If we were to write a model of the Eastern Block scientific society, or wider – science at large, we would have to begin with, "In the beginning there was the secret . . . " A secret as means of exclusiveness and state protection, a secret as a spectacular aesthetic phenomenon and an urban canon, a side effect of utopian terrains and material cultures, the means of power and control in liminal and contested territories. The secret has distinct priority in the individual/society equation, a secret as a central symbol in scientific cosmology. Using a real story of the Secret Cities - a network of high-security centres of research and knowledge production during the Cold War, we seek to interrogate these entanglements and to unfold the powers and the paradoxes of secret spaces still today perforating the surface of physical and intellectual landscapes.

The ultimate goal of this ZGW workshop is to introduce secrecy as an integral part of the process of strategic knowledge production, signifying a conflux of secret urbanisms, and the concept of the invisible terrains. Questions to be discussed: ethics of invisibility, poetics of radio and Morse signals, code/decode, penetrating the architectural bodies, secret/ sacral terrains, and translating secrecy from texts to architectures.

Program

15.30 - 15.40 Welcome Xenia Vytuleva (ETH Zurich, Columbia University NY)
15.40 - 16.00 Introduction: Philip Ursprung (ETH Zürich) & Jean Louis Cohen (IFA NYU)

I. Reading the Invisible
Moderator: Xenia Vytuleva (ETH Zurich)

16.00 - 16.30 “Visible Secrets, Invisible Responsibilities: Czech Art and Philosophy after 1968”, Hana Gründler (Max-Planck Florence)
16.30 - 17.00 “Cold War Beeps: Microarchitectures of Cryptography”, Evangelos Kotsioris (Princeton University, MoMa, NY)
17.00 - 17.15 Coffee break

II. Power of the Plan
Moderator: Marc Angell (gta ETH Zurich)

17.15 - 17.45 “Planned Geographies”, Kenny Cupers (Critical Urbanisms, University of Basel)
17.45 - 18.15 "Secrets and Clouds, Towards the Iconography of Concealed Geographies", Xenia Vytuleva (ETH, Zurich)
18.15 - 18.30 Coffee Break

III. Metanarratives: Secrecy and its Lessons
Moderator: Hana Grundler (Max-Planck Institute, Florence)

18.30 - 19.00 “Secrecy in Esotericism”, Andreas Kilcher (ETH Zurich)
19.00 - 19.30 N.N.
19.30 - 19.50 Final Discussion

Concept, organisation:
Xenia Vytuleva
Organisational assistance:
Rachele Delucchi