

PREFACE

Which definition could be provided for the expression “Structural Morphology”? This interrogation was the first one when Ture Wester, Pieter Huybers, Jean François Gabriel and I decided to submit a proposal of working group to the executive council of the International Association for Shells and Spatial Structures. We were discussing about topics of high interest for us, topics related to shapes, mechanical behaviour, geometry of polyhedra and surfaces, design, bionics... We had no clear answer to our first question, but hopefully our proposal was accepted by the executive council chaired by Steve Medwadowsky. Ture Wester was the chairman of this working group until 2004, and I accepted to “take the baton” for some years. The year after, during the annual symposium of the association, I proposed to my colleagues to collect some of the papers that had been published for IASS events (symposia and seminars). Pieter Huybers suggested calling it “An anthology of structural morphology”, and we agreed. This book gives our practical answer to our initial interrogation: while reading the thirteen chapters, a better understanding of “Structural Morphology” is possible. Several aspects of this discipline, which was introduced by famous pioneers like Leonardo da Vinci, Paxton, Graham Bell, E. Haeckel and more recently among others R. Le Ricolais, are illustrated by the contributions of many experts.

Next October our working group will hold its 6th international seminar in Acapulco. This seminar will be devoted to “Morphogenesis”. A new era is beginning with younger members and contemporary problems. It is also my pleasure to know that members of the International Association for Shell and Spatial Structures and its President Professor John Abel are always interested in the works produced by our group. This book simply aims to be a small milestone on the road of structural morphology.

René Motro
Montpellier 27 June 2008