

Alpine Studio – Winter

The Alps of the Future. Apocalyptic Snow Conditions and New Fronts of Winter tourism. The Renegotiation of the alpine Territory

Abstract

Temperatures are globally rising up to extreme levels. Consequently, meteorological and atmospheric changes such as condensation, solar radiation, wind flows etc. instigate drastic fluctuations in temperature and precipitations also on all areas and heights of the Alps. With this general tendency of disappearing “coldness”, not only the glaciers can be observed to retreat, but tourism, possibly, too.

(Natural and artificial) snow is, and has been, the paramount environmental phenomenon to secure tourism. Winter sports, skiing being the most traditional, are the main economic pillars of most Tyrolean villages. A manifold and differentiated field of amateur, sportive and professional athleticism and entertainment, skiing; reaching from classic alpine ski, to alpine touring, backcountry-skiing, park-skiing, heli-skiing etc. appropriates every possible facet and characteristic of a mountain: from snow production and management, all-terrain accessibility, increased transport capacities, hi-tech buildings and infrastructures provide an essential factor to the wealth and growth of many locally based companies and communities. With receding snow lines we can expect an increased disrupted and total desynchronised industrialization of the Alps. However, such infrastructures are very likely to stand in contrast with current and future sustainable ideas of protecting and preserving the alpine territory and environment (increasing the amount of renewable energy, reducing traffic; increasing the air quality etc.).

In the future, to succeed not just in economical and technological terms, but most importantly also in environment, societal and cultural terms, all small-scale projects and large-scale interventions will demand visionary and integrated, even extreme, solutions. The studio will explore partly architectural (roads, buildings, infrastructures, villages, towns, cities) and partly geological (remodelled and reprogrammed landscapes) formations in order to renegotiate the alpine territory towards future trajectories and investigate how new forms and fronts of winter tourism might be part of a greater solution.

Credits

Teaching: Prof. Marjan Colletti, Marc Ihle, Thomas Feuerstein, in collaboration with:
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