Hochschule München
Fakultät für Architektur
University of Applied Sciences München
Department of Architecture

Karlstraße 6
D - 80333 München

International Symposium
19 - 21 Nov 2009

STRUCTURALISM
in Architecture & Urbanism
RELOADED

Originally developed in linguistics, the structuralist approach was introduced as a scientific method in anthropology and other human sciences in the 1950s and later. In the 1960s and 70s the double category of primary and secondary structure (langue and parole) that is essential to Structuralism, in which the primary structure's system of rules determines how the secondary elements are placed in relation to one another, also advanced to a leading ideology in the field of architecture and urban planning. From its development in Holland and within the Team 10 circle of architects, Structuralism in architecture quickly spread worldwide. Almost all the utopian movements of the 1960s can be related to Structuralism, and in retrospect many research projects and theoretical approaches from this period can be characterized as structuralist. Although initially aimed at developing more humane environmental structures for mass society, Structuralism in architecture was never able to liberate itself from the taint of seriality and monotony. The built examples were perceived as inhumane, as they often failed in terms of practical use. The lack of individuality and the determinism of the primary structure brought Structuralism the reproach of anti-humanism. In the late 1970s it lost its appeal as a leading ideology in architecture.

Since the early 1990s we have been witnessing a revival of structuralist tendencies in architecture. In a parallel development, interest in the utopian aspects of the structuralist currents of the 1960s has also increased. Whereas the Structuralism of the 1970s encountered limits in complexity that were insurmountable at the time, today there is much to suggest that the return to this apparently unfinished project is causally connected to information technology, which has opened up new possibilities for dealing with complexity. There is talk of Neo-Structuralism with a digital imprint. This differs in several critical points from the precursor of the 1960s. The new, computer-aided tools lead logically to new approaches and different results. We are confronted with an enormous increase of complexity in the primary structures: away from simple grids to complex, irregular structures, with algorithmic design far exceeding the horizons of the old Structuralism. The question arises as to whether primary and secondary structures should be understood today as being in a state of complex interactions with one another which could be described through algorithms.

This further development and the current interest in design methods based on rules (ARCH+ 189) makes structuralism today one of the most productive and comprehensive approaches for the organisation and design of the built environment. At the same time it provides the systemic and meta-theoretical background for all disciplines involved in the production of space. In its digital reappearance however, structuralism often shows a naïve, technocratic belief in progress and feasibility in-as-much as it claims to be able to solve the demands for individuation in a mass society solely by numerical methods of planning and production technology. Today's digital Structuralism will probably only be able to bring us closer to the solution of the still unresolved issue of housing a mass society while simultaneously respecting man's individuality if there is also a utopian synthesis of all relevant aspects, including psychological, social and socio-political. The question of the sustainability of the structuralist approach in the future will probably boil down to whether its humanization (its individuation) will be sought within the system (i.e. in the course of perfecting the numerical-technological mastery of the complexities), or whether system-independent elements can be drawn upon for solving the problem.

Tomáš Valena

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In cooperation with
ARCH +
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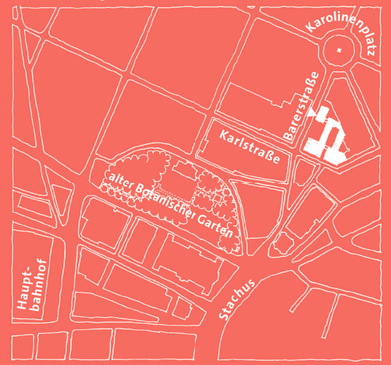
Karlstrasse 6
80333 München
Entrance Barerstrasse

Conference language
German & English



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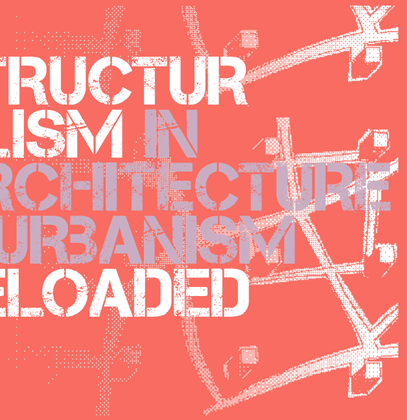

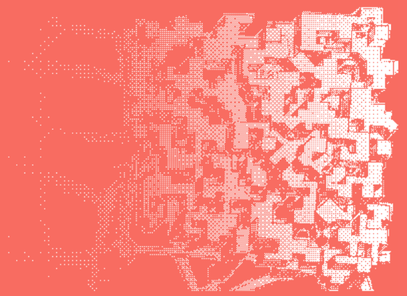

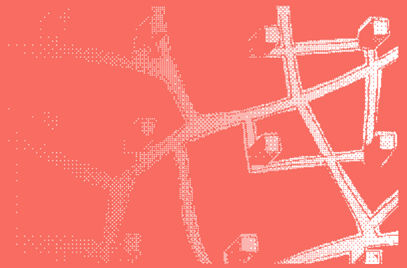

Thursday 19 Nov 09

13.00 Registration

14.00 **Introduction**
Prof Dr Tomáš Valena (HM Munich)

Section 1
Structuralism and Architecture
14.40 **Ruth Baumeister / Prof Dr Herman van Bergeijk**
Discovery of the Driving Forces behind Dutch Structuralism
Prof Dr Joaquín Medina Warmburg
Forum 1962:
Wachstumsstrukturen und Geschichtsmaschinen
Prof Dr Tom Avermaete
From Deep Structure to Spatial Practice:
Team 10, Structuralist Attitudes
and the Influence of Anthropology

15.50 Coffee break

16.20 **Dr Michael Hecker**
Structurel / Structural
Prinzipien und Merkmale der "strukturalistischen"
Strömung kybernetischer Prägung in Westdeutschland
Prof Dr Andri Gerber
(neo-)Structuralism and (neo-)Marxism?
17.10 Keynote
Prof Dr Georges Teyssot (Québec)
The Ethnographic Paradigm, Revisited
17.40 Round table with speakers of the section 1
Chair: **Bernhard Langer** (ETH Zurich)
Special guest: **Arnulf Lüchinger** (Den Haag)

Friday 20 Nov 09

8.30 Registration

Section 2
The Heroic Structuralism
9.00 Keynote
Prof Dr Koos Bosma (VU Amsterdam)
Structuralism in Architecture:
Patterns for a Civil Society
or the Charms of Seriality and Deviation?
9.30 **Inderbir Singh Riar**
Habitat 67 or Structuralism Redux
Dr Asseel Al-Ragam
Explorations in Mat-Building: Kuwait Urban Critique
Anne Kockelkorn
Verstädterung von Architektur:
Freie Universität Berlin 1963-1979

10.40 Coffee break

11.10 **Prof Dr Catherine Blain**
„The city as a combinatory"
French Structuralism of Atelier de Montrouge 1967-1972
Cornelia Regine Escher
Der Mega-Strukturalismus
der Groupe d'étude d'architecture mobile
Markus Stempl
Der strukturalistische Ansatz und die Raumstadt
Schwebende Städte für eine globalisierte Gesellschaft
1958-1974

12.20 Lunch

13.30 **Andrej Hrausky**
Structuralism in Slovenia
Dr Ersi Ioannidou
Structuralism and Metabolism
Bernhard Langer
Denken in Strukturen:
Ekistics und der Objektivitätsanspruch in der Architektur
14.40 Round table with speakers of the section 2
Chair: **Dirk van den Heuvel** (TU Delft)
Special guest: **Prof Doris Thut** (HM Munich)

15.30 Coffee break

Public lectures
Structuralism Reloaded?
16.00 **Prof Dr Herman Hertzberger** (Amsterdam)
Open Systems
Prof Winy Maas (MVRDV Rotterdam)
Pixelpower
Prof Dr Jörg Gleiter (FU Bozen)
struktural, material, digital
Zum strukturalistischen Denken in der Architektur
18.30 Round table with the speakers
Chair: **Nikolaus Kuhnert** (ARCH +)

Saturday 21 Nov 09

8.30 Registration

Section 3
Neo–Structuralism with a Digital Character
9.00 Keynote
Fabian Scheurer (Zurich)
Algorithmic Design - Werkzeug oder Weltbild?
9.30 **Dr Reinhard König**
Generative Planungsmethoden
aus strukturalistischer Perspektive
Prof Uwe Brederlau
Parametrische Entwurfsprozesse im Städtebau
Thomas Wortmann
Strukturalismus Recoded

10.40 Coffee break

11.10 **Heike Matcha**
Massenvielfalt:
Individualität durch parametrische Typologien
Steffen Lemmerzahl / Benjamin Dillenburger
Architektur-Automat -
Häuser als gebaute Kosten-Nutzen Analyse
Oder: der blinde Architekt
Niels Nötzel / Rüdiger Karzel
Evolutionary Structuralism
Dr Michael Dürfeld
Ornamentaler Strukturalismus
Vom Rhythmus zur Evolution
als Zukunft des Strukturalismus

12.50 Lunch

14.00 **Prof Bernd Kniess / Prof Christopher Dell**
Struktur, Diagram, reverse functionalism
Überlegungen zu einer Universität der Nachbarschaften
Walter Stelzhammer
„Himmel über Fünfhaus"
Strukturalismus und Teppichbebauungen aus heutiger Sicht
Peter Haimerl
Dynamisches Planen
15.10 Round table with speakers of the section 3
Chair: **Dr des Georg Vrachliotis** (ETH Zurich)

16.00 Coffee break

Saturday 21 Nov 09

Plenum
Structuralism – a Critical Look Ahead
16.30 **Dr Stefan Hajek**
Strukturalismus Reloaded
Der Versuch eines Ausblicks auf das Scheitern
Gernot Weckherlin
Lehren aus Missverständnissen:
Die kreative Adaption neuer Wissensfelder beim Entwerfen
Strukturalismus und Entwurfsmethoden heute
Dr Toni Kotnik
Algorithmic design: Strukturalismus reloaded?
17.40 Plenum with speakers of the Symposiums
Chair: **Nikolaus Kuhnert** (ARCH +)

Organisation and direction
Prof Dr Tomáš Valena
valena@hm.edu

Registration
via post, fax or email (s. Contact)
After payment of the symposium fee your registration will be confirmed
Account: Tomas Valena „Structuralism"
Account: 0202131285
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Symposium fee
Early bird (until 5 Nov 2009)
Regular
60 € whole symposium (incl. 2x lunch, drinks and booklet)
15 € half day
30 € one day
Reduced (students and partner institutions with verification)
30 € whole symposium (incl. 2x lunch, drinks and booklet)

Later registration
80 € whole symposium
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