Print culture and French architecture in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: a survey of recent scholarship

La culture de l'imprimé et l'architecture française des XVIIIᵉ et XIXᵉ siècles : un panorama sélectif des recherches récentes

Die Schriftkultur und die französische Architektur des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts: ein ausgewählter Überblick zur aktuellen Forschung

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Background

Of the many cultural history approaches that have found their way into scholarship on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century architectural history, perhaps none held more intrinsic potential to reinvigorate the old discipline than the study of print culture. I understand the study of print culture here in the broadest sense, as encompassing the material and cultural history of the printed book, from author to publisher to bookseller to reader; along with the intellectual and aesthetic implications, and socio-political consequences, of broadly disseminated, serially reproduced texts and images. In other words, a set of concerns extending from print runs and the price of paper to the expansion of reading publics and the emergence of an informational public sphere. To reflect on such matters is to reflect on the advent of the modern world itself; it is also, by implication, to reflect on the long eclipse of an earlier world in which embodied, phenomenal experiences unfolding in real space had been the normative ground for social existence, and in which the power of architecture to characterize such spaces had long made it the most prestigious public art of representation.[1] Thus print culture studies offers the scholar of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century architectural history a rich array of new insights and tools with which to rethink the contexts in which architectural forms, intentions, discourses, and reception developed during the long passage into modernity.

A renewed interest in the printed literature and imagery of architectural culture can be traced back at least as far as midcentury, with works by scholars like Rudolf Wittkower, André Chastel, and Anthony Blunt – or even the mysterious Mae Mathieu, whose *Pierre Patte, sa vie et son oeuvre* (1940) was in many respects decades ahead of its time.[2] This early work constituted a further step in the traditional history of architectural intention, as scholars worked to develop a more fine-grained understanding of the decisions that underlay design. Architectural theory, which had been mostly neglected in the past, became a focus of research. By the early 1960s the historiography of French eighteenth- and nineteenth-century architecture had been enriched by the first substantial

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publications on architectural texts generated, not by practitioners, but by critics, clergy-men, guidebook authors, and in the context of polemics and public debates (HERRMANN, 1962; MIDDLETON, 1962/1963; NYBERG, 1963, 1967).

Beyond the discipline of architectural history, the study of print culture and book history was beginning to come into its own. Emerging out of the Annales school in the 1950s and 1960s via pioneers Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, it matured in the 1960s and 1970s in the work of Elizabeth Eisenstein, who published her game-changing magnum opus, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, in 1979. This scholarship brought old tools of biblio-antiquarianism to bear on more recent historiographical concerns with deep social and epistemological change, thereby fleshing out insights about literacy, orality, and communication that had been offered previously in more speculative fashion by the likes of Harold Innis, Walter Ong, and Marshall McLuhan. In the 1980s, projects like the great *Histoire de l'édition française* codirected by Roger Chartier and Martin (1983-1986), along with work by the American scholar Robert Darnton, further enriched the field, knitting together the whole lifecycle of circulating books into an approach where content, dissemination, reception, and response all had their place.

Print culture studies and architectural history might seem at this point to have been on an inevitable path to blissful communion. But there were some obstacles. The types of questions print culture studies had been developed to explore were an uneasy fit with architectural history's traditional agenda: one was interested in deep structural changes that affected every level of society, whereas the other had traditionally focused on fine buildings built by famous architects working for elite clients. This is very likely why some of the first architectural historians to embrace the rhetoric of book history were specialists in the Renaissance, when printed materials (and especially those that dealt centrally with archi-tecture) were still the nearly exclusive province of those same elite architects and patrons with whom scholarship was already engaged – something that could not be said of, say, the nineteenth century. Some of this scholarship did aim to pose the kinds of deeper theoretical questions associated with book history – for instance, Joseph Rykwert's contribution at the major 1981 colloquium on Renaissance treatises at the Centre d'études supérieures de la Renaissance in Tours, which posed new and probing questions about what was at stake epistemologically in the revolutionary shift from oral to written transmission of architectural knowledge (RYKWERT, [1984] 1988). But a lot of the scholarship still took for granted that one studied treatises mainly in order to understand design intentions.

The period around 1980 was nonetheless something of a golden age for the study of architectural theory – one need think only of such landmarks as Françoise Choay's *La Règle et le modèle* (CHOAY, 1980), Alberto Pérez-Gómez's *Architecture and the Crisis of Modern Science* (PÉREZ-GÓMEZ, 1983), or Neil Levine's recovery of the theoretical apparatus underlying the work of Henri Labrouste (LEVINE, 1977, 1982) – and it was in the interest of gaining a deeper, more sociologically-informed understanding of nineteenth-century architectural theory that book history methods were first employed in a series of studies of French architectural perio-dicals. Central to all of these studies was César Daly and his *Revue générale d'architecture et des travaux publics*, the subject of an important article and Harvard dissertation by Ann Lorenz Van Zanten (VAN ZANTEN, 1977, 1981) and a Cornell University dissertation by Richard Becherer (BECHERER, [1980] 1984). On the other side of the Atlantic, Hélène Lipstadt wrote the lion's share of a remarkable joint study that considered the conflict between archi-tects and engineers as it played out in nineteenth-century French architectural periodicals

(LIPSTADT, MENDELSOHN, 1980). After a theoretical introduction justifying the project, Lipstadt offered one of the very first published surveys of periodicals from the period 1800-1835, while her third part was devoted entirely to the *Revue générale d'architecture*. Lipstadt went far beyond unearthing content, making instead the sociologically inflected argument that the conflict with engineers had been a *non sequitur* for an

1a. Cover of SABOYA, 1991; **b.** frontispiece of the *Revue générale d'architecture*, in SABOYA, 1991.

insecure architectural profession incapable of confronting the forces that really threatened it. In 1990 the *Revue de l'Art* then devoted an entire issue to architectural periodicals, with a spirited editorial by Françoise Hamon that urged scholars to tap into this neglected primary resource (HAMON, 1990). The issue also contained an essay by Françoise Boudon on the treatment of Renaissance architecture in nineteenth-century French periodicals (BOUDON, 1990), and another by one of Hélène Lipstadt's co-researchers, Bertrand Lemoine, who offe-red an overview of nineteenth-century periodicals followed by an inventory of titles he and Lipstadt had compiled (LEMOINE, 1990). This first burst of new scholarship then culminated with the publication of Marc Saboya's comprehensive study, *Presse et architecture au XIXᵉ siècle* (SABOYA, 1991), based on his 1989 thesis written under the direction of Daniel Rabreau. Saboya's book offered a detailed survey of post-1789 architectural periodicals followed by a systematic account of the materiality, organization, personnel, content, diffusion, and reception of Daly's *Revue générale d'architecture* (**fig. 1**). In the important middle section of the book, Saboya used the *R.G.A.* as a lens through which to enrich and extend Lipstadt's analysis of the sociological development of the architectural profession. Indeed, this concern with the profession emerges as one of the important early fruits of the marriage of print culture studies and architectural history: for if architectural historians were not yet ready to use print in exploring architecture's place in the larger society, sociological analysis of the smaller world of the nineteenth-century architectural profession marked at least a step in that direction, and one to which the new tools of print culture studies proved well adapted.

The potential relevance of print culture studies to architectural historians was demonstrated anew by the revisionist scholarship on the French Revolution and the French nation in general that began pouring forth from around 1980 onwards. Animated by works like François Furet's *Penser la Révolution française* (1978) but also by French (1978) and English (1989) translations of Jürgen Habermas's *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (1962), questions of political language, political culture, and the public sphere took on new urgency in scholarly circles. Art historians in particular were quick to join the movement, starting with Thomas Crow's hugely influential *Painters and Public Life* (1985). These new lines of inquiry carried with them the implicit suggestion that print ought to be studied not just as a neutral supplier of content, but as a fundamentally new factor in public life, one that

betokened deep structural mutations in the relationships between state, individual, and society, and that inaugurated a new relationship between the individual and public life.

Hélène Lipstadt's ambitious 1989 essay on "Architecture and its Image" gestured in this direction by suggesting that scholarship on architectural books and periodicals should be framed within a larger exploration of representation itself, and thus with how nineteenth-century architects situated themselves in a new kind of public sphere (LIPSTADT, 1989). In that same year, Richard Cleary published his study of Jacques-François Blondel's efforts to educate the architectural tastes of the broader non-specialist reading public through accessible and (putatively) entertaining books, including even an epistolary novel (CLEARY, 1989). A threshold of sorts was then reached in 1994 with Sylvia Lavin's pioneering study of the conceptualization of the public sphere in Quatremère de Quincy's contributions to Charles-Joseph Panckoucke's *Encyclopédie métho-dique* (LAVIN, 1994). This important essay, which in its first footnote castigated architectural historians for not responding more energetically to the challenge of Crow's book, was the first explicit attempt to point architectural history in the direction of Habermas's theories, Darnton's work on the publishing industry, and Roger Chartier's scholarship on language and reading practices. A year later, and making reference to Lavin's study, Marc Grignon and Juliana Maxim of Laval University in Canada published an undeservedly neglected article in which they sought to reread the evolution of important theoretical concepts – specifically, the eclipse of the theoretical concept of *convenance* and its replacement with that of *caractère* – against the backdrop of contemporary changes in the structure of the public sphere as theorized by Habermas (GRIGNON, MAXIM, 1995). This cluster of scholarship was then crowned, also in 1995, by the publication of Katie Scott's groundbreaking *The Rococo Interior*, a prodigiously dense social and cultural history of the Rococo that, amid much else, positioned print (both graphic prints and written theory) as a vulgarizing wedge seeking to prise open the privileged exclusivity of noble culture, with the rococo revealed as a willful – if ultimately vain – instrument of resistance (SCOTT, 1995). Scott's book, more than anything that had appeared up to that point, offered a glimpse of the exciting new insights available to a scholar willing to think ambitiously and afresh about the implications of print in architectural culture. By the time Mario Carpo then published his provocative analysis of the role of printing in the development of Renaissance classicism (CARPO, 1998 [2001]), it had become clear that the growing attentiveness to the implications of printing held enormous promise to push the discipline of architectural history in productive new directions.

Recent conferences

The proceedings of several conferences on aspects of print culture and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French architecture have appeared over the last two decades, all of them in France. Many of the essays from these seven volumes will be discussed in greater detail in what follows, but anyone seeking to get a sense of the current state of the field under consideration here could do worse than start with an overview of their respective editorial orientations.

The first two volumes appeared in 2001 and 2002, each one a year after the conference whose proceedings they contained, and may be treated as a pair. Both were published by the École nationale des Chartes and edited by Jean-Michel Leniaud and
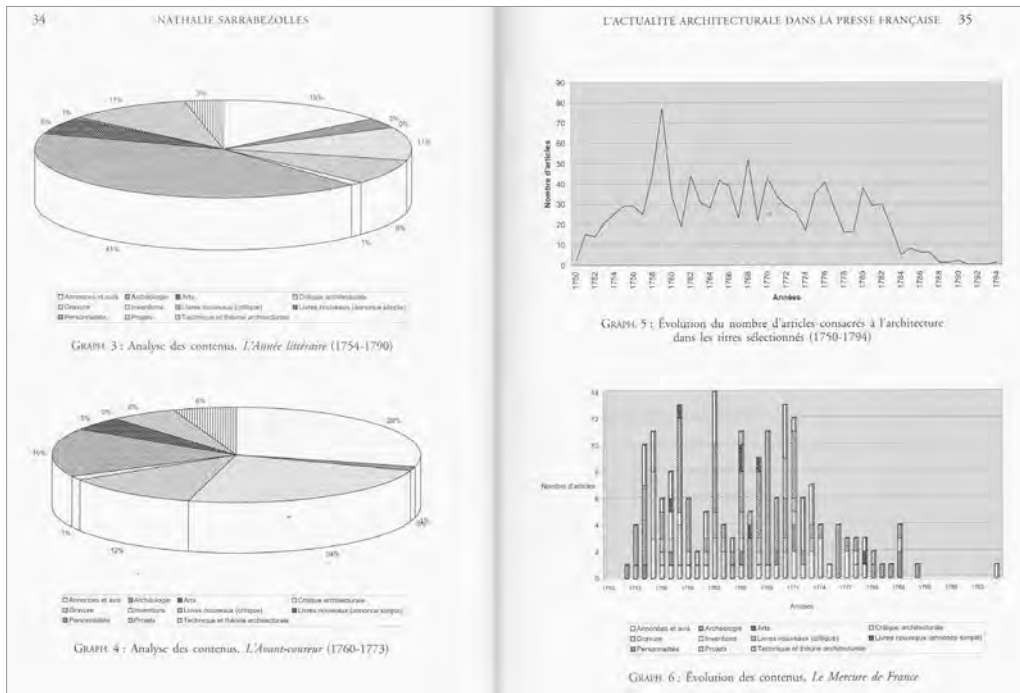
2. Example of quantitative research methods in LENIAUD, BOUVIER, 2001, 2002: Nathalie Sarrabezolles, "L'Actualité architecturale dans la presse française (1750-1794)," in LENIAUD, BOUVIER, 2001, p. 19-37.

his student Béatrice Bouvier. The first concerned the architectural periodical during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and the second the *livre d'architecture* from the fifteenth to the twentieth century (LENIAUD, BOUVIER, 2001, 2002). Reflecting Leniaud's longstanding support for quantitative methods of research, his introductions to both volumes stress the need for systematic inventories of publications, serial analysis of their different features, and "critique externe" (close study of the form and materiality of the volumes) in the manner of book history (**fig. 2**). Aspects of these approaches are in fact adopted by nearly all of the contributors, with a focus – albeit not exclusive – on books and periodicals aimed at members of the architectural profession. This stress on quantification was not without its critics: already in June 2000, in direct response to the debates that had occurred at the first of these two *journées d'étude*, Yves Chevrefils Desbiolles sounded the alarm against "insufficiently problematized quantitative studies" in his own methodological and bibliographical reflections on the study of architectural periodicals (CHEVREFILS DESBIOLLES, 2000). Noting that around 1830 there had been a major shift from a treatise-based economy of architectural discourse to one based firmly on professional journals, he made a nuanced appeal for a more holistic approach to the study of the architectural press, urging scholars to regard it as perhaps *the* central resource for nineteenth-century architectural history.

Another volume of essays, edited by Daniel Rabreau and Dominique Massounie, appeared in 2006 and presented the proceedings of a conference from 2004 sponsored by the Institut national d'histoire de l'art (INHA) on Claude-Nicolas Ledoux and the French architectural book, alongside those of a separate conference on Étienne-Louis Boullée that had occurred in 1999 (RABREAU, MASSOUNIE, 2006). Rabreau's introduction articulates two main avenues of exploration, one oriented around typical book history concerns – the

"editorial specificities" of the books and the nature of the relationship between text and image in them – and the other centered on the nature of their authors' engagement in theory, and on variations in language between theoretical writing, teaching, the reception of projects, criticism, and current historiography. In 2009 Rabreau was again the organizer, along with Christophe Henry, of an INHA-sponsored conference that resulted two years later in a major volume of essays on the subject of the public and the politics of art in the eighteenth century (HENRY, RABREAU, 2011). Several of the essays here focused specifically on architecture. The introduction, by Henry, made a straightforward plea in favor of a contextualist cultural history that aimed to capture the entire dynamic of artistic production, from the intellectual sources and cultural assumptions of the artist to their reception by the public. Printed texts were studied by the authors in the collection primarily for their content, and in particular for what they reveal about how artists conceived of and presented themselves to the public.

Three additional volumes have emerged from a group of scholars that includes Olga Medvedkova, Alice Thomine-Berrada, Jean-Philippe Garric, Émilie d'Orgeix, and Valérie Nègre, among others, most of whom are affiliated with the "Livre d'architecture" research program at the INHA founded in 2002 by Medvedkova and Thomine-Berrada. This program has both organized conferences and assembled a large bibliography of French architectural books that is consultable through the INHA's AGORHA web portal (http://agorha.inha.fr). Two important volumes of conference proceedings have been published through the program, one on *La Construction savante*, which is to say, published technical literature on construction (GARRIC, NÈGRE, THOMINE-BERRADA, 2008; **fig. 3**), and one on *Le Livre et l'architecte* more generally (GARRIC, D'ORGEIX, THIBAULT, 2011). These both examine the period from the Renaissance to the present. The essays adopt a wide variety of approaches in dealing with everything from the technical and economic aspects of book design to the social dimensions of book dissemination and content reception. Finally, Olga Medvedkova has edited a third collection, on *Bibliothèques d'architecture*, which also originated in an INHA-sponsored conference, this one in 2005 (MEDVEDKOVA, 2009). Medvedkova's introduction stresses the metaphor of architecture as an artificial language, which, unlike painting or sculpture, requires "manuals and dictionaries" for those who would learn to speak and read it, and collections of images for those who would like to see buildings without travelling to them. The essays in the book thus tend to take a documentary approach, and of the seventeen essays within, fourteen consider the libraries of architects or architectural institutions.
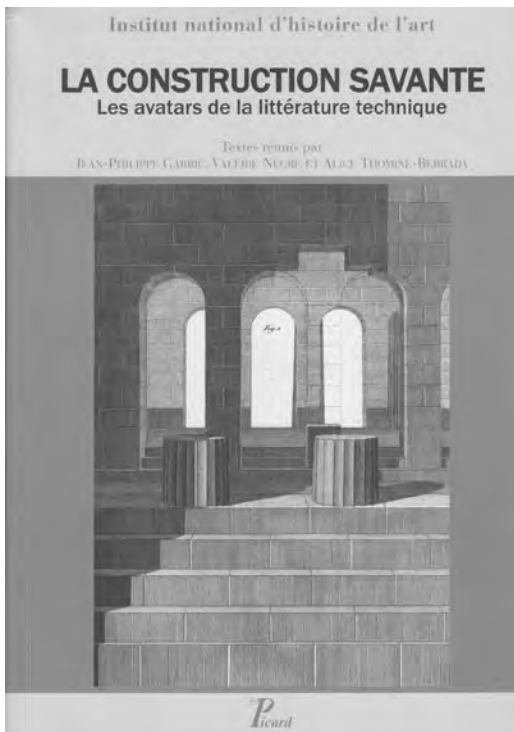
3. Cover of GARRIC, NÈGRE, THOMINE-BERRADA, 2008.

Architects and print

As this survey indicates, scholarship on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century print culture and French architecture has thus far centered overwhelmingly on books and periodicals that were oriented towards, and/or produced by, members of the architectural profession. Most of this work has either focused on a particular theme or issue, or has sought to bring print culture concerns into monographic studies of particular architects and theorists. There have been a few monographic studies devoted specifically to print culture topics – specific titles, book genres, or periodicals – though not as many as one might perhaps expect. In terms of nineteenth-century architectural periodicals (an area conveniently surveyed in a 2002 article by Marc Saboya [SABOYA, 2002]) it would appear that only one other full-scale study in the manner of Saboya's work on the *Revue générale d'architecture* has been published: Béatrice Bouvier's exhaustive study, based on her 2001 thesis, of the

4. Cover of the catalog of the Bance architectural publishing firm (1847), in BOUVIER, 2004, fig. 6.

nineteenth-century Parisian architectural periodical press as seen through the lens of the great Bance et Morel publishing house (BOUVIER, 2004; **fig. 4**). Bouvier brings a holistic approach to her task, first offering a history of the publishing house itself as it passed from generation to generation over the better part of a century; then an account of the periodicity, format, illustrations, personnel, and content of its two major journals, the *Encyclopédie d'architecture* (1850-1892) and the *Gazette des architectes et du bâtiment* (1871-1886); and then a section on Eugène Viollet-le-Duc's relationship with the press, first as collaborator and later as director after the death of Morel, with careful attention to the changes observable in these publications over time. Another long segment then investigates the relationship between the architectural profession and the architectural periodical in the nineteenth century, in a very wide-ranging inquiry that extends as far afield as the development of architects' syndicates and the evolution of architectural jurisprudence. The immense body of new information made available by this extraordinary labor of love was warmly welcomed by reviewers, who nonetheless also tended to regret that the book had not yielded more comprehensive and perhaps also more comparative conclusions (MASSU, 2004; FOSSIER, 2005; SAVAGE, 2005).

Beyond Bouvier's magnum opus, there have been only a few monographic articles, such as Nicolas Padiou's densely researched essay on the history of *L'Immeuble et la construction dans l'Est* (1887-1914), which situates the journal in both the architectural debates of its day and in the context of the architectural profession in Lorraine (PADIOU, 2001). Other studies have focused on specific books: Thierry Verdier's recent article on Augustin-Charles d'Aviler's *Dictionnaire d'architecture* disentangles the various models and sources

5. Cover of Claude Perrault, *Abrégé des dix livres d'architecture de Vitruve*, Paris, 1674, discussed in MEDVEDKOVA, 2008, p. 43-53.

ABREGE
DES DIX LIVRES
D'ARCHITECTURE
DE
VITRUVE.

A PARIS,
Chez JEAN BAPTISTE COIGNARD,
rue S. Jacques, à la Bible d'or.

M. DC. LXXIV.
AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROT.

on which the architect drew in assembling that pioneering text (VERDIER, 2011), while Olga Medvedkova's essay on Claude Perrault's *Abrégé* of Vitruvius points to wide margins, large type, and a relatively elevated price in making the case that this work, often assumed to have been oriented towards workmen, was in fact aimed at *amateurs* (MEDVEDKOVA, 2008; **fig. 5**). Annie Charon has detailed the multiple editions – and gradual evolution – of Pierre Bullet's *Architecture pratique* from the end of the seventeenth into the nineteenth century (CHARON, 2008). Nicolas Lemas's article about the late-eighteenth-century *Almanach des Bastimens* is a small masterpiece of the genre (LEMAS, 2005). Describing this annual publication as the eighteenth-century "pages jaunes du bâtiment," Lemas investigates the qualifications and motivations of its publisher, the sources of his information, the publicity strategies of those architects listed in the *Almanach*, as well as the publication's content, function, and intended audience; he even gets at the elusive question of how it was used by examining the annotations found in a copy at the Bibliothèque nationale de France. There has also been one very important book-length study of a particular genre of publication: Jean-Philippe Garric's *Recueils d'Italie*, which examines French architectural *recueils* of the nineteenth century, particularly the first half, with a focus on how they presented Italian buildings as models (GARRIC, 2004; **fig. 6**). Reconstructing the publishing context of the era, looking at both well-known and obscure publications, comparing their choice of content and their graphic technique, and interpreting them as arguments by their authors in favor of any one of a number of theoretical positions, Garric uses the tools of book history in concert with other forms of analysis in a very successful effort to produce a

Jean-Philippe GARRIC

RECUEILS D'ITALIE
Les modèles italiens dans les livres d'architecture français

MARDAGA

6. Cover of GARRIC, 2004.

kind of cultural history of the production of architectural theory and pedagogy – one that then authorizes convincing reassessments of some key figures. It is among the most successful demonstrations we have of the potential of this kind of inquiry to produce important revisions in our received views of the period.

Most scholarship on architectural books and periodicals has tended, understandably, to focus on more limited subjects. Thus there have been several studies of the images in books and periodicals, including the technical aspects of image reproduction (SABOYA, 2001; GARRIC, 2006; NÈGRE, 2010; CROSNIER-LECONTE, 2011; GUILMEAU-SHALA, 2011) and the practice of reusing old images from earlier
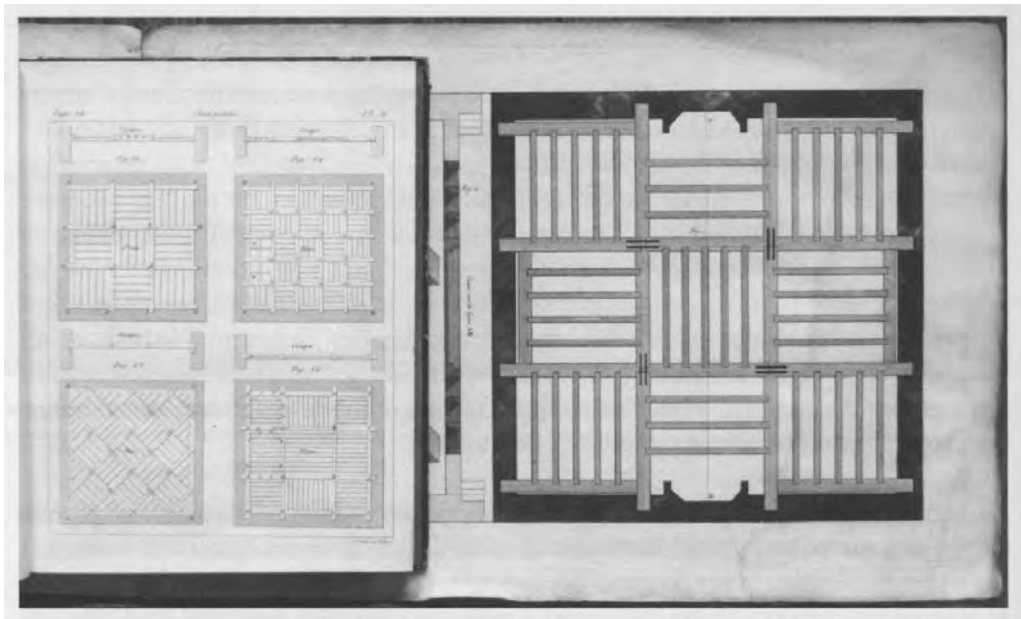
books (NÈGRE, 2011; **fig. 7**). There have been quantitative studies of tables of contents (THOMINE, 2001), book reviews (LEROY, 2001), and advertising (BOUVIER, 2001b). Even the architecture of nineteenth-century bookstores has been examined (BOUVIER, 2001c; GAUDARD, 2006). Pierre Pinon has presented a detailed consideration of the publishing activities of Louis-Pierre Baltard in an article in the *Construction Savante* collection – a topic he had touched on previously in his monograph on Baltard and his more famous son, Victor (PINON, 2005, 2008; **fig. 8**). Most work has focused on content in a traditional sense. Among many examples, Anne Georgeon-Liskenne has examined what the nineteenth-century German architectural press had to say about contemporary French architecture (GEORGEON-LISKENNE, 1999 [2001]); Édouard Vasseur has investigated how the 1867 Universal Exposition was reported in the architectural press (VASSEUR, 2001); Juan-Antonio Calatrava has explored the presentation of theater and architecture in the *Encyclopédie* (CALATRAVA, 2004); Josephine Grieder has sought to uncover the genesis and currency of the term "néo-grec" through an industrious examination of how it was – and wasn't – used in the nineteenth-century architectural press (GRIEDER, 2011); while for a collection of essays on Henri

9. Middleton and Baudouin-Matuszek's discussion of Jean Rondelet's *Traité de l'art de bâtir*, in MIDDLETON, BAUDOUIN-MATUSZEK, 2007, p. 217.
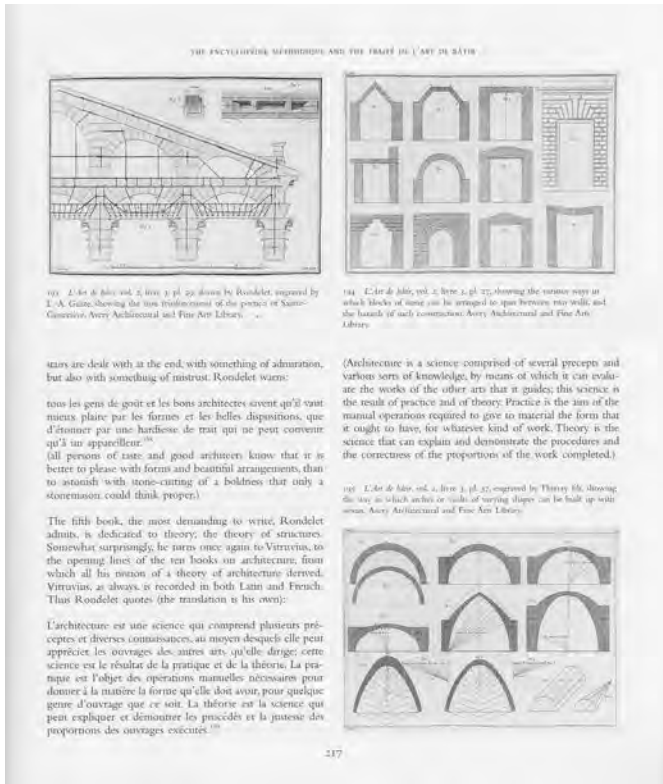
Labrouste and library architecture, Béatrice Bouvier has gathered press accounts of the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève between 1840 and 1860 (BOUVIER, 2003).

Three recent monographs on architect-theorists deserve to be mentioned here as well. The rich and no doubt definitive study of Jean Rondelet published by Robin Middleton and Marie-Noëlle Baudouin-Matuszek in 2007 devotes a long chapter to Rondelet's *Traité de l'art de bâtir* (**fig. 9**) and his contributions to Panckoucke's *Encyclopédie méthodique*, couching its analysis in detailed accounts of the editorial circumstances of both publications (MIDDLETON, BAUDOUIN-MATUSZEK, 2007). Christopher Drew Armstrong's book on Julien David Leroy contains an important chapter about Leroy's *Ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce* (**fig. 10**) in which the novel organization of the book, the ways in which it was targeted to particular readerships, and the complicated editorial revisions between the first and second editions (1758 and 1770) are all thoughtfully woven together to yield a fresh sense of the historical importance of the publication (ARMSTRONG, 2012). And finally

10. Julien David Leroy's *Les Ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce*, 2nd edition, Paris, 1770, discussed in ARMSTRONG, 2012.

Martin Bressani's splendid new study of Viollet-le-Duc devotes substantial attention to the architect-theorist's extensive activity as an author, polemicist, and, at the end of his life, editor-publisher; thus Bressani provides deeply contextualized discussions of (among much else) Viollet's early participation in the polemic on the Gothic revival, the long publishing traditions to which his *Dictionnaire* was heir, the *Dictionnaire* itself as a "graphic environment," and finally his stint as director of Morel's publishing house after 1869 (BRESSANI, 2014).

One of the most remarkable and, it is no exaggeration to say, thrilling recent attempts to bring the tools of book history to bear on the history of architectural theory is Fabio Restrepo Hernández's unpublished dissertation on Marc-Antoine Laugier's *Essai sur l'architecture* from the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya

(RESTREPO HERNÁNDEZ, 2011). This very original study, which one hopes will soon be published, centers on Charles Eisen's famous frontispiece for the second edition of 1755 (**fig. 11**), which the author provocatively argues does not illustrate the primitive hut, and was most likely elaborated without any input whatsoever from Laugier himself. In building his thought-provoking case, Restrepo Hernández deploys close analyses of the form of the two editions of Laugier's book, information derived from heretofore unknown (to me, at least) archival documents relating to Laugier's death and the publisher Duchesne's business, a certain amount of well-informed speculation as to the circumstances in which Eisen received the commission for the frontispiece, and finally a minute iconographic reading of the famous image – all of which is then assembled into an entirely fresh interpretation of what the famous frontispiece depicts. Not everyone who reads this detective story of a

11. Frontispiece to Marc-Antoine Laugier, *Essai sur l'architecture*, Paris, 1755, discussed in RESTREPO HERNÁNDEZ, 2011.

dissertation – which is remarkable also from the perspective of its graphic design (**fig. 12**) – will be convinced that the author has solved the mystery, but few will ever look at that iconic image in the same way again.

12. Double page spread from RESTREPO HERNÁNDEZ, 2011, p. 238-239.

Dissemination

It is in the DNA of print culture studies and book history that the scholar must attend not just to the material and intellectual production of the book, but also to its dissemination and, if possible, its consumption by readers. Architectural historians have increasingly tried to take on this challenge, and have done so in a variety of ways. At the level of the modalities of distribution, Jean-Philippe Garric has offered a very useful primer on the common early nineteenth-century practice of selling architectural books via subscription, with analysis of why the contemporary publishing market favored such arrangements, and how the practice was viewed with respect to the Ancien Régime practice of noble dedications (Garric, 2009). Other scholars have tried to track book dissemination on a national scale, as in studies such as those by Frédéric Jiméno on the presence of French architecture books in Spain after 1750 (Jiméno, 2006), Dirk van de Vijver on French architecture books in architects' collections in the Netherlands between 1750 and 1830 (van de Vijver, 2009), and Inga Lander on their presence in Russia over roughly the same period (Lander, 2009). Most work in this area has centered on libraries: architects' libraries mainly, although not always. In the case of individuals, such studies typically have drawn on convenient archival documentation in the form of after-death inventories or sale catalogs, while for institutions they draw on old catalogs as well as the logs of readers' book requests. Important early studies include Annie Charon's examination of Jacques-Germain Soufflot's library (Charon-Parent, 2002) and Anthony Gerbino's account of François Blondel's library (Gerbino, 2002). The *Livre d'architecture* collection contains three articles on nineteenth-century institutional libraries: those of the École des beaux-arts, the Administration des cultes, and the Commission des monuments historiques (Doulat, Vendredi-Auzanneau, 2002; Gastaldi, 2002; Pariset, 2002). Laurence Chevallier has also studied the library of the Bordelais architect Jean-Baptiste Dufart (Chevallier, 2004), while Annie Jacques has examined the place of Renaissance treatises in French libraries more generally (Jacques, 2010). Middleton and Baudouin-Matuszek's book on Rondelet devotes an exhaustive (and exhaustively erudite) chapter to Rondelet's library (Middleton, Baudouin-Matuszek, 2007, ch. 12). The most important resource for those interested in libraries is of course Medvedkova's 2009 collection, which in addition to its essays also contains an up-to-date bibliography of scholarship on the subject. Among the architectural libraries considered in the book are those of Gabriel-Philippe de la Hire, professor at the Académie royale d'architecture at the start of the eighteenth century (Rousteau-Chambon, 2009); the early nineteenth-century architectural partnership of Legrand and Molinos (Szambien, Toda, 2009); the obscure eighteenth-century architect Pierre-Noël Rousset (Quintard-Lenoir, 2009); and the Jesuit monastery of Antwerp during the eighteenth century (Fabri, Lombaerde, 2009). Particularly rich is Pierre Pinon's account of Pierre-Adrien Pâris's extensive library, in which not only the content is analyzed, but also the history of the library's assembly, the sources from which its books were purchased, the amount of money Pâris invested in it, and even how he seems to have used it (Pinon, 2009). Dimitri Ozerkov's fascinating chronicle of Catherine the Great of Russia's substantial architectural library is also noteworthy, especially for the annexed inventory of her collection, where it comes as something of a surprise to learn that the empress collected even such earthy works as Michel Frémin's *Mémoires critiques sur l'architecture* (1701; Ozerkov, 2009).

Another approach to the question of dissemination – one that permits scholars to consider less rarified populations – has been to examine how and to what extent architectural

discourse, or even simply representations of architecture and the city, were presented in print to the broader public. This work has focused mainly on periodicals and fiction. In 2001, Nathalie Sarrabezolles offered the first published survey of architectural coverage in the French press between 1750 and 1794 (SARRABEZOLLES, 2001). In that same year I completed a dissertation that was also rooted in the *dépouillement* of periodicals, indexes, and catalogs, and which was eventually reworked into the first book-length study of the role of print in constituting the modern architectural public during the eighteenth century (WITTMAN, 2007b). In the domain of fiction, Aurélien Davrius has recently made a thoughtful and densely argued contribution to the literature on Jean-François de Bastide's architectural novel, *La Petite Maison* (DAVRIUS, 2009), while in an article that looks at both Paris and London, Elizabeth McKellar has explored the rather neglected field of eighteenth-century guide-

books for their important contributions to fostering a more personal, experiential way of writing about the city (MCKELLAR, 2013). Turning to the nineteenth century, Barry Bergdoll, reprising material from his 1994 book on Léon Vaudoyer, has recently supplied a detailed account of the architectural polemics that were fought out by leading theorists mainly in the non-specialist press during the 1840s and 1850s, and which culminated in the epic publication of a didactic serialized history of French architecture in the "populist" *Magasin pittoresque* by Vaudoyer and Albert Lenoir (BERGDOLL, 2010). In the refreshingly interdisciplinary collection *La Modernité avant Haussmann* (BOWIE, 2001), several essays evoked non-professional perceptions of the changing city; for instance, Madeleine Fidell-Beaufort's study of the city in the illustrated press of the 1840s (FIDELL-BEAUFORT, 2001; **fig. 13**), or Sharon Marcus's inquiry into literary and journalistic descriptions of Parisian apartments (MARCUS, 2001). It is likewise refreshing that the editors of the recent collection *Le Livre et l'architecte* (GARRIC, D'ORGEIX, THIBAULT, 2011) saw fit to end their volume with an essay such as Henri Bresler's amusing and informative analysis of the presentation of domestic architecture in three nineteenth-century popular novels (BRESLER, 2011). The important "Printed & The Built" Research Project recently launched at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design under the direction of Mari Hvattum promises to deliver more work in this rich area.

Consequences

What impacts did the multiplication of architectural discourse in print have on different groups in society?

Clearly it played the central role in kindling the architectural interests of non-specialist members of the general public, some of whom mobilized themselves as self-appointed

spokespersons for that public. This was never truer than in debates about the form and administration of the city, those sectors of architectural culture where the public was first plausibly positioned as the natural beneficiary and, crucially, judge of architects' efforts. Eighteenth-century texts like Louis de Mondran's precocious proposals for the *embellissement* of Toulouse (Pujalte-Fraysse, 2006), the Parisian projects of Poncet de la Grave and P. A. Delamair (Lemas, 2002), the project of Jean Antoine Morand for Lyon (Chuzeville, 2006), and finally the mass of other projects for Paris that appeared in countless journals, pamphlets, and books during the eighteenth century (Lemas, 2003, 2008; Wittman, 2007b, 2009, 2010, 2012) together constituted a sustained collective attempt to devise a new theoretical model for the city in which public benefit would constitute the ultimate goal. One could say much the same about the even more plentiful proposals for the reform of Paris that appeared up to 1848, by which time the debate had turned into a contest between different political definitions of the public good (Backouche, 2001; Bourillon, 2001; Moret, 2001; Papayanis, 2001, 2004). The one area where recent research seems to be lacking, surprisingly, is the second half of the nineteenth century, where surely more remains to be said about how, with the eclipse of easy generalizations about the collectivity, print functioned in increasingly refractory debates about power and the politics of urban space.

This mobilization of a suddenly active and visible public via print also clearly contributed to reshaping the architectural profession. Though it was initially seen as vulgar for an architect to resort to print publicity, already by the end of the 1750s younger architects like Boullée, Charles de Wailly, and Victor Louis were exploiting, each in their own way, print's capacity to shape public opinion and fortify their reputation. Before long, periodicals appeared that specifically offered themselves for such purposes, and were immediately made use of, especially by younger architects (Wittman, 2007b). Jean-Loup Leguay's detailed consideration of the depiction of architects in the later eighteenth-century weekly *Affiches de Picardie* offers a complementary perspective on the changing role of publicity in the architectural profession: by tracking coverage of two local architects in particular, as well as of architects from outside Picardy, Leguay vividly fleshes out our sense of how architects became visible within the civic public sphere of print (Leguay, 2011). Antoinette Nort's thoughtful but alas unpublished 2001 dissertation offered the bold suggestion that writing and publishing became essential components of a successful architectural career in the second half of the eighteenth century, as architects from Soufflot to Ledoux felt "the necessity to write" in order fully to occupy the public role they considered normal for an architect (Nort, 2001). As we have seen, several scholars have explored the crucial role played by print in helping consolidate the emergence of the modern architectural profession during the nineteenth century (Lipstadt, Mendelsohn, 1980; Lipstadt, 1989; Saboya, 1991; Bouvier, 2004). To this list should be added Jean-Pierre Epron's *Comprendre l'éclectisme*, an ambitious cultural history of how the architectural profession reinvented itself for the new political, intellectual, social, and economic realities of the nineteenth century; central to this reinvention, in Epron's view, was the expansive diffusion of architectural debates and criticism into the wider public sphere via, among other means, the press (Epron, 1997).

How did the popular triumph of print affect architects at the conceptual level? Obviously it provided them with access to a vastly expanded, constantly evolving corpus of information. But how did the very existence of this public sphere of print affect their perceptions of society and, by extension, of the function of their art within it? I am thinking here of the kind of perceptions Benedict Anderson evoked when he observed that the act of reading a printed newspaper also implies an awareness of other readers reading the same newspaper

more or less around the same time; a kind of awareness that has been an indispensable ingredient in the constitution of the "imagined communities" of modernity (**fig. 14**). [3] Is it possible to relate this kind of change to the developments we see in eighteenth- or nineteenth-century architecture and theory? Not with the same confidence we have in revealing the contents of a library or the editorial proclivities of a journal, but connections can be made. Daniel Rabreau, as one of the longest-running and most persistent advocates of a more culturally oriented history of French architecture, has for decades been approaching his material with the awareness that architects from the later eighteenth century conceived of their relationship to society and the public in new ways, and therefore saw the role of their art differently than their forbears had done. In Rabreau's great study of Claude-Nicolas Ledoux (RABREAU, 2000) he grounds the inquiry in a discussion of Ledoux's vision of architecture's *communicative* vocation – his vision of architecture as necessarily didactic and oriented towards the moral improvement of society – which, Rabreau argues, must be related to the fact that "the eighteenth century had defined, perhaps for the first time in history, the role of the *Public* in society" (p. 36-37). Thus for him Ledoux's book of 1804, far from being a mere eccentricity, emerges as the key to understanding the architect's pivotal place in a changing world (**fig. 15**). Christopher Drew Armstrong has also taken steps in this direction, examining how Julien David Leroy's novel manner of writing himself into his own text, the *Ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce*, reflected a changed awareness of the readership and, by extension, of the public sphere into which his texts entered (ARMSTRONG, 2006, 2012). Valérie Nègre has come at the question from a very different angle by considering how the writing of architectural theory could be affected by the new temporal rhythms of

14. Front page of the *Journal de Paris*, May 4, 1778.

15. Frontispice of Claude Nicolas Ledoux, *L'Architecture considérée sous le rapport de l'art, des mœurs et de la législation Tome Ier*, Paris, 1804, discussed in RABREAU, 2000.

a contestatory public sphere: in showing that Charles François Viel's architectural treatise had been cobbled together between 1797 and 1814 from the author's ongoing engagements in contemporary architectural debate, she suggests that it thereby presented a new kind of treatise, one that – down even to Viel's alarmist, almost tabloidal titles – reflected the author's intimate participation in architectural *actualité* (NÈGRE, 2006). It has also been a major concern in my own work to explore how consciousness of the public contributed to undermining the Vitruvian tradition and inspired a search for a replacement in the 1750s (Laugier, Estève, de Vigny, Patte), as well as a more desperate search in the 1780s for an architectural language whose legibility could measure up to that of print (WITTMAN, 2007a, 2007b).

And finally, what of the readers of this burgeoning literature on architecture? Was ordinary people's experience of architecture, and perhaps even of space and society itself, affected by their increasingly frequent engagement with writings about distant places, distant buildings, and the architectural experiences of distant authors? The answer to that question is almost certainly "yes." But it would be impossible to demonstrate unequivocally how and why, and so most scholars, perhaps wisely, have steered clear. The lucky discovery of a Menocchio (so to speak) can help; the early eighteenth-century local Amienois historian Jean Pagès, for example, whose manuscripts reveal an epic struggle to reconcile his very local love for Amiens Cathedral with the rationalized models of judgment proposed in his printed copies of Perrault and Blondel (WITTMAN, 2003). Ultimately, though, there are countless ways of using the culture of print to get at the rich and important question of what the translation of architecture into printed forms meant beyond the immediate world of the architectural profession. Some inspiration might perhaps be drawn from recent work on English architecture. For instance, Caroline van Eck's anthology of primary sources in *British Architectural Theory 1540-1750* (2003), which includes selections from books about geometry, the arts of memory, and even sermons alongside more familiar materials; or Anne M. Myers's very recent *Literature and Architecture in Early Modern England* (2013), a book that considers an even wider range of mainly topographical and literary texts relating to architecture. Myers presents her project as an attempt to reclaim architecture from the discourses of architectural history; to reassert that, while architecture may have been a language for architects and connoisseurs, it formed narratives for everyone else. Such an assertion recalls the very earliest eighteenth-century public debates on architecture, when printing helped members of the public to break the architectural community's self-proclaimed monopoly to judge and interpret buildings. That is a precedent worth thinking about.

Notes

1. I understand the term "real space" in the sense theorized by David Summers (David Summers, *Real Spaces: World Art History and the Rise of Western Modernism*, London/New York, 2003).

2. Mae Mathieu, *Pierre Patte, sa vie et son œuvre*, Paris, 1940. For two good surveys of this historiography, see THOMINE-BERRADA, 2008, and MEDVEDKOVA, 2009.

3. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London/New York, (1983) 1991, ch. 3.

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