

Architecture, Research and the City

A PhD seminar at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO)
organised by Tim Anstey, Chair of Doctoral Programme, FTH and Léa-Catherine Szacka,
Postdoctoral researcher FTH (OCCAS)

With the participation of:

Jean-Pierre Chupin, associate professor at École d'architecture de l'Université de Montréal
and Carsten Ruhl, professor for architectural history at Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am
Main

PART I _ ALDO ROSSI: THE CITY AS A FIELD FOR RESEARCH & CREATION?

14.10.2014 | 13h-16h

[For 10-15 students from master seminar “**Concurrent Trends: Postmodern and Deconstructive Architecture**” + Group from the PhD school + Open invitation to the whole of AHO]

1. Introduction by Léa-Catherine Szacka

2. Aldo Rossi's *Città Analoga* as incomplete algorithm of individual expression within collective imagination

Jean-Pierre Chupin, Professor, Director of the Research Chair on Competitions and Contemporary Practices in Architecture (www.crc.umontreal.ca)

Left unfinished at the turn of the 1980s, partly published as *A Scientific Autobiography* (1981), and since the unveiling of his personal notebooks (*quaderni azzuri*) by the Getty Research Institute in 1999, Aldo Rossi's theory of the *Città analoga* (Analogous City) can now be recognised as an original algorithm of architectural design within historical contexts. This communication will show how Rossi's analogical principles can be included in a general theory of the role of analogical thinking in design thinking be it at the architectural, landscape or urban scales. In a widespread situation of cultural uncertainty, the concept of the analogous city proposed to establish new relationships between “reality and imagination.” This reality concerned the state of cities, historic centres and suburbs of Italy in the early 1970s and the fault – for Rossi - lay with architects as well as with critics and theorists unable to offer anything convincing against land speculation and fraudulent historic preservation. Among the problems listed by Rossi were broad questions on the role of architecture or the training of the architect, to issues of the city in a crisis of modernity: all still pertinent in our present condition. This criticism led him to set out two hypotheses: imagination and analogy. Although, in retrospect, Rossi's theory is illuminating in many ways, it is understood that he could have seemed cryptic in his Jungian tinted call to the problematic concept of “collective imagination”.

3. Magical thinking - monumental form. Aldo Rossi and the architecture of image **Carsten Ruhl, Professor for Architectural History at the Art History Department at** **Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main**

Monumental form's great significance in legitimizing post-war architecture can possibly be defined most clearly by studying Aldo Rossi's work. In his *L'architettura della città*, published in 1966, Rossi focuses on reconstructing architecture as a monumental body that is able to shape the image of a city above and beyond the mere moment. The main requirement here is the ability to understand the city as a work of art originating in subconscious life (*vita incosciente*) and thus withdrawing to the greatest possible extent from complying completely with all the laws applicable to it. Rossi avers that this is like looking at art: the city can be approached only on the plane of description and aesthetic experience, not on the plane of rational analysis. Starting from this the study tries to work out in what sense Rossi's reflection on monumentality led to a new iconic understanding of architecture.

4. Discussion

PART II _ THE POINT. THE LINE. THE FIELD. SPECULATIONS ON THE ARCHITECTURE PhD

15.10.2014 | 9h-12h

PhD's in architecture have an operative potential. The tradition of writing architecture PhDs grew out of a context that mixed scholarly research and contemporary manifesto discussion in a specific way. Relating back to the 1970s this second part of the seminar will consider how that period saw a productive exchange between an informed discourse outside "research" and academia as productive for architectural theory, and will use this to reflect over the problematics and potential of the contemporary architecture PhD. The session will consist of three 15 minute interventions by invited guests (**list of guests TBC**), responding to the discussions on day 1, and considering the following question:

- In the light of Aldo Rossi's work on the city, how can we reflect on what constitutes research and the creation of historical and theoretical knowledge in the field of architecture?
 - What are and should be the operative potentials of architecture PhDs, over and above a division into various styles of enquiry (for example „research by design“ versus „conventional“ methods (whatever those might be)?
 - To what extent does the contemporary formalized academic frame for PhDs, that seeks legitimacy within the traditional hierarchies of the university, support or frustrate that operative potential?
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Bio

Jean-Pierre Chupin is professor at the University of Montreal School of Architecture, where he holds the Chaire de recherche sur les concours et les pratiques contemporaines en architecture (www.crc.umontreal.ca) and co-directs the Laboratoire d'étude de l'architecture potentielle (www.leap.umontreal.ca). He was appointed member of the University Research Committee from 2006 to 2012 and received the Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2008. Jean-Pierre is an architecture graduate from Nantes (France), and Portsmouth (UK). He taught at the Université du Québec à Montréal (Uqam), Toulouse School of Architecture and Lyon School of Architecture before joining the Université de Montréal in 2000. Jean-Pierre Chupin conducts research projects on contemporary architecture, on competitions processes and on practical and theoretical issues such as tectonics, architectural judgment and architectural experimentation. He has been working for more than two decades on the role of "analogical thinking" in architecture and is author of *On life, on the city, and on design thinking, even*, (Infolio Editions, 2013) as well as various texts on the issue of doctoral studies in architecture.

Carsten Ruhl has recently been appointed Professor for Architectural History at the Art History Department at Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main. From 2010 to 2013 he was Professor for History and Theory of Modern Architecture at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar and from 2003 to 2010 Assistent Professor at Ruhr-Universität Bochum. Between 1998 and 2008 he was recipient of scholarships from the Gerda-Henkel Foundation, the German Academic Exchange Service (Royal Institute of British Architects, London) and the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. In 2009 he was guest professor at University College Dublin, School of Art History and Cultural Policy. Carsten Ruhl's books include: *The Death and Life of the Total Work of Art. Henry van de Velde and the legacy of a Modern concept*. 12th International Bauhaus-Colloquium, ed. by Carsten Ruhl/Chris Dähne/Rixt Hoekstra, (Jovis-Verlag: Berlin 2014), *Magisches Denken – Monumentale Form. Aldo Rossi und die Architektur des Bildes* (Wasmuth 2013), *Mythos Monument. Urbane Strategien in Architektur und Kunst seit 1945* (Transcript

2011), *Palladio bears away the Palm. Zur Ästhetisierung palladianischer Architektur in England* (Olms 2003).

Tim Anstey is Professor and Chair of PhD Programme the Oslo School of Architecture and Design (AHO), a member of OCCAS, the Oslo Centre for Critical Studies in Architecture, and is acting chair of AHO's Research Committee. He was formally Director of Research at KTH School of Architecture, Stockholm in which role he worked with developing research culture and research-driven Masters education. He has a strong interest in the history of discourse around architecture and design, with a focus on how ideas about the role of the architect have been inscribed into architectural discourse. From 2011-2013 he was co-director of the Swedish National Strong Research Environment "Architecture in the Making". He is on the editorial board of SITE Magazine. His current research project, "Things that move", is funded by the Swedish Research Council 2014-2016.

Léa-Catherine Szacka is currently postdoctoral research fellow at the Oslo Centre for Critical Architectural Studies (OCCAS) part of Oslo School of Architecture (AHO). In the past, she has worked for Actar publisher, the Barbican Art Gallery and the Centre Pompidou and taught at Nottingham Trent University, as well as various architecture schools in Paris (ENSA-V, ENSA-PL, ENSA-PM). She has presented her work at international conferences and has published in *LOG*, *AD*, *OASE*, *AAFILES*, *Domus* and *Canadian Architects*, among others. More recently she contributed to the *Monditalia* exhibition part of the 14th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale.