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EDITORIAL

Introduction: Building Word Image, a New Arena for Architectural History

Anne Hultzsch*,† and Catalina Mejía Moreno‡,§

The study of word-image relationships is one of the most innovative and cross-disciplinary fields to have emerged in the humanities over the last decades. This special collection of *Architectural Histories* opens up this area to architectural history by exploring the rising coexistence of the graphic and the verbal in the public dissemination of architecture in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Originating from a conference session at the Third International Meeting of the European Architectural History Network in Turin, June 2014, this selection of articles also presents the foundation for an EAHN Interest Group on Word & Image, which will help to define this new arena.

Even if word-image relationships are, so far, rarely identified as a specific topic within our discipline, as architectural historians we already investigate them across periods, territories and subjects. The purpose of this collection is to make this a subject per se by examining descriptions and illustrations of buildings in printed and publicly disseminated media such as newspapers, journals, pamphlets, books, manuscripts or catalogues. We hope that the papers in this special collection of *Architectural Histories* will encourage architectural historians of all fields to question the interplay between buildings, words and images afresh, thus building a new understanding of the verbal and visual presence of architecture.

This special collection of *Architectural Histories* had its origin in a conference session at the Third International Meeting of the European Architectural History Network in Turin, June 2014. All but one paper presented then have here been expanded into articles indicating the coherence as well as the relevance of the subjects and questions raised in the original session. Following onto the conference, we launched the Word & Image EAHN Interest Group and invited a range of other scholars to contribute their own work to this collection. The response was impressive. It demonstrated clearly that, while word-image relationships are rarely identified as a specific topic within architectural history, a great number of researchers investigates them, across periods, territories and subjects. We envisage this collection thus as a means to tackle not so much a lack of research but rather a certain absence of deliberate engagement with the manifold interactions between the verbal and the visual within our discipline. By gathering the articles so far published, and further ones to come, within this collection, we hope to instigate a debate that will encourage architectural historians of all fields to look critically at the handling of words and images within their work. Do we automatically prioritise the image (or the text) in our analyses? Do we acknowledge the role

of language played in the development of, for example, photography, such an instrumental element of the historiography of the Modern Movement? And, vice versa, do we give credit to the interaction between words and images, or between verbal and graphic images, in the development of historicism? These and other questions remain to be explored, and we anticipate that this special collection will give rise to many more. Indeed, faced with an ever-growing corpus of published verbal and graphic representations of architecture, we see an urgency to explore these questions and their implications for our discipline now.

Field

The study of word-image relations is one of the most innovative and cross-disciplinary fields to have emerged in the humanities over the last decades. Marked by the foundation of the International Association of Word and Image Studies (IAWIS) in 1987, the field is characterised by its broad scope, relevant to disciplines of the humanities as well as the social sciences. What has been labelled the 'visual turn' in the 1990s further accelerated interest in the relationship between words and images and scholars from disciplines as diverse as art history, linguistics, anthropology, philosophy or literature soon populated its arena. Architectural history, however, has lagged behind. Emulating a paradigm often found in the architectural profession, we have a tendency to overlook the role of language while ascribing much more agency to the image as a driver and symptom of the cultures of architecture historically — and thus all too often focus our critical gaze on the visual, exclusive of its verbal context.[1] It seems useful,

* The Oslo School of Architecture and Design, NO

† University College London, GB

‡ Newcastle University, GB

§ University of Brighton, GB

Corresponding author: Anne Hultzsch
  (anne.katrin.hultzsch@aho.no)

therefore, to offer here, in much brevity, some thoughts as to how word and image could be looked at in a more productive way.

W.J.T. Mitchell has referred to the problem of 'Word and Image' (a section heading in a report by the National Endowment for the Humanities (Cheney 1988)) as a 'shorthand way of dividing, mapping and organizing the field of representation' but describes this also as a 'basic cultural trope, replete with connotations that go beyond merely formal or structural differences' (1994: 3). If word and image are indeed bound within such a trope, it is paramount to investigate (and thereby challenge) the ways we perceive them to 'organise the field of representation' — and more, how they systematise our understanding of what representation is. Therefore, if word and image form a trope, investigating their relationships will tell us more about the cultural context of the objects described and depicted in them. Word-image relationships are crucial to understanding the very idea of architecture prevalent at any time and place, especially in a period in which illustrated print media underwent dramatic changes, beginning in the early 19th century. Essentially, buildings, printed in word and image, form a prism that helps to reveal the spectrum of architectural cultures within a society.

On the most basic level, to consider word-image relationships as a 'cultural trope', in Mitchell's sense, means that we cannot look at either word or image in isolation. It implies also, as Mitchell and others argue, that neither text nor image can ever be entirely independent of the other and that the graphic and the verbal are essentially mixed and impure. Further, and as a consequence of Mitchell's proposition, the relationship between language and image must be regarded as fluid, shifting from one point in time and space to another, as well as being dependent on other cultural paradigms. This is based on the notion that no mode of representation can ever be unbiased. Scholars now agree, for instance, that photography is as prejudiced as painting, however much the early pioneers of photography wished the new technique to enable nature to draw itself without interference from the photographer, as claimed in Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature* (1844) and other early writings on the new medium. Twentieth-century thinking has come to the conclusion that this is not the case, and can never be; any type of graphic representation is prone to distortion — and so is verbal description.

However, different modi operandi are at work in words and images: words do not attempt isomorphic association with the described object, as representational images do. Language, as first argued by Ferdinand de Saussure, relies on differences, or binary oppositions (such as good–bad, dark–light, etc.), whereas most images work through similarity with the thing represented (1959: 120–22). Adrian Forty, in *Words and Buildings*, has applied this to the realm of architecture in general, and to drawing in particular. He posits that language's ability to imply differences forms 'its routine occupation within architecture' — something that drawing, conventionally seen as architecture's primary mode of representation (even if this is debatable in itself), is unable to fulfil (2000: 38–39).

Forty also points to the linearity of language, which is opposed to the 'all-at-once' impression of drawings; he argues that in some ways buildings are more like language than images, as one experiences them through 'sequential motion' while moving through and around them (39–40). Forty argues that 'language allows perception to happen where it belongs, within the mind', meaning that a reader is required to visualise, or imagine, the described object or building, rather than looking directly at its graphic image (41). Even if the present collection of articles is not concerned with direct comparisons, or analogies, between architecture and language, such thoughts must make clear that words are as relevant as images to a critical history of architecture. And this is the case particularly when images are placed in the context of words, which, in some form or another, happens to most images. What people in the past have written about buildings must be as relevant to architectural historians as historical images of the same; and when the two, the text and the image, are placed in direct relationship to each other, when they are forced to interact, the historian must pay heed to this, especially when the subject is architecture, itself often considered a form of representation, as argued by Beatriz Colomina (1994: 13–14).

It becomes clear, thus, that the transparency of language is an illusion — as is the basic assumption that graphic isomorphism, being the same in form and relations, delivers transparency in representation. Both words and images are carriers of multiple meanings, overtly and covertly, and both are of equal relevance to architectural historiography, especially when they are placed in relation to one another.

Period

Such thoughts are especially relevant when investigating a period that was characterised by ever more sophisticated combinations of word and image. It is thus surprising that, while architectural historians have recently begun to investigate architectural journalism of the 1960s and 1970s (Schwarzer 1999; Sornin et al. 2008; Colomina 2010; Parnell 2012a; Parnell 2012b), the 19th and early 20th centuries have so far been largely ignored, at least in English-language academia.[2] Yet this was an age that saw a revolution of printing word and image, with one innovation chasing the next. The engraved boxwood block enabled the printing of typeset text and images at the same time and became the most prevalent in Victorian illustration since its first use in Thomas Bewick's *The General History of Quadrupeds* (1790). For a large part of the 19th century, the woodblock dominated both book as well as periodical printing with wood engraving firms rapidly expanding across the metropolitan centres. From mid century, electrotyping began to replace the woodblock in fine art illustrations but not in mass-produced periodicals. At the same time, cylinder presses transformed the printing of these cheaper publications, making larger print runs technologically and economically feasible. The 'discovery' of the daguerreotype and the rapid development of photography would eventually lead to the eclipse of the engraving by the photograph in the next century, throwing the publishing world into something of a crisis.

More than anything, the increase in illustrated print matter relied on an intimate partnership of word and image, not only on the page but from the conception of the very page and its production to the finished publication. Author and illustrator had to work hand in hand, each working with the other's material. From the first half of the 19th century, the proliferation of illustrated magazines in particular made wood engraving into an industry; the British *Penny Magazine*, for instance, had a circulation of 200,000 as early as 1832. The *London Journal*, a penny fiction weekly, printed over 450,000 copies each week in the 1850s (for these and other circulation numbers of British periodicals, see Appendix C in Altick (1998)). The year 1843 marked the birth of the illustrated newspaper, in which the written word and the illustration gained truly equal status, encouraging readers to read as much as to look. In short sequence, the British *London Illustrated News*, the German *Illustrirte Zeitung* and the French *L'Illustration* were launched, achieving, at their peaks, print runs of up to 200,000 copies. If one multiplies these numbers by the number of readers per printed copy (press historians commonly assume that each copy is read on average by between five and ten people), it becomes obvious how widespread the influence of this new combination of printed words and images must have been. Approximately one million men and women looked at the same images and read the same accompanying texts, if to varying degrees of intensity. Architecture featured widely in these publications, sometimes for its own sake and often as background matter, as well as in books, pamphlets, catalogues and other printed material. Buildings and cities at home and abroad were suddenly made familiar, often in simplified sketches that closely followed similar graphic models, to both a non-specialist audience as well as the architectural profession.

The split into these two audiences, lay and professional, becomes more and more important as one moves through the 19th century. While the illustrated newspaper catered to the former, the latter began to identify with another new genre: the architectural magazine. From Loudon's *Architectural Magazine* (1833–), the Austrian *Allgemeine Bauzeitung* (1836–), the French *Revue générale de l'architecture et des travaux publics* (1840–) to the British *Builder* (1843–) and the German *Zeitschrift für Bauwesen* (1851–), the architectural profession increasingly showed its presence within the publishing world. Towards the end of the century, more artistically oriented magazines emerged, such as *The Studio* (1893–), the *Architectural Review* (1896–) or the *Berliner Architekturwelt: Zeitschrift für Baukunst, Malerei, Plastik und Kunstgewerbe der Gegenwart* (1899–), among many others.

By the beginning of the 20th century, the photograph entered the world of mass-printed periodicals. The medium had long been a source from which engravings were produced for printing, but now it had become feasible to print halftone photographs, and eventually colour ones, in periodicals and books with larger and thus cheaper print runs. Such graphic innovations were of particular relevance for the architectural world, which began to rely on magazines more and more as source materials for spreading styles, movements and theories. As has been widely explored, the Modern Movement, or the International Style, relied fundamentally on a network of travelling words and images. Indeed, images and texts had always travelled and printing blocks had always been stereotyped and sold on; one often finds the same illustrations in different publications, crossing borders and even continents. They were reassembled, commercialised, copied and manipulated countless times and then read and scrutinized by readers all over the world, taking away from this flood of words and images an irrevocably transformed understanding of the built environment as one in flux. From the mid 1800s, railways enabled faster and wider distribution of newspapers, while in 1905 the first pictures were transmitted via telegraph, accelerating the movement and exchange of illustrated material to a speed never seen before. An image produced in Paris could appear in a New York newspaper within only a few days, and vice versa.

In the period covered in this special collection of *Architectural Histories*, readers witnessed a complete change in the way in which architecture, cities, buildings and landscapes were represented and disseminated. While literacy rates soared, illustrated material, increasingly varied and true to life, became more widespread and more accessible to a larger number of people than ever before. This proliferation of the built environment in word and image must have changed the relationship between the human subject, the objects surrounding it and the representation of these objects. In the articles collected here, scholars investigate this set of relationships found in various media.

Collection of Articles

By probing the visual and the verbal at the same time, the articles in this special collection expand current methods of architectural historiography. They are thus particularly concerned with presenting distinct, and often novel, methodologies for word and image studies within architectural history. They focus particularly on a close analysis of specific publications, genres, or published events within particular contexts, as well as detailed analyses of particular aspects, such as captions, layout, content, literary devices, etc. Questions explored include, but are not limited to, the following: What roles do words and images, and the relationship between both, play in the dissemination of architecture? What does the image illustrate, what does the text describe? What is the effect of treating word as image, or image as text? How are hierarchies between text and graphics expressed, in terms of content and in other ways? What is the effect of new reproductive and illustrative technologies on the style of writing? Each contributor responds to some or all of these questions while further exploring possible relationships between descriptions and illustrations of buildings in printed and publicly disseminated media. While the articles could be ordered chronologically, it seems more interesting to (loosely) group them here by means of the genre each explores: the travelogue, the catalogue, the history textbook, the illustrated newspaper and the architectural journal. While these distinctions

are not hermetic, and they certainly overlap, and while one could find other distinctions, they serve here to draw some indicative connections and distinctions among the work so far produced for this collection. Interestingly, two (related) genres, the travelogue and the catalogue, seem to frame the collection as a whole, with three articles each considering different variants from across the period.

In the article that is chronologically first in the travelogue genre, Victor Plahte Tschudi concentrates on the role of prints in the assembling of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Italian Journey.* Tschudi argues that engravings not only reflect Goethe's impressions of the monuments visited but gave form to those impressions in the descriptive memories he published later. Tschudi claims that Goethe's engagement with graphic reproductions shaped not only the publication but also his own ideas of nature, leading to the formation of his concept of an architectural metamorphosis. Dervla MacManus and Hugh Campbell's article then turns to a publication of the second half of the 19th century with similar classical interest, namely William J. Stillman's 1870 photographic album, *The Acropolis of Athens: Illustrated Picturesquely and Architecturally in Photography.* MacManus and Campbell explore the photo-book as a genre, arguing that the apparent disparities between word and image, as well as the combination of image, text and the white parts of the page, reveal the emergence of a discursive space in the 19th-century illustrated book. Finally, towards the end of the period considered here stands Catalina Mejía Moreno's article on how industrial buildings themselves became representational. She explores the encounter with such buildings, particularly grain elevators, by European architects and engineers travelling to North America at the beginning of the 20th century. By focusing on Walter Gropius's and Erich Mendelsohn's own photographs and verbal descriptions, Mejía Moreno argues that the emerging practice of photojournalism, by distinctively merging building, word and image — making them accessible to a wider audience in the public press — shaped the meaning of the buildings within the modernist architectural discourse, in contrast to their original engineering one.

Similar to the travelogue, the catalogue also serves as a guide, or introduction, to something that is different from the familiar: architecture within the walls of the museum. Again, three articles explore this type of publication. First, Danielle S. Willkens takes Sir John Soane's house-turned-museum as a case study, focusing on both its early catalogues, namely Soane's own *Description of the House and Museum*, as well as its 1955 sequel, the *New Description* by John Summerson. She argues how the catalogue's changing written and visual language depicted and described diverse and distinct experiences, thus constructing a spatial narrative of the museum. Second, Mari Lending's article explores late 19th-century catalogues of casts and their trade between Europe and North America. Tracing the history of distinct exhibition spaces and their catalogues (such as the Crystal Palace at Sydenham), Lending emphasises the dichotomy between the development of the cast as image-object and illustration on the one hand, and the catalogue as its word and image, or curatorial,

version on the other. Third, focusing on Herbert Bayer's 1930 *Section Allemande* exhibition and catalogue, Wallis Miller argues that the 1930 Werkbund exhibition not only defined the catalogue's content, function and format but also prompted some of Bayer's design solutions in typography and graphics, thus challenging and reshaping ideas around the exhibition catalogue as a genre in itself. It therefore transpires that the catalogue demonstrates the close relationship between represented and real space, as word and image correlate to construct spatial (and, in Lending's reasoning, objectified) experiences.

Another type of guidebook, in the widest sense, is tackled by Ellen Van Impe: the textbook. Impe explores two canonical Belgian histories of the second half of the 19th century, the *Histoire de l'architecture en Belgique* by A.G.B. Schayes and the *Histoire de l'influence italienne sur l'architecture dans les Pays-Bas* by Auguste Schoy. She maintains that both the textual and visual strategies of each of these publications construct its specific 'voice' and that it was through this, within printed matter, that architectural history was being established as a discipline in Belgium at the time.

After the travelogue, the catalogue and the textbook — all publications that guide the reader in one way or another — we turn to a genre that really comes to the fore in the period considered here: the periodical, published at regular intervals for the benefit of both the general public and specialist audiences. Two articles explore the illustrated newspaper, a new format that flourished across Europe and North America, and beyond, from the mid 1800s. Focusing on the roots of the genre in Britain, Anne Hultzsch reveals how the relationship between readers and authors was transformed through the new balance between word and image. Through a close analysis of linguistic and graphic patterns in the early *Illustrated London News*, she demonstrates how the correlation between the verbal and the graphic remained dynamic and malleable over the middle decades of the century, with fluctuating hierarchies, when both were referred to as 'illustrating' one another. Moving forwards to the turn of the century, Patrick Leitner studies the transatlantic exchange of images depicting New York's emerging skyscrapers. Examining the French periodicals *L'Illustration*, *Le Monde illustré*, *La Vie illustrée* and others around 1900, he identifies inverted hierarchies, such as an increasing autonomy of images from words. By comparing them to contemporary architectural magazines, Leitner reveals the existence, at the time, of a split between the public's perception of architecture and the city and the architectural experts' perception.

It is not surprising that most of the articles on the 20th century focus on architectural journals and magazines. The architectural profession is now established across industrialised nations and debates are carried out in specialist magazines of varying longevity. Michela Rosso focuses on *Il Selvaggio*, an Italian journal published in the first half of the 20th century and originally conceived and published as a political leaflet. Rosso explores diverse graphic modes, from caricatures to photographs, as well as literary forms, such as polemic essays, and linguistic devices, such as tropes,

irony and word play. She concludes that by analysing the disparity in the use of words and images within *Selvaggio*, it is possible to retrace the journal's relationship to the contemporary discourse on architecture and the city as well as to its political and historical context during the critical years of fascist rule. In turn, Hélène Jannière contests the conception stated by the avant-gardes in which the alliance between typography, photography and the 'new architecture' being promoted was one of parallelisms. By addressing a wider range of journals — including *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* and *Casabella* — Jannière argues that the new modes of perception introduced by photographic or typographic experiments gave rise to semantic associations generated by the juxtaposition of words and images.

The wide range of this special collection of *Architectural Histories* and the close links to be drawn between contributions — via genre, place, period, audience, or other categories — proves two things: first, that word-image relationships are relevant to our discipline, and second, that scholars with varying specialisations are already working on the subject. However, as diverse as the material and arguments presented in these articles are, overall, this collection demonstrates that, within architectural history, we mainly understand word-image relationships in the printed media as binary — as a problem of what the image does to the text and what the text does to the image. Usually, and for most of the work produced for this collection so far, architectural historians employ this binary to unveil editorial, social or political agendas. While this approach is very productive, as this collection demonstrates, little about this binary approach to word-image relationships has been critically discussed. As editors, we remain intrigued by the question of method and whether there are other possible ways to address the study of words and images in the printed media. We believe that it is an issue partly of asking different questions, and partly of ridding ourselves of a tendency to look at the image as a carrier of meaning while the text remains transparent. Architectural history, both as a subfield of art history and as an integral part of architectural practice and education, has emerged as a major visual discipline, yet we have seen here that word and image are, in most cases, so entangled with each other that we need to find ways to effectively deal with both at the same time in studying past conditions of the built environment. We must begin, therefore, to study words and images together, not merely as tools, but on their own accord. We must ask questions that query the role of both in the rise of technologies, styles and movements. And it is thanks to the format of the online journal, in which this collection for *Architectural Histories* appears, that we hope to be able to welcome further articles in this collection that might follow this call and answer some of the above questions or find new ones to ask.

Notes

[1] Of course, many studies of the relationship between text and architecture exist, but where these concern not architecture *as* text (which is an entirely different concern, of less interest to us here) but architecture represented by language, they have usually been authored by scholars from outside our own discipline.

[2] There are, however, some French and German studies on the subject, notably a series of writings by Hélène Lipstadt (1979; 1980; 1982; Lipstadt et al. 1985) as well as by Eva Maria Froschauer (2010).

Competing Interests
The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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