DOTTORATO IN
PATRIMONI STORICI E FILOSOFICI
PER UNA INNOVAZIONE SOSTENIBILE

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DEGLI STUDI DI BARI
ALDO MORO

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FORMS OF DWELLING

Historical and Philosophical Perspectives from Antiquity to the Present

CALL FOR PAPERS

Bari, 18-20 September 2025

Introduction

The second edition of the International Conference for Doctoral Students of the Ph.D. Programme in Historical and Philosophical Heritage for Sustainable Innovation at the University of Bari Aldo Moro aims to propose a broad and transdisciplinary discussion on the theme of dwelling, to be understood as an essential, yet historical relationship between human beings and the environment. The open call is addressed to doctoral candidates and early-career researchers interested in exploring the multiple forms that dwelling may take in its historical, theoretical, and practical articulations.

Description

Dwelling is neither a neutral nor a purely functional act; it is one of the first ways through which human beings relate to space and, more deeply, to the environment. Dwelling and habit-formation constitute a historically grounded complex of social, political, and symbolic practices through which the human subject – and living beings more broadly – transform and shape the world, both giving and receiving form and meaning.

In the current context – marked by deep technological, climatic, geopolitical, and transformations in settling behaviours – dwelling emerges as a critical issue that requires new theoretical and interpretive lenses. What shapes does space take, and what logic leads its construction and experience? How do built, lived, imagined, and conceptualised spaces intertwine in different historical contexts?

This conference proposes to explore dwelling as an open and dynamic field of inquiry, approachable through multiple perspectives. Far from being a univocal concept, it is rather an entanglement of practices, dispositifs, and representations that shift over time. The goal of this call is to foster dialogue among historical, philosophical, and more broadly humanistic approaches, capable of tracing the transformations of the concept of dwelling throughout its historical and theoretical development.

Thematic Areas

Submissions may address – but are not limited to – the following areas:

1. *Thinking Space, Dwelling in Thought*

As a way of shaping space and environment and as a peculiarity of social and political patterns of human life, dwelling has been a central theme of philosophical inquiry across ecology, ethics, anthropology, and aesthetics. Furthermore, philosophy has employed metaphors linked to architecture, dwelling and designing to reflect on its own discursive structure and understanding of knowledge, including the key role played by geographical differentiations in its genesis and transition. This section encourages reflections on how philosophy conceptualizes dwelling and how it represents itself as a way of "inhabiting" thought.

2. *Inhabiting Space: Forms, Networks, Power*

Inhabiting space means to operate on the world, shaping it through collective practices and material systems that evolve over time. Infrastructures, networks, cities, and territories are not merely supports of human life, but dynamic configurations of dwelling and building as well as products of historical tensions, shared needs, and cultural visions of order. This section welcomes insights on how societies have historically organized and shaped inhabited space, questioning the meanings, forms, and effects of the structures mediating the relationship between human beings and environment.

3. *Dwelling in the Sacred: Myths, Rituals, Institutions*

Sacredness is often construed as arising from the symbolic relationships a place fosters for those who dwell in or encounter it. Myths, rituals, and institutions are among the factors that determine whether a space – physical or metaphorical – acquires a sacred pattern for a community. In this perspective, dwelling in the sacred represents an ongoing process of redefinition, constantly opening new paths of inquiry across multiple – and often unexpected – direction .

4. *Inhabiting the Margins: Borders, Criminalization, Exile*

In addition to evoking historical and philosophical classifications based on confrontation and encounter, the margin can be understood as an autonomous category that refers to transition and transit processes. It is the original *locus* of conflict and negotiation in which symbolic space is established, and social agents diachronically and spatially locate themselves in, operating through resemanticised practices that shift along trajectories of relation and opposition, center and periphery, inclusion and exclusion. In this framework, the margin may also be understood in relation to practices of granting or denying citizenship, forms of systemic criminalization, social inequality and the experience of exile.

Submission Guidelines

Doctoral candidates and early-career researchers interested in participating are invited to submit an abstract (max. 300 words) by **20 July 2025** to the following email address: phd.patrimonistoriciefilosofici@gmail.com. The application should include the abstract and the following information:

- Full name
- Institutional affiliation
- Title of the proposed presentation
- Selected thematic area
- Keywords (max. 5)
- Short bio (max. 150 words)

Proposals will be evaluated by a scientific committee. Notification of acceptance will be sent by **31 July 2025**.

Contact

For further information, please contact: **phd.patrimonistoriciefilosofici@gmail.com**

Comitato scientifico-organizzativo

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