

4T Design in Times of Turmoil: Displacement Replacement Emplacement

“It was inevitable:”

Reads the opening of Nobel Laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez’s much acclaimed book, *Love in The Time of Cholera*. “It was inevitable: the scent of bitter almonds always reminded him of the fate of unrequited love.” And it is inevitable: every news item on wars, revolts and disasters reminds us of the fate of people suffering. It is inevitable for designers not to ponder the place of design in a world in turmoil. Turmoil, as a state of great disturbance, confusion, or uncertainty may apply to subjects as well as cultures, societies, and marginalized identities.

What are the potentials and shortcomings of design when people face constant fear, danger, death, hunger and sickness; when they strive to continue their lives in search of new normalcies in unsettling, unhomey and unfriendly environments? Is it possible to talk about an emancipatory position for design under these circumstances? What can be the designer’s capacity and role in anxiety-ridden contexts embedded in uncertainty? How does design respond to turmoil in various scales and define, reinforce, or exacerbate such conditions? Can design resist, preempt, or avert turmoil?

This year’s symposium addresses such questions under specific conditions of displacement, replacement and emplacement. These are highly charged terms, loaded with multiple meanings, some of which are cited below to indicate the span of possible approaches for symposium presentations. Papers are welcome to focus on one of the thematic categories or their intersections at various levels in the context of different design fields including spaces, buildings, industrial products, graphics, clothing and others.

Displacement: 1. The removal of someone or something by someone or something else which takes their place; 2. The enforced departure of people from their homes, typically because of war, persecution, or natural disaster; 3. (Psychoanalysis) The unconscious transfer of an intense emotion from one object to another

- Geographical displacement, i.e. war and forced migration
- Cultural displacement, i.e., hybrid cultural practices caused by migration
- Professional displacement, i.e., unprecedented tasks for established professions
- Technological displacement, i.e., new media taking the place of the traditional designers’ role
- Domestic displacement, i.e. places of the homeless

Replacement: 1. A person or thing that takes the place of another; 2. A person who fills the role of (someone or something) with a substitute; 3. An immediate renewal of an unsuccessful attack, often while still on the lunge

- Corporeal replacement, i.e. prosthesis after personal turmoil or traumas
- Replacement of needs and priorities in everyday life
- Replacement of realities, i.e. the role of histories, memories, dreams and hopes in coping with turmoil.

Emplacement: 1. A structure on or in which something is firmly placed; 2. A platform or defended position where a gun is placed for firing; 3. (chiefly Geology) The process or state of setting something in place or being set in place

- Geographical emplacement, i.e. refugee camps
- Urban emplacement, i.e. urban renewal
- Corporeal emplacement, i.e. migrant enclaves
- Cultural emplacement, i.e. gentrification

Participants are invited to address these or similar themes as they relate to design discourses, production processes, products, producers and users.