On Site (Berlin, 19 Feb 15)

Berlin, Feb 19, 2015

Franziska Lesák

On Site. Western Travellers Sketching Topographies in the Ottoman Empire
International Workshop

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the relations between the European countries and the Ottoman Empire are characterised by an increase in economic and diplomatic relations, but at the same time by military conflicts and aspirations. Europeans travelling to the Ottoman Empire in the 17th and 18th centuries were thus motivated by a variety of reasons and interests, which could be of a diplomatic, military, economic, religious, antiquarian or scholarly nature. Drawings and sketches were produced in these contexts both by travelling artists and by amateur draughtsmen.

The workshop investigates the activity of topographical sketching of landscapes or cityscapes during these travels with a particular focus on the implications of on-site sketching. The central question is how this artistic practice of sketching in a transcultural setup can be understood and conceptualised in art historical terms. We invite papers that deal with aspects of the following three fields.

Iconography
How did travelling draughtsmen choose their subjects and viewpoints? Which landscapes and cityscapes were considered significant and for what reasons (military, religious, antiquarian, aesthetic)? Did the permanent presence of conflict, both military and religious, between the Ottoman Empire and various European states, have an impact on the production and interpretation of these drawings?

Authenticity
Did these pictorial renderings aim at authenticity, and if so, how? How did travelogues testify to the authenticity of images? How did the knowledge, the preconceptions, the expectations and the fantasies of alterity that the travellers brought with them inform their practice of sketching on site; Or rather: In which way were such notions visually negotiated and thereby transformed?

Practices, Techniques and Modes of Representation
How was the practice of drawing on site (i.e. outside, in a foreign country, as a stranger) conceived of and dealt with? Which practices, techniques and modes of representation were applied under these conditions? What effects did sketching bans and a fear of pictures and their producers have on travelling draughtsmen? How were these situations described and reflected in travellers' writings?

Program, 19.2.2015

13.15 Ulrike Boskamp, Berlin
Welcome and Introduction

13.30 Palmira Brummett, Providence
Mapping the Ottomans: Moving from Narrative to Image at the “Limits” of Empire

14.30 Irini Apostolou, Athens
The Representation of the Levant by French Travellers in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

15.30 Coffee Break

16.00 William Kynan-Wilson, Berlin/Cambridge
Mediating Images in Jacques Carrey's View of Athens (1674)

17.00 Annette Kranen, Berlin
Presenting Travel. Movement, Space and Places in Seventeenth Century Western Images of the Ottoman Territories

18.00 Final Discussion

The Workshop will be hosted by the DFG Research Group 1703 Transcultural Negotiations in the Ambits of Art, Research Unit B1 In Motion. Artistic Mobility and Transcultural Exchange in the Early Modern Period.

Concept: Ulrike Boskamp, Annette Kranen

Venue: Freie Universität Berlin, Koserstraße 20, 14195 Berlin, Room A 163

Reference:
CONF: On Site (Berlin, 19 Feb 15). In: ArtHist.net, Jan 31, 2015 (accessed Nov 29, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/9377>.