

Architecture in the PostModern Era

Summer Semester 2017 (Friday 1-2:30pm)

Lawrence Hall (Room 104)

Instructor: Matthew Schlueb

Lecture 4 (2017.07.21):

An introduction to the work of Rem Koolhaas and his influence on post modern architecture

Leitmotifs:

Manhattan Grid/Block: a matrix capturing all remaining territory and all future activity, indifferent to topography, its ambition the subjugation and obliteration of nature, dimensionally identical, individual identity erased.

Skyscraper: infinite multiplication of the ground plane, continuity of space no longer functionally necessary, individual stacked privacies independent of each other, limited predictability planning becomes destabilizer, programmatic instability.

Typical Plan: an American invention, zero degree architecture stripped of all traces of uniqueness and specificity, without identity it is the end of the historic architectural fetishization of the atypical plan, the superiority of the artificial to the real.

Generic City: the conscious homogenized movement away from difference toward similarity, a global liberation movement, planning makes no difference whatsoever, buildings flourish and perish unpredictably, the end of city.

Conditioned/Conditional Space: through advancements in building technology, conditioned space inevitably becomes conditional space, interrelated and dependent on tangential attributes, both physical and metaphysical in nature.

Partis pris:

Wall: physical and metaphysical division, isolation, inequality, decision, limiting architectural possibilities, capable of creating a new phenomenon of desirable alternative, a walled oasis within the freedom of architectural confines.

Event-Structure: liberty zones, void bands, unplanned strips, erasure, enabling fields, providing unexpected juxtapositions of existing architectural material within a new context or relationship, resulting in unplanned activities or events with structure.

Junkspace: immersion in the arbitrary, what coagulates while modernization is in process, interior fallout, disorientation by any means, continually leaking entropy, orphan space, authorless, yet surprisingly authoritarian, apolitical entertainment.

Paranoid Critical Method (PCM): the spontaneous method of attaining knowledge based on the critical and systematic objectification of delirious associations and interpretations, internal mechanisms peculiar to paranoid phenomena.

Bigness: beyond a certain scale, no longer controlled by a single architectural gesture, façade no longer reveals interior instability of programmatic needs, exterior an agent of disinformation, no longer part of any urban tissue, merely exists.

magnum opuses:

1972 (competition/thesis) – **Exodus, or the Voluntary Prisoners of Architecture**,
Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis, Berlin, Germany

1987 (competition) – **Ville Nouvelle**, Rem Koolhaas, Melun-Sénart, Paris, France

2001 – **Prada Epicenter**, Rem Koolhaas, New York, New York

2004 – **Seattle Central Library**, Rem Koolhaas, Seattle, Washington

2008 – **China Central Television (CCTV)**, Rem Koolhaas, Beijing, China



bibliography:

Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto of Manhattan, Rem Koolhaas (Monacelli Press, New York, 1978)

S, M, L, XL, Rem Koolhaas and Bruce Mau (Monacelli Press, New York, 1995)

Perfect Acts of Architecture, Jeffrey Kipnis (Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, 2001)

Harvard Design School Guide to Shopping, Rem Koolhaas (Taschen, Köln, 2001)

Content, Rem Koolhaas, (Taschen, Köln, 2004)

Supercritical, Peter Eisenman, Rem Koolhaas, Jeffrey Kipnis and Robert Somol (Architectural Association, London, 2010)