

# Designing “Down to Earth.” Lessons Learned from Transformative Social Innovation

Tassinari, Virginia; Manzini, Ezio (2023.0)

## ***ABSTRACT ORIGINAL***

**ABSTRACT** The consequences of anthropocentric ways of thinking, designing, producing, and consuming are becoming painfully clear. Moving from this observation, several designers have become aware that design culture needs to reorient itself beyond anthropocentrism. In this article, we start with Bruno Latour’s proposal of coming “down to Earth,” which acknowledges that we are ultimately “terrestrials,” and connect it to Maria Puig de la Bellacasa’s idea of “care.” These concepts are pillars of the concrete guidelines we propose here: they are foundations for designing in a regenerative way, stepping beyond anthropocentrism. This paper traces a convergence between this emergent account of design and some recent social innovations, which are, in our opinion, making what it might mean to get down to Earth tangible. This convergence becomes particularly evident when introducing the concept of the “quality of complexity”: in other words, a qualitative dimension characteristic of those experimentations in which people re-orient their daily lives towards reweaving the web of life. While designing can strengthen its ability to be regenerative by exploring how to further engage with practices with this specific qualitative dimension, it might also provide philosophy with some concrete examples of a praxis taking further concrete steps down to Earth. © 2023 Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.