

Regionalism and Modernity (Ghent, 8-9 Nov 2007)

Conference

Title: "Regionalism and Modernity in the interwar period (1919/1940)"

Location: Ghent, Belgium

Date: 08-09 November 2007

Language: English

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Theme

Although the later - modernist - historiography minimized its role and presence in the architectural debate and production, regionalism was an important factor in the early twentieth century architecture.

The international and interdisciplinary conference on "Regionalism and Modernity in the interwar period (1919/1940)", will look deeper into the often disregarded regionalist tendencies in the interwar period. The conference continues the theme explored in the workshop "Sources of Regionalism" (Ghent, 2004), in which the roots of regionalism in the 19th century were analysed. By the end of 2007 the English publication "Sources of regionalism", based on the discussions in this first workshop, will be available.

The roots of the regionalist concept go back to the last decades of the 19th century. The many changes in society due to industrialisation formed the soil in which regionalism germinated as a cultural strategy to counter alienation. It cannot be dissociated from the Arts and Crafts movement, which stressed craftsmanship versus the uniformity and loss of quality in industrial production, and from the heritage movement, which reacted against the fast disappearance of traditional landscapes and the familiar environment. The essential feature of regionalism is the focus on regional and local characteristics, in architecture translated in the use of local building materials and of a local architectural vocabulary.

Massive destruction during the First World War enhanced the call for the rehabilitation of lost heritage, and regionalism became the main principle and official guideline for reconstruction in the devastated regions. The great success of regionalism led to its discredit in progressive circles. The schism between regionalists and modernists was born. A re-reading of the modernist-regionalist dichotomy based on an analysis of both contemporary discourse and architectural practice reveals that this schism was to some extent superficial. Above that, notions of "Heimat" and race infiltrated the

discourse and complicate the comprehension and appreciation of regionalism.

Organisation

The conference "Regionalism and modernity in the interwar period" is an initiative of the subgroup "Regionalism" of the international research community "Cultural Identities, World Views and Architecture in Western-Europe 1815-1940" (acknowledged by the FWO - Research Foundation - Flanders).

Conference Committee:

Dr. Jan De Maeyer (KADOC-K.U.Leuven/MoSa Faculty of Arts K.U.Leuven)

Dr. Leen Meganck (VIOE - Flemish Heritage Institute)

Drs. Evert Vandeweghe (Ghent University, Faculty of Arts)

Dr. Linda Van Santvoort (Ghent University, Faculty of Arts)

Programme - Thursday 08 November 2007

MORNING SESSION - Chaired by dr. Linda Van Santvoort (Ghent University, Belgium)

09u30 Linda Van Santvoort - Welcome & opening workshop; introduction to the research project

10u00 Jean-Claude Vigato (Ecole nationale supérieure d'Architecture de Nancy, France)

Le régionalisme entre progrès et tradition. Le cas français

10u30 Coffee break

11u00 Hervé Doucet (Université de Paris IV, France) Searching for a new image. An idealized regionalism in Lorraine

11u30 Johan Van den Mooter (Ghent University, Belgium) German reconstruction in Belgium during WWI

12u00 Discussion

12u30 Lunch break

AFTERNOON SESSION - Chaired by dr. Leen Meganck (VIOE - Flemish Heritage Institute, Belgium)

14u00 Björn Rzoska (VCV -Flemish centre for the study of popular culture, Brussels, Belgium) Flemish folklorists in the interwar period: building a national identity

14u30 Lut Missinne (Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany) Regionalism and a European view? Gerard Walschap on the "Heimatroman"

15u00 Coffee break

15u30 Geert Palmaerts (Groningen University, The Netherlands) 'Bildung', ethnicity and regionalism in interwar German town-planning: the case of Alfred Abendroth

16u00 Discussion

Programme - Friday 09 November 2007

MORNING SESSION - Chaired by dr. Tom Verschaffel (Leuven University)

09u30 Leen Meganck (VIOE - Flemish Heritage Institute, Belgium) Of patriotism, genius loci, authentic buildings and fake-farmsteads - regionalism in interwar Belgium

10u00 Benoît Mihaïl (Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium) The use of history in Art Deco architecture. Belgium and Northern France in the 1930s

10u30 Coffee break

11u00 Evert Vandeweghe (Ghent University, Belgium) Municipal Imagery and regionalism in the aftermath of the First World War in Flanders. Provincial agencies of the National Bank of Belgium

11u30 Elizabeth Darling (Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom) From the Rhetorical to the Regional: relocating British modernism towards the end of the 1930s

12u00 Discussion

12u30 Lunch break

AFTERNOON SESSION - Chaired by dr. Jan De Maeyer (Leuven University, KADOC)

14u00 Michelangelo Sabatino (University of Houston, United States) Italian Architecture and the Vernacular: Toward a Regionalist Modernism

14u30 Rob Dettingmeijer (Utrecht University, The Netherlands) Inventing regional traditions to facilitate the modernization of farming and resettlement

15u00 Coffee break

15u30 Hartmut Frank (HafenCity Universität, Hamburg, Germany) The 'Dächerkrieg' and the German Debates about Modern Architecture in Germany before World War II

16u00 Discussion and closing session

16u30 Drink

Fee:

The fee attending the whole conference is € 40. This includes the conference brochure, coffee breaks and the closing drink.

Reduced student fee: € 25 (student ID card required)

Fee per day: € 25,

Reduced student fee per day: € 15

Payment:

Can be made on the spot in cash.

Registration and information:

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