Constructing the Architectural Canon (Wassenaar, 22–23 Feb 16)

Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study, Meijboomlaan 1, 2242 PR Wassenaar, Feb 22–23, 2016

Petra Brouwer, University of Amsterdam

Workshop at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences

Constructing the Architectural Canon
The Architectural History Survey Text in the Nineteenth Century
Organization: Petra Brouwer, University of Amsterdam

Today the canonical images and histories in architectural history survey texts are regarded as clichés that confirm dominant values and established practices. This workshop brings to the fore that at the time of its invention, halfway through the nineteenth century, the survey text was an explorative and critical genre. Being conscious of the pioneering nature of the architectural history survey text, nineteenth century authors extensively accounted for their method in their introduction, references and main text.

The reflections of the original authors on the advantages and limitations of the survey text may not only put a new light on the origins of the genre (its objectives and idiosyncracies), they are also instructive for our contemporary efforts to redefine the architectural canon and rewrite its history. Nineteenth-century authors touched upon themes that are still relevant and fiercely debated today in the fields of architectural history and cultural heritage studies, such as: the choice for a global versus local or national perspective; the value of generalization versus the acknowledgement of the particular; the value of professional versus popular knowledge.

The workshop at NIAS brings scholars together who research the origins of architectural history and the genre of the architectural history survey text in the long nineteenth century. It aspires to exchange and critically discuss each others historiographical insights in order to define common principles and concepts for a publication and international research project.

PROGRAM

Monday February 22
Invention, Uses and Impact of the Architectural History Survey text
Chair: Lex Bosman, University of Amsterdam

14.00-14.10
welcome by prof.dr. Paul Emmelkamp, rector of the NIAS

14.10-14.20
Petra Brouwer Introduction to the workshop

14.20-14.50
Christopher Drew Amstrong, University of Pittsburgh
Architectural history before the survey text

14.50-15.20
Martin Bressani, McGill University
Pre-surveys of Hope (1835), Ramée (1843) and Bâtissier (1843) and the alternative of Viollet le Duc

15.20-15.50
Petra Brouwer, University of Amsterdam
A new genre. The first architectural history survey texts

coffee/tea

16.15-16.45
Stephan Muthesius, University of East Anglia
The margins of architectural history

16.45-17.15
Mari Hvattum, Oslo School of Architecture and Design
Architectural history and the public realm

17.15-17.45
discussion (referee Caroline van Eck, Leiden University)

Tuesday February 23
Architectural History Survey Texts: case studies
Chair: Lex Bosman, University of Amstedam

11.00-11.30
Sarah Allaback, Library of American Landscape History, Amherst
Louisa C. Tuthill, History of Architecture, 1848

11.30-12.00
Henrik Karge, Technical University Dresden
Wilhelm Lübke, Geschichte der Architektur, 1855

12.00-12.30
Dirk Baalman – Centre for Cultural Heritage Het Oversticht, Zwolle
Eugen Gugel, Geschiedenis van de bouwstijlen, 1869

lunch

14.00-14.30

Andrew Ballantyne, Newcastle University
Banister Fletcher, A History of Architecture, 1896

14.30-15.00
Richard Etlin, University of Maryland
Auguste Choisy, Histoire de l’Architecture, 1899

coffee/tea

15.15-16.00
discussion: A survey of survey texts (referee Dirk van de Vijver, Utrecht University)

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Reference:
CONF: Constructing the Architectural Canon (Wassenaar, 22-23 Feb 16). In: ArtHist.net, Feb 6, 2016 (accessed Oct 30, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/12167>.