Evolutionary Tree 2000, Charles Jencks, no copyright

M four

the 2010/11 CAAD MAS class

# M architects revisisted
## four

The second theory module will revisit different *topoi* of architectural theory. The students will work out conceptual schemas, which will allow them to compare different positions of architectural theory. They will proceed by case studies for example on Palladio's approaches to spatial grammar and syntax, on the cosmic scope of French Revolutionary Architecture, on Durant's rationalization as well as on more contemporary approaches like the *machine à habiter* (le Corbusier), *The Architecture of Well-Tempered Environment* (Reyner Banham), *Mechanization Takes Command* (Sigfried Giedion) or more recent approaches like *parametricism* (studio Zaha Hadid), *Junkspace* (Rem Koolhaas), or *The Function of Form* (Farshid Moussavi) a.o.

The students approaches in analytically formalizing these case studies will be prepared for synthesis and modalization. They will learn how to make these topoi more readily accessible and reconstructible by a sort of "conceptual cross-breeding" of these approaches. In a final exercise, each student will take one approach and reformulate it according to his or her own attitude, or to a fictitious attitude especially conceived and characterized for this occasion. Like this, the students are asked to produce and represent their own written manifestos.
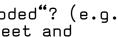
The module will start with recapitulating the achievements of the first theory module: what is at stake in the concepts of an *architectonics of growth* and a *general theory of stratification*? What is the relevancy of concepts such as the *plane of consistency*, the *abstract machine*, or *double articulation* regarding the power of contemporary information technology and the design space that goes along with this kind of technology and infrastructure?

Keeping these aspects in mind, the students will be introduced to a comparatistic way of engaging with architectural history and theory. They will analyze what kind of values certain theories have regarded as elementary, what emphasis have been put where in different theoretic edifices, and what kind of schemes and concepts they have proposed as mediating between these dimensions. Furthermore they will look at how the technological conditions predominant for different times reveal their impact in particular architectural manifestos and theoretical models. Especially, we will be concerned with how the different numerical spaces incorporated in the respective technological paradigms allow for different kinds of conception and construction principles, and also different paradigms of theoretical reflection.

The students will be trained in developing a sense of distinction and comparison between the spaces of potentials and constraints that different "renderings" of such construction principles allow as a design space for architecture. A great emphasis of the course will lie on analyzing the role of technology for architectural theories, as well as the different attitudes taken towards technology therein.

## Guests

**Dr. Keith Lilley**: Cities of tomorrow? Geometrical forms and their cultural symbolism. *Queens University Belfast, Ireland*

**Dr. Christoph Schindler**: An architectural periodization model with criteria of production technology. *schindlersalmerón, Zurich*

**Dr. Andrei Rodin**: Objects without structure. A philosophical introduction to mathematical category and topos theory. *University Paris-Diderot in Paris and Russian Academy of Science in Moscow*

**Monday Jan. 17th**
9–11 am — Recap Module One, Intro Module Four (V.Bühlmann and L. Hovestadt)
**Task ONE**: select a document from architectural theory to work with, and begin by preparing a characterization of its historical situation (e.g.what kinds of technology was available, how was the political situation, what were the societal challenges at the time)

**Tuesday Jan. 18th**
9–11 am — The Architectonic Model (Video Lecture by **Prof. Dr. Werner Oechslin**)
2–6 pm — Presentations and Discussions of TASK ONE

**Wednesday Jan. 19th**
10–12 am — Cornerstones of architectural problem-thinking (L. Hovestadt)
**Task TWO**: What is the problem articulated in your selected document, and how is it „encoded"? (e.g. how to make architectural knowledge available intersubjectively, how can architecture meet and answer demographic changes, architecture as Art, etc.)

**Thursday Jan. 20th**
4–6 pm — Presentations and Discussions of TASK TWO

**Friday Jan. 21st**
2–4 am — On Schema and Schematization (V. Bühlmann)
4–6 pm — Presentations and Discussions of TASK TWO

**Monday Jan. 24th**
10–12 pm — Cities of tomorrow? Geometrical forms and their cultural symbolism (**Dr. Keith Lilley**)
1–3 pm — Presentations and Discussions of TASK TWO
4–6 pm — An architectural periodization model with criteria of production technology, as illustrated with the example of timber construction (**Dr. Christoph Schindler**)

**Tuesday Jan. 25th**
3–5 pm — Presentations and Discussions of TASK TWO
**Task THREE**: Formulate an architectonic specification of the problematics addressed in your theory document and work out a schematic representation of its problem-solving approach (e.g. distinguish the conceptual dimensionality of theoretical position, specify how the elements of the different dimensions interact, how their relations are defined, how is the temporal process structured)

**Wednesday Jan. 26th**
3–5 pm — Presentations and Discussions of TASK THREE

**Thursday Jan. 27th**
10–12 am — On Formalization (input lecture by **Klaus Wassermann, CAAD ETHZ**)

**Friday Jan. 28th**
3–5 pm — Presentations and Discussions of TASK THREE

**Saturday Jan. 29th**
1–3 pm — Visit to the library Werner Oechslin in Einsiedeln

**Monday Jan. 31th**
3–5 pm — Presentations and Discussions of TASK THREE
**Final Task**: Imagine, and modalize the achieved theory-scheme from your case studies! Work out architectonic manifestos for the metalithic age.

**Tuesday Feb. 1st**
3–5 pm — Presentations and Discussions of FINAL TASK

**Wednesday Feb. 2nd**
3–5 pm — Presentations and Discussions of FINAL TASK

**Thursday Feb. 3th**
3–5 pm — Presentations and Discussions of FINAL TASK

**Friday Feb. 4th**
10–12 am — Presentations and Discussions of FINAL TASK
3–5 pm — Objects without structure. A philosophical introduction to mathematical category and topos theory (**Dr. Andrei Rodin**)

**Saturday Feb. 5th**
9–12 am — Final Critique