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WIGWAM NEWS

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Wigwam Local Community Washington D.C. USA

GREY VENETO: ANTHROPOCENE & LANDSCAPE TRANSFORMATIONS

The research of Mirco Cecchetto, on the transformation of the landscape in Veneto, rewarded by the interest of the Wigwam Communities of the USA

My name is Mirco, I'm 25 and I'm starting to work as a journalist, I just graduated at University of Rome ''Roma Tre''. My master's degree thesis was called: *''Grey Veneto: Anthropocene and landscape transformations''*.

It's an analysis of relationship between human economic development, landscape, and environment in the northern-Italy region of Veneto; the outcome of my work comes from scientific literature and mostly from interviews to some inhabitants of this region. This work has been possible thanks to Wigwam International Circuit and its network, in which I found many peoples to interview.

The theory behind my investigation is the Anthropocene concept: the term 'Anthropocene' refers to the current geological epoch: climate, biosphere, and geological set-ups are deeply affected by human's activities and overgrowth, through its

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settlement modes, agriculture and industrial productions, natural resources exploitation or climate-changing gasses.

Theory behind Anthropocene comes from both Science and Humanities (e.g., from chemistry, geology, history or philosophy). Due to the meaning of 'geological epoch', Anthropocene's evidence must be visible in every place of the world, from the landscapes to the soil stratigraphy. My thesis was inspired by a 2016 historical essay, named *''The shock of the Anthropocene. The Earth, History, and us''*, written by historians **Christophe Bonneuil** and **Jean-Baptiste Fressoz**. In this book we can find a detailed analysis of the human development since XVI century, regarding the consequences of Britain Empire global expansion or the Industrial Revolution of XVIII century in current economic, political and social balances.

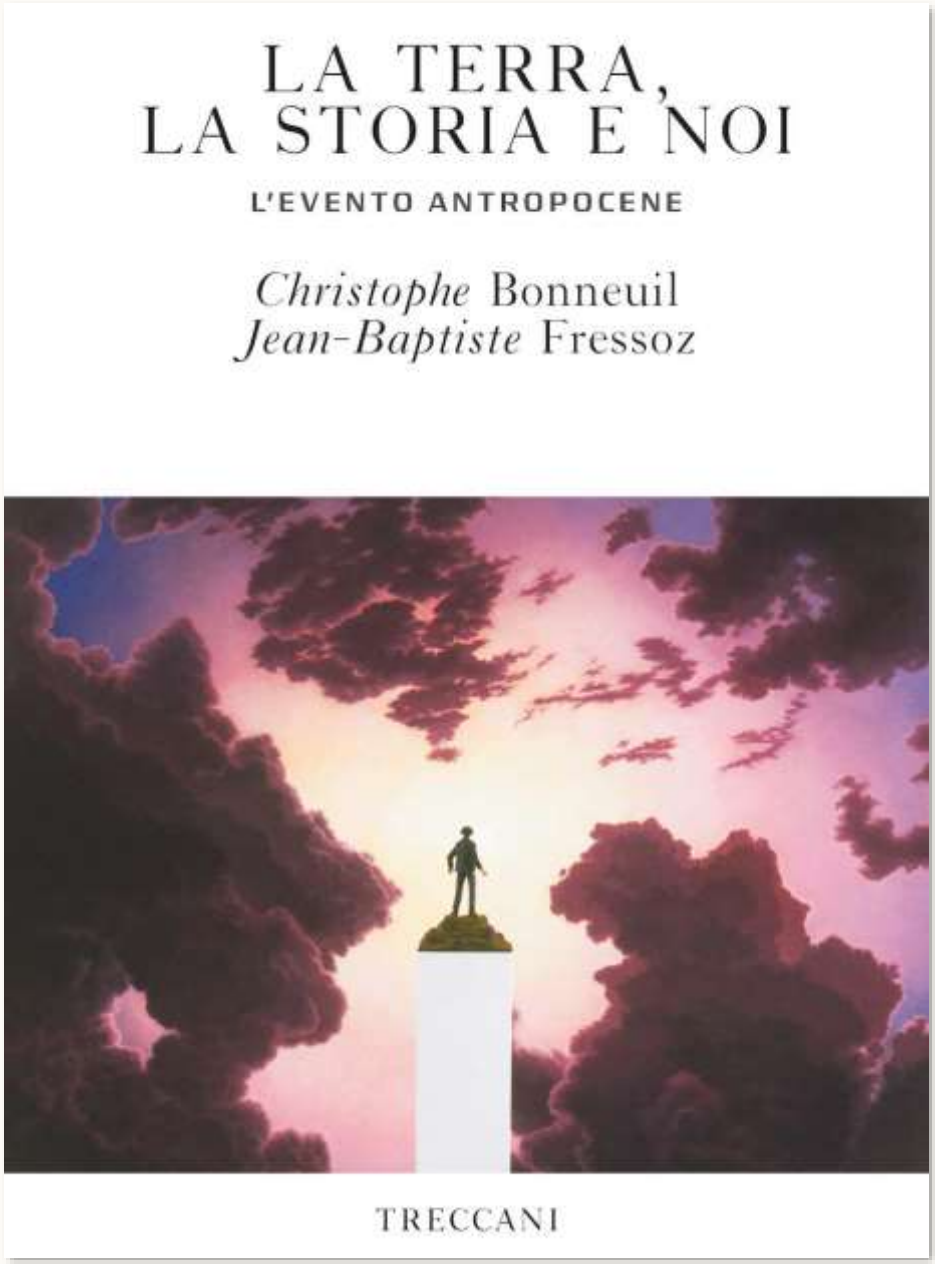
This book reports seven historical perspectives, to understand the evolution of Human-Earth relationship:

- **history of CO2 production and energy sources;**
- **history of war industry, which shaped civil use of many technologies, materials, and urban development;**
- **history of consumerism and planned obsolescence, then again, history of industrial food and how it has led to new diets, high in sugars and plant fats;**
- history of a capitalist world-system, in which we found supply chains distributed unequally around World's countries, regarding raw materials, processing industry and commercial networks;
- history of environmental policies, industrial development and the knowledge of its advantages and risks, and the contrast between this ''risk-consciousness'' and economics needing;
- history of the ''narratives of progress'' from politics, science, and economics institutions, and how some information about environmental and public health risks were historically omitted;
- history of environmentalist-social movements

which opposed certain development models.

I've used the theories of this book as a starting point of my case study about how Anthropocene appears in the Italian northern region of Veneto: this region has been investigated in eight landscapes, from the mountains to the plains, to the sea. From these investigations I've found eight narrative witnesses, which describe the relationship between local population and landscape transformation, urban planning, and agriculture. These eight places are:

- **Veneto's Dolomites**: glaciologist **Franco Secchieri** explains the retreat of glaciers and how this phenomenon will lead to drought in all the plains territory of the Region, already this year;
- **Asiago Plateau**: in this land, two councillors of Asiago's town hall, explains the ancient relationship between local population, tourism, and landscape management. They talk about a plan for hotels building and how this must fit with forest and pastures conservation;
- **Valdobbiadene hills**: in this interview, **Diego Tomasi**, CEO of Protection Consortium of Prosecco Conegliano-Valdobbiadene DOCG tells about how this land has been transformed to suit the Prosecco wine production, and how agri-technical research has been carried on in order to satisfy an international wine request and, at the same time, in order to provide the conservation of habitat, soils and groundwater situated in these hills;
- **Reclamation of the swamps**: **Francesco Cazzaro**, president of ANBI Veneto (National Association of Irrigation and Reclamation) and the agri-enviromental PhD **Filippo Moretto**, explains how drought will be the main problem for agriculture in the next years, in all the Veneto region. They also tell how to use the regional irrigation network, as a resilience tool, capable of bringing stored water (mainly from the rain) across all the plain and all the fields;
- **Urban sprawl**: this interview was addressed to the director of Territorial Planning Bureau, architect **Salvina Sist**. She had explained the role of a



regional law, called ''14/2017'', which establish the zeroing of soil consumption within 2050. This law is very important because Veneto is the second region in Italy for consumed soil-surface;

- **River communities**: two experts of Veneto inland navigation, **Enrico Sandon** e **Maurizio Ulliana**, talk about social reconfiguration in river communities following the industrial revolution and the expansion of railways and highways, occurred between XIX and XX centuries. This changing regard history of crafts, river conservation, logistics and economics across the entire Veneto land;
- **Venice and its lagoon**: engineer **Giovanni Cecconi**, with archeologist **Marco Paladini**, explain the future outlooks of Venice, its lagoon, its economy, and the adapta-

tion of the city to sea level rising (eustatism). They tell about a society which learned to host a mass tourism, and how climate change affects the economy of the Island: local population must be able to re-think its way of living in Venice, through engineering and cultural adaptation;

- **City of Bibione**: a seaside town built in 1960 is a good example of how Anthropocene express itself in Veneto: Bibione hosted an important phenomenon which is the transition from an agriculture economy to a tourism economy, in less than twenty years. In Bibione has been carried out an important urban sprawl, and nowadays, the city can host almost six million of tourist. To testify this transformation in social tissue and landscape, I've interviewed **Pasqua Catto**, one of the first inhabitants of the land, moved here in 1954 when there was just swamp and woods, or as she remember: ''just fox and snakes''.

In these eight interviews, five topics were examined: bond between human development and land use, history of crafts, landscape transformation, conservation, and decay of the environment, and finally, climate change. The outcome of the thesis is a fresh image of how Anthropocene appears in Veneto, through the real life-experience of its inhabitants ■

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