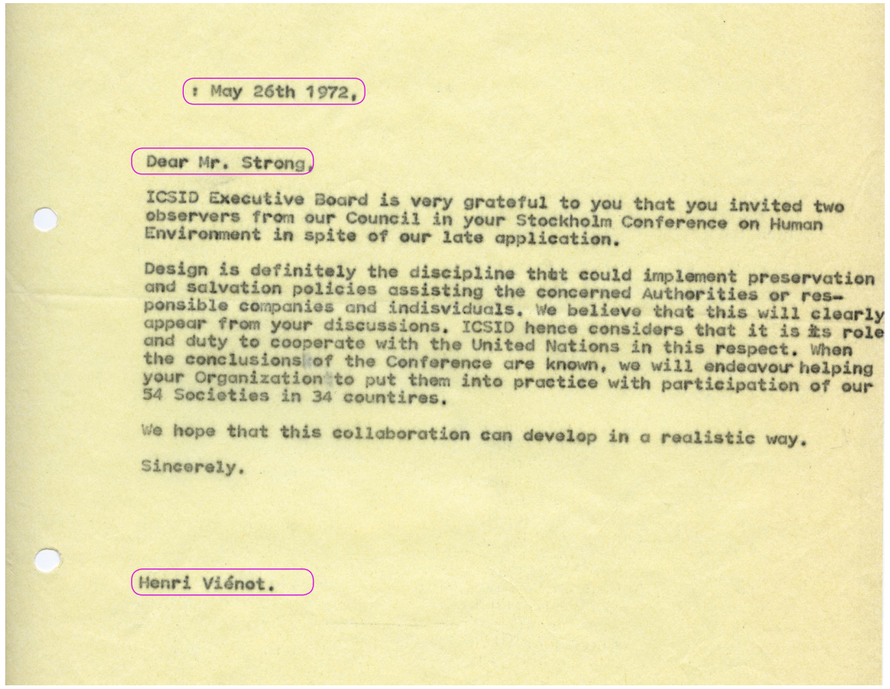
Let me know whether you need anything further from our side ... ICSID's fate is now in your hands !

Yours sincerely,

Josine des Cressonnières
Secretary General

cc H. Viénot

Josine des Cressonnieres to S. Bernadotte and U. Segerstad, May 25, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f17 07/3/2



: May 26th 1972,

Dear Mr. Strong,

ICSID Executive Board is very grateful to you that you invited two observers from our Council in your Stockholm Conference on Human Environment in spite of our late application.

Design is definitely the discipline that could implement preservation and salvation policies assisting the concerned Authorities or responsible companies and indisviduals. We believe that this will clearly appear from your discussions. ICSID hence considers that it is its role and duty to cooperate with the United Nations in this respect. When the conclusions of the Conference are known, we will endeavour helping your Organization to put them into practice with participation of our 54 Societies in 34 countires.

We hope that this collaboration can develop in a realistic way.

Sincerely.

Henri Viénot.

Henri Vienot to Maurice Strong, May 26, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f18 07/3/2

Stockholm UN Conference, Annex I, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f19 07/3/2

Annex II

Provisional list of the Conference documents

A/CONF. 48/1	-	Provisional agenda
A/CONF. 48/2	-	Annotations to the provisional agenda
A/CONF. 48/3	-	Provisional rules of procedure
A/CONF. 48/4	-	Draft declaration on the human environment
A/CONF. 48/5	-	An action plan for the human environment
A/CONF. 48/6	-	Planning and management of human settlements for environmental quality (subject area I)
A/CONF. 48/7	-	Environmental aspects of natural resources management (subject area II)
A/CONF. 48/8	-	Identification and control of pollutants of broad international significance (subject area III)
A/CONF. 48/9	-	Educational, informational, social and cultural aspects of environmental issues (subject area IV)
A/CONF. 48/10	-	Development and environment (subject area V)
A/CONF. 48/11	-	International organizational implications of action proposals (subject area VI)
A/CONF. 48/12	-	Consolidated document on the UN system and the human environment, submitted by the ACC
A/CONF. 48/13	-	Bibliography
A/CONF. 48/14	et seq.	Possible draft conventions.

Annex I

Provisional agenda for the Conference

1. Opening of the Conference.
2. Election of the President.
3. Adoption of the rules of procedure.
4. Constitution of committees.
5. Election of the officers other than the President.
6. Credentials of representatives to the Conference:
   (a) Appointment of the credentials committee;
   (b) Report of the credentials committee.
7. Adoption of the agenda.
8. General debate.
9. Declaration on the Human Environment.
10. Planning and management of human settlements for environmental quality (subject area I).
11. Environmental aspects of natural resources management (subject area II).
12. Identification and control of pollutants of broad international significance (subject area III).
13. Educational, informational, social and cultural aspects of environmental issues (subject area IV).
14. Development and environment (subject area V)
15. International organizational implications of action proposals (subject area VI).
16. Adoption of plan of action.
17. Adoption of the report of the Conference.

Stockholm UN Conference, Annex II, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f20 07/3/2

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 1972

Text of the Environmental Principles

STOCKHOLM, June 16 (Reuters) — Following is the statement of principles from the Declaration on the Human Environment adopted today by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment:

[1]

Man has the fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality which permits a life of dignity and well-being, and bears a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations. In this respect, policies promoting or perpetuating apartheid, racial segregation, discrimination, colonial and other forms of oppression and foreign domination stand condemned and must be eliminated.

[2]

The natural resources of the earth including the air, water, land, flora and fauna and especially representative samples of natural ecosystems must be safeguarded for the benefit of present and future generations through careful planning or management as appropriate.

[3]

The capacity of the earth to produce vital renewable resources must be maintained and wherever practicable restored or improved.

[4]

Man has a special responsibility to safeguard and wisely manage the heritage of wildlife and its habitat which are now gravely imperiled by a combination of adverse factors. Nature conservation including wildlife must therefore receive importance in planning for economic developments.

[5]

The nonrenewable resources of the earth must be employed in such a way as to guard against the danger of their future exhaustion and to insure that benefits from such employment are shared by all mankind.

[6]

The discharge of toxic substances or of other substances and the release of heat, in such quantities of concentrations as to exceed the capacity of the environment to render them harmless, must be halted in order to insure that serious or irreversible damage is not inflicted upon ecosystems. The just struggle of the peoples of all countries against pollution should be supported.

[7]

States shall take all possible steps to prevent pollution of the seas by substances that are liable to create hazards to human health, to harm living resources and marine life, to damage amenities or to interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea.

[8]

Economic and social development is essential for insuring a favorable living and working environment for man and for creating conditions on earth that are necessary for the improvement of the quality of life.

[9]

Environmental deficiencies generated by the conditions of underdevelopment and natural disasters pose grave problems and can be remedied by accelerated development through the transfer of substantial quantities of financial and technological assistance as a supplement to the domestic effort of the developing countries and such timely assistance as may be required.

[10]

For the developing countries, stability of prices and adequate earnings for primary commodities and raw material are essential to environment management since economic factors as well as ecological processes must be taken into account.

[11]

The environmental policies of all states should enhance and not adversely affect the present or future development potential of developing countries, nor should they hamper the attainment of better living conditions for all, and appropriate steps should be taken by states and international organizations with a view to reaching agreement on meeting the possible national and international economic consequences resulting from the application of environmental measures.

[12]

Resources should be made available to preserve and improve the environment, taking into account the circumstances and particular requirements of developing countries and any costs which may emanate from their incorporating environmental safeguards into their development planning and the need for making available to them, upon their request, additional international technical and financial assistance for this purpose.

[13]

In order to achieve a more rational management of resources and thus to improve the environment, states should adopt an integrated and coordinated approach to their development planning so as to insure that development is compatible with the need to protect and improve the human environment for the benefit of their population.

[14]

Rational planning constitutes an essential tool for reconciling any conflict between the needs of development and the need to protect and improve the environment.

[15]

Planning must be applied to human settlements and urbanization with a view to avoiding adverse effects on the environment and obtaining maximum social economic and environmental benefits for all. In this respect projects which are designed for colonialist and racist domination must be abandoned.

[16]

Demographic policies, which are without prejudice to basic human rights and which are deemed appropriate by governments concerned, should be applied in those regions where the rate of population growth or excessive population concentrations are likely to have adverse effects on the environment or development, or where low population density may prevent improvement of the human environment and impede development.

[17]

Appropriate national institutions must be entrusted with the task of planning, managing or controlling the environmental resources of states with the view to enhancing environmental quality.

[18]

Science and technology, as part of their contribution to economic and social development, must be applied to the identification, avoidance and control of environmental risks and the solution of environmental problems and for the common good of mankind.

[19]

Education in environmental matters, for the younger generation as well as adults, giving due consideration to the underprivileged, is essential in order to broaden the basis for an enlightened opinion and responsible conduct by individuals, enterprises and communities in protecting and improving the environment in its full human dimension. It is also essential that mass media of communications avoid contributing to the deterioration of the environment, but, on the contrary, disseminate information of an educational nature on the need to protect and improve the environment in order to enable man to develop in every respect.

[20]

Scientific research and development in the context of environmental problems, both national and multinational, must be promoted in all countries, especially the developing countries. In this connection, the free flow of up-to-date scientific information and experience must be supported and assisted, to facilitate the solution of environmental problems: environmental technologies should be made available to developing countries on terms which would encourage their wide dissemination without constituting an economic burden on the developing countries.

[21]

States have, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies, and the responsibility to insure that activities within their jurisdiction or control do not cause damage to the environment of other states or of areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

[22]

States shall cooperate to develop further the international law regarding liability and compensation for the victim of pollution and other environmental damage caused by activities within the jurisdiction or control of such states to areas beyond their jurisdiction.

[23]

Without prejudice to such general principles as may be agreed upon by the international community, or to the criteria and minimum levels which will have to be determined nationally, it will be essential in all classes to consider the systems of values prevailing in each country, and the extent of the applicability of standards which are valid for the most advanced countries but which may be inappropriate and of unwarranted social cost for the developing countries.

[24]

International matters concerning the protection and improvement of the environment should be handled in a cooperative spirit by all countries, big or small, on an equal footing. Cooperation through multilateral or bilateral arrangements or other appropriate means is essential to prevent, eliminate or reduce and effectively control adverse environmental effects resulting from activities conducted in all spheres, in such a way that due account is taken of the sovereignty and interests of all states.

[25]

States shall insure that international organizations play a coordinated, efficient and dynamic role for the protection and improvement of the environment.

[26]

Man and his environment must be spared the effects of nuclear weapons and all other means of mass destruction. States must strive to reach prompt agreement, in the relevant international organs, on the elimination and complete destruction of

"Environmental Principles" New York Times, June 17, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f21 07/3/2

: September 4th 1972,

Dear Sigvard,

It was very fortunate for ICSID that you could devote some of your time to the UNO Conference. It is excellent that ICSID could be represented and so well.

From what I read in the press, I am afraid that little attention was paid to industrial design or to allied considerations. Even if you only have negative conclusions to draw, a short comment would be of help for our future relations with the UNO.

As we will have a Board meeting I would appreciate having your comments before October 15.

I thank you warmly for your assistance.

Best regards.

Yours.

Henri Viénot

H. Vienot to S. Bernadotte, September 4, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f22** 07/3/2

Dear Henri,

Thank you for your letter of September 4.

I am enclosing a short report on the Stockholm Conference. As you will see there was nothing discussed regarding industrial design, but all the same it was an interesting experience and I think very much worth while.

I am sorry that the result was so meager.

Best regards,
Yours,

Sigvard Bernadotte

1972-09-19

SB/IEg

S. Bernadotte to H. Vienot, September 19, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f23** 07/3/2

: October 2nd 1972,

Dear Ulf,

It is splendid that you could wave ICSID flag in the UNO Conference. We have difficulties at present to be recognized as NGO and your participation on the Human Environment will certainly help us.

The "Statement" of the NGO representatives may be considered a little emphatic but I found it very impressive. Thank you for having sent it with your excellent report.

The Board will be very grateful that you accepted to "serve" once more and did it so well. Each member will receive a copy of your report.

A follow up of the operation can be expected as ICSID was invited to participate in two meetings of the NGO Committee Geneva October 2-3 and New-York 17-19. We had little time to organize for it but I hope that end results are obtained after your initial efforts.

Many thanks on behalf of the whole Board.

Henri Viénot

H. Vienot to U.H. af Segerstad, October 2, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f24** 07/3/2

: October 2nd 1972

Dear Sigvard,

The results of your attendance with Ulf Hard to the UNO Conference cannot be considered meager since you used the opportunity to promote industrial design in such spheres where we should find cooperation in the future.

It will be long but it is very fortunate that you could cover the Conference so widely. Thank you also for sending the full text of the "Statement of the NGO" which is a splendid document. You may feel rewarded hearing that the Committee of NGO invited ICSID to participate in the follow up that they organize through a 2 days session in Geneva October 2-3 and in New-York 17-19. There was little delay to set up our participation but we will attempt to follow the train.

It is very important that you could represent ICSID in the Conference on the Human Environment because it is our first move towards UNO whose recognition as a NGO we are presently seeking.

Many thanks for your assistance in this operation and for your quick report of which each Board Member will receive a copy.

Henri Viénot

H. Vienot to S. Bernadotte, October 2, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f25** 07/3/2

THE STOCKHOLM CONFERENCE

The Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment was the very first attempt by the nations of the world to agree on new principles of international behaviour and responsibility on which effective management of the global environment must be based. The action plan for human environment defined itself as "... a blueprint for international cooperation to protect and enhance the present and future quality of the environment for human life and wellbeing."

The Conference was the biggest and certainly the most important ever organized by the United Nations. The environmental conditions were excellent including the splendid summer weather. More than 1.000 official delegates from 113 national gouvernements, 1.500 journalists ande more than 600 non gouvernemental observers (NGO:s) had gathered in Stockholm.

The theme of the Conference beeing predominantly ecological there was no opportunity for a discussion on Industrial Design but we had the opportunity to inform friends among the NGO;s and to put the name of ICSID on several of the papers circulating among the people in the Conference. We covered the most important of the General Plena and the meetings of the three big official committies but also some of the stimulating inofficial activities (lectures, exhibitions, discussions) organized by Environment Forum, Black Mesa, Hog Farm, Dai Dong, IIEA and other organizations.

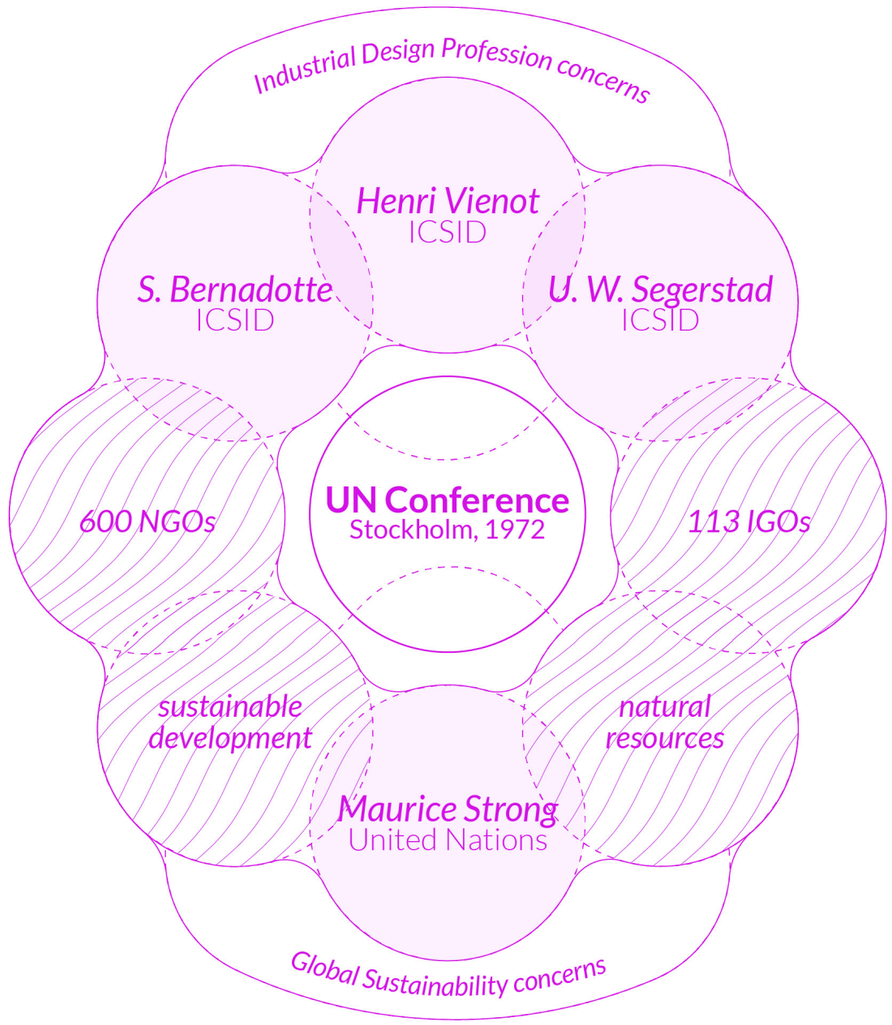
We intended to send you this condensed report together with the final report from the NGO secretariat which was announced to be distributed in September, but we have now been informed that the NGO report will be delayed. As a substitute we enclose the list of NGO observers (see p. 13) - the list is provisional - and the Statement of the Non Governmental Organizations to the Plenary Session of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment.

Even if the possibilities to promote Industrial Design were most limited we enjoyed the stimulating experience of attending the Conference on behalf of ICSID.

Stockholm September 1972

(Sigvard Bernadotte) (Ulf Hård af Segerstad)

S. Bernadotte and U.H. af Segerstad Stockholm report, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f26 07/3/2



focus THE "LIMITS TO GROWTH" REPORT PUBLICATION

Club of Rome MIT, 1972

This report was published thanks to the interest developed by **Aurelio Peccei**, founder of the Club of Rome, towards issues related to the unlimited exploitation of natural resources from large markets.

Aurelio Peccei, who is entitled to the Master's course in Systemic Design of the Politecnico of Turin, was born in Turin in 1908 and died in 1984; he was a great Italian entrepreneur, but even more a visionary philanthropist.

He graduated in economics at the University of Turin in 1930 and then began his career at the FIAT offices. After the end of World War II he participated in the foundation of Alitalia and then in 1949 moved to Latin America for work with **FIAT**. Here he remained for 20 years, opening a new branch in Argentina, which was a huge success.

In 1958 he founded **Italconsult**, a non-profit economic consultancy. In fact, Aurelio Peccei chose to provide assistance to 50 developing countries free of charge, demonstrating its interest in humanitarian issues and its willingness to contribute actively to the sustainable development of the world's least industrialized regions.[60]

In 1964 he became CEO of **Olivetti** and held the position until 1967, marking significant improvements within the Ivrea company.

In 1968 he decided to found the **Club of Rome**, a non-governmental and non-profit association composed of different actors from different spheres of action, such as economists, scientists, entrepreneurs, activists, public leaders and international heads of state. The group soon emerged as a high-level symposium in which prominent personalities with various cognitive skills exchanged views on global changes in contemporary society.[61] The initial nucleus of this group was Peccei and the Scottish scientist **Alexander King**. In fact, as we will now deepen, the component of accuracy and scientific demonstration was a key element in Peccei's vision. Any formulation of a

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60 Enrico Cerasuolo "The Last Call" film, Zenit Arti Audiovisive, Skofteland Film, ZDF

61 Ibid.

humanistic or philosophical character could be considered valid only if demonstrated from a scientific-mathematical point of view. Peccei's vision was to identify the global crisis, called **"la problematica"**, as the result of numerous smaller crises.

He argued that every problem had many sides and facets, interconnected with each other, and that as these problems increased, an even larger and more complex tangle was created that gave rise to the global problem. The first meeting of the group took place in Bern, where **Hugo Thiemann**, a member of the executive committee, organized the meeting in June 1970.[62]

Jay Forrester, of the Massachusett Institute of Technology, one of the founders of the dynamics of complex systems, also participated in the meeting. He could effectively respond to Peccei's desire to analyze the problems of the world, of a systemic and complex nature, through the use of the computers of his laboratories in America.[63]

The chance encounter of the humanist Aurelio Peccei and the mathematical genius Jay Forrester planted the seed for what would later become the epochal report of "The Limits to Growth".

The **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** conducted the computer simulations that Peccei needed to validate the assumptions made within the volume from a mathematical and scientific point of view. The team consisted of 17 researchers including **Donella H. Meadows**, **Dennis L. Meadows**, **Jorgen Randers**, and **William W. Behrens III**, the official authors of the final report.

The aim of the report was to demonstrate how the development of those times had to be slowed down in order to avoid a collapse of the natural system and an irreversible depletion of natural resources. The basic assumption is that a world of finite nature cannot endure an infinite exploitation of its own resources, because they are destined to run out. The publication of the report led

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62 Enrico Cerasuolo "The Last Call" film, Zenit Arti Audiovisive, Skofteland Film, ZDF

63 Ibid.

to an incredible cultural and media sensation, especially among the ranks of **economists**, who defended the economic model of the time and reacted harshly to the assumptions made in the volume. In fact, the economists interpreted the contents of the publication as an exhortation to stop development and global economic growth, although the overall message of MIT's work had very different objectives. However, on this occasion it emerged clearly how large economies have played a crucial role in the development of ecological and sustainable thinking, often hindering and mystifying its objectives in order to preserve growth and unlimited economic gain.

As many literature assume, such as "Ecological Literacy" of 1992 written by **David W. Orr**, the crisis of sustainability is to be found in the economic growth in the name of which the big markets and multinationals have justified their work, at the expense of the environment.[64] In fact, most industries have aimed to grow and expand beyond the limits of the natural system, because in our society it is the economic growth and the gain that determine the success of a company, regardless of the consequences caused by the impacts of their processes or the lack of responsibility and ethics found in their modus operandi. This should make us reflect, once again, on the perceptive error we have been making for years in judging the quality of a company according to inadequate criteria, against a just and sustainable technological development.

In fact, if users evaluated the quality of a company based on the commitment shown by the company towards social and ecological issues, the developments of the market would certainly have taken different paths. In this regard, the question arises, who defines the values? Is it up to individuals to build their own ethics or is it up to the same system that then profits

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64 David W. Orr, Ecological Literacy, 1992

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on those values, built specifically to sell and earn according to principles completely wrong? This is exactly the mechanism of the consumerist system of yesterday and today: creating false needs to which only the richest regions of the world, or those able to invest in such needs, can access. Large economies need large investments and investors, to the detriment of poorer regions that are exploited for labor and resources because they are cheaper in terms of costs and revenues. Over the years the gap between the poor and the rich has increased more and more and where some people can not even access basic necessities such as drinking water and food, others live in golden worlds surrounded by all kinds of comfort and luxury. "Economic growth" therefore has its basis in the exploitation of poor countries to the advantage of increasingly rich and consumer countries.[65] About the problem of the capitalist system and the possible solutions that design can offer, Alastair Fuad-Luke in his "Design Activism: Beautiful Strangeness for a Sustainable World" states: "sustainability is grounded in ecological praxis and systems thinking. It challenges the capitalist system of production and consumption that assumes unlimited growth".[66]

In 2009, in fact, the author points out that design is "issue-led", that is, it starts from a problem to develop and propose solutions. He also argues that sustainability is a "meta-challenge", that is, a challenge within the challenge, a constant to always take into account regardless of the scope of the design.

As stated by Peccei in 1981: "It is necessary a change in the system of values and in the "new education" which must be "anticipatory" and at the same time "participatory": it must prepare generations for a better future through the involvement of citizens in the elaboration and evaluation of policy programs for society".

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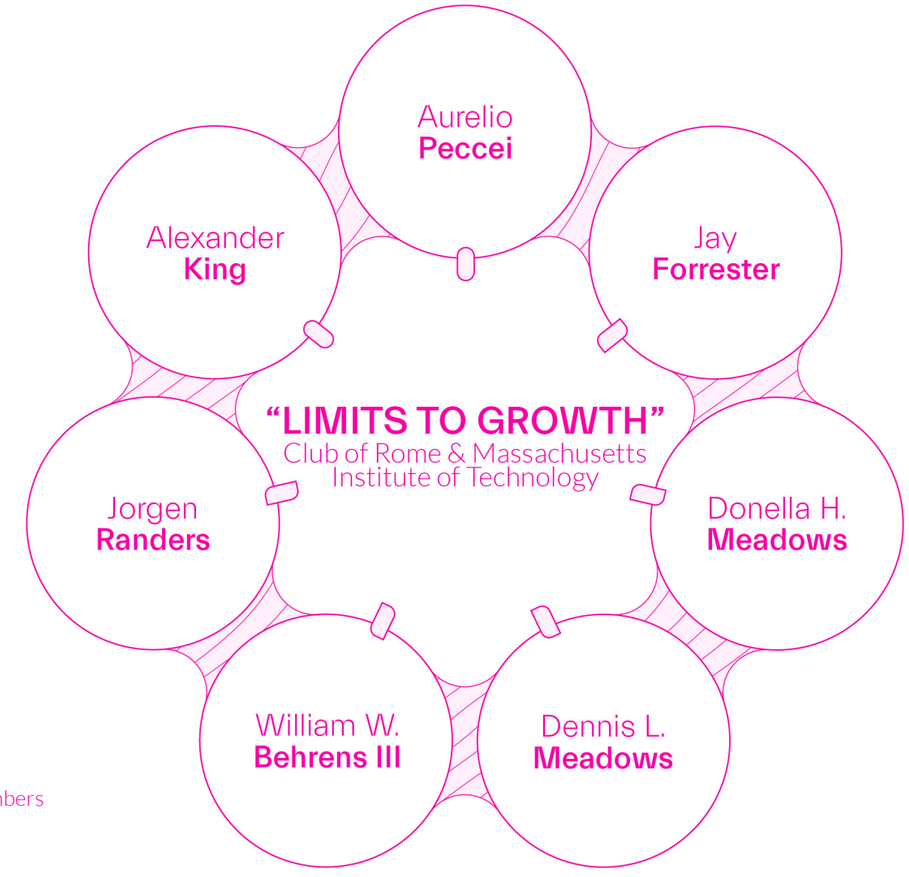
65 David W. Orr, Ecological Literacy, 1992

66 Alastair Fuad-Luke "Design Activism: Beautiful Strangeness for a Sustainable World", 2009

focus



4.2.2 United Nations Environment Programme foundation, 1972

In **1972**, UNEP, the **specialized agency** of the United Nations, was founded, whose objectives are to mobilize public opinion and governments towards lifestyles and policies responsible to human populations, animals and the whole natural system in all its forms and resources.

We read in an official letter of 7 November 1974, just over a year after the foundation of the agency, the words of **Gary Hérbertson**, Chief of the NGO section, in which he addresses the latter, official partners of UNEP, claiming: "UNEP has now been located in its headquarters city of Nairobi for just a little more than one year. In that period of time many tasks have been accomplished to create the infrastructure for a growing commitment to solve the problems of the global environment. We are aware that your personal actions, the actions of your organizations, and your collective work with other NGOs have played a positive role in the development of UNEP and in co-operative action. For this we express our sincere appreciation".[67]

The specialized agency of the United Nations therefore strongly believed in the possible collaboration between **NGO** and **IGO** and immediately mobilized in promoting initiatives aimed at the involvement of non-governmental bodies on international stages.

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67 Gary Hébertson letter, November 7, 1974, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 12/32

4.2.3 World Environment and Resources Council foundation, 1972

WERC is a **non-governmental organization**, an NGO, planned in 1972 during the meeting held in The Hague and formally established in 1973 in Zurich. The WERC has consultative status with **ECOSOC** and **UNESCO** and has worked closely with numerous international, governmental and non-governmental organizations. The main objective of the organization was to establish an NGO capable of collaborating with the United Nations and its specialized agencies on a par with other multinational organizations involved in **environmental and conservation of natural resources**.[68]

In the official "Report of Activities" of the WERC body, it is claimed that "the purpose of WERC is to promote the sciences, whether theoretical or applied, of environment improvement and resource utilization in whatever system or field they arise" and that the council "it wants to provide an open, interdisciplinary, non-political, international forum for interaction, exchange of information and review of environmental quality and progress in the management of resources among professional, industrial, scientific, social and other national groups concerned with, or influenced by, environmental or resources problems".

Here as well, the importance of **transdisciplinary dialogue** and cooperation is emphasized, and in this regard the following is added: "This (goals) will be achieved by the creation, interchange and circulation of information, in cooperation with national, regional and international organizations; by staging international congresses, colloquia and symposia, and also, by publications to be communicated to all bodies interested in these same problems".[69]

The ICSID will have the opportunity to work closely with the World Environment and Resources Council at the 1976 Brussels Conference, "The Environment of Human Settlements"The European Parliament has a duty to ensure that the European Parliament is fully involved in this process.

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68 Cambridge University Press report The World Environment and Resources Council (WERC), 2009

69 WERC Report of Activities, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 06/10 Quater

4.2.4 ICSID Conferences in 1972

In relation to the activity of the association in 1972, the ICSID archives collected the documentation relating to two conferences in particular: the one held in **Misinto**, Italy, entitled “Industrial Design” and the one held in **Mexico City** on the theme “Design in the Americas”.

These two conferences have two extremely different historical values. The Misinto meeting raised theoretical, social and ethical issues and was structured into three sections that dealt with issues related to the design methodologies of the time and the impact of communication on society.

The meeting in Mexico was the first in history to be organized in a country of the South American continent.

congress “INDUSTRIAL DESIGN”

Misinto, Italy, 1972

In Misinto they discussed experimentation and forms, according to a very Italian approach to matter. The meeting was managed by the **Centro Studi e Ricerche Busnelli** and focused on theories and practices from the perspective of the 1970s.

In a private correspondence between the architect **Roberto Ubaldi**, contact person of the centre and **Josine des Cressonières**, Secretary General of the ICSID, we read the words of the Belgian designer:

«(...) Il a donc été décidé de vous accorder le patronage de l’ICSID, qui sera représenté à votre Congrès par notre Société membre italienne l’ADI, et particulièrement par son Président M. Rodolfo Bonetto avec lequel nous vous demandons de garder le contact».[70]

The representation of the ICSID was therefore entirely Italian, headed by the Italian association **ADI**, **Associazione Disegno Industriale**, active since 1956 and official partner of the ICSID. We recall that the ADI was among the founders of the first nucleus of the ICSID, of **BEDA**, The Bureau of European Design Associations and also of **ICOGRADA**, the International Council of Graphic Design Associations, today ICOD International Council of Design.

The ADI also, since 1958 is responsible for awarding the **Compasso d’Oro Award**, established in 1954 thanks to the idea of the Italian designer **Gio Ponti**, which is the oldest and most authoritative recognition in the Italian and international design scene.[71]

During the Misinto congress, among other things, the **pedagogical role of design** and the importance of **creative training** for the improvement of the human environment were discussed. It is therefore clear that the cultural, social and educational sphere had now officially entered the international agenda of the organization and that the concepts of social and environmental responsibility were widely discussed within the discipline panorama. In the official flyer of the event we read:

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70 “Industrial Design” International meeting (Italy, 1972), ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 07/3/4

71 ADI Official Website

«L'Industrial Design, [...] continua un discorso ancora insoluto nelle problematiche dell'insegnamento moderno che partendo dal Morris attraverso la Bauhaus giunge fino a noi e si connota di quei problemi che la crisi umanistica del mondo occidentale, la nascita delle tecnocrazie avanzate e il crollo delle mitologie delle cosiddette aree geografiche terziarie hanno sollevato».[72]

(english translation: «Industrial Design, [...] continues a discourse still unsolved in the problems of modern teaching that starting from Morris through the Bauhaus comes to us and connotes those problems that the humanistic crisis of the western world, the emergence of advanced technocracies and the collapse of the mythologies of the so-called tertiary geographical areas have raised».)

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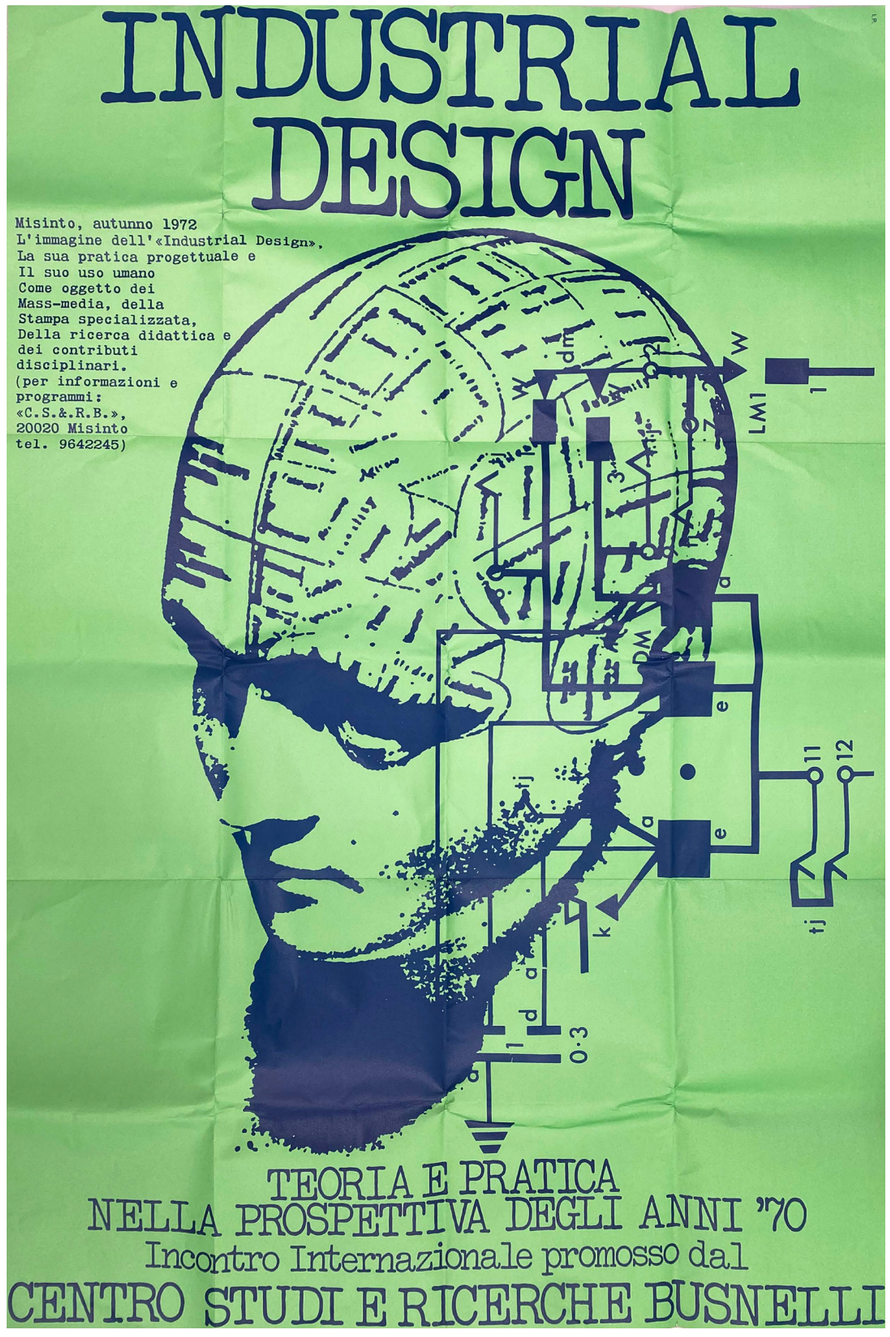
72 ICSID Archive, Box 07/3/4, University of Brighton Design Archive



Misinto Congress Poster, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f27** 07/3/4

Misinto Congress Flyer, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f28** 07/3/4

Questo **incontro internazionale** promosso dal **CS&RB** vuol essere un'occasione per cominciare a tradurre in precise e concrete prospettive — a breve e a lungo termine — quell'area di proposte metodologiche che fanno capo all'**Industrial Design** e che oggi, più che in ogni altro momento della nostra storia, determinano alcuni degli aspetti fondamentali dell'**habitat** delle culture occidentali.
L'incontro, previsto per l'autunno del 1972, è articolato in tre sezioni che connotano, nell'ambito di questa ricerca interdisciplinare, momenti salienti considerati non come ottiche diverse del problema generale dell'**Industrial Design**, quanto come quei punti critici che più di altri meritano di essere discussi e studiati.

Sezione Prima
TEORIA E PRATICA DELLE UTOPIE E DELLE METODOLOGIE PROGETTUALI DELL'INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

Questa sezione raccoglie i contributi progettuali dell'Industrial Design così come si propongono nella ricerca sperimentale sia come dato formale che come problema morfologico.
Nuove forme, nuovi materiali e tecnologie avanzate concorrono, oggi, a modificare radicalmente i metodi d'approccio del reale artificiale considerato da una parte come spazio umano occupabile e dall'altra come territorio dell'architettura. Di contro la crisi istituzionale dell'Industrial Design ha di fatto esploso l'ottica di funzionamento di questa metodologia come teoria e come utopia del possibile.

Sezione Seconda
L'INDUSTRIAL DESIGN NELLE PROSPETTIVE CRITICHE DELLA STAMPA SPECIALIZZATA COME COMUNICAZIONE, COME FENOMENO DI CULTURA E COME FATTO SOCIALE

Il contributo critico della stampa specializzata e d'informazione alla «nominazione» dell'**insieme** Industrial Design e alla sua decifrazione analitica è in questi anni un tema fondamentale non solo per una ricognizione storica di questo fenomeno quanto anche per una criticizzazione della sua presenza nel momento d'impatto dell'individuo con i modelli di cultura che lo contengono e che si consolidano intorno a lui.

Sezione Terza
L'INDUSTRIAL DESIGN COME MOMENTO PEDAGOGICO DELLE METODOLOGIE SULLA FORMATIVITA' E SULLA CREATIVITA' DELL'AMBIENTE UMANO

L'Industrial Design, come pedagogia della formatività e della creatività, continua un discorso ancora insoluto nelle problematiche dell'insegnamento moderno che partendo dai Morris attraverso la Bauhaus giunge fino a noi e si connota di quei problemi che la crisi umanistica del mondo occidentale, la nascita delle tecnocrazie avanzate e il crollo delle mitologie delle cosiddette aree geografiche terziarie hanno sollevato.

This **international meeting** promoted by the **CS&RB** wants to be an occasion to begin to traduce in precise and concrete perspectives — in short and long term — that area of methodological suggestions that concern the **Industrial Design** that, today, more than any other moment of our history, determin some of the fundamental aspects of the **habitat** of the western cultures.
The meeting, which is programmed in autumn of 1972, is articulated in 3 sections which are related, within the limits of this interdisciplinary research, to the most outstanding moments, considered not as different views of the general problem of Industrial Design, but as those critical points that, more than others, deserve to be discussed or studied.

First Section
THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE PROJECTUAL UTOPIES AND METHODOLOGIES OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

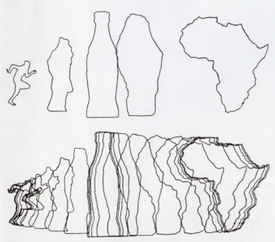
This section gathers the projectual contributions of the Industrial Design, so as the experimental research proposes them, either as a formal datum, or as a morphological problem.
New forms, new materials and advanced technologies, work together today, to change radically the method of approach to the artificial reality considered, on one hand, as the space that can be occupied by man, and on the other hand, as land of the architecture.
On the contrary, the institutional crisis of the Industrial Design has in fact crushed the view of the working of the methodology as a theory and as an utopy of the possible.

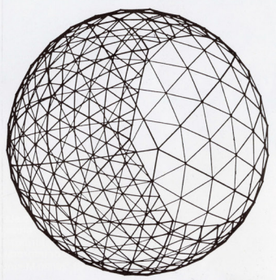
Second Section
THE INDUSTRIAL DESIGN IN THE CRITICAL PREMISES OF THE SPECIALIZED PRESS AS COMMUNICATION, AS A CULTURAL PHENOMENON AND AS A SOCIAL FACT

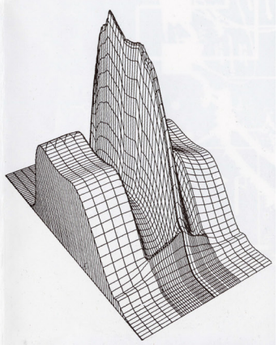
The critical contribution of the specialized information press to the «nomination» of the **whole** Industrial Design and to its analitic comprehension, is in these years a fundamental subject not only for a storical recognition of this phenomenon, but also for a criticism of its presence in the moment of the crash of the person with the models of culture which contain and sorround him.

Third Section
THE INDUSTRIAL DESIGN AS A PEDAGOGICAL MOMENT OF METHODOLOGIES CONCERNING THE FORMATIVITY AND THE CREATIVITY OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

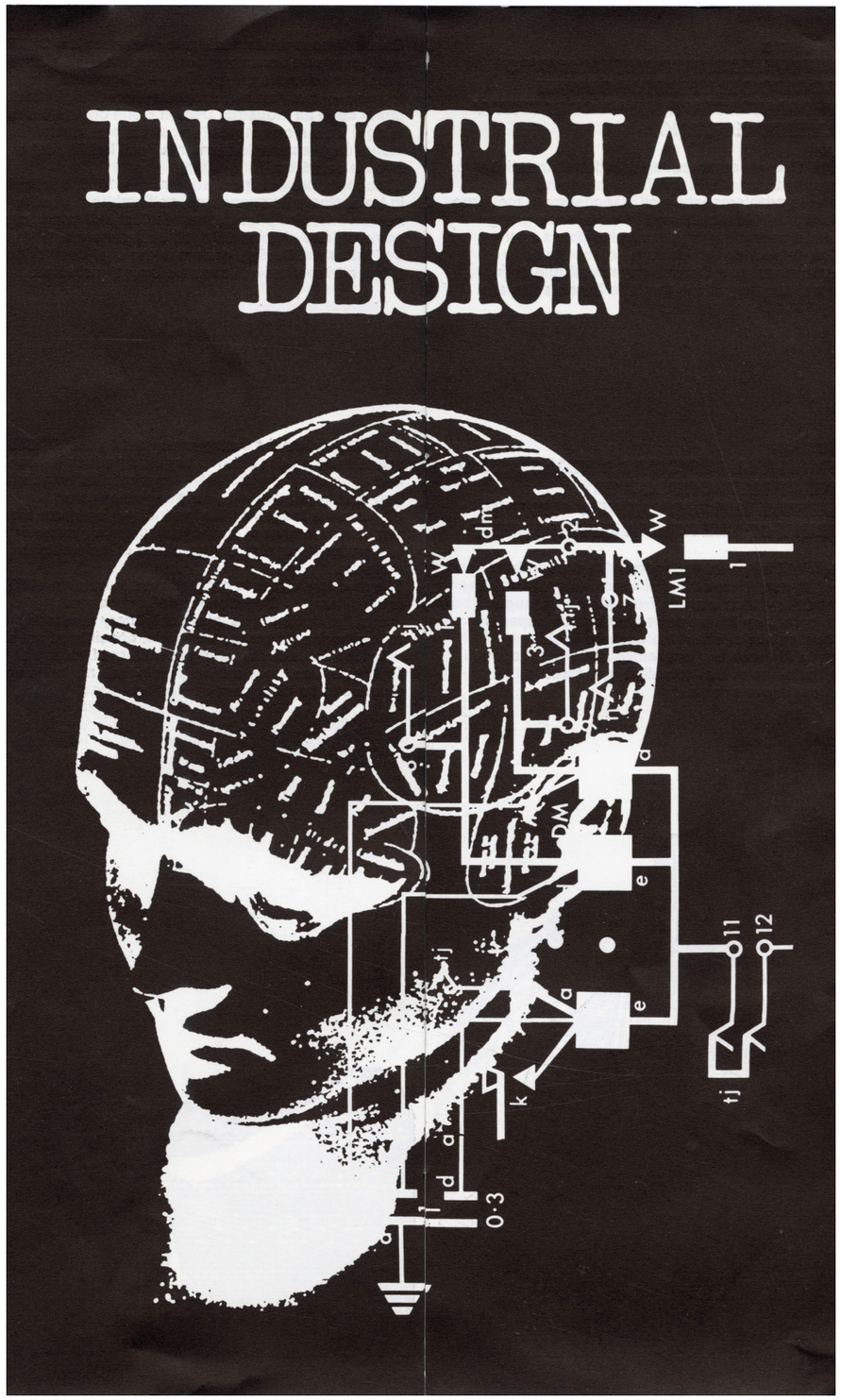
The Industrial Design as pedagogy of the formativity and creativity, continues the still unsolved problem of modern teaching that, starting from Morris, through Bauhaus, comes up to us and assumes other aspects that the humanistic crisis of the western world, the birth of advanced technocracies and the collapse of the mythologies of the, so called, geographie tertiary areas, have arisen.







Misinto Congress Flyer, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f29** 07/3/4



congress

“DESIGN IN THE AMERICAS”

Mexico City, Mexico, 1972

The debate is different on the **Mexico City** conference. This event is full of meaning because it marks the effective entry of the Latin American continent into the international design scene as a member on a par with its Western colleagues. Mexico was considered a developing country at the time and was viewed with great interest by many because of the many investment opportunities it offered.[73]

As we mentioned earlier, for example, during the “Argentine” years of Peccei, he realized that opening a FIAT subsidiary in Argentina could prove a profitable investment and so it was.

Because of these particular circumstances, in which **Mexico** and **South America** in general were the protagonists of a period of rapid expansion, the ICSID showed great interest in concretizing the conference and in the possibilities that the country had to offer for future agreements professional and commercial. As we shall see, however, South America will prove to be a tenacious territory, rich in solid values and cultural identity, two elements that will be strongly defended by the Western “expansionist” aims that saw them involved in that historical period.[74]

In 1979 then, as we will see later, the South American Design companies will found their own independent organization, the **ALADI** (Associaciòn Latino Americana de Diseño Industrial), in favor of an authentic and local design vision against the standardization attempts promoted by the ICSID.[75]

Returning to the 1972 Congress, the main keynotes covered topics such as **“The Effect of Change”**, **“The Use and Preservation of the Hemisphere’s Resources”** and **“The Development of the Community through Design”**, thus embracing the major issues inherent in developing countries and the attitude of the rest of the world towards the exploitation of their resources. This conference was a significant meeting because for the first time a “non-industrialized” country hosted an international

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73 Tania Messell “Constructing a ‘United Nations of Industrial Design’: ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

congress in which it could express its opinion and defend itself against political aggression, justified by its “technological progress” aim.

Clearly, the conference was coordinated by several associations, The **Instituto Mexicano de Comercio Exterior**, the **Instituto Nacional para el Desarrollo de la Comunidad Rural y de la Vivienda Popular** and the **Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes and Diseñadores Mexicanos**, in co-sponsorship with the **Industrial Designers Society of America** (USA).

The American presence in the general setting of the conference certainly played a crucial role in balancing the tones of the debate, which did not assume any accusatory tendency on the part of South America against Western countries.[76]

This is also because, as previously illustrated, there were prominent personalities, such as des Cressonières, who really believed in the mission of leveling the present socio-political gap between industrialized and developing populations.

In a letter dated 22 February 1972 we read the words of Secretary General **Josine des Cressonières** to **Manuel Villazon**, President of the Conference:

«The Congress “Design in the Americas” is really a good opportunity to put Mexican designers on the international scene, so please give me the possibility to help you!», in response to a letter in which Villazon claimed: «It would be a very good idea if you can have an ICSID Board Meeting here in Mexico during the time of the Congress (from October 30 to November 1, 1972), as you probably know we need all the support we can get from ICSID».[77]

Later, in an exchange between **M. Villazon** and **John Reid**, the first illustrated in more detail the means and aims of the first Latin American congress: «I feel It would be very Important that you and the rest of the Executive Board of ICSID could have a Board meeting in Mexico City a day prior to the Congress, [...] We have been discussing this with Mr. Raul Enriquez, Head of the Design Department of the Mexican Institute of Foreign Trade and decided that [...] It would be worth while to make a join venture to hold this proposed executive meeting on the date mentioned above»[78] — and again, he informed Reid about the personalities involved in the Program Committee — **Mr. Arthur Crapsey** from USA, Mr. **Jan Kuypers** from Canada, **Mr. Lucio Grinover** from Brazil, **Mr. Rodolfo Moller** from Argentina, **Mr. Jaime Gutierrez Lega** from Colombia, **Miss Teresa Gianella** from Perù, **Mr. Pedro Ramirez Vazquez** from Mexico and **Mr. Manuel Villazon Vazquez** himself, from Mexico.

As we can see, the representation was mainly from the South American nations, but the presence, at the same time, of **American** and **Canadian** representatives marked a further important step towards international collaboration and transversal cultural exchange within Industrial Design.

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76 ICSID Archive, Box 07/3 “Seminars, Exhibition, Congresses, Conferences”, University of Brighton Design Archive

77 ICSID Archive, Box 07/3/5 “Seminars, Exhibition, Congresses, Conferences”, University of Brighton Design Archive

78 ICSID Archive, Box 07/3/5 “Seminars, Exhibition, Congresses, Conferences”, University of Brighton Design Archive

CONGRESO I DISEÑO EN LAS AMERICAS MEXICO '72

COMITE DE PROGRAMAS
Program Committee:

Arthur Crapsey	(E.U.A.)
Jan Kuypers	(Canada)
Lucio Grinover	(Brazil)
Rodolfo Moller	(Argentina)
Manuel Villazón	(México)
Pedro Ramírez Vázquez	(México)

PROGRAM

PROGRAM: (There will be simultaneous Spanish English translation throughout the meeting).

a) **Keynote Addresses** by outstanding authorities on the theme "The Effect of Change; The Use and Preservation of the Hemisphere's Resources, and The Development of the Community through Design". Speakers will play a leading role in seminar discussions.

b) **Presentation of papers and or audio-visual material** relating to the theme for discussion in depth.
All participating countries or individuals are invited to submit to the International Program Committee, abstracts, or paper of presentations they wish to make NO LATER THAN JUNE 1, 1972.
Inclusion of material in the final program shall be subject to the decision of the Program Committee which reserves the right to review and screen all material submitted.

c) **Seminars:** choice to participate or attend as an observer any four discussion sessions from at least twelve scheduled to take place.

PROGRAMA

PROGRAMA: (Habrá traducción simultánea español e inglés en todas las reuniones).

a) Conferencias por autoridades en los temas de "El efecto del cambio; El uso y preservación de nuestros recursos; "El desarrollo de la comunidad a través del diseño", Los conferenciantes tomarán parte activa en los seminarios.

b) Presentación de ponencias y/o material audio visual relativo a la temática para ser discutido a fondo.
Todos los países o individuos participantes están invitados a someter al Comité Internacional de Programas, resúmenes de sus ponencias o presentaciones que quieran que participen en el Congreso A MAS TARDAR EL 1o. DE JUNIO DE 1972.
La inclusión de este material en el programa final estará sujeto a la decisión del Comité de Programas que se reserva el derecho de revisar todo el material presentado.

c) Seminarios: Se podrá asistir o participar como observador a cualquiera de las 4 sesiones de cuando menos 12 que se llevarán a cabo.

CALENDARIO

Lugar: Hotel Camino Real — LUNES OCTUBRE 30

8:30	10:00	Registro
10:00	12:30	Inauguración oficial - Introducciones presentación de ponencias, Conferencia I.
1:00		Comida recepción
3:30	5:30	Conferencia II. Presentación de los resúmenes de las ponencias, selección de seminarios.
7:00		Cocktails, cena Conferencia III

Lugar: Hacienda Cocoyoc (Hacienda del Siglo XVI) — MARTES OCTUBRE 31

10:00	12:00	Seminarios
12:15		Comida - informal
2:00		Tiempo para asuntos personales y discusiones
5:00	7:00	Continúan los seminarios
7:30		Cocktails, cena, entretenimiento

Lugar: Hotel Camino Real — MIERCOLES NOVIEMBRE 1

10:00	1:00	Continuación seminarios
1:00	2:30	Comida
3:00	5:30	Seminarios finales... .conclusiones
		Noche mexicana (lugar pendiente) Cena de gala, música, baile

PROGRAM CALENDAR

Place: Camino Real Hotel — Mon. Oct. 30

8:30	10:00	Registrations
10:00	12:30	Official Opening- Introductions Announcement of Papers Keynote Address I
1:00		Luncheon Reception
3:30	5:30	Keynote Address II Presentation of Papers in outline Selection of seminar discussion groups
7:00		Cocktails, dinner Keynote Address III

Place: Hacienda Cocoyoc (16th Century Hacienda) — Tues. Oct. 31

10:00	12:00	Discussion sessions
12:15		Luncheon - informal
2:00		time for independent pursuits and discussions
5:00	7:00	Discussion Sessions continue
7:30		Cocktails, dinner, entertainment

Place: Camino Real Hotel — Wed. Nov. 1

10:00	1:00	Concurrent sessions continue
1:00	2:30	Luncheon
3:00	5:30	Final seminars . . . conclusions
		MEXICAN NIGHT (place pending) GALA DINNER with music

FORMA DE REGISTRO

"Diseño en las Américas" México, octubre 30, 31 y noviembre 1, 1972.
Favor de completar esta forma y mandarla con su cuota a:

De los Estados Unidos y Canadá:
IDSA National Office
"Design in the Americas"
60 West 55 St.
New York, N.Y. 10019
De Latino América y demás países:
"Diseño en las Américas"
Río Neva No. 46
México 5, D.F., México
Sírvase hacer su cheque a nombre de: "Diseño en las Américas" Congreso I, 1972

Nombre Sr. y Sra.

Dirección

Miembro de alguna asociación (profesional o estudiante), Gobierno u otra afiliación
IDIOMAS ( ) ( )

CUOTAS:

Miembros de organizaciones de diseño	$100.00 U.S.
Esposas participantes	85.00 U.S.
No-miembros	120.00 U.S.
Estudiantes	25.00 U.S.

(La cuota incluye: 7 comidas, transporte de la sede del Congreso a los otros lugares de reunión y copias de las ponencias presentadas.)

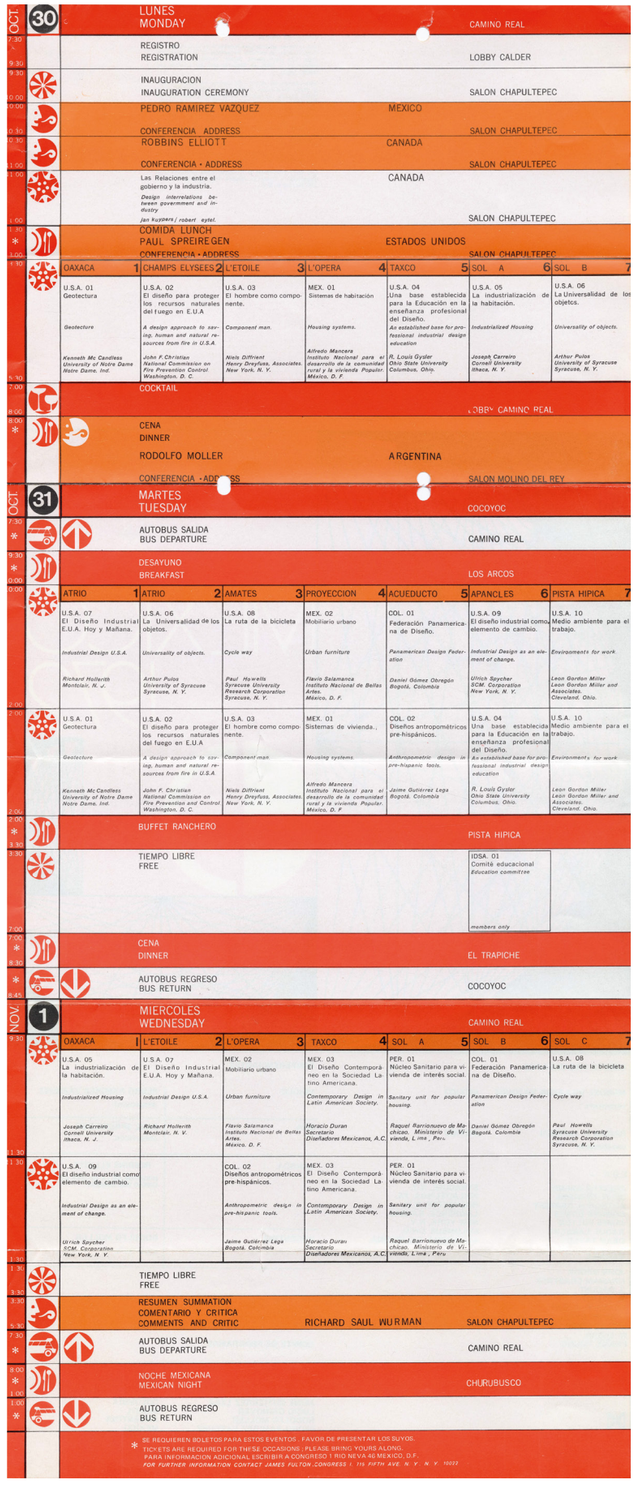
Nota.

Registro extemporáneo - aquellos que se registren después de agosto 30, 1972 se les requerirá el que paguen $5.00 U.S. Cy.
El registrarse a tiempo ayuda al Comité Organizador a planear el Congreso más eficientemente.

Se incluye cuota $

Fecha | | | Firma

"Design in the Americas" Flyer, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f30 07/3/5



LUNES / MONDAY — CAMINO REAL

REGISTRO / REGISTRATION — LOBBY CALDER

INAUGURACION / INAUGURATION CEREMONY — SALON CHAPULTEPEC

PEDRO RAMIREZ VAZQUEZ — MEXICO
CONFERENCIA ADDRESS — SALON CHAPULTEPEC

ROBBINS ELLIOTT — CANADA
CONFERENCIA - ADDRESS — SALON CHAPULTEPEC

Las Relaciones entre el gobierno y la industria. / *Design interrelations between government and industry.*
Jan Kuypers / robert eytel. — CANADA — SALON CHAPULTEPEC

COMIDA LUNCH
PAUL SPREIREGEN — ESTADOS UNIDOS
CONFERENCIA - ADDRESS — SALON CHAPULTEPEC

OAXACA 1	CHAMPS ELYSEES 2	L'ETOILE 3	L'OPERA 4	TAXCO 5	SOL A 6	SOL B 7
U.S.A. 01 Geotectura — *Geotecture* — *Kenneth Mc Candless, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind.*	U.S.A. 02 El diseño para proteger los recursos naturales del fuego en E.U.A. — *A design approach to saving, human and natural resources from fire in U.S.A.* — *John F. Christian, National Commission on Fire Prevention Control, Washington, D. C.*	U.S.A. 03 El hombre como componente. — *Component man.* — *Niels Diffrient, Henry Dreyfuss, Associates, New York, N. Y.*	MEX. 01 Sistemas de habitación — *Housing systems.* — *Alfredo Mancera, Instituto Nacional para el desarrollo de la comunidad rural y la vivienda Popular, México, D. F.*	U.S.A. 04 Una base establecida para la Educación en la enseñanza profesional del Diseño. — *An established base for professional industrial design education* — *R. Louis Gysler, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.*	U.S.A. 05 La industrialización de la habitación. — *Industrialized Housing* — *Joseph Carreiro, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.*	U.S.A. 06 La Universalidad de los objetos. — *Universality of objects.* — *Arthur Pulos, University of Syracuse, Syracuse, N. Y.*

COCKTAIL — CAMINO REAL

CENA / DINNER
RODOLFO MOLLER — ARGENTINA
CONFERENCIA - ADDRESS — SALON MOLINO DEL REY

MARTES / TUESDAY — COCOYOC

AUTOBUS SALIDA / BUS DEPARTURE — CAMINO REAL

DESAYUNO / BREAKFAST — LOS ARCOS

ATRIO 1	ATRIO 2	AMATES 3	PROYECCION 4	ACUEDUCTO 5	APANCLES 6	PISTA HIPICA 7
U.S.A. 07 El Diseño Industrial E.U.A. Hoy y Mañana. — *Industrial Design U.S.A.* — *Richard Hollerith, Monticiari, N. J.*	U.S.A. 06 La Universalidad de los objetos. — *Universality of objects.* — *Arthur Pulos, University of Syracuse, Syracuse, N. Y.*	U.S.A. 08 La ruta de la bicicleta — *Cycle way* — *Paul Howells, Syracuse University Research Corporation, Syracuse, N. Y.*	MEX. 02 Mobiliario urbano — *Urban furniture* — *Flavio Salamanca, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, México, D. F.*	COL. 01 Federación Panamericana de Diseño. — *Panamerican Design Federation* — *Daniel Gómez Obregón, Bogotá, Colombia*	U.S.A. 09 El diseño industrial como elemento de cambio. — *Industrial Design as an element of change.* — *Ulrich Saycher, SCM. Corporation, New York, N. Y.*	U.S.A. 10 Medio ambiente para el trabajo. — *Environments for work* — *Leon Gordon Miller, Leon Gordon Miller and Associates, Cleveland, Ohio.*
U.S.A. 01 Geotectura — *Geotecture* — *Kenneth Mc Candless, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Ind.*	U.S.A. 02 El diseño para proteger los recursos naturales del fuego en E.U.A. — *A design approach to saving, human and natural resources from fire in U.S.A.* — *John F. Christian, National Commission on Fire Prevention and Control, Washington, D. C.*	U.S.A. 03 El hombre como componente. — *Component man.* — *Niels Diffrient, Henry Dreyfuss, Associates, New York, N. Y.*	MEX. 01 Sistemas de vivienda. — *Housing systems.* — *Alfredo Mancera, Instituto Nacional para el desarrollo de la comunidad rural y la vivienda Popular, México, D. F.*	COL. 02 Diseños antropométricos pre-hispánicos. — *Anthropometric design in pre-hispanic tools.* — *Jaime Gutiérrez Lega, Bogotá, Colombia*	U.S.A. 04 Una base establecida para la Educación en la enseñanza profesional del Diseño. — *An established base for professional industrial design education* — *R. Louis Gysler, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.*	U.S.A. 10 Medio ambiente para el trabajo. — *Environments for work* — *Leon Gordon Miller, Leon Gordon Miller and Associates, Cleveland, Ohio.*

BUFFET RANCHERO — PISTA HIPICA

TIEMPO LIBRE / FREE — IDSA. 01 Comité educacional / *Education committee* — *members only*

CENA / DINNER — EL TRAPICHE

AUTOBUS REGRESO / BUS RETURN — COCOYOC

MIERCOLES / WEDNESDAY — CAMINO REAL

OAXACA 1	L'ETOILE 2	L'OPERA 3	TAXCO 4	SOL A 5	SOL B 6	SOL C 7
U.S.A. 05 La industrialización de la habitación. — *Industrialized Housing* — *Joseph Carreiro, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. J.*	U.S.A. 07 El Diseño Industrial E.U.A. Hoy y Mañana. — *Industrial Design U.S.A.* — *Richard Hollerith, Monticiari, N. V.*	MEX. 02 Mobiliario urbano — *Urban furniture* — *Flavio Salamanca, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, México, D. F.*	MEX. 03 El Diseño Contemporáneo en la Sociedad Latino Americana. — *Contemporary Design in Latin American Society.* — *Horacio Duran, Secretario Diseñadores Mexicanos, A.C.*	PER. 01 Núcleo Sanitario para vivienda de interés social. — *Sanitary unit for popular housing.* — *Raquel Barrionuevo de Machizo, Ministerio de Vivienda, Lima, Perú.*	COL. 01 Federación Panamericana de Diseño. — *Panamerican Design Federation* — *Daniel Gómez Obregón, Bogotá, Colombia*	U.S.A. 08 La ruta de la bicicleta — *Cycle way* — *Paul Howells, Syracuse University Research Corporation, Syracuse, N. Y.*
U.S.A. 09 El diseño industrial como elemento de cambio. — *Industrial Design as an element of change.* — *Ulrich Saycher, SCM. Corporation, New York, N. Y.*		COL. 02 Diseños antropométricos pre-hispánicos. — *Anthropometric design in pre-hispanic tools.* — *Jaime Gutiérrez Lega, Bogotá, Colombia*	MEX. 03 El Diseño Contemporáneo en la Sociedad Latino Americana. — *Contemporary Design in Latin American Society.* — *Horacio Duran, Secretario Diseñadores Mexicanos, A.C.*	PER. 01 Núcleo Sanitario para vivienda de interés social. — *Sanitary unit for popular housing.* — *Raquel Barrionuevo de Machizo, Ministerio de Vivienda, Lima, Perú.*		

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"Design in the Americas" Flyer, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f31** 07/3/5

CONGRESO I
Información General.

Vea la forma adjunta para registrarse en el Congreso. La cuota incluye las comidas únicamente de la manera indicada. Los participantes locales deberán comprar sus boletos en la Mesa de Registros para las comidas que deseen asistir.

Reservaciones de Hotel.— Se sugieren los Hoteles Camino Real, María Isabel, El Ejecutivo y Ambassador; vea la forma adjunta. La oficina del Congreso tiene un número fijo en cada hotel y tiene un límite de 200 cuartos reservados para los participantes del Congreso. Las reservaciones se pueden directamente hacer a través de Aeropuerto Internacional, Reforma 378, México, 6, D.F., o al enviar su Forma de Registro. La confirmación de sus reservaciones se recibirá del hotel en cuestión dentro de un período razonable.

Las copias de direcciones y ponencias estarán a disposición de los participantes por cortesía de XEROX.

Los tours posteriores al Congreso están saimismo a su disposición a través de Aeropuerto Internacional, Reforma 378, México 6, D.F.

CONGRESS I
General Information:

Registration for Congress, *see enclosed Form. Fee includes meals only as indicated. Local registrants are required to purchase tickets at the Registration Desk for those meal functions they wish to attend.*

Hotel Reservations. *The suggested hotels are the Camino Real, María Isabel, El Ejecutivo and Ambassador — see enclosed form. Congress Headquarters in the Hotel Camino Real with a fixed phone and 200 rooms to be held for Congress registrants. Arrangements may be made through Airport International, Reforma 378, Mexico 6, D.F., directly, or when you send in your Congress Registration Form. Confirmation of reservations should be received within a reasonable period of time from the hotel involved.*

Copies of Addresses and Papers *will be made available to all registrants through the courtesy of XEROX.*

Post-Congress Tours *are available through Airpoot International, Reforma 378, Mexico 6, D.F.*

CONGRESO I
DISEÑO EN LAS AMERICAS
MEXICO 1972

COMITE ORGANIZADOR
ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

MANUEL VILLAZON VAZQUEZ — PRESIDENTE / *PRESIDENT*	MEXICO
RAMAH R. LARISCH — COORDINADOR / *CO ORDINATING CONSULTANT*	MEXICO
E.U.A. — U.S.A.	
CHESTER ABEND	SYRACUSE, N.Y.
JOHN ANDREWS	PHILADELPHIA, PA.
ARTHUR H. CRAPSEY	ROCHESTER, N.Y.
DOWNER DYKES	LAWRENCE, KANSAS.
JAMES FULTON	NEW YORK, N.Y.
RAQUL LAMBERT	COLUMBUS, OHIO.
DEAN TAYLOR	ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNA.
CANADA	
JOHN BROOK	
GRAHAM CRABTREE	
J. DAOUST	
R. ELLIOTT	
FRANK E. DUDAS	
ROBERT EYTEL	
JAN KUYPERS	
W. SLOAN	
FRANK YOUNG	

VILLAZON Y ASOCIADOS DISEÑO

CONFERENCIANTES
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

MEXICO	PEDRO RAMIREZ VAZQUEZ — ARQUITECTO / *ARCHITECT*
EUA USA	PAUL SPREIREGEN — ARQUITECTO / *ARCHITECT*
CANADA	ROBBINS ELLIOTT — DIRECTOR DE LA OFICINA DE DISEÑO DEL CANADA / *DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE OFFICE OF DESIGN (DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, TRADE AND COMMERCE, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF CANADA)*
ARGENTINA	RODOLFO MOLLER — ARQUITECTO / *ARCHITECT*

COMITE DE PROGRAMAS
PROGRAM COMMITTEE

ARTHUR CRAPSEY	EUA
JAN KUYPERS	CANADA
TERESA GIANELLA	PERU
JAIME GUTIERREZ LEGA	COLOMBIA
LUCIO GRINOVER	BRAZIL
RODOLFO MOLLER	ARGENTINA
PEDRO RAMIREZ VAZQUEZ	MEXICO
MANUEL VILLAZON VAZQUEZ	MEXICO

"Design in the Americas" Flyer, 1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f32** 07/3/5

DESIGN
IN THE
AMERICAS
MEXICO 72

January 25, 1972.

J. des Cressonnieres
Secretary General
International Council of Societies of
Industrial Design

Brussels, Belgium

Dear Josine:

The developing of the Congress Design in the Americas is going at a fast pase. We are now in the process of forming a program Committee with a head designer from each country integrating it. We expect to achieve some excellent results that will be adequate to our hemisphere.

It would be a very good idea if you can have an ICSID Board Meeting here in Mexico during the time of the Congress (from October 30 to November 1, 1972), as you probably know , we need all the support we can get from ICSID.

I would like to have a list, if you have it, of all Latin American Designers that you know.

This Congress is co-sponsored by the Mexican Government and we anticipate it will be a success.

Please let me know if you can arrange anything with relation with the Board Meeting so we can make the necessary arrangements here in Mexico.

Best regards,

Your friend,

Manuel Villazon
Chairman

Manuel Villazon to Josine des Cressonnieres, January 25,1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f33** 07/3/5

DESIGN
IN THE
AMERICAS
MEXICO 72

Mr. Manuel Villazon,
Chairman,
Design in the Americas Mexico 72,
Mexico.

22 February 1972.

Dear Manuel,

I passed your letter of Jan.25 to our President. We are indeed very happy that such an interesting activity is developing in Mexico, but we think you should now, first and before anythings else, settle the matter of your membership of ICSID. If it is too expensive for your Association, perhaps the responsible Department of the Government could become a member ? But we cannot bring you all the support we would wish, if your country is no longer a member of ICSID.

The Congress "Design in the Americas" is really a good opportunity to put Mexican designers on the international scene, so please, give me the possibility to help you! I have indeed lists of contacts (personal and official) in many Latin-American countries, which could be useful.

Regarding the organization of an ICSID Board Meeting in Mexico at the time of the Congress, the idea is tempting, but I doubt whether our Board Members could afford the travelling expenses. But we could, perhaps, be represented by a few of us, especially the members from North-America.

Do you think the Congress would wish to invite them ?

Looking forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,

Josine des Cressonnières,
Secretary General.

Josine des Cressonnieres to Manuel Villazon, February 22,1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box **f34** 07/3/5

DISEÑO
EN LAS
AMERICAS
MEXICO '72

March 2, 1972.

Mr. John Reid

London
England

Dear Mr. Reid:

As you have probably been informed through ICSID we are holding the first Hemisphere Congress "Design in the Americas" in Mexico City on the 30 and 31st. of October and the 1st. of November of the current year.

The purpose of the first Hemisphere Congress is to institute regular meetings of designers, individuals and groups with common interests in the Western Hemisphere. Also, to examine the problems of change and adaptation that are continuously in effect, through stimulating the interchange of ideas to seek solutions to particular problems profiting with the cultures and people of other countries.

The themes of the Congress are: "The effect of change", "The use and preservation of the resources of our Hemisphere" and "The development of the Community through Design".

Because of this, I feel it would be very important that you and the rest of the Executive Board of ICSID could have a Board meeting in Mexico City a day prior to the Congress, that would be Sunday the 29th of October. This day, by the way, its been used for the private meeting of all the professional Design Societies of our Hemisphere in order to take advantage getting them together in order to resolve their own private endevours.

. . . .

CONGRESO I

EL EFECTO DEL CAMBIO;
EL USO Y CONSERVACION DE LOS
RECURSOS DEL HEMISFERIO
TEL. 566-76-55 RIO NEVA 46 MEXICO 5, D. F.
MEXICO

Manuel Villazon to John Reid, March 2,1972, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box f35 07/3/5

DISEÑO
EN LAS
AMERICAS
MEXICO '72

We have been discussing this with Mr. Raul Enriquez, Head of the Design Department of the Mexican Institute of Foreign Trade and decided that since he already made advances to have a design meeting with different executive boards of different profesional design societies, it would be worth while to make a join venture to hold this proposed executive meeting on the date mentioned above in order not to make 2 efforts.

The following proposed themes are:

Administration of design
Universality of design
Politics of design
Design and the communication
The relation between design and community
Design as a service for social welfare
Human Engineering in design
Relation between design and individual values
Execution and preparation of design

These themes are already in the hands of the Program Committee which is made up by:

United States	Mr. Arthur Crapsey
Canada	Mr. Jan Kuypers
Brazil	Mr. Lucio Grinover
Argentina	Mr. Rodolfo Moller
Colombia	Mr. Jaime Gutierrez Lega
Peru	Miss Teresa Gianella
Mexico	Mr. Pedro Ramirez Vazquez
Mexico	Mr. Manuel Villazon Vazquez

I do hope we will get a reply from you soon to this respect and we will keep you informed continuously as to the development of the Congress. A Congress program will follow shortly.

Sincerely yours,

Manuel Villazon
Chairman

CONGRESO I

EL EFECTO DEL CAMBIO;
EL USO Y CONSERVACION DE LOS
RECURSOS DEL HEMISFERIO
TEL. 566-76-55 RIO NEVA 46 MEXICO 5, D. F.
MEXICO

congress “THE ENVIRONMENT OF HUMAN SETTLEMENTS”

WERC, Brussels – Bruges, Belgium, 1976

In **1976** the **WERC** was instructed by the Belgian Government to hold a conference in Brussels at the beginning of April to provide input to the government forces for their participation in the United Nations Conference which was to be held a few months later in Vancouver. Various non-governmental organizations, including the ICSID, participated in this event.[79]

The international association of design participated by preparing a summary report on some of the results obtained during past **workshops** conducted in different geographical areas on the theme of urban planning and contemporary housing systems. These workshops are called **Interdesign** and involve many personalities belonging to the field of design and not.

The report was written by **Mary V. Mullin**, who stressed the themes of tourism and respect for **natural resources** in rapidly growing inhabited environments, characterized by a rich natural heritage.[80] With regard to the report on Interdesign, Secretary-General **Josine des Cressonnieres** had several times stressed that the objective of the ICSID was not to promote its own activity but to share the results obtained from their initiatives. Once again, in fact, the risk was to place excessive attention on the individual objectives of the association, losing sight of the general focus of the meeting, focused on the fundamental issues of environmental and urban issues that characterized those times.

The Interdesign carried out up to that moment were 6 and in particular, as reported by M. V. Mullin: «The first one held in 1971 in Minsk, in the U.S, S.R. It studied the comparatively narrow subjects of furniture and the organization of bread making and distribution systems. The second was held in Kilkenny, Ireland on Design for Tourism. The third in the Province of Ontario in Canada on Small Communities, The fourth was

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79 ICSID Archive, Box 06/10 Quater “Working Group General”, University of Brighton Design Archive

80 Ibid.

congress

a new experimental type for senior students held in Kilkenny, Ireland, and looked at Design in the Post Office. The fifth was held in Sarfaus in the Austrian Tyrol. And the sixth here in the city of Bruges».[81]

Mullin identified some common characteristics found in the analysis of small communities and reported that the inhabitants are often very aware of the factors that adversely affect their quality of life even if very few individuals have backgrounds in human settlements or urban planning studies.

Moreover, the report established that among the citizens with whom they had come into contact there was very little knowledge of the field of design and that they did not imagine there could be possible alternatives to those adopted by them, the result of a more careful and human-needs centered.[82] Finally, what is highlighted is that in order to propose design solutions that can really improve the lifestyle of small communities they need to establish a much closer relationship with the locals, in order to fully understand their culture, customs and thinking, without risking standardizing needs, but rather diversifying them.

Following the cooperation between the two associations **P. Laconte**, President of the WERC will report to **Carl Auböck**: «As a practical step towards further cooperation I suggest that ICSID will become member of WERC what would give to ICSID a seat the board of governors and the right to participate to its policy».[83]

The Brussels Conference will thus consolidate the relationship between the ICSID and the WERC and offer the organization new possibilities for future development.

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81 World Environment and Ressources Council (WERC) "The environment of human setlments", conference (Bruges, 1976) Texts, ICSID Archive, University of Brighton, Box 06/10/14
82 Ibid.
83 Ibid.

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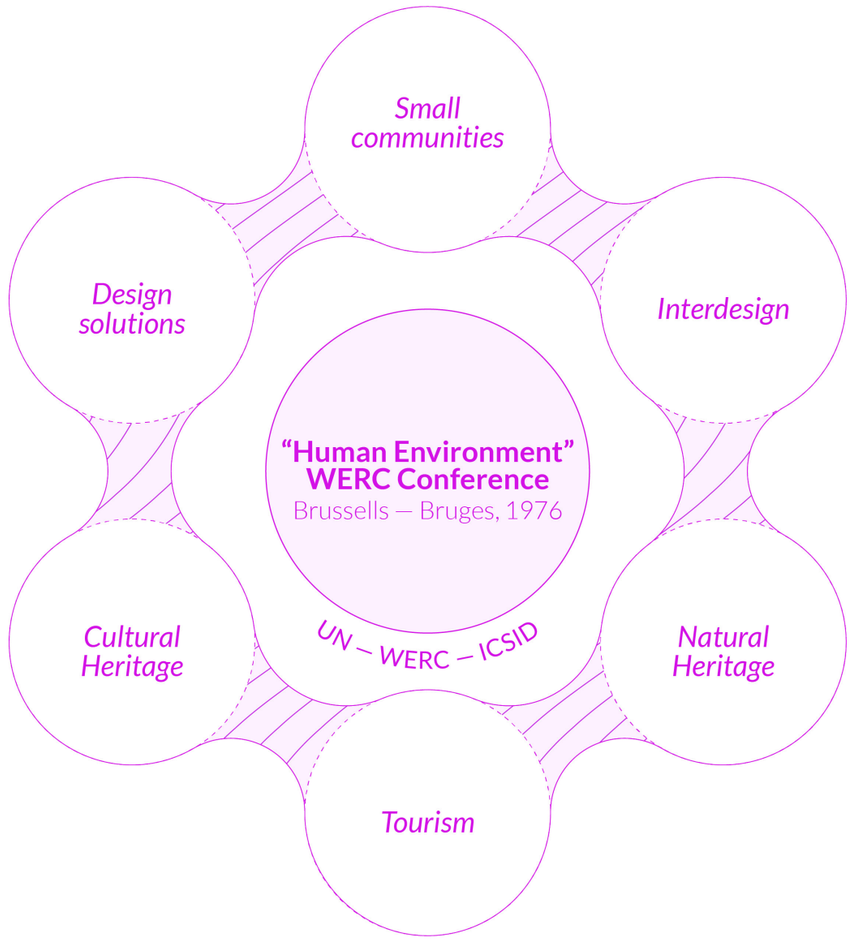

congress “ICSID 10 JUBILEE CONGRESS”

Dublin, United Kingdom 1977

During the course of the 1970s the ICSID was characterized by a period of strong internal transformations and crises on what should have been the objectives and modes of action of the association. After 10 years from its foundation, the body of the association was much less cohesive than one would expect for a group of professionals who set themselves the task of unifying under their own sign the entire panorama of international design. The internal dynamics of the organization were not so different from those of the first General Assembly in 1959 in London.

During an executive committee held in **Leningrad** in **1970** that discussed the possible future of the association, it was established that: «ICSID should develop an “outside” action, that is an activity aiming at bringing all designers together to help, at world level, a humanitarian cause. At the same time, such an action should aim at proving the designers’ capability for co-operating to (sic) world’s problems in a practical manner - and should also prove the use of a coordinating body: ICSID».[84]

However, not everyone agreed on the choice of expanding the objectives of the association towards social and humanitarian horizons. **Italy France** and **Scandinavian countries** shared a socio-cultural vision of design, while **England** and the **United States** promoted an approach based on partnerships and the economic-commercial advantage that an international association could convey.

Despite this, the international debate continued to be enriched with new compelling social and humanitarian issues, and design had to face change by seeking its own direction within society in the midst of a socio-cultural transformation. Issues such as **sustainability**, **consumer rights**, **natural disasters** and **disability** led the design world to question the new contribution that its professional role could make.[85]

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84 ICSID, Notes on the Project of Equipment for Disasters’, p.1, ICD/06/5/8 quoted in Tania Messell “Constructing a ‘United Nations of Industrial Design’: ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

85 Tania Messell “Constructing a ‘United Nations of Industrial Design’: ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

In 1973 Josine des Cressonnières had argued:

«ICSID has now reached the stage where it is concerned with everything relating to physical environment; respect for ecology, a well-balanced economic development, the material equipment of the world, relief for victims of disasters, for handicapped and people whose standard for living is too low».[86]

In this regard, the meetings held in **Kyoto in 1973** and in **Moscow in 1975**, dealing respectively with spirituality and environmental protection, are significant. The sector was enriched with new reflections related to philosophy, psychology, ecology and human rights.[87]

In particular, the **1973 Kyoto Congress** marked a turning point in that for the first time the spiritual component entered the halls of the ICSID conferences. The event was hosted by the Japanese Industrial Designers' Association, a member of the organization, and was titled **"Soul and Material Things"**. Not only that, for the first time the West and the Asian continent met officially, enriched by the presence of delegates from **Africa**, **Brazil**, **Mexico** and **Taiwan**.[88]

The meeting of Eastern thought, often focused on the themes of spirituality and philosophy rather than those of industrial dynamics, with the West, was an important and unprecedented step.[89]

In this sense, the reflection presented by **Jonathan M. Woodham** on the conference is relevant: «The sociocultural differences between the Japanese and non-Japanese delegates inhibited discussion, something that a number of delegates and commentators regretted, particularly since opportunities to reflect at length on contemporary social, political, economic and environmental concerns that had begun in the 1960s were not to the forefront of the professional design agenda despite the fact that Western society's growing concerns about the impact of ecological damage had been put on notice for more than a decade».[90]

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86 Josine des Cressonières quoted in Tania Messell, 2018
87 Ibid.
88 Toshino Iguchi, 'Reconsideration of the World Design Conference 1960 in Tokyo and the World Industrial Design Conference 1973 in Kyoto; Transformation of Design Theory' (2013), quoted in Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell, 2022, 92
89 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell, 2022
90 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell, "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022
91 Ibid.
92 Tania Messell "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018
93 Ibid.

Once again ICSID has failed to grasp the important opportunity offered by an **international cultural exchange** between different thoughts and philosophies. Such a decisive and crucial moment therefore ended up being underestimated and almost hindered in its intentions, because of a communicative difficulty due to **ideological distances** that one has not been able to endorse. The paradox is evident if we think of an "international" association whose primary aim is the transnational unification of a discipline and whose aim is to involve the whole world under the same sign, that of the ICSID.

At the **1977 Dublin Conference**, social issues such as the living conditions of the disabled and the elderly will be discussed further, while in **Mexico City, 1979**, the subject of **development and human needs** will be discussed, with results which are not entirely satisfactory.[91]

The great aspirations expressed by the group often did not find concrete expression in the facts, as we shall have the opportunity to examine in greater detail the 1979 conference in Mexico City.

One of the major obstacles to the implementation of the Association's humanitarian objectives was certainly the **internal fragmentation** and ideological clash between those who wanted to broaden the scope of the ICSID in order to achieve effective results and the ones focused on trade opportunities.[92]

Moreover, from a purely pragmatic point of view, the ICSID's **lack of real executive power**, as well as the lack of **financial purposes** and therefore funds, meant that most of the association's more ambitious goals remained only on paper, never seeing the sunlight.[93]

In a correspondence between **Josine des Cressonières** and **André Ricard** in **1974**, the latter claimed:

«It is evident that all actions ICSID initiates has a promotional aim for this discipline (...) our profession [has] in its very essence social aims as we constantly attempt to enhance the relationship human-object [sic] and therefore to humanise the world of objects which surround us».[94]

Many felt this way among ICSID members, including **Kenji Ekuan**, who argued that the ICSID's action programmes should be more geared to human needs than to commercial ones.[95]

As the years pass, internal disagreements increase, to the point of touching the spheres of gender equality among its members. We have already mentioned the unpleasant event that saw the protagonist **Josine des Cressonières**, the backbone of the group and **Henri Viénot**, who accused her of being ineffective because of her "poor virility" in representing the association.[96] It was even attempted to hinder the work of the Secretary General by proposing to remove her from the group's top management so as to push her to **retire in 1973**, and then convince her to return to her post after a few days, at the request of a majority of the Executive Board. Moreover, during the **Dublin Congress of 77**, when she was presented with the opportunity to hold the maximum office of President, she was hindered by the counter-proposal made by **Paul Reilly**, **John Reid** and **Misha Black**, of a Russian leader, **Yuri Soloviev**, which would have guaranteed a "virility" appropriate to the image of the organization and could have been a trump card in relations between East and West.[97]

As we can see, therefore, the association was strongly fragmented within it and in several respects, a condition that severely limited its affirmation and the effectiveness of its work.

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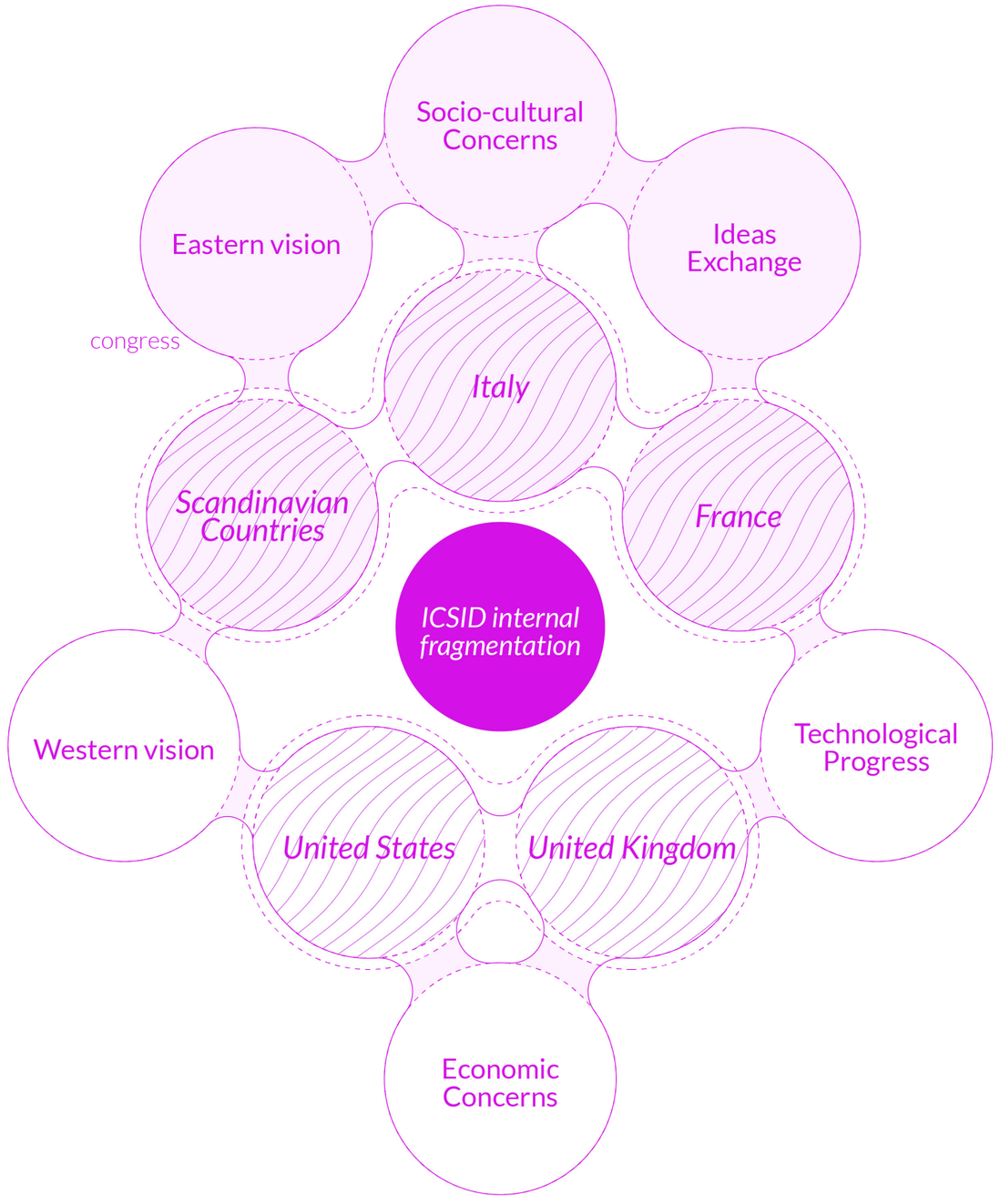
94 André Ricard, 1974, quoted in Tania Messell Thesis, 2018
95 Kenji Ekuan to Henri Viénot, 25 Jan. 1972, ICD/10/16/1, quoted in Tania Messell Thesis, 2018
96 Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell, "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022, 188
97 Ibid., 190



congress “INDUSTRIAL DESIGN AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT” ICSID CONGRESS

Mexico City, Mexico, 1979

As anticipated, from the 1960s many Western designers became interested in developing countries, looking for new ways to promote the methods and processes of the profession in areas that at that time offered numerous possibilities for the expansion and affirmation of the field.[98]

The growing attention to these new realities was nourished by new reflections in the humanitarian and social field carried out by leading personalities such as Victor Papanek or Tomas Maldonado. As already mentioned, in fact, the contribution offered by “Design for the Real World” by Papanek in 1971 had opened the debate on the role of responsibility of professionals in the sector, fueling new expectations in the common imagination of designers. Some members of the community, such as Josine des Cressonnières, really believed in the positive ideals promoted by the new humanitarian thought, others saw in this new perspective, interesting opportunities for gain and professional prestige.[99]

In the volume “The Design Hope”, Tomas Maldonado identifies the responsible design as the only possible solution against the environmental catastrophe, stressing that the environment is not only nature, but also human habitat and that, Paradoxically, it is the very man who is threatening and destroying his own home.[100]

The growing importance of the theme of responsibility, therefore, cast new light on the possibilities offered by the developing populations. As we shall see, however, the aspirations of individuals had very different focuses and were not always aimed at truly ethical goals.

In the early 1970s, ICSID founded the Working Group Developing Countries in order to discuss issues related to the development initiatives promoted by the association.[101]

The interest of the group towards sustainable development was

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98 Tania Messell “Constructing a ‘United Nations of Industrial Design’: ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

99 Ibid.

100 Tomas Maldonado “La Speranza Progettuale”, 1971

101 Tania Messell “Constructing a ‘United Nations of Industrial Design’: ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

then formalized by the signing of a memorandum between ICSID and UNIDO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, in 1977, in which the involvement of developing countries in Western design methods was encouraged.[102]

In this regard, in **1979** the **Ahmedabad conference** was held which dealt with the macro-theme "Design for Development" and which marked a fundamental step for international relations, especially in the general framework of the Cold War.[103]

In the official document is stated: «The Meeting for the Promotion of Industrial Design in Developing Countries convened by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in close cooperation with the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) and the Indian National Institute of Design in January 1979, in line with the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action and in pursuance of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNIDO and ICSID on April 26,1977 to accelerate jointly industrial design activities in developing countries in order to satisfy the urgent needs in this field, and to carry out as extensively as possible the promotional activities necessary to alert developing countries to the advantage of including industrial design in their planning processes».[104]

As is evident, the promotion of Western activities is a central theme within the Declaration and would be aimed at improving the standard of living of developing countries by spreading the technological processes of the Industrial Design of the time.

However, **Victor Margolin** expressed doubts about some conflicting concepts within the statement. In fact, while "indigenous skills, materials and traditions" were proposed as crucial elements for ethical and sustainable development, on the other hand, the declaration

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102 Tania Messell "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

103 Ibid.

104 Ahmedabad Declaration Document, UNIDO-ICSID, 1979

argued that to facilitate the creation of new skills of developing countries in the field of design, they had to absorb the Western model, characterized by the ability to exploit "the extraordinary power" of science and technology.[105]

The growing relations between **ICSID** and **UNIDO** had begun in 1969 during the General Assembly in London where members of the ICSID Executive Committee had a meeting with UNIDO delegates. In **1974** the ICSID obtained **consultative status** at the specialized agency of the United Nations, and officialized their partnership.[106] As claimed by Tania Messell, ICSID during the 1960s and 1970s multiplied its development efforts in South America to the crucial event of the **1979 Mexico City Conference** and the subsequent founding of the Latin American design association **ALADI**.[107]

In those days, Mexico still lived on handicrafts and 75% of its products were made according to traditional and local techniques.[108]

In the eyes of the ICSID, Mexico presented many similarities with the Indian socio-cultural landscape and made the mistake of standardizing and stereotyping a reality that instead possessed its own well-defined and rooted identity characteristics in the territory.

The lightness of the international design council will eventually unleash the resistance of the Mexican community against the attempt of technological colonization of the West, in favor of safeguarding its local and regional networks.[109]

In this regard, the president of the ICSID of those years, **Yuri Soloviev**, sought to strongly emphasize the political character which the benefits of industrialization could bring in relation to the international tensions characteristic of the Cold War period

However, he stressed the risk that developing countries would inherit from Western culture the influence of false ideals related to consumerism and the production of unnecessary products.[110]

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105 Victor Margolin quoted in Tania Messell Thesis, 2018

106 Tania Messell "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

107 Ibid.

108 Ibid.

109 Ibid.

110 Yuri Soloviev, 'Evolution of Industrial Design in Developed Countries' UNIDO-ICSID Meeting, ICD/06/4/1, quoted in Tania Messell Thesis, 2018

However, the 1979 congress ended with the founding of **ALADI**, a design association of Latin American states. In fact, the aggressive intervention of the West led Mexico and the other states of the continent to make a united front against the attempts of standardization coming from outside. South American culture had roots too deep for the voice of progress to eradicate them so easily. The event represented by the founding of ALADI sent a clear message to the members of the ICSID and reaffirmed the socio-economic and productive independence of Latin America ICSID made a miscalculation that cost it credibility and effectiveness, missing the opportunity to assert itself in those areas and to provide real support for the developing communities involved.

Victor Papanek strongly condemned the actions of the industrialized countries, accusing them of pursuing personal economic and political interests. On the contrary, the real focus should have been the commitment to international issues, the promotion of sustainable development through action programmes based on respect for local resources and the real needs of the population.[111] In this sense it seems that the attempts of the ICSID to incorporate humanitarian purposes into its agenda clashed harshly with the multifaceted reality of its members. In fact, during the **ICSID 10 assembly**, the Jubilee Congress of 1977, the same problems emerged that saw it fragmented already in **1959 in London**.

More than ten years after its founding, the group still did not share a well-defined common line and was divided on crucial issues such as **professional identity**, **gender issues** and **development strategies**, showing once again its tendency towards a **western and elitist vision**.[112]

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111 Tania Messell "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

112 Ibid.

*«THE MEETING FOR THE **PROMOTION** OF INDUSTRIAL DESIGN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES CONVENED BY **UNIDO** IN CLOSE COOPERATION WITH **ICSID** AND THE INDIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE **OF DESIGN** IN JANUARY **1979**, […] TO ACCELERATE JOINTLY I**NDUSTRIAL DESIGN ACTIVITIES** IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ORDER TO SATISFY THE **URGENT NEEDS** IN THIS FIELD, AND TO CARRY OUT AS EXTENSIVELY AS POSSIBLE THE **PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES** NECESSARY TO ALERT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO THE **ADVANTAGE OF INCLUDING INDUSTRIAL DESIGN IN THEIR PLANNING PROCESSES**».*

Ahmedabad Declaration on Industrial Design for Development
ICSID — UNIDO, Ahmedabad, India, January 1979

focus AHMEDABAD DECLARATION PLAN OF ACTION

Ahmedabad, India, 1979

1

Developing countries are encouraged to consider the establishment of design institutions, design centres and/or other design-practising and promotional institutions to spread design methodology, awareness and consciousness.

2

These institutions should develop close and sustained links with industrial activity in government and in the private sector, at every level including heavy industries, medium-scale industries, small-scale, rural and craft industries, as well as with educational and research institutions, and with people who are the ultimate users of design.

3

In developing countries, the establishment of professional design associations which can function parallel to the design promotional institutions should be seriously considered, and such efforts assisted.

4

Design institutions are worthy of financial and other support by their governments, which must be their prime source of succour at this early stage of development.

5

These institutions must work to establish a priority for industrial design through the creation of a national design consciousness. They must hasten the awareness that in all areas of public expenditure, the integration of design in the planning process can ensure optimum quality and utilisation of resources. They must communicate that industrial design is concerned with the improvement of our environment through the appropriate use of raw materials, increased productivity, with the protection of health, human safety, natural and cultural resources, with the enhancement of working environments, and with expanding work opportunities and earnings at all levels, including exports. Therefore design considerations should be

incorporated in plans for national development.

6

To achieve these purposes, such institutions in developing countries may consider the importance of articulating a statement on the importance of design which can serve as a national consensus on the need for creating design awareness and for utilising design as a discipline for better planning.

7

Such institutions must stress the importance of establishing and improving facilities for design education and training, upgrading design experience, as well as assisting designers to act as trainers and as catalysts for design awareness wherever they work, so that design skills can be disseminated at several levels simultaneously, and thus influence industrial activity on a broad scale in the developing world.

8

The establishment of national design awards, exhibitions, documentation and publication programmes should be encouraged as aids to a wider understanding of industrial design and of design traditions and resources.

9

Systems of active cooperation should be established and promoted between design institutions in the developed and less developed countries, and between these institutions in the less developed world.

10

These cooperative arrangements could be bilateral as well as multilateral. International organisations including **ICSID**, **UNIDO**, **UNESCO**, **UNCTAD**, **WHO**, **UNEP**, **IBRD**, the **Asian Development Bank** and the **African Development Bank**, **IADB** and others should be encouraged to provide active support to such cooperative arrangements.

Ahmedabad Declaration on Industrial Design for Development

UNIDO - ICSID INDIA 79 **Design for Development** January 14-24

A. Ahmedabad Declaration

1 The Meeting for the Promotion of Industrial Design in Developing Countries convened by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in close cooperation with the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) and the Indian National Institute of Design in January 1979, in line with the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action and in pursuance of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNIDO and ICSID on April 26,1977 to accelerate jointly industrial design activities in developing countries in order to satisfy the urgent needs in this field, and to carry out as extensively as possible the promotional activities necessary to alert developing countries to the advantage of including industrial design in their planning processes,

Adopts

The Ahmedabad Declaration on Industrial Design for Development.

2 **Having reviewed** the situation with respect to industrial design in a number of developing countries,

3 **Bearing in mind** that design improves function, enhances communication, simplifies manufacture, use and maintenance,

4 **Recognising** that the problem faced in most developing countries is that although design is a real need, it is not yet a sufficiently felt need,

5 **Noting** that design methodology is inadequately known and insufficiently used as an economic resource,

6 **Aware** that few countries have the organisational, financial and personnel resources which can enable industrial design to assume its proper role,

7 **Convinced** that design can help raise the quality of life within economic planning and that the designer can become an agent of progress,

8 **Recognising** that through design, relevant cultural traditions can be preserved and utilised to current advantage,

9 **Recognising** that cooperation between UNIDO and ICSID should not only further the transfer of technology, know-how and information in the field of industrial design, but should help to stimulate self-reliance,

10 **Noting** that UNIDO and ICSID have agreed to carry out as extensively as possible the promotional activities necessary to alert developing countries to the advantages of including industrial design in their planning processes,

11 **Bearing in mind** that as a first step towards achieving these objectives, this Meeting was convened to help initiate meaningful cooperation and exchange between institutions and designers concerned with problems of the developing world,

12 **Having decided** to adopt a common position and a line of action, the Meeting

Solemnly declares

13 Its firm conviction that design can be a powerful force for the improvement of the quality of life in the developing world;

14 Its firm belief that designers must have a clear understanding of the values of their own societies and of what constitutes a standard of life for their own people;

15 That design in the developing world must be committed to a search for local answers to local needs, utilising indigenous skills, materials and traditions while absorbing the extraordinary power that science and technology can make available to it;

16 That designers in every part of the world must work to evolve a new value system which dissolves the disastrous divisions between the worlds of waste and want, preserves the identity of peoples and attends the priority areas of need for the vast majority of mankind;

17 That in view of the foregoing, the Meeting adopts the various measures set forth in the following Plan of Action.

B. Plan of Action

Measures

1 Developing countries are encouraged to consider the establishment of design institutions, design centres and/or other design-practising and promotional institutions to spread design methodology, awareness and consciousness.

2 These institutions should develop close and sustained links with industrial activity in government and in the private sector, at every level including heavy industries, medium-scale industries, small-scale, rural and craft industries, as well as with educational and research institutions, and with people who are the ultimate users of design.

3 In developing countries, the establishment of professional design associations which can function parallel to the design promotional institutions should be seriously considered, and such efforts assisted.

4 Design institutions are worthy of financial and other support by their governments, which must be their prime source of succour at this early stage of development.

5 These institutions must work to establish a priority for industrial design through the creation of a national design consciousness. They must hasten the awareness that in all areas of public expenditure, the integration of design in the planning process can ensure optimum quality and utilisation of resources. They must communicate that industrial design is concerned with the improvement of our environment through the appropriate use of raw materials, increased productivity, with the protection of health, human safety, natural and cultural resources, with the enhancement of working environments, and with expanding work opportunities and earnings at all levels, including exports. Therefore design considerations should be incorporated in plans for national development.

6 To achieve these purposes, such institutions in developing countries may consider the importance of articulating a statement on the importance of design which can serve as a national consensus on the need for creating design awareness and for utilising design as a discipline for better planning.

7 Such institutions must stress the importance of establishing and improving facilities for design education and training, upgrading design experience, as well as assisting designers to act as trainers and as catalysts for design awareness wherever they work, so that design skills can be disseminated at several levels simultaneously, and thus influence industrial activity on a broad scale in the developing world.

8 The establishment of national design awards, exhibitions, documentation and publication programmes should be encouraged as aids to a wider understanding of industrial design and of design traditions and resources.

9 Systems of active cooperation should be established and promoted between design institutions in the developed and less developed countries, and between these institutions in the less developed world.

10 These cooperative arrangements could be bilateral as well as multilateral. International organisations including ICSID, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNCTAD, WHO, UNEP, IBRD, the Asian Development Bank and the African Development Bank, IADB and others should be encouraged to provide active support to such cooperative arrangements.

Ahmedabad Declaration, ICSID – UNIDO, India, 1979, designmanifestos

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5 CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the themes and documentation set out in this discussion, we will now try to draw a conclusive framework in the hope of offering a starting point that, although not decisive, can throw new light on the issues previously investigated.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 ICSID Past Contribution

The experiential heritage of the ICSID, in the light of what has been seen and maintained so far, is invaluable. As we have seen, since the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s, the ICSID has had the opportunity to broaden its sphere of action and to come into contact with the highest decision-making spheres present on the international scene of the time.[1] The **meeting of design and social sciences** at the end of the 70s crowned a period of strong **transformation and awareness** on the part of Western design in its entirety and therefore, also by the ICSID. It is important to remember that these are the years of great international collaboration for the ICSID, which has access to the environments of **UNESCO**, **UNIDO**, **UNEP**, **ISO**, **UNCTAD**, **GATT** and **ITC**.[2]

Thanks also to the precious contribution of **Josine des Cressonnières**, the association has managed to cut fundamental and unique goals in the history of design, perhaps, however, in a period when design itself struggled to recognize a well-defined role within the professional sphere and in the network of society. The design of the 70s still struggled against a **widespread fragmentation**, influenced by the **political and social context** of those times, marked by the tension between **East and West** and the growing gap between wealth and poverty of different regions of the world. The ICSID is a huge network of **relationships**, a **complex system** to be placed within a specific space and time. In 1957, when it was founded in Paris, we found ourselves in a purely **European environment**, fresh from the Second World War and in the midst of an invisible war, an ideological war.

We tried to draw, within the Research, a general picture of the historical and political dynamics of those years, underlining the key factors that influenced the work of the association and the thinking of its members.

The elements taken into consideration are many and

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1 Alison J. Clarke in Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell, "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022, 247

2 Tania Messell "Constructing a 'United Nations of Industrial Design': ICSID and the Professionalisation of Design on the World Stage, 1957-1980, 2018

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numerous, from the **profiles of the founders** of the group to the **geography**, incredibly extensive, covered by its affiliates. The **ideological and cultural differences** analyzed in the research also found within the ICSID body itself then played an equally crucial role in the study of this complex reality.

But returning to the focus of this discussion, namely the issue of sustainability and the contribution made in those years by the world of associations, the considerations to be made are many.

First, it is evident that the apparent commitment of design in those years to social and environmental issues has often proved more a formal interest, decreed on paper, than an authentic will for action for change. Proof of this is the distracted participation of 1972 in Stockholm, where the incredible opportunity to take part in an epochal and unprecedented event in history has indeed been wasted, as well as greatly underestimated.

As the members of the association themselves, probably the most attentive to social and environmental dynamics, argued, the ICSID of the early years engaged its forces almost exclusively in order to promote itself and its profession. On the other hand, the sector needed formal recognition of its authority, without which it would certainly be more difficult to achieve higher objectives. But this objective of recognition, although validated by the urgent need of the sector to remedy its lack of authority compared to other professions, has for a long time tarnished the lenses of the group, which too often has **missed unrepeatable goals**, even though they're within reach. An example of this is the departure from **UNESCO**, as well as the **1979 Mexico City Congress** or the establishment of parallel bodies such as the **1973 Working Group Developing Countries**. There have been many attempts, but in one way or another they have always proved not to be effective.

Reporting the thought of Alison

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J. Clarke: «design's critical role in underpinning global, postindustrial institutional development policy in 'peripheral economies' has largely escaped critical scrutiny»[3] neverthless, as the author herself underlines, «theorists within the social sciences have increasingly recognized design's distinctive and politicized agency in the development paradigm».[4]

It is undeniable that the efforts of the design world of the time have sanctioned crucial developments, even if only in an attempt to establish a global meeting point between distant countries, for thought, lifestyles and economic-political conditions. However, the criticism that is being leveled is that the demonstrated intentions, though enormously complex, have **rarely found their concretization** for the improvement of the global socio-environmental conditions.

However, it must be remembered that the **tools** available to the ICSID at the time were not sufficient to meet the bold expectations of the Executive Committee. In fact, the desire to broaden the field of action of the sector has often clashed harshly with the reality of the facts, where the **lack of executive power** and the **lack of an intergovernmental status**, hugely affected the action possibilities of the group.

But perhaps that is not the point we should dwell on. The real strength of the ICSID of those years was in fact another one.

Also thanks to the cultural revolution that occurred in those years, the ICSID was able to free design from its more rigid material guise to associate it with new disciplines, far from design but at the same time inextricably bound to it. Anthropology, sociology, psychology, culture, politics, economics, are areas that might not seem relevant to the practice of design, but they are not.

As stated by Tony Fry in his **"Design as Politics"**: «Dominantly, the [design] approach has been to reduce the presentation of design to aesthetic concerns, with a focus

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3 Alison J. Clarke in Jeremy Aynsley, Alison J. Clarke, Tania Messell, "International Design Organizations: Histories, Legacies, Values", 2022, 248

4 Ibid.

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on taste and style. Added to this has been the delimitation of an already circumscribed presentation of the field to just a few areas of practice — mostly architecture, furniture, fashion, graphics and 'designer' objects. The vast bulk of that which is designed — its character, function and consequence — goes by in silence».[5]

ICSID has expanded the common design concept, operating in spheres far from design and industry. Without realizing it, ICSID has promoted a vision of the sector that is very close to that of today, 50 years after that time, concretized in the world of systemic design.

The real strength of design is precisely this, its ability to be fluid and permeate every area of human life. But not only that. What differentiates the work of good design professionals is their ability to face political, economic and social issues according to a **systemic approach** that considers the **environmental** and **social** aspects, deeply linked to the condition and **real human needs**.

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5 Tony Fry, "Design as Politics", 2011

5.2 Design Future Role in Global Environmental Governance

The real wealth that design must add to the global governance landscape is this. In the past, the work of design has not always differentiated in the **objectives of large companies** promoting **irresponsible consumerism**, but today the awareness reached at the individual level, about professional and global issues on environmental and social sustainability allow us to hope for a concrete **change of direction**.

As discussed by Fry: «Currently the design profession, in all its diversity, is unambiguously a service industry bonded to the economie status quo. But for it to become an affirmative force of redirection towards Sustainment (and in so doing, contribute to remaking a politics beyond democracy) it has to become truly futural and political - which implies design becoming more dynamic, more powerful and more able to communicate the significance of designers to society in general».[6]

Today's good design knows what man's real needs are, those of whom enlightened minds such as those of **Victor Papanek** and **Tomas Maldonado** spoke about 50 years ago. The responsibility that must be shown for safeguarding the future is no longer an individual matter but a common commitment.

One might wonder what could really make the difference after all the efforts already made. Starting from Stockholm in 1972, to continue with the Brundtland report of 1987, after the Earth Summits of 1992, 1997 and 2002, we continued with the Conference of the Parties, which since 1995 has reached its 27th edition this year, The Kyoto Protocol of 1997 until the 2015 Paris agreements and the 2030 Agenda.

We are committed to a common front in order to pursue a global objective, that of preventing the forecasts estimated by the "Limits to Growth" report of 1972 come true. As we are sadly discovering, we are already beyond the limit where we can cope with the climate crisis through small gearshifts, now

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6 Tony Fry, "Design as Politics", 2011, 76

the change must be quick and sudden. The real difference will be the **intentions**, the real will to change things and the creation of **new bodies and institutions** in order to concretize and achieve these objectives.

It is clear that **the conflict of interest** of the largest economic forces in the world towards a true ecological transition and a decisive behavioural change are enormous and this is probably the greatest obstacle that our society must aim to overcome. But we must remember that the **three dimensions of sustainable development** include, in addition to the social and environmental spheres, **economic development**. These three elements are interrelated and constitute objectives to be achieved according to a **systemic approach**, in which the interrelations between the different spheres of action influence each other with positive effects on each other. Economic, environmental and social objectives must develop in unison, through positive cause-and-effect relationships aimed at integrated, fair and equitable growth.[7]

Today's economic and commercial system is based on obsolete values, belonging to an ancient society that no longer reflects the minds and needs of the contemporary world. A **new system** must be built, based on today's values, that takes into account the interests of the planet and people by finding **new methodologies and processes** in order to obtain the same profits, if not higher, as the result of sustainable and socially positive activities. The **myth of unlimited growth** has run its course, now it is necessary a radical paradigm shift, to use the words of Fry, a **"radical redirection by redirective practices"**.[8]

As previously stated, the real change is the result of a **social, political and cultural transformation**. Starting from the **global advocacy** initiatives for a sustainable future supported by **NGOs** and through an **educational system** capable

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7 Alleanza Italiana per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile website

8 Tony Fry, "Design as Politics", 2011

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of transmitting these values and notions to **future generations**, a solid and better future can be built, in which economic forces based on processes harmful to the environment and to communities will be penalized also and above all by the **conscious choices of a new class of consumers**. However, every effort will be in vain if not supported and aided also by the political forces, often too accommodating towards the impacting societies because influenced by economic pacts and by the will to gain the consensus of public opinion. And it is precisely here that **public opinion**, that is, global society, is extremely influential and outnumbered by the minority of large international entrepreneurs. Once again, citizens and their needs are at the centre of the debate. Citizens can mark the **behavioral change** that society needs to achieve the goal of a truly **sustainable future**. This behavioral change can be promoted and defended also and above all by the figure of the designer. Man must return to the center of the discourse, but this time not according to a logic of excessive consumerism and false needs, linked to the accumulation of goods promoted by capitalism, but according to a new vision, systemic and sustainable, which includes the exception of "man" according to the three basic dimensions of sustainability: **economic, social and environmental**.

Systemic design focused on human needs can in this sense enrich the political debate, promoting the best strategies for the realization of positive actions towards the consolidation of a sustainable society.

As stated by Fry: «Designing has to be grasped and made present as an activity that extends well beyond the rubric of designers. Designing goes ahead of all that we intentionally bring into being, thus it is integral to all forms of prefigured human productive action».[9]

Through a critical work and analysis towards the design and work of the past, the profession

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9 Tony Fry, "Design as Politics", 2011

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itself can grow enriching itself with new objectives aimed at solving the pressing issues of contemporary society. «Thus re-created, design can return with a major increase in its efficacy when mobilized against structural unsustainability».[10]

The economic and environmental social sphere should be the discriminating factors for the positive evaluation of projects in each sector, whether of a physical or intangible nature, in order to determine their feasibility only if they are the result of good design, ethical, sustainable and fair.

The world of design can make a difference, provided that it is admitted in the places of **international debates** and that it is given a decisive status for the conclusion of decisions of a transnational nature. In this sense, its role would be to **assist the political work** on issues related to global sustainability in a **multidisciplinary council**, enriched by the expertise of different actors, spokesmen of their **national realities**. Multidisciplinarity is a crucial factor, indispensable to the conclusion of **fair decisions**, which take into account the different facets and **complexity** of the human needs of the **contemporary world**.

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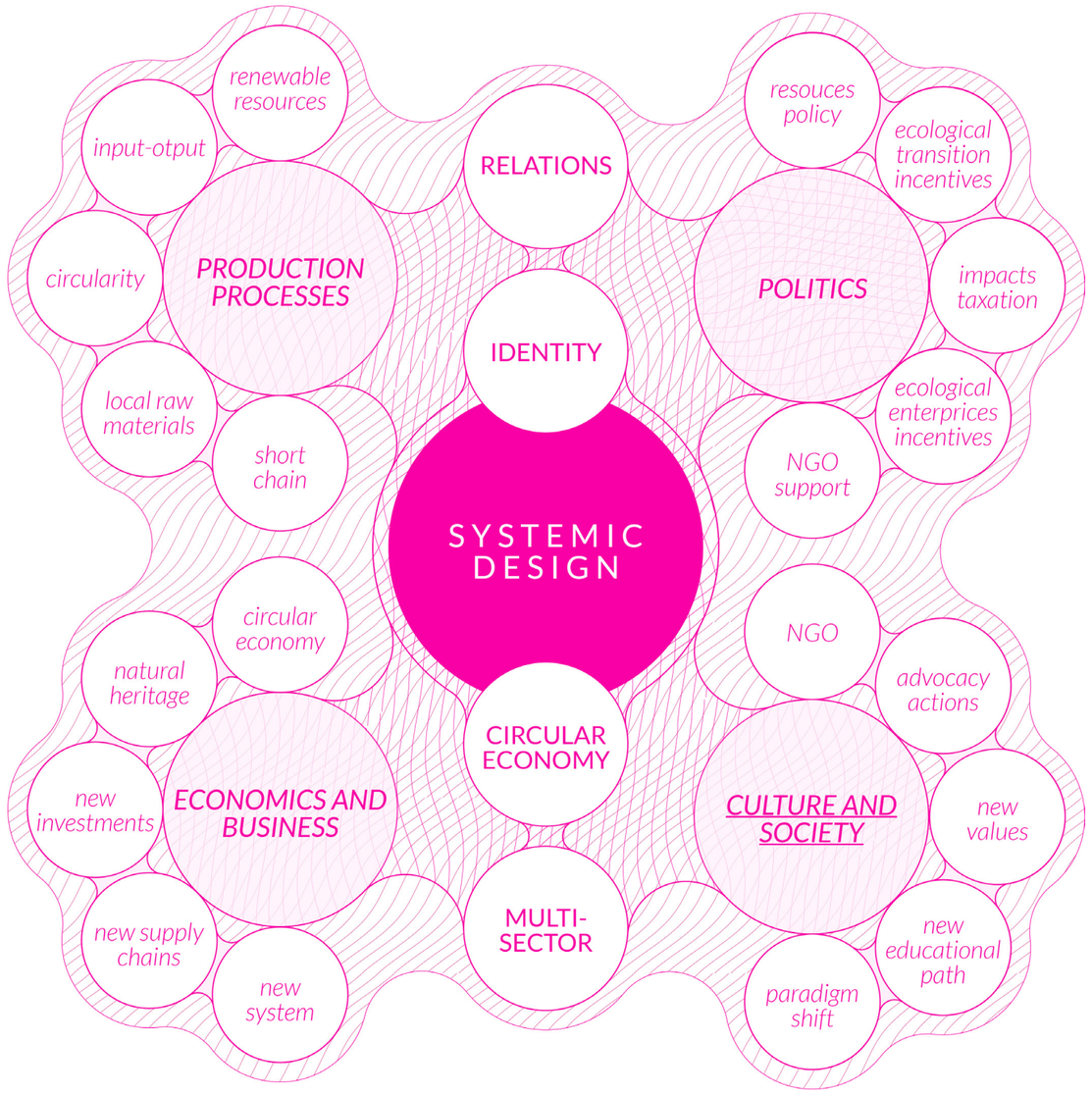
10 Tony Fry, "Design as Politics", 2011

*«THUS RE-CREATED, **DESIGN CAN RETURN WITH A MAJOR INCREASE IN ITS EFFICACY** WHEN MOBILIZED **AGAINST STRUCTURAL UNSUSTAINABILITY**».*

*«DESIGNING HAS TO BE GRASPED AND MADE PRESENT AS AN ACTIVITY THAT **EXTENDS WELL BEYOND THE RUBRIC OF DESIGNERS**. DESIGNING GOES AHEAD OF ALL THAT WE INTENTIONALLY BRING INTO BEING, THUS IT IS INTEGRAL TO ALL FORMS OF PREFIGURED HUMAN PRODUCTIVE ACTION».*

Tony Fry
"Design as Politics", 2011



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Box 06/10Quater “Working group general”

Box 07/3 “Seminars, Exhibition, Congresses, Conferences”

Box 09/4 “ICSID General”

Box 12/19 “International Organizations”

Box 12/32 “International Organization”

Executive Board Members in 1960s and 1970s

1957 - 1959
Mr. Peter Muller-Munk, President
Sir Misha Black, Executive Vice President
Mr. Enrico Peressuti, Vice President
Mr. Pierre Vago, Secretary Treasurer
Count Sigvard Bernadotte, Board Member

1959 - 1961
Sir Misha Black, President
Mr. Peter Muller-Munk, Past President
Ms. Mia Seeger, Secretary Treasurer
Count Sigvard Bernadotte, Vice President
Mr. Pierre Vago, Vice President
Mr. Enrico Peressuti, Board Member

1961–1963
Count Sigvard Bernadotte, President
Sir Misha Black, Past President
Ms. Mia Seeger, Secretary Treasurer
Mr. Jay Doblin, Vice President
Mr. Alberto Rosselli, Vice President
Mr. Pierre Vago, Board Member

1963 - 1965
Mr. Pierre Vago, President
Count Sigvard Bernadotte, Past President
Sir Paul Reilly, Honorary Treasurer
Mr. George Beck, Vice President
Mr. John Radic, Vice President
Mr. Andre Ricard, Vice President
Mrs. Josine des Cressonnières, Secretary General
Mr. Marco Zanuso, Board Member

1965 - 1967
Mr. Richard S. Latham, President
Sir Paul Reilly, Honorary Treasurer
Mr. John Radic, Vice President
Mr. André Ricard, Vice President
Mr. Karl Schwanzer, Vice President
Mrs. Josine des Cressonnières, Secretary General
Mr. Tomas Maldonado, Board Member
Mr. Jacques S. Guillon, Board Member

1967 - 1969
Mr. Tomas Moldonado, President
Mr. Richard S. Latham, Past President
Mr. Jacques S. Guillon, Treasurer
Mr. Ulf Hård 8f Segerstacl, Vice President
Mr. Andrzej Pawlowski, Vice President
Mr. Gino Valle, Vice President
Mrs. Josine des Cressonnières, Secretary General
Mr. Eliot Noyes, Board Member
Mr. John Reid, Board Member

1969 - 1971
Mr. John Reid, President
Mr. Henri Vienot, Honorary Treasurer
Mr. Ulf Hård af Segerstad, Vice President
Mr. Eliot Noyes, Vice President
Dr. Yuri Soloviev, Vice President
Mr. Gino Valle, Vice President
Mrs. Josine des Cressonnières, Secretary General
Mr. Edgar Kaufmann Jr., Board Member
Mr. Andrzej Pawlowski, Board Member
Mr. Carl Auböck, Board Member
Mr. André Ricard, Board Member

1971 - 1973
Mr. Henri Vienot, President
Mr. John Reid, Past President
Mr. Jurgen Hämer, Honorary Treasurer
Mr. Carl Auböck, Vice President
Dr. Yuri Soloviev, Vice President
Mr. André Ricard, Vice President
Mrs. Josine des Cressonnières, Secretary General
Mr. Rodolfo Bonetto, Board Member
Mr. Frank Dudas, Board Member
Mr. Kenji Ekuan, Board Member

1973 - 1975
Mr. Carl Auböck, President
Mr. Henri Vienot, Past President
Mr. Jurgen Hämer, Honorary Treasurer
Mr. Rodolfo Bonetto, Vice President
Mr. Gui Bonsiepe, Vice President
Mr. Kenji Ekuan, Vice President
Mrs. Josine des Cressonnières, Secretary General
Mr. Richard Hollerith, Board Member
Mr. Martin Kelm, Board Member
Mr. Juhani Salovaara, Board Member
Mr. Richard Stevens, Board Member

1975 - 1977
Mr. Kenji Ekuan, President
Mr. Carl Auböck, Past President
Mr. Richard Stevens, Treasurer
Mr. Richard Hollerith, Vice President
Ms. Mary Mullin, Vice President
Dr. Yuri Soloviev, Vice President
Mrs. Josine des Cressonnières, Secretary General
Mr. Herbert Ohl, Board Member
Mr. Wolfgang Schmidt, Board Member
Mr. Jan Trägårdh, Board Member

1977 - 1979
Dr. Yuri Soloviev, President
Mr. Kenji Ekuan, Past President
Mr. Herbert Ohl, Honorary Treasurer
Prof. Arthur J. Pulos, Vice President
Mr. André Ricard, Vice President
Mr. Jan Trägårdh, Vice President
Mr. Yoshio Nishimoto, Secretary General
Mr. Ryszard Bojar, Board Member
Mr. Dirk Jacobs, Board Member
Ms. Francoise Jollant, Board Member
Mr. Wolfgang Schmidt, Board Member

1979 - 1981
Prof. Arthur J. Pulos, President
Dr. Yuri Soloviev, Past President
Mr. Alejandro Lazo Margain, Honorary Treasurer
Mr. Ryszard Bojar, Vice President
Ms. Carla Venosta, Vice President
Mr. Loek van der Sande, Secretary General
Mr. Dirk Jacobs, Board Member
Ms. Francoise Jollant, Board Member
Prof. Antti Nurmesniemi, Board Member
Mr. H.K. Vyas, Board Member
Mr. Knut Yran, Board Member

ACKNOLEDGMENTS

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