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AUTHENTICITY

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# FOREWORD TO THE 'AUTHENTICITY' THEMATIC ISSUE

It will not have escaped the notice of regular *Bulletin KNOB* readers that the journal has undergone a number of changes over the course of the past decade. The most striking is of course the new design, which was introduced in the first issue of 2013. But behind the scenes, too, important steps in the modernization and professionalization of the journal were taken. A smooth collaboration was forged between the editors, editorial board and the KNOB office, which was permanently embedded in the Faculty of Architecture at TU Delft. All issues from the over one-hundred-year history of the journal were published as open-access downloads on the *Bulletin KNOB* website. The *Bulletin* was incorporated into Elsevier's Scopus, the Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI) and the European Reference Index for the Humanities and the Social Sciences (ERIH PLUS), resulting in greater visibility in the international academic world and measurable bibliographical citations. And since 2019 English translations of articles in the journal have also been published online. All this occurred under the inspiring leadership of editor-in-chief Marie-Thérèse van Thoor, who relinquished her activities for the journal on 1 January 2020.

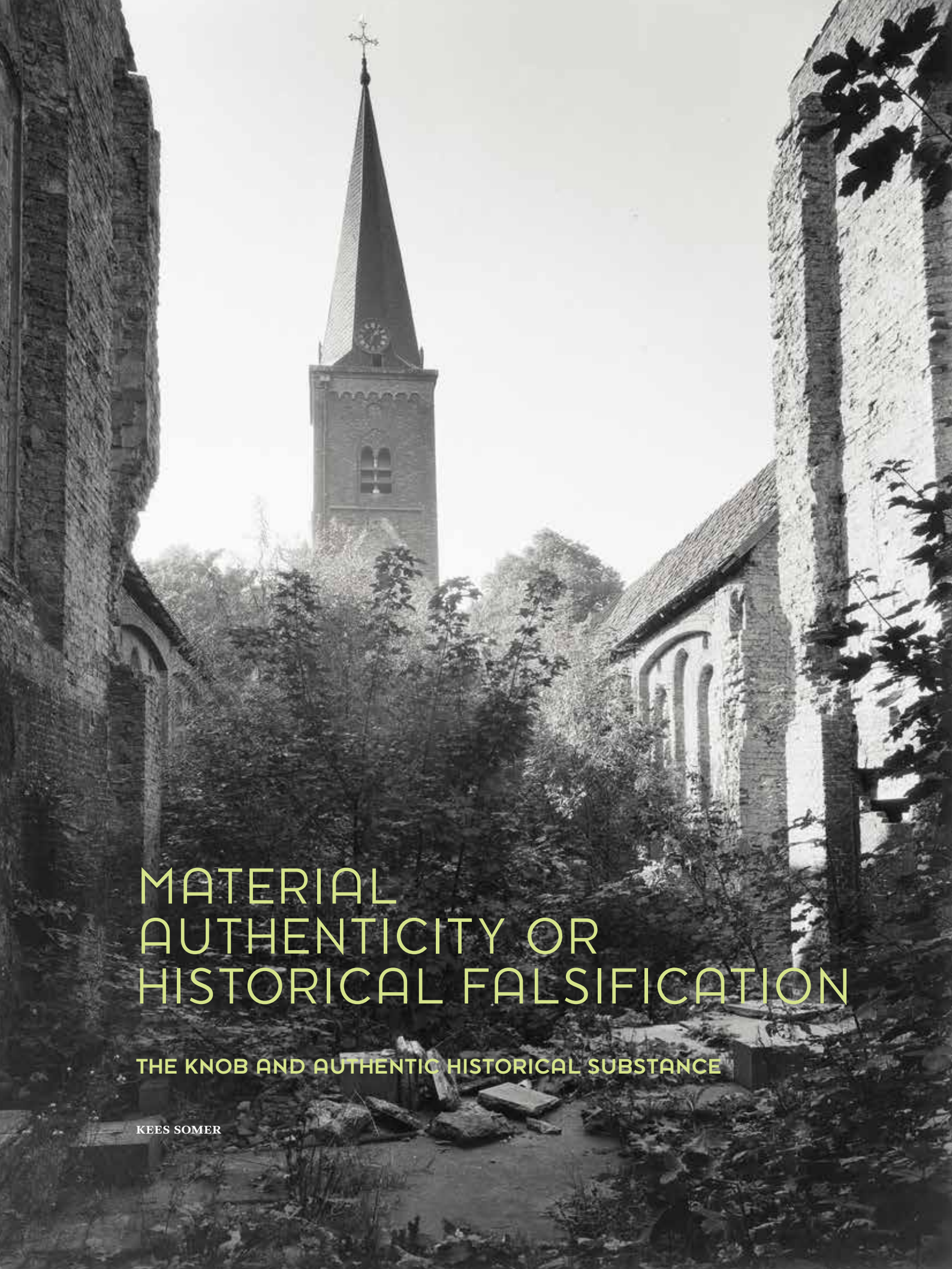
Marie-Thérèse van Thoor joined the *Bulletin* as editor at the beginning of 2008, becoming editor-in-chief three years later. She was the first woman to head an editorial team that up to that point had been largely made up of men. It might be going too far to say that she left behind a bereft editorial team at the end of 2019, but her departure did bring home to us just what she has meant for the *Bulletin*. The journal she encountered in 2008 had of course long ceased to be the 'occasional pamphlet' that the KNOB had envisaged at its foundation in 1899. With her vision, dedication and energy, Marie-Thérèse transformed the *Bulletin* into a contemporary scholarly journal for spatial heritage, with an increasing focus on modern architecture, urban design and cultural landscape. Marie-Thérèse has a unique ability to combine drive with work satisfaction. During the past nine years, she has decisively but good-humouredly charted the journal's course and distributed the tasks among 'her' editors.

To mark her departure as editor-in-chief, the KNOB board offered Marie-Thérèse a study day, with a programme of her own choosing. Marie-Thérèse decided to devote the colloquium to a topic close to her heart – authenticity – and invited a number of current and

former editors to contribute. Scheduled for 26 June 2020, the study day could alas not go ahead owing to COVID-19. Fortunately, that did not apply to the preparation of a thematic issue of the *Bulletin* that the editors already had in hand. This special edition of the journal brings together the contributions intended for the study day in article form. The diverse discourses demonstrate that in choosing 'authenticity', Marie-Thérèse had settled on a fascinating, complex and above all inexhaustible topic that continues to invite exploration of the wide range of fields to which this concept can be applied. In this issue we find successive contributions on: debates within the KNOB; reconstruction of vanished architecture; adaptive reuse of buildings; reuse of building materials in the past; design in the digital era; landscape authenticity; postmodern housing estates; and the evaluation of modern architecture.

The final word goes to Marie-Thérèse who, taking all this into account and with a special focus on world heritage, reminds us once more of the fluidity of the concept of authenticity, but also offers the prospect of its use as an exceptional mark of quality. Although the reader will not find the ultimate definition of authenticity in this thematic issue, we hope that they will identify with the physicist Enrico Fermi's comment after listening to some lecture or other: 'I am still confused. But on a higher level.'

THE EDITORS



# MATERIAL AUTHENTICITY OR HISTORICAL FALSIFICATION

## THE KNOB AND AUTHENTIC HISTORICAL SUBSTANCE

KEES SOMER

In 1998 the Koninklijke Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond (Royal Netherlands Archaeological Association, KNOB) celebrated its centenary. The *Bulletin KNOB* published an extensive review of its history and called on members to continue to champion the preservation of the built heritage in relation to its historically evolved context, 'and with an eye to the preservation of authentic historical substance in particular'.[1] That telling addition relates to the KNOB's stance in the debate about restoration principles that had been conducted with varying degrees of intensity throughout the twentieth century.

**PRINCIPLES AND A REFLECTION**

The 'Principles and precepts for the preservation, restoration and extension of historical buildings' that the KNOB had published in 1917 represented a radical departure from the restoration views of P.J.H. Cuypers and Victor de Stuers.[2] Under the motto 'preservation before restoration', the Principles took issue with the reconstruction or arbitrary completion of historical buildings on the grounds that it resulted in historical falsification and the destruction of heritage objects as historical documents. In practice, however, these principles were often ignored and besides, during the post-war reconstruction period the desire to restore the ravaged beauty of the cities fostered a less purist stance on reconstruction.[3] A committee set up in 1948 to review the Principles accordingly adopted a more moderate tone and placed restoration in a social perspective. In 1953 the committee published its reflections on the subject under the title 'The restoration of historical monuments. Misconceptions, difficulties and possibilities'. The desire to render monuments as aesthetically pleasing as possible and the tendency to correct defects were identified as aberrations that had caused a lot of trouble. The monument, they countered, retains a memory value 'that is directly proportional to its genuineness, to its authenticity as a historical document... One does not correct documents without falsifying them.'[4] It was more problematic when the monument had taken shape in different periods or had a function that entailed practical requirements; in both instances the competing interests needed to be weighed against one another based on a thorough analysis of the existing values. Restoration, the committee stated, could take different forms. Simple preservation was an option if the monument had no practical function, or restoration to the original condition, provided this could be meticulously reconstructed. When not enough was known about the original form, the monument could be completed in a

◄ 1. Interior Geertekerk looking west towards the tower, 1952 (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort)

▼ 2. Interior Geertekerk looking east towards the apse, 1957. Photo G.T. Delamarre (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort)

contemporary or a historical formal idiom. This option was a form of 'falsification' of course, but the committee considered this approach preferable in some situations – 'notwithstanding the barrage of complaints of spurious authenticity'.[5]

**A NEW DOCTRINE?**

The KNOB committee's 1953 reflections typified postwar restoration practice in the Netherlands. The 1917 Principles had proved to be ineffectual and there was little appetite for new rules in this area.[6] Two decades on, however, the tide had turned. In 1972, KNOB chairman Coen Temminck Groll called for a new appraisal of the Principles in light of the current diversity of views, the continuing vogue for 'beautifying' heritage buildings at the expense of their historical authenticity, and the increase in the range of tasks through the addition of 'modest' heritage buildings and urban renewal. Two principles should once again be paramount: 'recognition of the authenticity value of our patrimony and the prevention of historical falsification'.[7] But it took another six years for any such appraisal to occur and for the issue of the 'authenticity value' to feature prominently on the agenda. On 15 April 1978 the KNOB and the Vereniging van Nederlandse Kunsthistorici (Society of Dutch Art Historians, VNK) organized a seminar on restoration philosophy and theory in the Geertekerk in Utrecht. The boards of both organizations had noted the virtual absence of any discussion of this fundamental aspect of heritage preservation in the Netherlands. They felt that this had led to a confusing situation with respect to restoration policy and thought it would help clarify the situation to assemble the various opinions and judge them on their merits. It would then be possible to decide which ideas were suitable for realization 'for the Netherlands of today and tomorrow'. It was hoped that the seminar might be the springboard for 'a "blueprint" for restoration policy', which would then need to be formulated in consultation with the responsible government authorities.[8] The basis for the discussion consisted of five introductions penned by architectural historian Kees Peeters, (restoration) architects Cornelis Wegener Sleeswijk, Coen Temminck Groll and Wiek Röling, and the Belgian heritage expert Paul Philippot, and published in the *Bulletin*. Members were invited to respond in writing and those responses were summarized in a number of discussion points, with 'doctrine' and 'authenticity' proving to be the most contentious topics.[9] Peeters, who rather tellingly took the motto of the 1917 Principles as the title of his

3. Johannes Bosboom, *Interieur van de Geertekerk te Utrecht met de viering van het heilig avondmaal*, 1852 (Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)

introduction, was an avid advocate for a doctrine. He denounced the 'physical interference' practised by the architects tasked with 'saving historical authenticity'.[10] He believed that the prevailing anarchy could only be curbed by means of a number of centrally imposed and readily verifiable principles which prioritized preliminary scientific research. Others though did not see any point in formulating a new doctrine, either because there were already enough doctrines, the most recent being the 1964 Venice Charter, or because practitioners took little notice of theoretical principles. The conclusion was that while there was little demand for normative rules for restoration work, there was a need for methodical guidelines that would be regularly tested in actual practice.

## AUTHENTICITY OF FORM

The discussion of the issue of authenticity produced more surprises than an outcome satisfactory to all. Here, too, the tone was set by Peeters, who argued that it was all about the preservation of 'the material authenticity of the historical substance'.[11] By authentic he meant 'the first, the original, that which has never been replaced'.[12] His view was endorsed by such prepared questions as: is the authenticity of the historical substance impaired by wear and tear and maintenance, and at what percentage of replacement does authenticity cease to exist? However, Wegener Sleeswijk opened up a new perspective by pointing out that they were overlooking something essential. In his view, architecture's primary significance lay not in the matter, but in the space and the light that was created by that matter. Preserving that was usually more worthwhile than preserving the matter; indeed, it often necessitated the replacement of matter. The value people attached to the historical object was bound up with the question of whether it was usable or beautiful, or whether it was significant from the point of view of memory; 'being historical, being old, is not in itself a value'.[13] Wegener Sleeswijk acknowledged that none of this was straightforward; matter was easy enough to understand, but then there was also the question of form. He believed that it was possible to talk about an authentic form when, for example, a vanished roof construction had been restored using new materials. Temminck Groll went a step further, arguing that as well as authentic material and authentic form, he could readily imagine an authentic manner of finishing. By way of illustration, he pointed to the interior of the church where they were gathered at that moment. This originally medieval parish church had a turbulent history. Seriously damaged during the sixteenth-century Protestant Iconoclasm, after the Reformation the building functioned successively as a Reformed church, stable, barracks, warehouse and – from 1814 onwards – as a Dutch Reformed church. In 1855 hundreds of victims of the floods in Veenendaal found temporary refuge there and five years later the church was comprehensively renovated. After the building was deconsecrated in 1930, it quickly fell into disrepair. Ten years later it was a roofless ruin with luxuriant vegetation filling the former church space (fig. 1). Thanks to the efforts of concerned citizens, however, the building was saved from demolition; in 1954 the Remonstrant congregation bought the ruin and embarked on a full-scale restoration that was completed three years later.[14] Temminck Groll was well acquainted with the building through his work for both the Rijksdienst voor de Monumentenzorg (Department for the Preservation of Monuments and Historic Buildings) and Utrecht's heritage department. He informed participants that the remains of the once-stuccoed brick walls had been given a coat of plaster and it was in this context that he referred to an authentic finishing technique. Although virtually nothing in the church could be called 'old', he believed one could definitely talk about authentic dimensions, light, proportions and plasterwork (fig. 2). The atmosphere of the earlier church, as depicted in a nineteenth-century canvas by Johannes Bosboom, had been recaptured and he saw that, too, as 'an instance of authenticity' (fig. 3).[15]

## MATTER IS THE ESSENCE

This proved to be a bridge too far, however. Philippot, who had introduced the theme of authenticity during the discussion and was to provide a summing up, deemed it dangerous to separate the abstract form from the material that gave expression to that form, because new material or plasterwork would always have a slightly different effect than the original. He therefore refused to call the reconstruction of a form authentic; 'what is essential, what must be left intact as far as possible is the authentic material'.[16] Architectural historian Jan Terwen attempted to clarify the other side of the argument by pointing to the importance of the architectural conception. Authenticity, he argued, was mainly about an architect's idea, which was subsequently realized in a structure. Any and everything could be changed or reconstructed: 'as long as it adheres to and returns to that original idea of the architect, that's what I consider authentic in a building'.[17] However, Philippot's conclusion was brief and to the point: the concept of authenticity could only have objective meaning in relation to the material; a limited meaning perhaps, but an essential one. Whether people wanted to expand it was open to discussion. And so ended the first and also last funda-

mental discussion of the concept of authenticity within the KNOB. They had discussed the different interpretations that existed side by side in the diverse practice of heritage preservation and that were highly topical at that moment.[18] In 1994 the *Nara Document on Authenticity* would broaden the meaning of the concept to such an extent in the context of cultural diversity that it lost a good deal of its usefulness as a distinguishing criterion.[19] On the initiative of ICOMOS, experts from some thirty countries had gathered in the Japanese city of Nara to consider the issue of authenticity in relation to cultural context. They concluded that authenticity was not confined to material and substance, but also applied to things like form, design, use, function, traditions, techniques, location, setting, spirit and feeling. The KNOB had by then long since closed that Pandora's box and retreated to the safe haven of authentic historical substance.

NOTES

1 G.W. van Herwaarden, '100 jaar Koninklijke Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond. Een beknopte beschrijving', *Bulletin KNOB* 97 (1989) 5, 145-180, quote 175.
2 The Principles were published in 1917 by the KNOB and reprinted in 1940: 'Grondbeginselen en voorschriften voor het behoud, de herstelling en de uitbreiding van oude bouwwerken, met een inleiding door dr. J. Kalf, door den Ned. Oudheidkundigen Bond', *Bouwkundig Weekblad Architectura* 61 (1940) 9, 69-75. See also W. Denslagen, *Omstreden herstel. Kritiek op het restaureren van monumenten*, The Hague 1987, 153-213.
3 R. de Jong, 'Authenticiteit en monumentenzorg/monumentenzorg en authenticiteit', in: *Monumenten en bouwhistorie, Jaarboek Monumentenzorg* 1996, Zwolle/Zeist 1996, 274-282, 275.
4 'Het restaureren van historische monumenten. Misverstanden, moeilijkheden en mogelijkheden', *Bulletin van de KNOB* 6th volume, 6 (1953) 5, (column) 169-188, quotes 171, 172.
5 'Het restaureren van historische monumenten' (note 4), 184.
6 Denslagen 1987 (note 2), 207.
7 'Bondsnieuws. Verslag van de Algemene ledenvergadering van de Koninklijke Nederlandse Oudheidkundige Bond op vrijdag 16 juni 1972 in de grote zaal van de Ostfriesische Landschaft te Aurich (Ostfriesland)', *Bulletin KNOB* 71 (1972) 4, 111-117, quote 113.
8 'KNOB. Aan de leden van de K.N.O.B. en de V.N.K.', *Bulletin KNOB* 77 (1978) 1, 1-2.
9 'Discussie over de problematiek van de architectuurrestauratie', *Bulletin KNOB* 77 (1978) 3-4, 179-194, quote 186.
10 C. Peeters, 'Behouden gaat vóór vernieuwen', introduction for the joint KNOB and VNK meeting on 15 April 1978 in Utrecht, *Bulletin KNOB* 77 (1978) 1, 3-7, quote 4.
11 Peeters 1978 (note 10), 5.
12 'Discussie over de problematiek van de architectuurrestauratie' (note 9), 189.
13 'Discussie over de problematiek van de architectuurrestauratie' (note 9), 186.
14 [H.] De J[ong]., 'Een klok luidde...', *Maandblad van 'Oud-Utrecht'* 30 (1957) 1, 2-6; W. Stooker, '50 jaar monumentenzorg in stad en provincie Utrecht. 1. De monumentenzorg in de stad Utrecht tot 1957', *Jaarboek Oud-Utrecht* 1973, 148-165.
15 'Discussie over de problematiek van de architectuurrestauratie' (note 9), 192.
16 'Discussie over de problematiek van de architectuurrestauratie' (note 9), 192.
17 'Discussie over de problematiek van de architectuurrestauratie' (note 9), 192-193.
18 De Jong 1996 (note 3), 270-281. Several forms of authenticity played an important role in the extensive debate about the restoration of Paleis Het Loo and the conceptual aspect was central to the approach to Nieuwe Bouwen monuments like the Rietveld Schöder House in Utrecht. For the latter see M.T. van Thoor 'The restorations of the Rietveld Schröder House. A reflection', *Bulletin KNOB* 118 (2019), 15-31.
19 W. Denslagen, 'Authenticiteit en spiritualiteit', *Bulletin KNOB* 109 (2010) 4, 135-140.

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## MATERIAL AUTHENTICITY OR HISTORICAL FALSIFICATION
### THE KNOB AND AUTHENTIC HISTORICAL SUBSTANCE

KEES SOMER

In 1917 the Koninklijke Oudheidkundige Bond (KNOB)[1] published its 'Principles and precepts for the preservation, restoration and extension of historical buildings'. They represented a break with the views on restoration held by P.J.H. Cuypers and Victor de Stuers. The Principles opposed the reconstruction or arbitrary completion of historical buildings because this resulted in historical falsification and the destruction of heritage objects as historical documents. In practice, however, these principles were often disregarded. Moreover, during the post-war reconstruction period the desire to restore the ravaged beauty of the city disposed many people to adopt a less purist viewpoint and there was little appetite for new rules. But in the 1970s the KNOB called for a re-evaluation of the principles. During a seminar on restoration philosophy and theory in 1978, participants discussed the theme of 'authenticity'. There was a wide divergence of opinions on this concept. While for some it related strictly to the authenticity of the original material, for others the notion of authenticity extended to design, form, space or finish. The latter interpretation proved to be too subjective for a collective viewpoint; the KNOB remained first and foremost the guardian of authentic historical substance.

1 Royal Netherlands Archaeological Association

# RECONSTRUCTION AND RESISTANCE

## ON MATERIAL AUTHENTICITY

GABRI VAN TUSSENBROEK

**Should heritage professionals resist reconstructions? In the case of building elements, gables or interiors they clearly should, because the historical substance of the existing building is at stake. But when it involves the complete reconstruction of something that has been lost through wilful demolition, war or some other calamity, things are not quite so straightforward. Such reconstructions possess no historical layering and have a different craftsmanly and architectural quality from the buildings that served as model.[1] They are, in short, new creations, lacking unity of time, place and function. Nevertheless, proposals for these kinds of reconstruction generally provoke impassioned reactions among heritage professionals and architectural historians.[2]**

### NO NEW HARINGSPAKKERSTOREN

In Amsterdam the debate about the reconstruction of the Haringspakkerstoren is still fresh in people's memory (fig. 1).[3] The tower, which was demolished in 1829, served later generations as a daunting example of how not to deal with historical buildings. Yet in 2006 its proposed reconstruction was the subject of bitter debate: the Amsterdamse Maatschappij tot Stadsherstel (Amsterdam Association for Urban Restoration, founded in 1956) wanted to celebrate its twenty-fifth anniversary by reconstructing the tower as a gift to the city.[4] In the gap left by its absence, they argued, 'the neighbourhood had lost its roots'.[5]

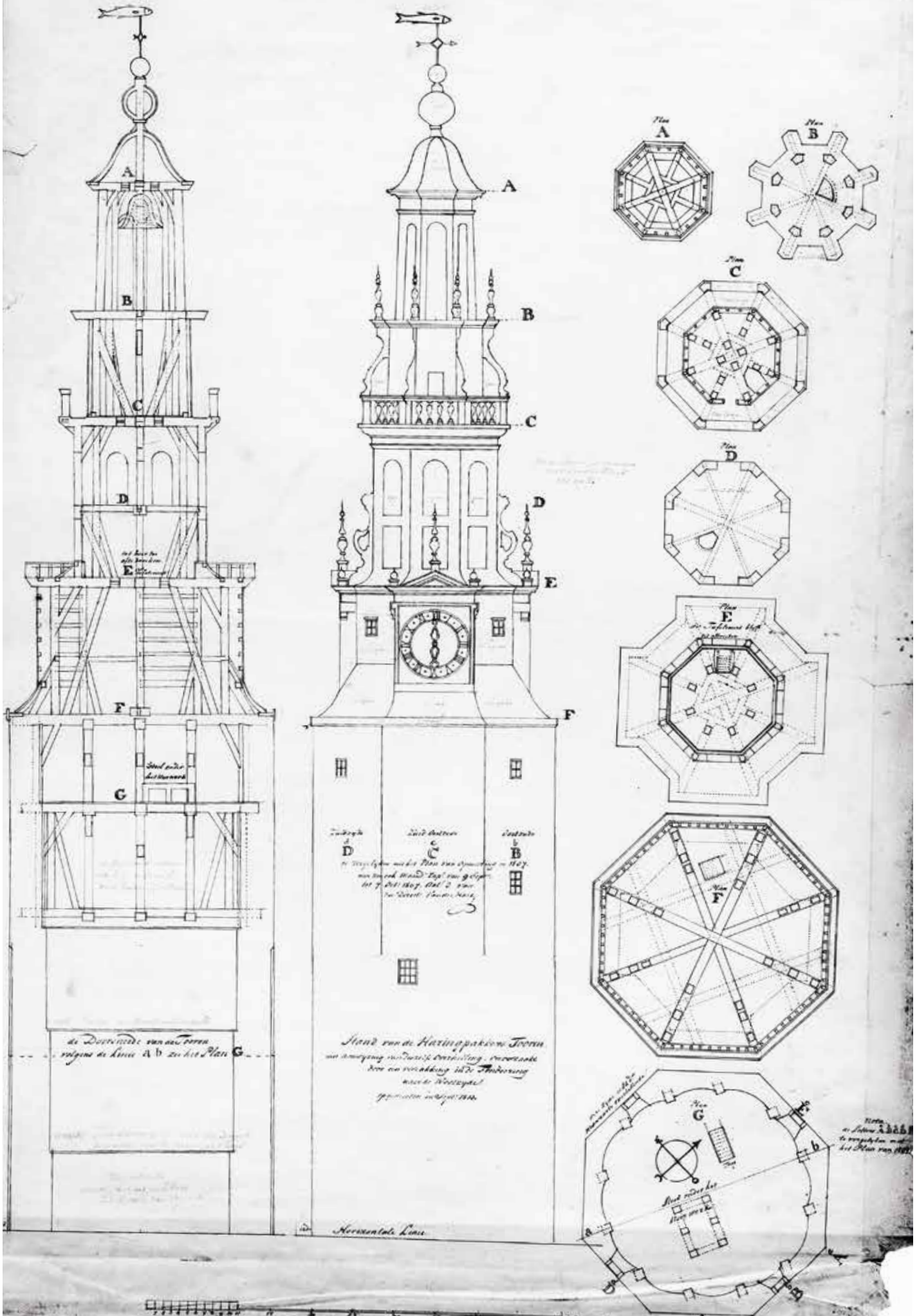
Maarten Kloos, architect and former director of Architectuurcentrum Amsterdam, roundly dismissed the reconstruction of the Haringpakkerstoren as nonsense, arguing that the project afforded nothing new in spatial terms and that the tower would never have the patina and self-evident consistency of an old building: 'there can never be any question of authenticity'.[6] But for proponents of the plan it was not about material originality, but about the historical *form*. Setting aside whether it is possible to distinguish between the two, art historian Wim Vroom was unconvinced as well: he defended reconstructions in cases of dire necessity, for example following war damage, but Amsterdam had no need of the Haringpakkerstoren and its reconstruction would in his view serve only as a tourist attraction.[7]

Ironically enough, it was the heritage status of Amsterdam's city centre that ultimately proved fatal to the reconstruction plans because they represented an obstacle to the city's inclusion in the World Heritage List. In UNESCO's view historicizing new constructions earned a black mark. By 2009, therefore, the political will to support the reconstruction had dwindled to almost nothing.

Nevertheless, various arguments can be advanced in favour of the reconstruction of vanished buildings: alongside aesthetic or economic considerations, an architecturally reconstructed memory can restore religious or political continuity, a national or regional memory, or the memory of individuals.[8]

The main concern of construction and architectural historians, whose work depends on the existence of material sources, is that reconstruction should not lead to the loss of any valuable built substance. Should

► 1. Amsterdam, measuring of the leaning Haringpakkerstoren, Abraham van der Hart, September 1813 (Stadsarchief Amsterdam)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that indeed be so, then it is time to mount the barricades. This is a matter of tackling things in the proper order. However, in the vast majority of cases the object to be reconstructed has already long vanished from the earth's surface. In such cases reconstruction is effectively a matter of a new construction. And this is why arguments based on the theoretical principles of heritage preservation, which advocate the preservation of age-related and evidential values and of historical built substance, are rarely pertinent.[9] The reality is that if wholesale reconstruction is under consideration, those values no longer exist physically.

### HAGGLING OVER AUTHENTICITY

Once the first European archaeologists had started to delve into the significance of remnants of the past, they gradually developed a theoretical framework encompassing concepts like authenticity and issues such as how buildings should be treated during restorations.[10] An important motivation for that theory development was the preservation of material authenticity. Just as excavated fossils are palaeontologists' most important source of knowledge about extinct organisms, so ancient, medieval and later buildings are primary sources for historians of construction and architecture wanting to discover how people built in those periods. Those who believe that other forms of authenticity (such as contextual, conceptual, visual, historical, ahistorical and functional authenticity) should also be taken into account will no doubt come up with new ideas regarding the interpretation and treatment of historical sources.[11] But this is after all about evaluation and interpretation in the present day. Anyone who fails to distinguish between the material and intangible aspects is like the grocer who believes that a persuasive packaging is an adequate representation of biscuits on the shelves, forgetting that the consumer will have to buy their actual biscuits elsewhere.

The fact that the material aspects are not always paramount in heritage preservation is largely attributable to a separation that has crept in between scientific researchers, who depend on primary source material, and heritage conservators and policy makers, for whom practical engagement with that source material in the spatial domain is paramount. In recent decades we have seen a trend towards the 'dissolution of the real monument'.[12] The evaluation of material remnants of the past has been destabilized since the Nara Conference on Authenticity in 1994. The resulting Nara Declaration was the product of a desire 'to bring greater respect for cultural and heritage diversity to conservation practice'. Nara concluded that the concept of authenticity should be evaluated from the perspective of the cultural context to which it belongs. Within that context a heritage object can be judged authentic not just on the basis of credible historical sources and material, but also on the basis of sources that testify to authentic aspects like function, design, tradition and spiritual or social value.[13]

According to this way of thinking everything is possible as long as the story of the 'outstanding values' can be credibly and truthfully *recounted* from the perspective of the culture concerned. This concept and definition of heritage deviates fundamentally from the traditional concept. Although the Nara document references the concept of authenticity in the 1964 Charter of Venice, which is founded on the material authenticity of a building regarded as a historical document, it ignores the scientific methods used to investigate historical structures, methods that do not differ fundamentally regardless of whether the material remains are from the Berlin Wall or the Great Wall of China.

### (IL)LEGITIMATIONS OF RECONSTRUCTIONS

With a semblance of theoretical speculation about what we might understand by authenticity, it doesn't take long to arrive at a legitimation of a reconstruction.[14] According to UNESCO, a reconstruction can only be based on complete and detailed information and never on conjecture.[15] But the 'suggestion that a design or detailed documentation always and repeatedly licenses reconstruction, as a score does for the performance of a piece of music', is false.[16] There are at least eight replicas of the White House Oval Office in the United States (fig. 2). But there is only one genuine Oval Office and it is in the White House. A reconstruction is always a retrospective interpretation; a designed ideal of the past using the means and possibilities – along with the preconceptions – of the present. Historical heritage whose material authenticity is beyond dispute would be at risk if this musical score analogy were to supplant material authenticity.[17]

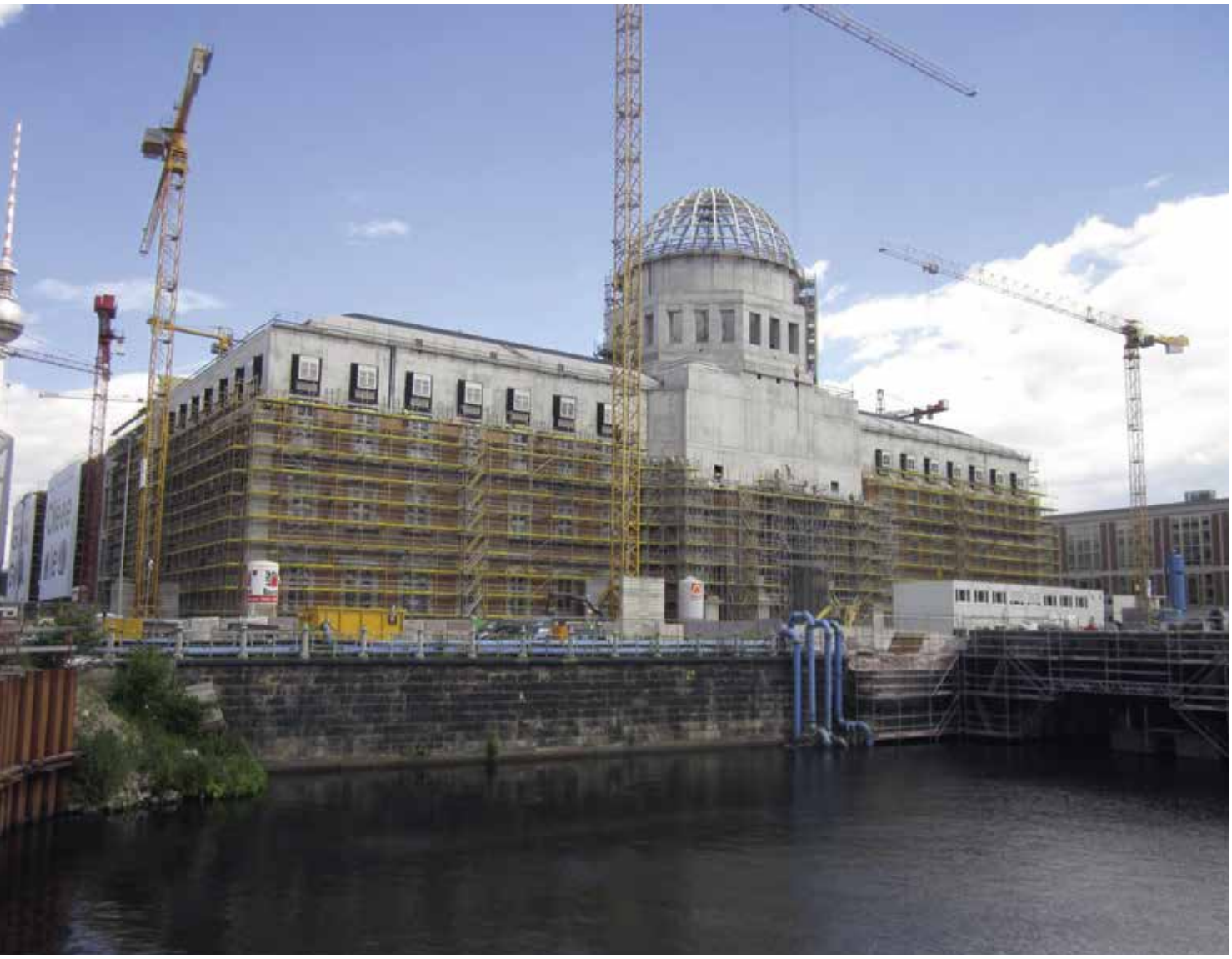
In some recent restorations carried out in the Netherlands it is difficult to distinguish between restoration and reconstruction.[18] There have also been a few complete reconstructions. In the reconstruction of the Rietveld Pavilion in the sculpture park of the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, and in the reconstruction of J.J.P Oud's Kiefhoek housing estate in Rotterdam, the architectural concept took precedence over the historical material. What these examples have in common is that the original design and the aesthetics of the building weighed more heavily than the preservation of historical materiality. Such a decision is informed by the condition of the building and the feasibility of salvaging the original material. This is not to say that a reconstruction cannot have any aesthetic value, or be a meaningful re-creation of the typology, the function, et cetera. But it is *staged authenticity* and

2. Replica of the Oval Office in the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, Grand Rapids, Michigan (author's photo)

incapable of conjuring up any material authenticity in a historical sense.[19]

Fortunately, the value judgements made by the architects and heritage professionals involved in the above-mentioned examples were based on expert knowledge and free of any political motivations. But we only have to look across the border to see how differently it might play out. The reconstruction of the Frauenkirche in Dresden necessitated the demolition of the ruin of that church, which had been cherished since 1945 as a *Mahnmal* or cautionary memorial.[20] For the reconstruction of the Potsdam City Palace, the post-war history of this part of Potsdam was erased. The most distressing case is the reconstruction of the Berlin City Palace (*Stadtschloss*), the remains of which were blown up in 1950 to make way for the parliament of the fledgling East German state (fig. 3). After the fall of the Wall in 1989 there were calls for the City Palace to be rebuilt. A decision to do so was finally taken in 2002 and construction commenced in 2010. This reconstruction in turn required the demolition of the GDR's Palast der Republik. In terms of construction technology, architecture and functional value, the importance of the Palast was not confined to German history. It had even greater significance as a symbol of the Cold War. In the debates about its fate, the fact that this GDR parliament building, along with the largely demolished Berlin Wall, was the most important structure of communist Germany was subordinated to the reconstruction of the vanished city palace. The wilful intent to demolish the Palast der Republik equalled that of half a century earlier when the City Palace was dynamited into oblivion. Even after 1989, the determination to erase the traces of the past prevailed.[21]

In the long run, the domination of conceptual approaches (see the above-mentioned categories of authenticity) has a negative impact on the way we deal



3. The Berlin Stadtschloss (City Palace) under (re)construction, July 2016 (author's photo)

with material heritage.[22] The devaluation of scientific, physical material sources places that material heritage in a narrative context. And by this I do not just mean interpretation: it becomes vulnerable to ideological framing Heritage preservation policy is at risk of becoming increasingly focused on context, on stories and intangible aspects. This can assume innocent forms and consist of genuine attempts to interpret and give meaning to phenomena of the past. But in its most extreme form – when demolition of a surviving fragment becomes part of the reconstruction process – it can also lead to radical and brutal decisions, because the stone artefact from the past is declared a symbol that must be destroyed.

NOTES

1 S. Stroux, '"Kein ästhetisches Heil, außer im Alterswert?" Over het actuele Duitse reconstructiedebat', *Bulletin KNOB* 114 (2015), 84-101, 94-95.

2 A. von Buttlar et al., *Denkmalpflege statt Attrappenkult. Gegen die Rekonstruktion von Baudenkmälern – eine Anthologie,* Berlin/ Basel 2011. But see also: U. Hassler and W. Nerdinger (eds.), *Das Prinzip Rekonstruktion*, Zurich 2010, in which some argue that reconstruction is in fact one of heritage protection's tasks. Cf. S. Stroux et al. (eds.), *Recomomo. Hoe echt is namaak, hoe dierbaar het origineel?*, Delft 2011. Somewhat older, but also about the attitude of heritage professionals to reconstruction following total destruction due to disaster, is Wim Denslagen, *Nostalgie en modernisme in de monumentenzorg*, Utrecht 1999.

3 M. Kloos, 'Terugbouwen. Wat een vreselijk woord!', *Maandblad Amstelodamum* 93 (2006) 1, 22-26; W. Vroom, 'De Haringpakkerstoren: liever niet', *Maandblad Amstelodamum* 93 (2006) 1, 27-29.

4 W. Denslagen, 'Discordia turrium', *Maandblad Amstelodamum* 93 (2006) 1, 3-10, 7. See also G. Frankfurther, 'Stadsherstel investeert in de toekomst van Amsterdam', idem, 19-21.

5 P. van Well, 'De Haringpakkerstoren herrijst. Geschiedenis en herbouwplan', *Maandblad Amstelodamum* 93 (2006) 1, 11-18, 15.
6 Kloos 2006 (note 3), 25.
7 Vroom 2006 (note 3), 27.
8 W. Nerdinger, 'Warum wurde und wird rekonstruiert. Rekonstruktion als politische, ideologische oder ästhetische Handlung', in: Hassler and Nerdinger 2010 (note 2), 14-29. Cf. W. Schoonenberg, 'Without Reconstruction, No Inner City', in: L. Deben, W. Salet and M.-T. van Thoor (eds.), *Cultural Heritage and the Future of the Historic Inner City of Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 2004, 133-148. There have been much more recent reconstructions where it is reasonable to ask whether preservation was not an option. V. van Rossem, 'Cum laude', *Binnenstad* 41 (2007), 223-224, 52-53.
9 Cf. Stroux 2015 (note 1), 92.
10 W.F. Denslagen, *Omstreden herstel. Kritiek op het restaureren van monumenten. Een thema uit de architectuurgeschiedenis van Engeland, Frankrijk, Duitsland en Nederland* (1779-1953), The Hague 1987; A. Hubel, 'Der "Generalkonstervator" Alois Riegl. Verdichtung des Denkmalbegriffs durch die Erfahrungen in der Praxis', in: A. Hubel, *Kunstgeschichte und Denkmalpflege. Ausgewählte Aufsätze. Festgabe zum 60. Geburtstag*, Petersberg 2005, 217-230.
11 Cf. W. Denslagen, 'Authenticiteit en spiritualiteit', *Bulletin KNOB* 109 (2010) 4, 135-140, 138; H. Ronnes, 'Authenticiteit en authenticiteitsbeleving. De presentatie en receptie van museum Paleis Het Loo', *Bulletin KNOB* 109 (2010) 5, 190-199.
12 M. Glendinning, *The Conservation Movement. A History of Architectural Preservation*, Abingdon 2013, variously described as the 'dissolution of the real monument' (423), and 'dissolving authenticity' (429). See also M. Kuipers, 'Authenticiteit versus Attrappenkult?', in: Stroux et al. 2011 (note 2), 8-11, 10-11.
13 Article 13 of the Nara Document on Authenticity (1994) states: 'Depending on the nature of the cultural heritage, its cultural context, and its evolution through time, authenticity judgements may be linked to the worth of a great variety of sources of information. Aspects of the sources may include form and design, materials and substance, use and function, traditions and techniques, location and setting, and spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors. The use of these sources permits elaboration of the specific artistic, historic, social, and scientific dimensions of the cultural heritage being examined.' Cf. G. van Tussenbroek, *The Myth of Immutability. Shifting opinions on listed buildings in Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 2015, 20.
14 On heritage values see: D. Boesler, 'Werte und Wertewandel in der Denkmalpflege', *Die Denkmalpflege* 69 (2011) 1, 5-10.
15 UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, 27 (version 10 July 2019); Denslagen 2010 (note 11), 138.
16 D.J. de Vries, *Verbrokkeld verleden*, Leiden 2001, 3-4.
17 Cf. A. de Swaan, 'The Fetish of Authenticity', in: L. Deben, W. Salet and M.-T. van Thoor 2004 (note 8), 35-42, 39: 'Without this fetish of authenticity the theoretical foundations of the preservation movement are not very strong and they have been further undermined by the emergence of much improved techniques of reconstruction that allow only experts to see the difference.'
18 B. Mulder, 'Het reconstrueren van gebouwd erfgoed', in: Stroux et al. 2011 (note 2), 46-51, 48; W. de Jonge, 'Oorspronkelijkheid versus reconstructie – waar ligt de grens? Een verkenning in de restauratiepraktijk van monumenten', in: Stroux et al. 2011 (note 2), 12-19.
19 D. MacCannell, 'Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings', *American Journal of Sociology* 79 (1973) 3, 589-603.
20 *Die Dresdner Frauenkirche. Geschichte ihres Wiederaufbaus, uitgegeven als Dresdner Hefte* 20 (2002), no. 71.
21 See also Stroux 2015 (note 1).
22 Denslagen 2010 (note 11).

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## RECONSTRUCTION AND RESISTANCE
### ON MATERIAL AUTHENTICITY

GABRI VAN TUSSENBROEK

Reconstructions of vanished buildings are new creations, lacking unity of time, place and function. Because of this, arguments based on the theoretical principles of heritage preservation – which advocate the preservation of age- and evidence-related values and of historical building substance – are rarely pertinent. Nevertheless, reconstructions are not without danger, given that they relativize the value of historical materiality, leading to the 'dissolution of the real monument' (Glendinning 2013).

The evaluation of material remnants of the past was destabilized by the Nara Conference on Authenticity in 1994. According to the Nara Document on Authenticity, the notion of authenticity should be evaluated from the perspective of the cultural context to which it belongs. Within that context a heritage object can be judged authentic based on credible historical sources and material, but also based on sources that attest to authentic aspects like function, design, tradition and spiritual or social value.

This conceptualization of authenticity serves to sideline material authenticity. The dominance of conceptual approaches has a negative impact on the way material heritage is dealt with. The devaluing of scientific, material sources places material heritage in a narrative context, thereby rendering it vulnerable to ideological framing.

# GENUINE ARCHITECTURE

## ON AUTHENTICITY AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

FREEK SCHMIDT

Judging by the various contributions to this issue of the *Bulletin*, authenticity is a loaded term in the world of architecture and heritage. Its use in the context of adaptive reuse is often so complicated as to induce people to come up with alternatives or to ignore it altogether. In this article authenticity is understood as historicity: the genuineness and singularity of a historically evolved building and its surroundings, in both a physical sense and as the embodiment of cultural significance. At issue is what the concept of historicity might mean in the context of adaptive reuse – an expanding design task that is increasingly being seen as separate discipline.[1] If ever there was a need for a clear conceptual framework it is in this design practice in which architects in particular increasingly adopt the role of historian as well. In the recent spate of publications on adaptive reuse there is little evidence of a clearly defined research subject, let alone of a scholarly attitude vis-à-vis the historical living environment and the way designers operate within it. At the same time this often has serious consequences for the value and significance of the building, city and cultural landscape. In practice, based on the interpretation of the building as architectural artefact a new design concept or an 'intervention' is worked out in a combination of preservation, restoration, demolition and new build, geared to the building's 'new life'. But does the historicity of our environment receive enough attention in this process? This article is an appeal for independent, broad architectural-historical research prior to redevelopment, to protect the historical value and cultural significance of buildings.

► 1. Nederlandsche Bank, Frederiksplein, Amsterdam, 19 December 1967. This building, designed in 1961 by architect Marius Duintjer, was extended in 1991 with a round tower designed by Jelle Abma (photo G.L.W. Oppenheim, Stadsarchief Amsterdam, collection Oppenheim)

## ALL BUILDINGS GROW

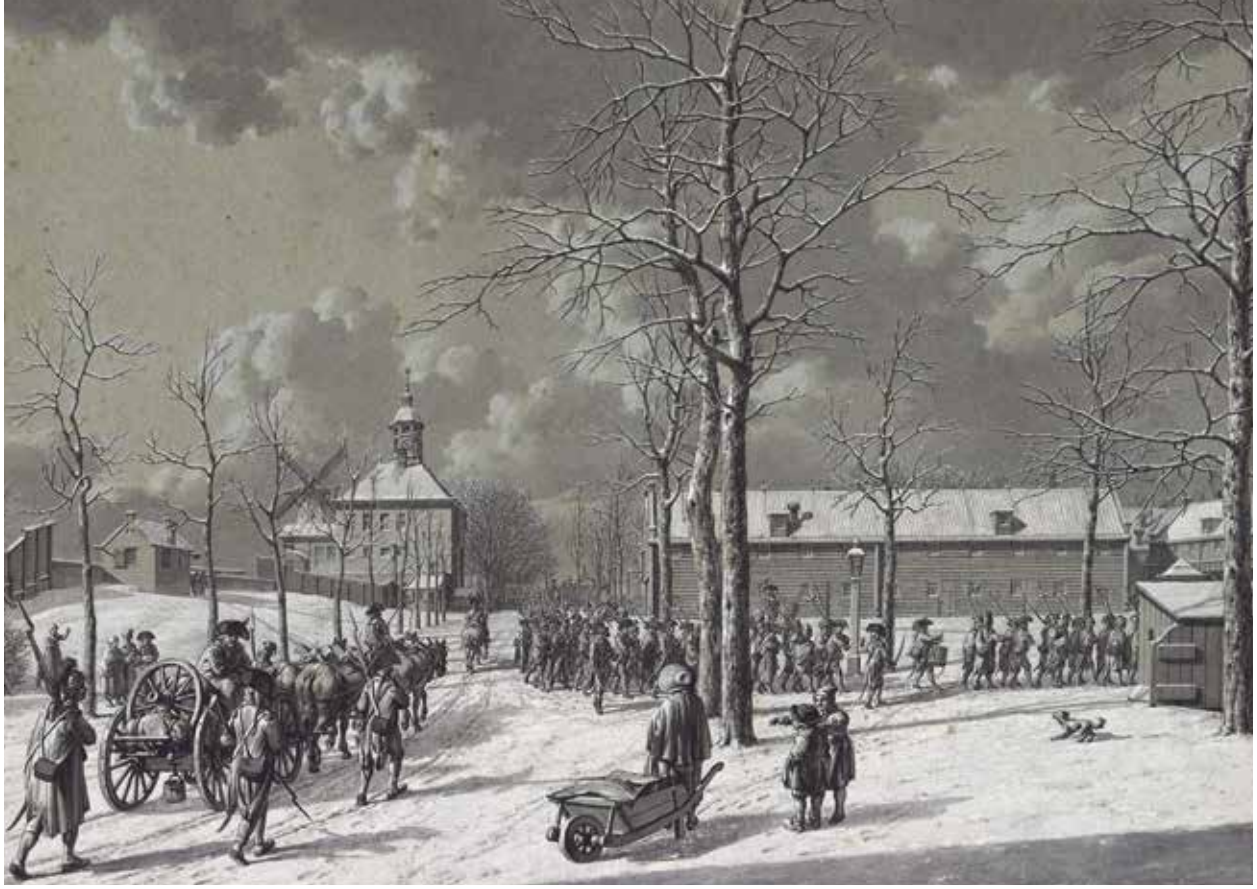
Today the building industry is anxiously trying to deal with climate change, the shortage of natural resources and disruptive human behaviour. In light of that, the idea that buildings can simply be discarded is becoming increasingly problematic. What can architecture do to better facilitate change and to become more resilient and sustainable? The architectural profession and the heritage industry have embraced the growing adaptive reuse market of empty and obsolete buildings, a task in which new architectural design and preservation techniques are combined. This means a return to premodern practice, when the architectural culture was dominated by permanence, durability and gradual change.[2] In order to continue to function buildings have to move with the times, to remain in sync with the changes taking place around them. All buildings grow, observed Stewart Brand in his compelling book *How buildings learn. What happens after they're built*.[3] One major difference with premodern practice lies in the approach to the existing built fabric. In most of the recent literature on adaptive reuse – written largely by and for architects – an implicit distinction is made between the 'original' building and later additions. There is often more respect shown for the architectural design than for the changes those buildings have undergone and which are part of their cultural history and significance.[4] There is a relative lack of interest in the history of use, in ad hoc pragmatic alterations and in whatever has been done to the buildings over the course of time to ensure their continued existence.[5]

Even when a building has outlived its purpose, it is rarely worthless. The only value to have largely dissipated is of a financial and economic nature.[6] The building possesses other values beyond those of use, such as its spatial value as an urban design and architectural object. People tend to overlook the intangible value that is associated with individual and collective memories and which derives from use, specific events and testimonials in word and image. There are few for whom Amsterdam's Paleis voor Volksvlijt is a living memory, yet the exhibition hall's continued popularity shows just how great an intangible value based on documents, testimonials and stories can be.[7] The historian is best placed to trace and elucidate that value and significance.

## HERITAGE MARKET

In recent decades architectural historians have voiced their disquiet about the fundamental change affecting heritage buildings as a result of, to quote Hilde Heynen,

2. Frederiksplein, Amsterdam, remains of the Paleis voor Volksvlijt (1864) after the fire, April 1929 (Stadsarchief Amsterdam)



3. Jacob Cats, *Het inrukken der Fransche Troupen in de Utregtsche Poort*, 1796. Drawing of the entry of French soldiers into the (later) Frederiksplein in the early hours of 19 January 1795, seen from his house on the Amstelgrachtje. Left the Utrechtse Poort (1664-1858) (Stadsarchief Amsterdam)

'the combined effects of tourism, commodification, the shifting place of the public realm and the transformations of the experience of time'.[8] Tourism and entertainment seem increasingly to dominate how we deal with our built environment. Museumization is one of the problems being vigorously debated both within and beyond the heritage world. This tendency is not confined to historical city centres and listed heritage buildings. Everywhere you look historicity is being exchanged for a vague kind of nostalgia that chiefly fuels consumption and entertainment, and whereby the preservation of historical fragments serves as an alibi for commercial redevelopment and property deals. History is being replaced by entertainment.[9] In the process, protection and preservation go hand in hand with a loss of genuine concern and esteem for the authentic significance of built heritage.[10]

The turn of the century saw the emergence of 'adaptive reuse' in the international construction and heritage world; in the Netherlands, since the launch of a new government spatial policy (*Nota Belvedere*) in 1999, this approach has been promoted under the motto 'preservation through development'. Interest in adaptive reuse was further boosted by the increasing tendency to link heritage value to economic return. As the government's 2011 policy statement 'Opting for character. Perspective on heritage and space' put it: 'Without value creation there is no sustainable basis for preservation and we also miss out on opportunities to maximize economic profit from this "gold in our hands"'.[11] Wholly in line with this, heritage preservation has been transformed into heritage management and adaptive reuse has become a revenue model that is hugely appealing for the building industry and property developers. But what does this mean for the authenticity of our built environment and how is historicity to survive in this largely commercially and entertainment driven dynamic? The fact that the addition of new values is accompanied by the loss of old values, significance and historicity has so far received little attention in the debate about adaptive reuse.

#### THE BUILDING AS ARTEFACT

Most recent publications on adaptive reuse are a combination of lip service to the heritage canon, design conceptions geared to redevelopment, and a personal selection of practical examples.[12] The use of existing literature is fragmentary and arbitrary, resulting in a lack of academic rigour. Interestingly, Brand's study is largely ignored in the majority of publications.[13] This could well be deliberate, because in the final pages of his book Brand suggests that we should no longer regard architecture as the art of building, but rather as '"the design-science of the life of buildings". A shift that minor could transform the way civilization manages its built environment – toward long-term respon-

sibility and constant adaptivity.'[14] Critical scholarly reflection on the task, position and authority of the architect within the heritage discourse is virtually absent. The existing building is analysed as an architectural artefact, as a material remnant, so that all attention is focused on documenting the historical building substance and determining the rarity and integrity of the physical elements. Seldom are the value and significance of the building as a cultural-historical object – sometimes cherished, lived in, used and adapted for generations – mentioned as the starting point for intervention. And because of this, there is a lack of awareness that a comprehensive redesign results in the loss of the authenticity of what has evolved over time and with that its historicity. This raises the question of just how resilient and sustainable an adaptive reuse project is or should be. Brand contends that 'Almost no buildings adapt well. They're designed not to adapt, also budgeted and financed not to, constructed not to, administered not to, maintained not to, regulated and taxed not to, even remodeled not to.'[15] Instead of cherishing a building's resilience, an overly radical or large-scale redevelopment adversely affects the potentially irreplaceable experiential value and collective memory. As for the lasting 'value creation' benefit of such projects, that is as yet unknown.

## THE 'GENIUS OF THE PLACE'

In their recent book, *Adaptive reuse of the built heritage. Concepts and cases of an emerging discipline*, Bie Plevoets and Koenraad Van Cleempoel offer an alternative for the authenticity concept by harking back to 'the genius of the place'.[16] The term was coined by the eighteenth-century English poet Alexander Pope in reference to the particular qualities of English landscape architecture in which existing nature was rearranged in accordance with the spirit of the place to the greater delight of human beings. They also invoke the 'genius loci', a term introduced in relation to architecture in 1980 by the architectural historian Christian Norberg-Schulz.[17] The authors regard adaptive reuse as 'an opportunity to recreate, rethink, or strengthen the genius loci'.[18] The building is seen as a place where the juxtaposition of different historical layers has enhanced the authentic experience of the site and the richness and depth of its memory.[19] Plevoets and Van Cleempoel argue that the new discipline of adaptive reuse should not just respect what we have inherited from the past, but also actively search for the values and memory of the host space and, through a succession of tangible and intangible associations, establish meaningful relations between past and present.[20] Put like that, no one could object to their proposal. But Pope's 'genius of the place' in the landscape is quite a different matter from an old building or an intensely experienced place. We might well wonder whether it is such a good idea to allow the designer to also evaluate the significance of a building or place. After all, an architecturally successful adaptive reuse project may also result in substantial loss of historicity and cultural-historical significance, even while the historical building substance remains virtually intact.

It is not enough for the architect, à la Pope, to intuitively and associatively read the 'genius' of an existing building or place and translate it into a visible and far-reaching transformation, without first having the intangible value and significance of building and place analysed by an independent (architectural) historian. This kind of research into historical and cultural significance has received insufficient attention in the debate about adaptive reuse. At a time when more and more relatively recent built heritage is being redeveloped, genuineness and historicity are extremely important for the accessibility and comprehensibility of the built environment. What is needed above all, in addition to building history analysis, is a description of the historical and accumulated cultural value and significance of building and place as a starting point for redevelopment. Stories about the building and the place, the intentions behind the design, and changes to use: all these intangible aspects together determine the cultural value of the building in society. That historicity or genuineness and singularity is crucial to the building's significance. Otherwise the spirit of the place disappears to be replaced only by novelty and entertainment, at the service of the contemporary consumer.

NOTES

1 This article expands on a few ideas that were conceived some years back in close collaboration with Marie-Thérèse van Thoor, Gabri van Tussenbroek, Ronald Stenvert, Jan van der Hoeve and Edwin Orsel in the course of formulating two applications for programmatic research at NWO (not granted), and on the author's ongoing research. Literature consulted for this article: C. Bloszies, *Old buildings, new designs. Architectural transformations*, New York 2012; E. Braae, *Beauty redeemed. Recycling post-industrial landscapes*, Risskov/Basel 2015; Crimson, Re-Arch. *Nieuwe ontwerpen voor oude gebouwen*, Rotterdam 1995; P. Diederen, *Ontwerpen van verandering. Intreerede prof. ir. Paul Diederen. Uitgesproken op 1 juni 2018 aan de Technische Universiteit Eindhoven* (https://research.tue.nl/nl/publications/ontwerpen-van-verandering); S. Gelinck et al., *Rekenen op herbestemming. Idee, aanpak en cijfers van 25 + 1 gerealiseerde projecten*, Rotterdam 2015; R. van Hees, S. Naldini and J. Roos, *Durable past – sustainable future*, Delft 2014; H. Ibelings and Diederendirrix Architects, *Make it anew*, Amsterdam 2018; M. Kuipers and W. de Jonge, *Designing from heritage. Strategies for conservation and conversion*, Delft 2017; M. Kuipers and W. Quist, *Culturele draagkracht. Op zoek naar de tolerantie voor verandering bij gebouwd erfgoed*, [Delft] 2013; P. Meurs, *Heritage-based*

*design*, Delft 2016; P. Meurs, M. Steenhuis and J. de Groot, *Reuse, redevelop and design. How the Dutch deal with Heritage*, Rotterdam 2017; P. Nijhof et al., *Herbestemming industrieel erfgoed in Nederland*, Zutphen 1994; B. Plevoets and K. van Cleempoel, *Adaptive reuse of the built heritage. Concepts and cases of an emerging discipline*, New York 2019; R. Roorda et al., *Vital architecture. Tools for durability = Vitale architectuur. Gereedschap voor levensduur*, Rotterdam 2016; J. Saris, S. van Dommelen and T. Metze, *Nieuwe ideeën voor oude gebouwen. Creatieve economie en stedelijke herontwikkeling*, Rotterdam 2008; F. Scott, *On altering architecture*, London 2008; M. Steenhuis, P. Meurs and A. Kuijt, *Herbestemming in Nederland. Nieuw gebruik van stad en land*, Rotterdam 2011; H. Stevens, *Hergebruik van oude gebouwen*, Zutphen 1986; S. Stone, *UnDoing buildings. Adaptive reuse and cultural memory*, New York 2020; K. Vandenbroucke, *Mag dit weg. Methodiek voor herbestemming*, Rotterdam 2020; L. Wong, *Adaptive reuse. Extending the lives of buildings*, Basel 2016.

2 E.M. Merrill and S. Gimarelos, 'From the Pantheon to the Anthropocene. Introducing resilience in architectural history', *Architectural Histories* 7 (2019) 1, doi.org/10.5334/ah.406; K. Trogal et al., *Architecture and resilience. Interdisciplinary dialogues*, London 2019; M. Trachtenberg, *Building-in-time. From Giotto to Alberti and modern oblivion*, New Haven/London 2010; J. van Ooijen, 'Resilient matters. The cathedral of Syracuse as an architectural palimpsest', *Architectural Histories* 7 (2019) 1, 26, doi.org/10.5334/ah.65

3 S. Brand, *How buildings learn. What happens after they're built*, New York 1994.

4 See also F. Schmidt, 'Moet opgeknapt worden. Gebouwen en hun aanpassingen', in: R. Stenvert and G. van Tussenbroek (eds.), *Het gebouw als bewijs. Het bouwhistorische verhaal achter erfgoed*, Utrecht 2016, 145-208.

5 Merrill and Giamarelos 2019 (note 2).

6 In D.M. Abramson, *Obsolescence. An architectural history*, Chicago 2016 the author shows that the high turnover rate and discarding of buildings in large parts of the Western world in the twentieth century follow a simple financial model.

7 R. Kousbroek et al., *Het paleis in de verbeelding. Het Paleis voor Volksvlijt 1860-1961*, Amsterdam 1990; E. Wennekes, *Het Paleis voor Volksvlijt (1864-1929). 'Edele uiting eener stoute gedachte!'*, The Hague 1999; G. van Tussenbroek, *IJzeren ambitie. Het Paleis voor Volksvlijt en de opkomst van de Nederlandse industrie*, Amsterdam 2019.

8 H. Heynen, 'Introduction to the theme "Petrified Memory"', *The Journal of Architecture* 4 (1999) 4, 331-332, 332.

9 H. Heynen, 'Petrifying memories: architecture and the construction of identity', *The Journal of Architecture* 4 (1999) 4, 369-390, which in turn references M.C. Boyer, *The city of collective memory. Its historical imagery and architectural entertainments*, Cambridge 1994.

10 Heynen 1999 (note 9).

11 Policy statement 'Kiezen voor karakter, Visie erfgoed en ruimte'. Parliamentary paper 15 May 2011, 10. www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2011/06/15/beleidsvisie-kiezen-voor-karakter-visie-erfgoed-en-ruimte (20 July 2020).

12 See note 1.

13 Exceptions are Roorda 2016 (note 1) and Kuipers and De Jonge 2017 (note 1), principally in relation to the 'shearing layers' concept borrowed from Frank Duffy.

14 Brand 1994 (note 3), 210.

15 Brand 1994 (note 3), 2. Elsewhere (p. 53) Brand also cautions against 'over-designed buildings', which are well-nigh impossible to adapt.

16 Plevoets and Van Cleempoel 2019 (note 1).

17 C. Norberg-Schulz, *Genius loci. Towards a phenomenology of architecture*, New York 1980.

18 Plevoets and Van Cleempoel 2019 (note 1), 92-93; 126-131.

19 'This juxtaposing of different historical layers, however, did not compromise the authentic experience of the site. On the contrary, it enhances the richness and depth of its memory.' Plevoets and Van Cleempoel 2019 (note 1), 92.

20 Plevoets and Van Cleempoel 2019 (note 1), 93: 'We believe that for the discipline to move further, the future practice and theory of adaptive reuse should aim not just at respecting what is handed over from the past to the present but instead should actively search for the values and memory of the host space and try to establish a meaningful relationship between the present and the past through a sequence of tangible and intangible associations.'

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# GENUINE ARCHITECTURE
## ON AUTHENTICITY AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

FREEK SCHMIDT

This article is an appeal for independent, broad architectural-historical research prior to the redevelopment of buildings to protect their potential historical value and cultural significance. Authenticity is understood here as historicity and the article explores what it might signify in adaptive reuse, a growing sector in architectural design that is increasingly coming to be regarded as a separate discipline. In adaptive reuse strategies the building is viewed primarily as an architectural object that is to be given a 'new life'. But does that allow sufficient attention to be paid to the historicity of our living environment? How resilient and sustainable is a repurposed building? Stories that touch on the building, on testimonies in which place plays a role, on the intentions behind the design, and on changes to use: all these intangible aspects together determine the cultural value of the building in society, community and setting. That historicity, or genuineness and singularity, is crucial to the building's significance. What is needed above all is for the description of the historical and accumulated cultural value and significance of a building and place to be the starting point for redevelopment. Otherwise the spirit of the place disappears to be replaced only by novelty and entertainment, at the service of the contemporary consumer.

# AUTHENTICITY AND MATERIAL

## A CONSIDERATION OF THE CONCEPT BASED ON EXAMPLES FROM (LATE) ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES

LEX BOSMAN

**A good description of authenticity in architecture might be that a built object – or part thereof – really is what it purports or appears to be, a definition related to existentialism. In a simple philosophical definition, authenticity is understood as the degree to which someone remains true to themselves, in spite of external influences. Yet it is clear from virtually every description of authenticity that this concept has only limited application in relation to architecture. In this article I set out to apply that initial definition to the architecture of Antiquity, late Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. I also explore some other interpretations of the concept of authenticity.**

PAGINA'S 22-25

▲ 1. Magdeburg Cathedral, spolia columns in the interior of the apse (author's photograph)

## SPOLIA

In the architecture of the aforementioned periods, load-bearing elements such as columns usually perform the function for which they were intended, which is to say bearing or supporting part of a building. The way they are employed serves to demonstrate the essence of the architectural system and in that sense they are authentic. The issue of the application and the material of these load-bearing elements is relevant to the concept of authenticity. The numerous columns in ancient and medieval architecture may well be much older than the building in which they are used, as such elements were often redeployed in a new context. This reuse of materials – called 'spolia' – from late Antiquity until well into the Middle Ages, raises other questions that are related to authenticity. It was not unusual for older material used in a new context to be given a different architectural function from the one it originally performed. We see this, for example, in the new Magdeburg cathedral, built from 1209 onwards to replace its fire-ravaged predecessor. Many of the Roman spolia columns in this church were used in a way that differed from their original function. The striking quartet of costly granite and porphyry columns in the apse of the cathedral have no structural function (fig. 1). As such they do not appear to satisfy the definition of authenticity at the beginning of this article. Nevertheless, it was because of their (authentic) Roman origins that they were transported from Italy to Magdeburg and given such a prominent position in the church. The construction history of the new cathedral contains ample evidence that an eye-catching position was expressly sought for the multi-coloured columns, and eventually found in the apse.[1] In this case the significance eclipsed the original function of the columns.

In most cases, however, older material was used in the same role as originally and thus in line with the definition given above. A well-known example of this is the widespread reuse of column shafts in church buildings: the function remained the same, namely supporting an architrave or arch. For a contemporary researcher, this reuse of old building materials can serve to highlight the issue of authenticity in the sense of originality. At the time, however, this was not a consideration. There is not the slightest indication that spolia were purposefully employed in the early Christian era, nor that any distinction was made between new and recycled column shafts. The dozens of reused columns in the big early Christian basilicas of St John Lateran and St Peter's in Rome were used on account of the material. In St Peter's in particular the profusion of marble and granite was the deciding factor, not the issue of whether the material was new or had been used before.[2] This observation has relevance for the evaluation of the reuse of materials like column shafts, architrave beams, capitals and bases. The availability of such materials is a substantial point. In the fourth century, for example, columns used in the construction of churches in Rome came not only directly from older buildings but also from previously stockpiled elements. The original context in which such materials had functioned was unimportant; the building did not have to be constructed from materials that all came from the same period. Clearly, other considerations weighed more heavily in the selection of materials and the development of a design concept, such as the richness of the material as manifested in the vibrant colours. What mattered was that the spolia should perform the same function as they had fulfilled in an earlier situation.

## RECOGNIZABLE REUSE

An interesting point in all this is that of recognizability. For who would have been capable of discerning the difference between reused and new column shafts in the fourth-century basilica of St Peter's in Rome? It was only in the sixteenth century that the artist Raphael and the writer Baldassare Castiglione were able to recognize that parts of the sculpture on the Arch of Constantine (c. 315) dated from different periods, witness their famous 'Letter to Pope Leo X'; their evaluation of the quality of sculpture dating from different periods differed as well.[3] Interestingly, it was not the unity of material that was under discussion, but the quality of the reworking of the sculpture.

In Rome and beyond spolia were employed for a variety of reasons, including after the fourth century. At times, the recognizable elements were taken for granted and no attempt was made to disguise the fact that some elements were being reused. At other times recognizable characteristics were actively sought after and in such cases the (putative) origin could be at issue. In the thirteenth-century church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli, a second-century base was used in combination with a marble block with a conspicuous medieval inscription; two examples of reused material, placed one on top of the other.[4] In the episcopal church in Pisa, construction on which began early in the second half of the eleventh century, older material was used in a totally different way. This important church building boasts an unprecedented wealth of Roman and Islamic spolia deployed in order to emphasize the status of both the institution and the city. Locked in rivalry with other maritime cities, Pisa incorporated into the architecture of this new church allusions to the city's Roman origins, in the form of spolia columns (fig. 2), blocks of stone with clearly visible fragments of inscriptions, and a Roman sarcophagus. And on the exterior, bricked into one of the lozenge-shaped ornaments in the southern clerestory, an Egyptian *bacino*

2. Pisa Cathedral, spolia columns in the dwarf gallery of the apse (author's photograph)

3. Pisa Cathedral, reused block of stone with a fragment of an older inscription (author's photograph)

(basin). These elements were intended to be visible because the blocks of stone could just as easily have been fitted in so that the inscriptions remained hidden (fig. 3). The Roman elements allude to the city's origins and thus to Pisa's importance, while it is assumed that the Islamic *bacino*, specimens of which were also incorporated into other Pisan churches, was intended to underscore the city's dominant role in the Mediterranean.[5] In addition other, medieval, elements such as a frieze were also used, while the use of spolia in the interior is considerable.[6] The totality of these reused elements points to a deliberate application of spolia in a rigorously organized programme. In this instance the authenticity, in the sense of the origins or source of the individual elements, is fundamental: together they were intended to form a new architectural whole. And it was important that the reused architectural elements be used in accordance with their original function. If the recognizability of the majority of these spolia was of crucial importance in Pisa, this was not always or everywhere the case with the reuse of materials. In the extension of the 'Alte Dom' in Cologne from a three-aisle basilica to a building with five aisles in the tenth century, red sandstone columns of Roman origin were used. In this case, however, the origin appears to have been of little importance, although the columns did retain their original function.[7]

**CONCLUSION**

The examples given above justify my reservations as to whether authenticity is a useful concept for understanding the architecture of these periods. The contemporary concept of authenticity – in whatever meaning – did not exist in Antiquity or the Middle Ages. Authenticity in the sense of originality certainly did not feature highly in the architecture of Antiquity or the Middle Ages. To the extent that there was any notion of originality back then, it was usually something to be avoided; in the Middle Ages in particular architecture was expected to be familiar and to conform to established and important traditions. Too strong a deviation from what was familiar – and thus comprehensible – in the application of architectural concepts would put the building or building complex's patron outside the established order. Ideally, the history of an institution or individual patron was to be rendered visible in the architecture, thereby creating a strong connection between the history and the contemporary situation.[8]

Nor did authenticity play any role in the reuse of material. The origins of material in the early Christian era was simply not a consideration; what mattered was the richness of the material. During the Middle Ages there was a more conscious use of older material on account of its significance, but the concept of originality seems more relevant here than authenticity.

NOTES

1 L. Bosman, 'Bedeutung der Tradition. Über die Spolien im Chorbereich des Magdeburger Domes', in: W. Schenkluhn and A. Waschbüsch (eds.), *Der Magdeburger Dom im europäischen Kontext*, Regensburg 2011, 187-195.

2 F. Marcorin, 'Classicismo e reimpiego nei colonnati dell'antica basilica di San Pietro in Vaticano', in: *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 58 (2015), 138-163, 154-157; L. Bosman, 'Spolia in the Fourth-century Basilica', in: R. McKitterick et al. (eds.), *Old Saint Peter's, Rome*, Cambridge 2013, 65-80; L. Bosman, 'Constantine's Spolia. A Set of Columns for San Giovanni in Laterano and the Arch of Constantine in Rome', in: L. Bosman, I.P. Haynes and P. Liverani (eds.), *The Basilica of Saint John Lateran to 1600*, Cambridge 2020, 171-181.

3 F.P. di Teodoro, *Raffaello, Baldassar Castiglione e la lettera a Leone x con l'aggiunta di due saggi raffaelleschi*, Bologna 2003, 82. For a good English translation of the text, see: V. Hart and P. Hicks (eds.), *Palladio's Rome*, New Haven/London 2006, 183.

4 P. Pensabene, 'Architectural Spolia and Urban Transformation in Rome from the Fourth to the Thirteenth Century', in: S. Altekamp, C. Marcks-Jacobs and P. Seiler (eds.), *Perspektiven der Spolienforschung 2. Zentren und Konjunkturen der Spoliierung*, Berlin 2017, 222-225.

5 K.R. Mathews, *Conflict, Commerce, and an Aesthetic of Appropriation in the Italian Maritime Cities, 1000-1150*, Leiden/Boston 2018, 126-146.

6 A. Peroni, 'Spolia e architettura nel Duomo di Pisa', in: J. Poeschke (ed.), *Antike Spolien in der Architektur des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, Munich 1996, 205-223.

7 D. Hochkirchen, 'Antike Säulen im Alten Dom. Ein Rekonstruktionsvorschlag zu den Seitenschiffarkaden der vorgotischen Kölner Bischofskirche', *Kölner Domblatt* 76 (2011), 77-107.

8 W. Schenkluhn, 'Bemerkungen zum Begriff des Architekturzitats', *Ars* 41 (2008), 3-12.

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## AUTHENTICITY AND MATERIAL

### A CONSIDERATION OF THE CONCEPT BASED ON EXAMPLES FROM (LATE)ANTIQUITY AND THE MIDDLE AGES

LEX BOSMAN

It is not immediately clear whether the concept of authenticity can be applied to the architecture of (Late) Antiquity and the Middle Ages. If you were to apply the existentialist definition of the concept, you could say that an architectural element is authentic when it is what it purports or seems to be: a column, for example, should support something. Authenticity can also be understood in the sense of 'initial' and 'original'. A brief survey of a few examples reveals the importance of originality and, in particular, of the function of the architectural element. Examples like the eleventh/twelfth-century episcopal church of Pisa demonstrate that alongside the original function of an element, in this case columns, there could be multiple layers of meaning. On the other hand there is the redeployment of ancient columns in the thirteenth-century Magdeburg Cathedral, where they have no load-bearing function, having been placed in the apse solely because of what they signify. Ultimately one can wonder whether the concept of authenticity can be usefully applied to the architecture of the periods in question.

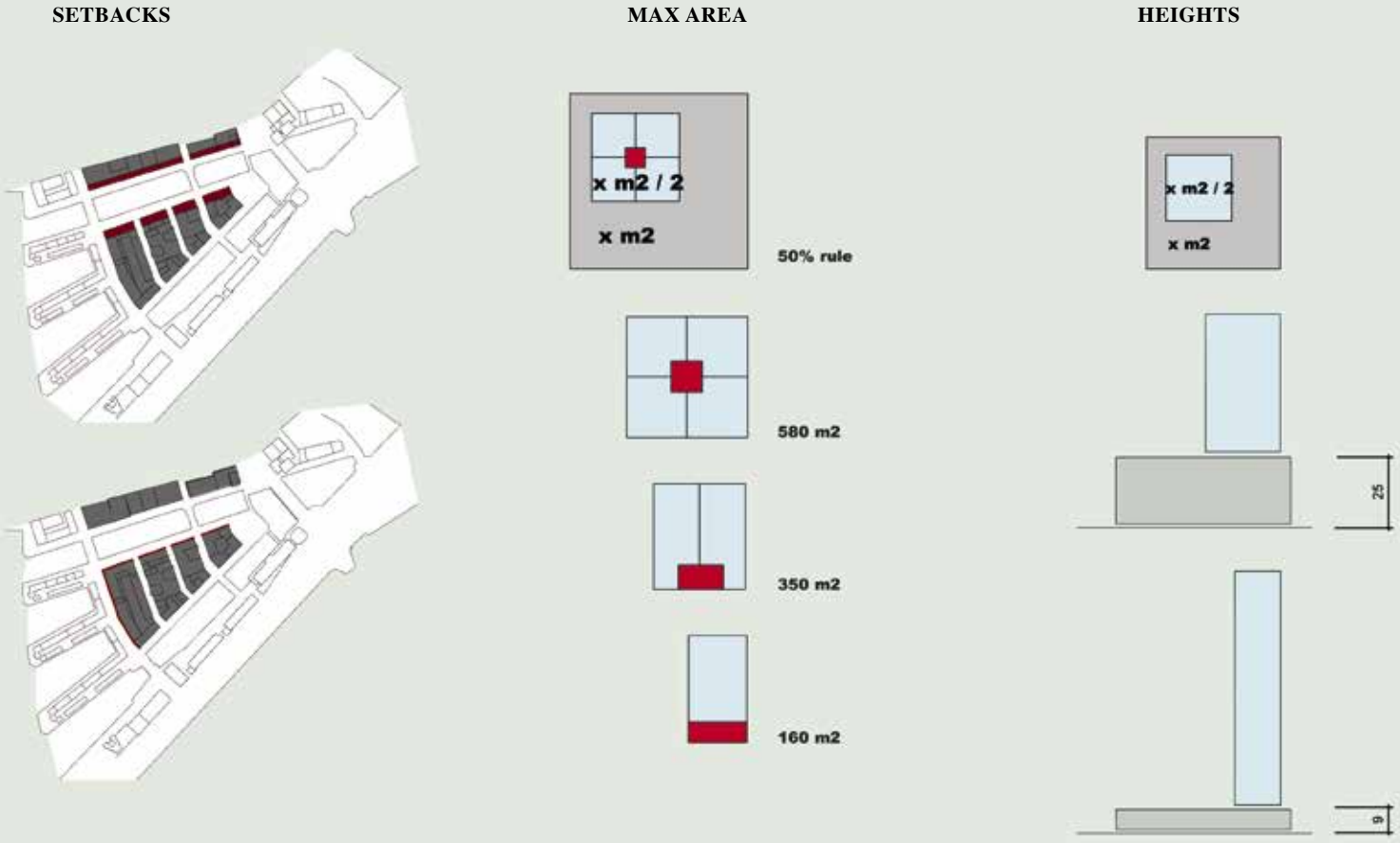
# ALWAYS THE REAL THING?

## AUTHENTICITY IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL REPRODUCTION

LARA SCHRIJVER

In his celebrated 1935 essay, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', Walter Benjamin argues that: 'The authenticity of a thing is the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced.'[1] He is in effect interpreting authenticity as a concept that transcends the technical and material criteria of genuineness. In other words: he expands it in order to be able to include the 'life of things' in the debate about new techniques in art. This broader notion is used here to explore how we might respond to the demand for authenticity in the age of digital reproducibility.

▲ 1. KCAP, aerial photo and urban planning strategy Wijnhaveneiland, Rotterdam, 1995 (photo Ossip van Duivenbode, diagrams KCAP)




**AUTHENTICITY AND CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE**

The various interpretations of the concept of authenticity, ranging from the technical assessment of genuineness in the narrow sense to a broader notion of origins and context, are all relevant to architectural history. They can help in determining which elements belong to the original design and how a work relates to a particular time, context and culture. In architecture, the authenticity of an artefact or a building can be used to date something or to denote changes over the course of its life. However, the concept of authenticity is not always used unambiguously: sometimes it is indicative of an underlying evaluation rather than the condition of the object. Wim Denslagen once suggested that these implicit, additional meanings sow confusion and give rise to an ideological discussion.[2] Even with these limitations of the concept of authenticity – in the twentieth century also closely related to the debates about originality – there is reason enough to repeatedly interrogate the different viewpoints on authenticity, especially in the context of contemporary architectural practice.

Back in the 1930s Benjamin had already pointed to changes in the production, character and experience of the artwork as a result of the rise of technical reproduction methods.[3] His essay remains a touchstone for us today, in particular as a reflection on the properties of photography and film. Although his arguments are mainly concerned with the effects of technical reproduction in these two domains in relation to the allied areas of painting and theatre, his essay has been extremely influential in architectural practice. One important element, especially in the postmodern period, is his acute analysis of the potential of technical reproduction methods, in which there is still scope for the quality of an 'original' as a time- and place-specific artistic realization: 'The presence of the

original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity.'[4] In the 1980s and '90s this acquired new relevance with the development of digital reproduction methods, which fuelled an ever-expanding understanding of copy, original and simulation.[5]

The digital age adds a new layer to the debate because digital techniques create a new condition. What is the authenticity value of a product or design if a perfect reproduction – in some cases even a new *production* – of an idea can be made based on a program, a scan or even an algorithm? This can lead to a further transformation of the role of the designer and of the elaboration and materialization of the design. Some aspects of digital production were already implicit in Benjamin's argument, which pointed out that technical reproduction effects a change in the authority of the original.[6] Mechanical reproduction, such as printing negatives, is less dependent on the original than manual reproduction. In this context, the architect Stan Allen refers to the distinction drawn by the philosopher Nelson Goodman between 'autographic' and 'allographic' arts: 'In music, poetry, or theater ... the work exists in many copies and can be produced without the direct intervention of the author.'[7] Moreover, such a reproduction can transcend the time and context of the original, as in the showing of a film in cinemas worldwide or individual performances of a piece of music.

## DIGITAL DESIGNING WITHOUT A BLUEPRINT

Digital reproducibility adds to the complexity of the debate because there is less direct transfer between designer and outcome and greater 'mediation' on the part of new media. In architecture, where the realization of the architect's vision has always involved multiple contributors (draughtspeople, structural engineers, contractors), nowadays software programs also contribute to the elaboration. Some sketches by modern architects like Tadao Ando or Le Corbusier have achieved iconic status as essentialist expressions of an idea. But the effort and vision of the architect is no longer articulated by a few pencil strokes. Nowadays a sketch is just as likely to be an algorithmic abstraction of the architect's 'hand'. The software may also contain the underlying construction details, while standard solutions are already pre-programmed in AutoCAD, BIM or Revit. The transfer of information in these models gives more attention to details but they are pre-sorted based on programmed preferences.

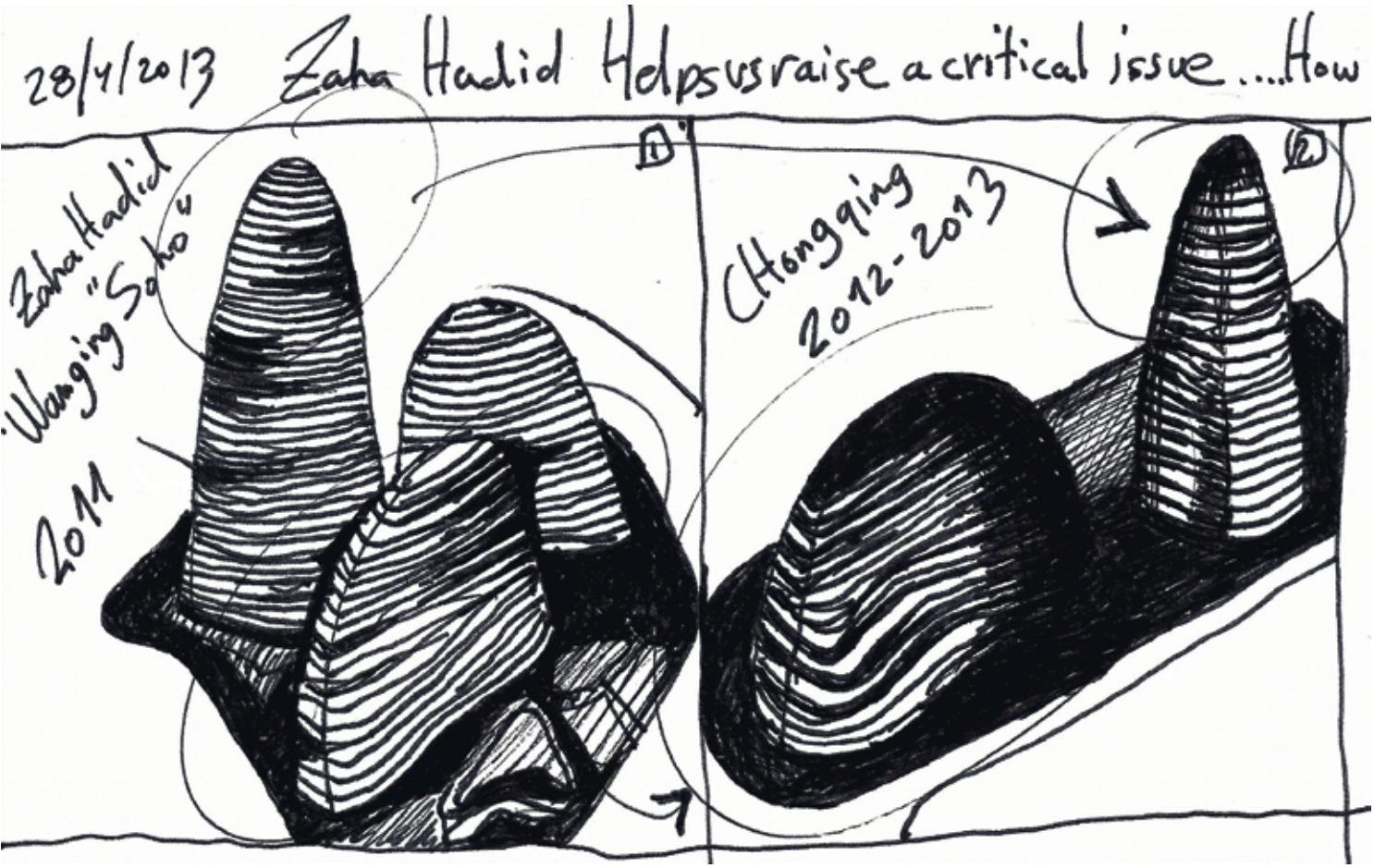
Of particular interest in this respect is the research carried out by the architect Kees Christiaanse, who harnesses the logic of software programs in his quest for a dynamic form of urban planning. An early example was realized on Wijnhaveneiland in Rotterdam in 1995. Instead of determining the building envelope of a plot statically in line with traditional regulations, an inter-dependence was created on and in-between the plots. For example, if the structure on plot A was tall and narrow, then the building on plot B could be wider (fig. 1).[8] In 1999, together with ETH Zurich and the university of Kaiserslautern, Christiaanse presented the project 'Follow the church', which demonstrated the potential of a dynamic town planning strategy. This was pursued in the Kaisersrot project, a collaboration at ETH Zurich with Ludger Hoverstadt.[9] These early examples of an urban design strategy modelled on the mechanisms of computer programs (the 'if... then...' basis of programming language) were further developed in the research supervised by Christiaanse at ETH Zurich, the best-known example of which is probably Alex Lehnerer's PhD study.[10] In *Grand Urban Rules* (2009) Lehnerer analysed the rules and regulations that had contributed to the creation of widely admired modern cities, thereby laying the basis for a 'programming code' that can be used for the design of cities in the future.

What these projects have in common is that they lack the kind of predetermined outcome one finds in baroque urban planning or the long straight sight lines of Haussmann's Parisian boulevards. Instead they have a mechanism, an algorithm that formulates a process based on preferences and requirements. On Wijnhaveneiland this is still a limited intervention but in later projects the subdivision rules cover a wider variety of aspects, such as location, size, proximity to the village square and situation on the periphery or in the middle of the urban fabric. This kind of urban planning is comparable to a concert in which the individual performance follows the notes set down by the composer but is in essence a personal production.[11]

## DESIGN AND REALITY

Although these kinds of projects have undeniable potential for urban planning, digital reproduction also creates difficulties, especially in relation to the improved visual quality and the ease of digital dissemination. Websites and magazines publish renderings of yet-to-be-built buildings that can scarcely be distinguished from photographs of the finished article. And so the age-old problem of 'falsification' and plagiarism returns, albeit in a different guise, as in 2012 with Zaha Hadid's design for the Wangjing SOHO complex in Beijing (fig. 2).[12] Even before the complex was finished a developer had started to erect a copy of the building in a different Chinese city, Chongqing (fig. 3).[13] A long article on this and other copycat projects quoted Rem Koolhaas, writing in that same year in *Mutations*: 'Design today becomes as easy as Photoshop, even on the scale of a city.'[14] Although her firm raised this issue

2. Zaha Hadid Architects, Beijing Wangjing SOHO Complex, 2014 (Wei Cao/Alamy Stock Photo)




3. Eli Inbar, sketch of Wangjing Soho Complex and Chongqing Meiquan, 2013 (https://archidialog. com/2013/04/30/zaha-hadid-helps-us-raise-a-critical-issue-that-should-concern-us-all-how-to-get-inspired-from-existingbuildings-consciously/)

and publicly claimed copyright, Zaha Hadid herself revealed in interview an attitude reminiscent of the thinking behind Christiaanse's urban design models. She suggested that these cloned buildings also possess a unique potential: if they were to reveal new and innovative mutations, they could in turn contribute to innovation. If the architect herself sees an interesting twist in the potential of copies, this also gives rise to new conditions in which the distinction between copy and original might be less important. If the copy were to be finished first, for example, one could then ask which should be regarded as the 'original': the design or the first realization?

Hadid's project demonstrates that it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep control of copies in the digital age. The public debate reveals just how strongly traditional assumptions about copies hold sway: to be able to claim the aura of the 'original', Hadid's building needed to be finished ahead of the copy. At the same time, this example, together with the work of Kees Christiaanse, confront us with new issues: if elements of a building or an urban plan are determined by processes and algorithms, how can we still talk about an 'original'? Should architects protect their design mechanism rather than the eventual building? Where does the Benjaminian 'aura' of the building then reside?

#### ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN AS TEAMWORK

Despite the important role ascribed to the inspiration and vision of the (often male) architect since the Renaissance, it is worth exploring the more fluid forms of collaboration spawned by digital culture. Open-source software like Linux and the crowded world of Minecraft are examples of domains where individual authorship is less important than continuing to build on the work of others. Applied to architecture, the digital culture example could create scope for the continuous adaptation of (semi-anonymous) models – genuine teamwork in other words – which would alter the very concept of authenticity. How a model performed would be more important than who made, drew or programmed it, or how it originated.

At the moment, design practice still struggles to reconcile itself to the potential of digital techniques; they are utilized, but the role of the architect is still

pretty much what it has been for the last few hundred years. Open-source design continues to be relatively marginal in architecture, despite attempts to give it greater prominence. Yet the integration of digital approaches into a broader and more collaborative design process has a lot of potential for the future, especially if this better reflects the many hands and perspectives that contribute to a building, and if architecture really is conceived as a team effort. In this context 'authenticity' would acquire a new meaning, one that was primarily concerned with the building itself and the culture in which it comes about.

NOTES

1 W. Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in: W. Benjamin, Illuminations: Essays and Reflections, ed. H. Ahrendt, trans. H. Zohn, New York 1968, 217-251, 221 (trans. of 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter der technischen Reproduzierbarkeit', 1935).
2 W. Denslagen, 'Authenticiteit en spiritualiteit', *Bulletin KNOB* 109 (2010) 4, 135-140.
3 Benjamin 1968 (note 1), 220.
4 Benjamin 1968 (note 1), 220.
5 J. Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Glaser, Ann Arbor 1995 (trans. of *Simulacres et simulations*, Paris 1981).
6 Benjamin 1968 (note 1), 220.
7 S. Allen, *Practice. Architecture, Technique and Representation*, New York 2000, 33.
8 On KCAP's website the project is presented as a 'flexible masterplan', or 'not a design but a strategy with no predictable outcome'. https://www.kcap.eu/en/projects/v/wijnhaveneiland/
9 The 'Follow the church' project ran from 1999 to 2001. The principle behind it was followed up in Kaisersrot, introduced on the website as 'solutions you cannot draw'. http://www.kaisersrot.com/kaisersrot-02/Welcome.html
10 A commercial edition of the dissertation was published as: A. Lehnerer, *Grand Urban Rules*, Rotterdam 2009.
11 Allen 2000 (note 7), 31-45. He observes that architecture operates somewhere between the 'autographic' and the 'allograpic'.
12 M. Fairs, 'Zaha Hadid Building Pirated in China', *dezeen.com*, 2 January 2013, www.dezeen.com/2013/01/02/zaha-hadid-building-pirated-in-china/.
13 'Hadid said in an interview, she is now being forced to race these pirates to complete her original project first.' K. Holden Platt, 'Copycat Architects in China Take Aim at the Stars', *Der Spiegel* online, 28 December 2012, www.spiegel.de/international/zeitgeist/pirated-copy-of-design-by-star-architect-hadid-being-built-in-china-a-874390.html.
14 Quoted in Holden Platt 2012 (note 13).

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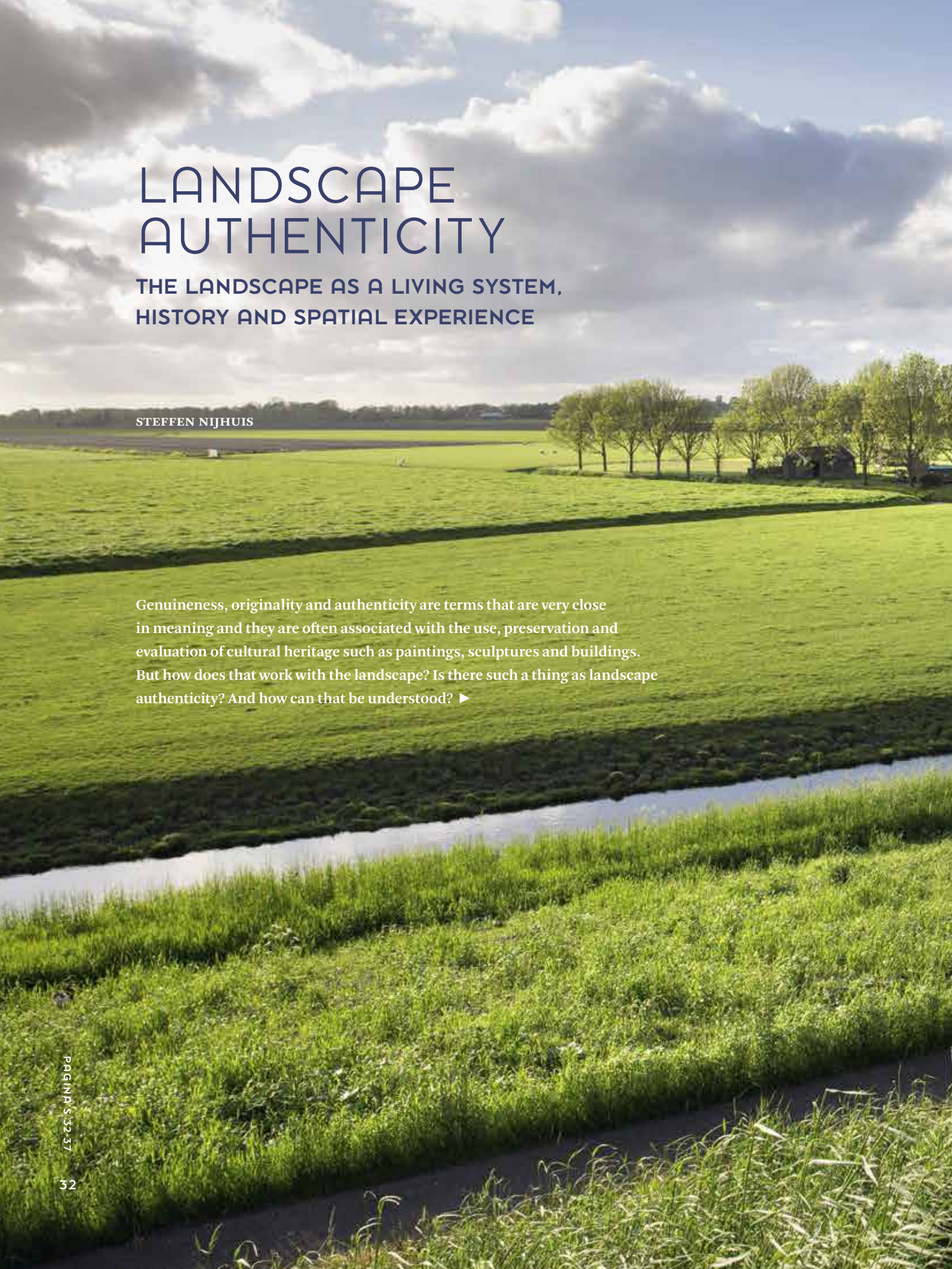
## ALWAYS THE REAL THING?
### AUTHENTICITY IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL REPRODUCTION

**LARA SCHRIJVER**

Walter Benjamin's famous 1935 essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' addresses the authenticity of a work of art as something beyond the merely material and technical. Benjamin constructs a broader notion of authenticity that includes 'the life of things' and is related to new techniques in artistic production. This broader sense of authenticity is used here to explore how it may help us to understand architecture in the age of digital reproduction.

Two aspects of authenticity in Benjamin's article are discussed: process reproduction and image reproduction. In process reproduction, authenticity is transformed through the mediation of technical procedures. Benjamin's analysis of photography and film is a seminal version of how the digital age raises new questions through tools and techniques such as programs, coding and algorithms. The work of Kees Christiaanse in collaboration with Ludger Hovestadt provides an example of an increasingly algorithmic approach to urban planning. In image reproduction, the question of authenticity revolves around the increasing proliferation of images. In this context, the Wangjing SOHO complex by Zaha Hadid and its apparent imitation by a Chinese developer proves illuminating. These projects show aspects of the changing conditions of the digital age, in which new techniques of realization may transform current notions of authenticity.



# LANDSCAPE AUTHENTICITY

## THE LANDSCAPE AS A LIVING SYSTEM, HISTORY AND SPATIAL EXPERIENCE

STEFFEN NIJHUIS

**Genuineness, originality and authenticity are terms that are very close in meaning and they are often associated with the use, preservation and evaluation of cultural heritage such as paintings, sculptures and buildings. But how does that work with the landscape? Is there such a thing as landscape authenticity? And how can that be understood? ►**

1. Reclaimed lakes are often clearly recognizable landscape types. The Beemster is a famous example, with its characteristicirregular perimeter dike, orthogonal planting and subdivisionpatterns, and typical 'stolp' farmhouses, all well below sealevel (photo Hans Lemmens, Algemeen Nederlands Persbureau)

In this article authenticity means that each landscape has its own distinguishing features and is differentiated by its own specific character. In other words, landscape authenticity is about spatial quality and identity. Orientation in time and space play a role, as do aesthetics, (multi)functionality, ecological variation and coherence. Owing to the diversity of connections and interactions between these aspects, landscape authenticity is a complex matter. This article argues that we can understand landscape authenticity by looking at the landscape as an integrated whole: as a living system, history and spatial experience.

## LANDSCAPE AS A LIVING SYSTEM

A common definition of landscape is the one adopted by the Council of Europe: 'an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors'.[1] This definition emphasizes the dynamic nature of landscape: landscape changes with and without human intervention. Sometimes the changes are far-reaching, sometimes less so. Some changes, such as the consequences of climate change, take a long time to become visible. But change can also occur swiftly, as when a new housing development is built in a former agricultural area. This is why landscape can be conceived as a living system, which is to say a complex and dynamic network of subsystems that are constantly changing in response to natural processes, social demands and technical possibilities. As such the landscape is an interface between nature and society, which manifests itself in a material space made up of both structures and processes.

In order to understand the coherence and heterogeneity of landscape in space and time, it is important to study the chronological (horizontal) and topological (vertical) relationships.[2] A practical and widely used method entails analysing the landscape in layers and organizing them according to the level of influence and dynamics of change.[3]

### *LANDSCAPE IN LAYERS*

Unpacking the landscape in layers is a way of grasping the different systems and subsystems and their relationships. This dissection into layers should not be seen as a static or hierarchical arrangement. Rather, it is about discrete layers that influence one another to a greater or lesser degree, and that influence may also change over the course of time. There are many types of layer-based analysis, such as the triplex model in which a distinction is drawn between the abiotic (relief, water, soil), biotic (flora and fauna) and anthropogenic (human activity) layers.[4] Another well-known layer model divides the landscape into substratum, networks and urbanization.[5] Although useful in their application, neither model explicitly addresses the social and cultural aspects. Alternative layer-based approaches stress that the concept of the relation between the physical environment (hardware), human activity (software), and cultural, institutional and conceptual ideas (orgware) is essential to understanding the landscape and its genesis.[6] In light of this, the following layer-based analysis seeks to understand the landscape a dynamic interaction between human beings and nature.

### *THE NATURAL CONTEXT (LAYER 1)*

The natural context is made up of relief, water, soil, geological substructure and climate, together with the corresponding ecosystems. This layer should be seen as an exogenic, physical factor, with specific features that are also subject to change, such as geological and geomorphological processes like plate tectonics, erosion and sedimentation by wind and water (fig. 1). Natural succession, as when open grassland turns into a forest or into a semi-open park landscape as a result of natural grazing, is a concrete example of this process. The natural context should not be regarded as a discrete factor, but as a central and inextricable component of the system that in large part determines how the landscape can be used. The dynamics of this basic condition are characterized by a slow, often almost imperceptible, process of change, repetition and natural cycles.

### *HUMAN MODIFICATIONS AND INTERVENTIONS (LAYER 2)*

Human activity is part and parcel of the use of the natural context for living, working and recreation. Human beings appropriate the natural environment through activities such as road building, land reclamation, diking and canalization of watercourses, the construction of towns and villages, drainage and irrigation, which manifest as, among other things, different subdivision patterns and water infrastructure. Throughout history, that appropriation process has led to a succession of sometimes drastic changes in the landscape. The dynamics of this layer are related to the long term of social, economic and cultural history.

### *CULTURE, ORGANIZATION AND POLITICS (LAYER 3)*

This layer comprises the cultural, spiritual and religious conceptions of the natural context and our engagement with it, including the state of science and technology, organizational forms, political movements, design concepts and aesthetic ideals. Water, for example, has different meanings in different cultures, which can find expression in landscape architectural treatments in parks and gardens. The reclamation of the peatlands in the western Netherlands,

2. The dynamic character of the landscape is clearly visible along the Dutch coast where processes of erosion and sedimentation continually modify the land (photo Joop van Houdt, Rijkswaterstaat)

for example, was in part motivated by geopolitical and economic considerations. Another example is land reclamation for food production, housing, recreation and nature development in the IJsselmeer area. The dynamics of this layer relate to the relative short term, linked to people and politics.

An understanding of landscape authenticity is inherent to the concept of the layers and their relationships that constitute the landscape system. The landscape is a relational structure that connects and influences scales and spatial, ecological, functional and social entities. As such, the landscape is not just a holistic system, but also a scale continuum that we can only understand by looking at different spatial scales and their relationships.

**LANDSCAPE AS HISTORY**

Time is an important factor in landscape authenticity. Over time the landscape undergoes transformations resulting from selections based on possibilities and evaluation. Some structures, patterns and forms are preserved, others continue to develop or are replaced by new ones. That transformation or series of transformations usually results in a balance between more permanent landscape structures and others more prone to rapid change.[7] The more permanent ones tend to be resistant to change and over time become more robust (and even inert). Those asynchronous transformations turn the landscape into a layered whole in which physical traces of time can reinforce or contradict one another.[8] It provides a window on a range of chronologies, events and meanings that con-

3. A layer added to the history of the place. This divided bunker, once known as Bunker 599, offers visitors to the Diefdijk Line a different perspective of the surroundings. A joint project of RAAAF and Atelier de Lyon, 2013 (author's photograph)

nect the traditional and the contemporary, the tangible and the intangible. In that respect an authentic landscape is so rich in meaning that it can be 'read' as a biography, as a palimpsest that illustrates the key activities that have contributed to the formation of that landscape.[9] Key to the landscape as history is the notion of the *longue durée*, the landscape as a long-term structure that changes over time in a process of 'sequent occupance'.[10] A knowledge of these historical traces is one of the starting points for new transformations of the landscape: the addition of new 'layers' (fig. 2). As such, the evolution of the landscape is inherent in the 'erasure' and the 'writing' of history. The landscape is the result of a gradual process of selection in which some elements remain and others change or are replaced.

## LANDSCAPE AS SPATIAL EXPERIENCE

Spatial experience is crucial to understanding landscape authenticity. Legibility of the landscape is a key concept, as aptly expressed by the poet Willem van Toorn: 'Some landscapes are so "full", so rich in meaning, that you can almost read them like a book, or look at them like a picture book. ...You don't even have to know a lot about the history of the area to see, or rather experience, how it has acquired its wealth of forms through an age-long interaction between human beings and nature.'[11] This involves the perception of beauty and the orientation in time and space resulting from the aforementioned processes. Perception alludes to the sensory relationship between the observer and the landscape. In principle it entails a holistic experience involving all the senses, although visual aspects dominate because most sensory information about the spatial environment comes via visual perception.[12] The scope of our senses also plays a role. While the landscape in our immediate surroundings can be experienced with all our senses, the vast majority of landscape is experienced mainly through sight.[13] Spatio-visual characteristics, such as unity, spatiality and outward appearance, are crucial to the legibility of the landscape and the concomitant human behaviour and valuation of the landscape (fig. 3).[14]

## CONCLUSION

Landscape authenticity can be understood by regarding the landscape as a living system, as history and as the spatial expression of that history. The landscape is constantly changing, even without human intervention. Legibility of the landscape is the basis for its perception and valuation. The physical aspects are just as dynamic as the perceptual: a changing view of the landscape often leads to a change in how we treat the landscape. This is characterized by a selective and incremental process in which the role of time is obvious; some structures remain and are modified; others make way for new structures. Understanding the evolution of the landscape is therefore just as important as the visible result. For this reason, the landscape is also an important source of knowledge about the valuation of material (physical) and intangible (social and political) features of the past, about how to deal with particular natural conditions and their effects, about how the landscape functions, which interventions are successful and which not, and so on.[15]

How then are we to deal with landscape authenticity? Landscape authenticity has nothing to do with fossilizing the landscape in its current condition; a landscape cannot be preserved unchanged given that it is itself the result of continuous transformation. Dealing with the landscape does call for a careful approach because rapid urban development and functional change can compromise the layering and legibility of the landscape and there is a danger that the cultural identity will disappear. To avoid this requires a 'management of change' approach aimed at creating a future landscape in which the past, in one form or another, continues to play an appropriate role.[16] This demands a dynamic and political process that is not confined to the domain of the landscape experts, but in which local stakeholders are also actively involved.[17] In this way the public debate about the significance of (historical) landscape features and their use can give rise to careful appraisals of landscape authenticity.

NOTES

1 Council of Europe, European Landscape Convention, Florence, 3; see also: I. Zonneveld, *Land Ecology. An Introduction to Landscape Ecology as a Base for Land Evaluation, Land Management and Conservation*, Amsterdam 1995.
2 Zonneveld 1995 (note 1). In north-western Europe there are long traditions of landscape characterization and physical-geographical and historical-geographical research that focus on such relations. Each of these research fields has its own research perspective and set of research tools. For an overview see, for example: M. Antrop and V. van Eetvelde, *Landscape Perspectives. The Holistic Nature of Landscape*, Basel 2019.
3 F. Braudel, *La Méditerranee. La part du milieu*, Paris 1966; S. Nijhuis and M. Pouderoijen, 'Mapping Urbanized Deltas', in: H. Meyer and S. Nijhuis (eds.), *Urbanized Deltas in Transition*, Amsterdam 2014, 10-22.
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## LANDSCAPE AUTHENTICITY

### THE LANDSCAPE AS A LIVING SYSTEM, HISTORY AND SPATIAL EXPERIENCE

STEFFEN NIJHUIS

Landscape authenticity relates to spatial quality and identity. Orientation in time and space are relevant, as are beauty, (multi)functionality, ecological variation and coherence. Owing to the diversity of connections and interactions between these aspects, landscape authenticity is a complex matter. This article contends that landscape authenticity can be understood by looking at the landscape as an integrated whole: as a living system, as history and as spatial experience. The landscape changes even without human intervention. The legibility of the landscape is crucial to how it is perceived and valued. The role of time is obvious and is characterized by a selective and incremental process whereby some structures endure and are adapted, while others make way for new structures. Landscape authenticity is not about fossilizing the landscape: a landscape cannot be preserved unchanged given that it is itself the outcome of continuous transformation. Understanding the evolution of the landscape is therefore just as important as the visible result.

# THE DWELLING AS MASS PRODUCT

## AUTHENTICITY IN POST-WAR HOUSING ESTATES

JAAP EVERT ABRAHAMSE
AND REINOUT RUTTE

1. The Vinex development of Brandevoort in Helmond was based on the image of a seventeenth-century canal town, complete with appropriately historicizing architecture (photo Rosa Tigges)

**From the early 1960s Dutch mass housing was dominated by a modernism in which the neighbourhood concept held sway.[1] Amsterdam's 1935 General Extension Plan served as a source of inspiration in many cities.[2] Urban extensions were carried out within a hierarchical set-up whereby each neighbourhood was conceived as a self-contained entity with its own amenities and a strict separation of functions. Rectilinear infrastructure and wide green belts separated housing estates from their surroundings. *Tabula rasa* was the basic principle.**

2. Almere Haven acquired little canals and an architecture that in scale, materiality and form was intended to evoke the historical towns along the shores of the Zuiderzee (photo Rosa Tigges)

Neighbourhoods took shape on the drawing board and were designed according to a regular, repetitive pattern made up of residential units (*stempels*), within which different types of dwellings were combined. Each neighbourhood consisted of a repetition of such units, the only variety being provided by schools, shopping centres and other amenities. New neighbourhoods were erected in record time, after a metres-thick layer of sand had been laid over the existing cultural landscape, effectively erasing the history of the place. The scaling-up of urban development and the construction industry, and the use of industrial prefab and modular construction resulted in uniformity in housing construction. On top of that, continuity with historical models was deliberately minimized; architecture was no more than the expression of function by means of material and engineering. Both the existing identity of the place and any new identity that might stem from the meaning of the architecture was avoided as far as possible. So if authenticity is seen as the expression of identity, meaning or character, it could be argued that modernist housing can *consequently* not be authentic. That is not how we see it; in this case authenticity does not derive from any deeper meaning, but from the very absence of such meaning as dictated by functionalism.

The lack of identity in new housing developments was already regarded as a problem in the 1960s. It was said that living in dull, placeless, meaningless and soulless new housing eventually led to rootlessness, depression, alcoholism, 'flat neurosis' and other afflictions. In the 1970s, this prompted a new approach to the design of housing estates. In this article we discuss three examples that were built in quick succession in reaction to modernism: Almere Haven, Kattenbroek in Amersfoort and Brandevoort in Helmond. They are not representative of Dutch urban design – they are far too distinctive for that – but they do offer insight into attempts to confer identity on a housing estate. Designers wanted to create a 'sense of place' that would enable residents to identify with their living environment. How did designers go about achieving that, what was the result, and finally, to what extent did this differ from modernist housing?

**ZUIDERZEE TOWN ON THE GOOIMEER**

Almere Haven is the oldest part of the new town of Almere in the Flevopolder, construction of which commenced in 1976. Small-scale development and a sense of place were the key design considerations.[3] To get away from the atmosphere of the bare, windswept polder, it was decided to model this district on the old Zuiderzee harbour towns. Consequently, it had canals and a lakeside waterfront lined with shops, cafés and restaurants, and a marina (fig. 1). Along the waterside, which was paved with clinker bricks and stone pavers, there was a varied streetscape featuring two round towers, brick facades, tiled roofs and vertical windows. A cursory glance suggests a pastiche of an old town, yet the architecture is in fact a derivative of modernism. In the empty, amorphous landscape of the IJsselmeer polders, the importation of familiar town and village tableaus was nothing new. In the 1950s, all the villages in the Noordoostpolder, with the exception of Nagele, were modelled on historical examples.

In Almere Haven there was an attempt to create identity and a sense of place in a design world still dominated by modernists. The result was new townscapes with organic street plans or pedestrian-friendly 'home zones', which were promptly dismissed as 'Nieuwe Truttigheid' (new insipidity): the 1970s housing estates strove to avoid the uniformity of the post-war reconstruction period but ended up all looking alike.[4]

**AMERSFOORT'S KATTENBROEK THEME PARK**

Upon taking up office as an alderman in Amersfoort in 1978, Fons Asselbergs characterized housing construction practice as 'colourless, anonymous, monotonous, characterless, insipid, deplorable, banal, lazy, clever, agile and slick, nondescript, indifferent, cavalier, dull, virtuous, *horreur locale*, tiresome, mediocre and more and more of the same.'[5] One reaction to this was Kattenbroek, built on his watch from 1988 onwards. Ashok Bhalotra, the coordinating urban designer and supervisor, was the first to employ a form of

3. The basic layout of the Kattenbroek housing estate in Amersfoort was based on an abstract painting by the Russian avant-garde artist Wassily Kandinsky. This illustration shows how that composition was applied to the peat landscape (Archief Eemland)

'theming' in housing construction. Until then it had only been used to give shopping centres and amusement parks a veneer of variation, identity and character. The themes dreamt up by Bhalotra were intended to stimulate the architects' imagination so that every part of the district would have its own distinctive character. For the spatial master plan, Bhalotra drew on the work of the Russian painter Wassily Kandinsky. Kattenbroek consists of a combination of geometric elements. In the centre is De Ring (fig. 2). One of the housing complexes in this circle, the Nieuwe Muurhuizen, was inspired by the *muurhuizen* (wall houses) in the centre of Amersfoort. De Ring was bisected by the Laan der Hoven (Almhouse Avenue) and surrounded by evocatively named areas: the Verborgen Zone (Hidden Zone), Het Masker (the Mask) and De Kreek (the Creek). The Laan der Hoven runs through Kattenbroek from the north-west to the south-east. It is lined by thousands of dwellings and also serves as the main access road. The Verborgen Zone cuts diagonally through the district. Scattered among the hundred-and-fifty dwellings in De Kreek, were a few retained farmsteads. Het Masker curves around an oval lake.

The themed neighbourhoods were fleshed out in workshops, resulting in Kattenbroek becoming a showcase of idiosyncratic, sometimes extravagant architecture – there are, for example, 'ruin' and 'bridge' dwellings. There is certainly more variation than in modernist housing estates or in Almere Haven, but the Amersfoort extension has almost as little to do with the local landscape as modernist districts, despite the retention of the odd existing building and landscape elements, which now look like museological relics in the clinical new-build setting. There is even a similar separation of functions. Moreover, the concepts on which Kattenbroek is based are at least as abstract as those informing the modernist districts. The themes and geometric elements imposed by Bhalotra have resulted in a district where you quickly lose your way; a sense of place is nowhere to be found.

## HOLLAND-STYLE CANAL CITY IN HELMOND

The southern Netherlands industrial city of Helmond, which suffered a sharp decline in employment opportunities as a result of de-industrialization in the 1970s, was allocated two government-designated (Vinex) development locations in the 1990s: Dierdonk and Brandevoort. Construction of Brandevoort, on the south-western side of Helmond, commenced in 1996 in accordance with a master plan by the Luxemburg architect Rob Krier, who had designed the new district as a canal city modelled on those in North and South Holland.[6] Brandevoort appears to have been conceived as a self-contained world that has nothing to do with the surrounding landscape or the city of Helmond. Like Almere Haven, Kattenbroek and the modernist districts, it seems to have appeared out of nowhere, like a UFO that has landed in the landscape. Once again, the familiar functional separation is very similar. The core consists of a quasi-fortified town with canal houses (fig. 3). This is encircled by areas of predominantly free-standing and attached houses, often featuring classical elements. The execution of the architecture and the outdoor space is immaculate; every detail has been designed. In this it paradoxically conforms to the modernist ideal in which every level of scale in a city – from city park to doorknob – is a product of the drawing board. As such, Brandevoort also appears to be a repudiation, or at any rate a criticism, of the deregulation that has taken root in urban design.

Identity and authenticity are sought here in housing that is vaguely inspired by the seventeenth-century architecture of Dutch classicism, and in town planning seeking to reference the Golden Age. In reality, Brabant profited little from that Golden Age, but perhaps that was the whole point of choosing this form: by importing an image of prosperity the poor industrial city is able to emulate Holland under the Republic. Brandevoort could well be a product of the underdog position the southern Netherlands still feels obliged to adopt: the periphery is fond of emulating the centre.[7]

## CONCLUSION

In past decades, the quest for meaning and identity in mass housing has resulted in a wide range of neighbourhood types. However, the layout and architecture of new housing developments have rarely, if ever, borne any relationship to the typical features of the city or the landscape in which they are built. To the extent that it is possible to invest a new housing estate with identity by seeking inspiration in the local cultural landscape or in long-term urban development, it is clear that thus far little attempt has been made to do so.[8] This is undoubtedly not just due to ignorance, inexperience or lack of interest (justified or not) on the part of clients, but also to the fact that on the one hand many architects are alert to the latest trends and on the other regulations, developers and contractors determine the image far more than designers would like to admit. It is highly doubtful whether an architect can have much influence at all on something like identity, and thus authenticity, through the design of housing estates. Clients and designers of housing estates seem to prefer to look for identity in the abstract or the unorthodox. It is clear that a lot of new-build districts do not actually want to be new-build districts, but rather a Zuiderzee township, a collage of contrived themes, or a Golden Age canal city. There can be no question of

authenticity when such an identity is applied arbitrarily.

Bestowing identity on housing estates has been an ambition of designers since the 1970s. Yet however much the appearance of housing estates may have changed, the urban design concepts and principles employed do not appear to have changed much since the Amsterdam General Extension Plan was launched in 1935. In addition, regulations affecting spatial planning and housing construction are relatively slow to change and that also contributes to the uniformity of housing estates. Perhaps we must conclude that only those housing estates that do not aspire to be anything other than what they are – housing estates – are authentic: the estates dating from the era of hardcore modernism. So the question is whether the term authenticity in this context has any meaning at all after that period. But that is not necessarily a problem, because on another point at least the modernists have been proven right: a new-build dwelling is an interchangeable mass product, even in postmodernist times.

NOTES

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## THE HOUSE AS A MASS PRODUCT
### AUTHENTICITY IN POST-WAR HOUSING ESTATES

JAAP EVERT ABRAHAMSE AND REINOUT RUTTE

From the 1960s, Dutch mass housing construction was for a while dominated by modernism. Housing developments shot up in double quick time – after the existing cultural landscape had first been totally erased. In both typology and architecture, planners and architects strove to avoid any sense of continuity between these new estates and their predecessors: architecture was no more than the expression of function by means of material and technology. The following period saw the construction of housing estates that didn't really want to be housing estates, aspiring instead to be a Zuiderzee town (Almere Haven), a collage of contrived themes (Kattenbroek in Amersfoort), or a Dutch canal city (Brandevoort in Helmond). Clearly, there can be no question of authenticity when such identities are arbitrarily pasted on. Perhaps we should conclude that only those housing developments that do not aspire to be anything other than what they are – housing developments – are authentic: which is to say, the hardcore modernist housing estates of the 1960s. So one may well ask whether, in this context, the term authenticity has any meaning at all after the modernist period. But that need not be a problem because on another point the modernists have been proved right: a new-build dwelling is an interchangeable mass product, even in postmodern times.

# FORM AND CONTEXT

## ON THE ROLE OF AUTHENTICITY IN THE EVALUATION OF MODERN HERITAGE

NOOR MENS

Authenticity is a key criterion in the evaluation of heritage. For example, in the *Guidelines for Building Archaeological Research* (2009), which the Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency (RCE) refers to when making cultural-historical evaluations, the various values that can be assigned to a building or an area are tested against the concept of authenticity.[1] This article sets out to show that this concept is problematical when applied to more recent architecture, particularly when it is linked to the original materialization. The way authenticity is normally assessed can prove especially tricky when it is a precondition for preserving an object or area. Contrary to what one might expect, the preservation of original materials is more challenging with recent than with old architecture. There are several reasons for this. One is the Modern Movement's predilection for using experimental building methods and new materials, which all too often fail to withstand the ravages of time. It is also difficult, if not impossible, to preserve such experimental materials when a building is expected to satisfy contemporary requirements, for example in the area of energy efficiency. Does the use of new materials compromise the heritage value of a renovated or restored building? Using examples in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, I hope to show that this does not necessarily have to be the case.

► 1. Gerrit Versteeg, housing complex (nowadays Koningsvrouwen van Landlust), Amsterdam, 1937 (Stadsarchief Amsterdam)

## THE CONCEPT OF AUTHENTICITY

The roots of the concept of authenticity as applied to heritage buildings lie in the nineteenth century. Eugène Viollet-le-Duc (1814-1879) restored many important, mainly medieval buildings, in the process becoming one of the most influential architects of his age. He believed that monuments should represent the period that had produced them as perfectly as possible; restoration consequently amounted to undoing later alterations and additions. For him, unlike present-day heritage experts, authenticity had less to do with the original building substance than with the realization of the building's ideal state. This would remain the dominant view throughout Europe until the beginning of the twentieth century, despite criticism of the reconstruction of an (idealized) image of the past from those who felt that instead of erasing later alterations, heritage buildings should display all historical traces. In 1849 John Ruskin (1819-1900) published *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*.[2] He denounced the restoration of monuments because it generally led to the loss of the original character and resulted in a dead and meaningless copy of the previously 'living' monument. Although Ruskin clearly could not have been aware of the interpretation of the concept of authenticity in current heritage studies, it is obvious that he associated authenticity with the material character the building had acquired over the centuries. Precisely when the current concept of authenticity found its way into the heritage world is difficult to determine. But it is certainly a important criterion in the influential *International Charter for Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites*, the so-called Venice Charter of 1964. This Charter underscores the importance of the original building substance and stipulates that any materials used in new elements added during restoration should be contemporary and recognizable as such.[3] Since then the concept has been part of the thinking on how to deal with monuments and stands for authenticity of material, form or function.

## EVALUATION OF RECENT ARCHITECTURE

From the 1980s onwards the government agency in charge of heritage preservation found itself faced with the question of how to deal with more recent architecture, much of which bore the stamp of modernism, a style that pursued a radical break with the past but which now itself belonged to the past. In functional and structural terms a lot of modernist architecture no longer complied with the latest requirements. This was especially true of social housing; a great many of the dwellings are simply too small by current standards. In the 1990s and 2000s the realization grew that not just the pioneering work of architects of the likes of J.J.P. Oud, but also post-war modernist architecture represented important cultural values. In the context of the Monuments and Historic Buildings Inventory Project (MIP) a 'Subcommittee on Recent Architecture' drew up a list of criteria: the place of the building in the architect's oeuvre, the role of the client, the architectural and technical concept, the use of innovative ideas and techniques, and the building in its spatial setting. This implied a certain broadening of the prevailing criteria, which were based mainly on artistic and historical significance. This widening sprang from the considerable value the subcommittee attached to historical, socio-economic, political and cultural frameworks.[4] The new criteria in turn required the formulation of corresponding values. In addition to cultural-historical and architectural-historical values, recent architecture would be judged on ensemble values; the latter were linked to the degree of repetition, which resulted in larger coherent units. The additional criteria, for both urban design and architecture, were integrity, recognizability and rarity.[5] In the aforementioned *Guidelines for Building Archaeological Research*, Leo Hendriks and Jan van der Hoeve identified general historical values, ensemble and urbanistic values, architectural-historical values, building archaeological values and values based on the history of use. They recommended testing the assessment of each of these values against the criteria of integrity (authenticity) and rarity. They regarded the significance of the heritage object in architectural history and in the architect's oeuvre, as well as the pronounced aesthetic qualities of the design, the ornamentation and the interior finishing as important criteria.[6] The increasing weight given to intangible, cultural-historical aspects is also evident in the revised 2009 version of these guidelines, which suggests that the hitherto fairly theoretical term 'authenticity' was now to be applied in practice. But what does that mean for modern heritage? And how does authenticity relate to the materiality of buildings?

## THREE RENOVATIONS AND THE AUTHENTICITY OF BUILDING MATERIALS

From the 1980s onwards the large-scale use of experimental, less sustainable and hard-wearing materials in the housing schemes of the interwar and post-war periods necessitated comprehensive renovations during which the retention of the original materiality proved problematic. Three examples from the practice of modern heritage evaluation show that the concept of authenticity seldom if ever refers to the materiality but more often to the urbanistic values and the architectural expression.

2. Archivolt Architecten, renovation Koningsvrouwen van Landlust, Amsterdam, 2012
(photo Thea van den Heuvel, Archivolt Architecten)

*THE KIEFHOEK, ROTTERDAM*

The Kiefhoek (1925-1929), a complex of working-class dwellings in Rotterdam designed by J.J.P. Oud when he worked in the city's housing agency, was accorded national listed status in 1985. The RCE's value assessment describes it as a complex of dwellings plus public buildings and collective amenities that unites the characteristics of Functionalism with those of De Stijl. It is also regarded as a milestone in the history of public housing.[7] A fairly comprehensive renovation in 1986 altered Kiefhoek's external appearance. Among other things, the wooden door and window frames were replaced by plastic frames. One block of eight dwellings was left untouched because of its poor structural condition. In 1988 Wytze Patijn was commissioned to reconstruct this block in what became a trial run for the rest of the complex. Following a post-completion evaluation it was decided to reconstruct the remaining blocks as well given that the poor state of the original structural shell made preservation financially unviable. The rebuilt blocks had larger dwellings, reducing the original 298 dwellings to just 190. The blocks originally had stuccoed facades and wooden floors; in the reconstructed blocks both the facades and floors were of concrete. The Kiefhoek experience is an early example of the treatment of Nieuwe Bouwen architecture, whereby the architectural expression and the urban design values weighed more heavily than material authenticity.[8]

*KONINGSVROUWEN VAN LANDLUST, AMSTERDAM*

This building block (1937) designed by Gerrit Versteeg, renamed Koningsvrouwen van Landlust during the most recent renovation, was part of the first row-housing subdivision in Amsterdam, masterplanned by Ben Merkelbach and Charles Karsten. It has local listed status on account of the high score given to the urbanistic and architectural design and the use of what were then innovative new building techniques. In the twenty-first century, however, the buildings no longer met current standards for fire safety, energy efficiency and housing typology. In 2012, therefore, the complex was renovated by Archivolt Architecten. It had to meet high standards of energy efficiency, sustainability and architectural character. Insulation followed the box-in-box principle. The new aluminium frames recaptured the look of the characteristic 1930s steel profiles previously replaced by plastic frames. The building services were renewed and the dwellings internally reconfigured (figs. 1 and 2).

*BOSLEEUW, AMSTERDAM*

Bosleeuw is also one of the first examples of row housing in Amsterdam and contains a block designed by Gerrit Versteeg (1941). In 2014 it was renovated by KAW Architecten. Although the urbanistic integration and the architecture were both highly rated, it just missed out on local listed status. The block was classified as an 'Order 2 project', which allowed for a more far-reach-

3. KAW, renovation Bosleeuw, Amsterdam, 2014
(photo Hennie Raaymakers Photographer/DAPh)


De 7de Hemel
Café de 7de Hemel
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ing renovation than in Koningsvrouwen. To improve the insulation a new facade with brick facing applied in strips was placed on the outside, adding 12.5 cm to the depth of the outer wall. The new frames were brought forward by the same amount, thereby retaining the original appearance (fig. 3). The preservation of the architectural image and the urbanistic situation were more important here than the authenticity of the material.

These schemes were restored and/or renovated in the 1980s and the last decade respectively. All three demonstrate the weak correlation between the concept of authenticity and the originality of the materials: the appearance and the urbanistic composition were considered more important. This applies just as much to the modernism of post-war housing as to the pioneering work of the 1920s. It appears that in the renovation of modernist architecture, the views of Viollet-le-Duc prevail over those of Ruskin. New materials that allude to the original building substance reinstate the original architectural image and where this has been compromised by later alterations, these are removed. Contrary to the Venice Charter's stipulations, the new materials can scarcely be distinguished from the old. It is clear that modern monuments can tolerate old-fashioned restoration better than the new approach recommended by the Charter.

In this online version of the article a few inaccuracies in the printed version with respect to the attribution and classification of the Bosleeuw project have been corrected.

NOTES

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4 C. van Emstede, *Waardestelling in de Nederlandse monumentenzorg 1981–2009*, Delft 2015, 60.
5 Van Emstede 2015 (note 4), 57.
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## FORM AND CONTEXT
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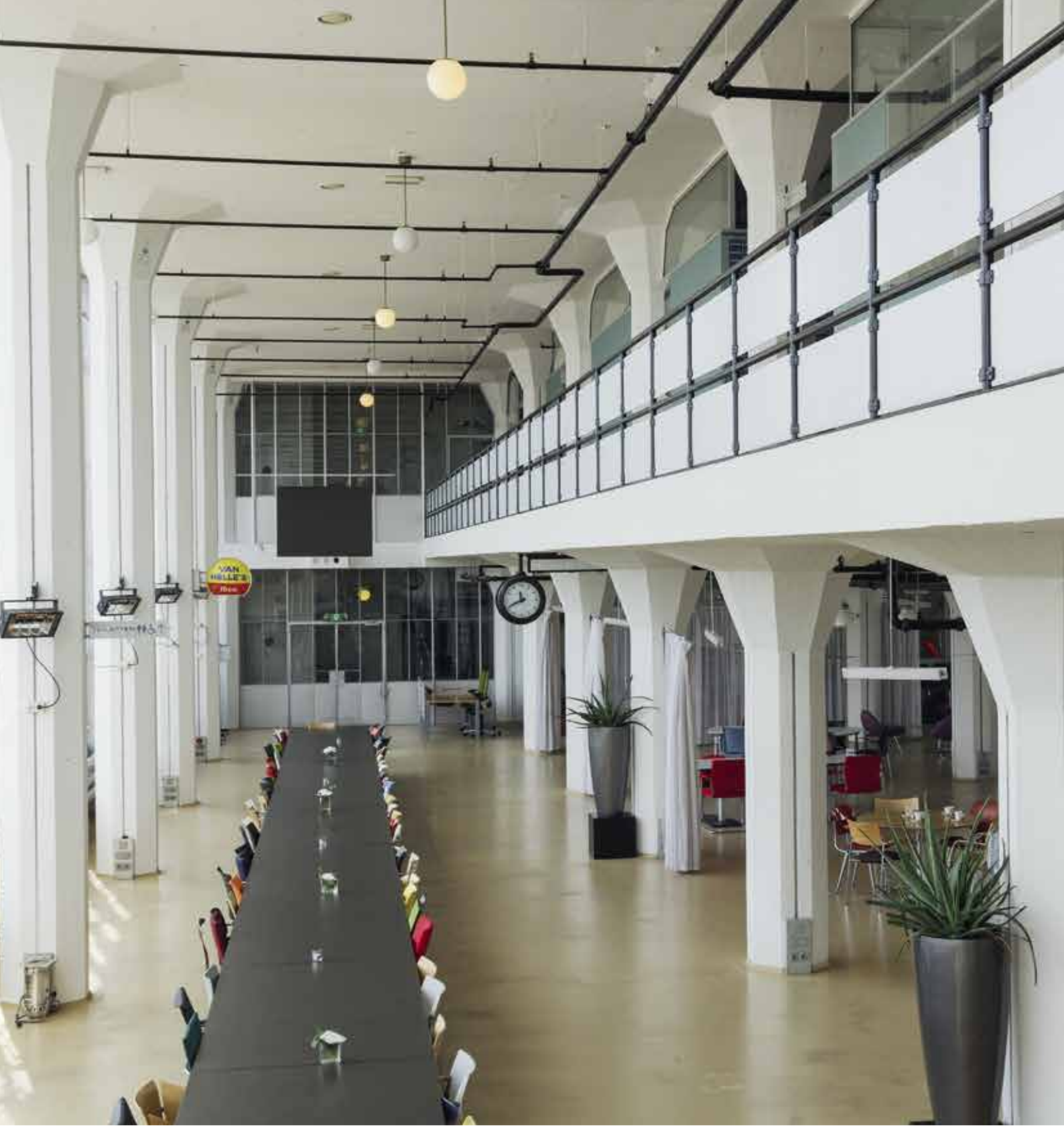
Authenticity is a key criterion in the evaluation of heritage. This article sets out to show that this concept is problematical when applied to more recent architecture, particularly when it is linked to the original materialization. The way authenticity is normally assessed can prove especially tricky when it is a precondition for preserving an object or site. Contrary to what one might expect, the preservation of original materials is more challenging with recent than with old architecture. There are several reasons for this. One is the Modern Movement's predilection for using experimental building methods and new materials, which all too often failed to withstand the ravages of time. It is also difficult, if not impossible, to preserve such experimental materials when a building is expected to satisfy contemporary requirements, for example in the area of energy efficiency. This raises the question of whether the replacement of authentic building materials during restorations and renovations compromises the heritage value. Using examples in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, the article shows that this does not always have to be the case.

# AUTHENTICITY, A CREDIBLE CONCEPT?

MARIE-THÉRÈSE VAN THOOR


► 1. Rietveld Schröder House, Utrecht, interior of the upper floor during restoration in 1985-1986. Architect Bertus Mulder removed any remaining finishing layers from walls and ceiling (Bertus Mulder archive, Centraal Museum Utrecht)

Over forty years ago, in 1978, an entire edition of *Bulletin KNOB* was devoted to the subject of architectural restoration. The articles reflected the authors' views on the philosophy and theory of restoration, and it is interesting to see that even then the concept of authenticity figured prominently in the debate. Linked to the related concept of 'authenticity value', terms such as 'material genuineness of the historical substance', 'authenticity of form', 'finishing', as well as 'proportion', 'use of light' and even 'authentic atmosphere' passed in review.[1]



2. Van Nelle Design Factory Rotterdam, interior, 2014 (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed)

In this issue, while Kees Somer focuses on that 1978 discussion about restoration principles, Jaap Evert Abrahamse, Reinout Rutte and Lara Schrijver address the meaning of authenticity in the architecture and urban design of the same period, 1970-1980.[2] Nowadays everyone has an idea of what is meant by an authentic atmosphere, recognizability, smallness of scale, identity and character. And even in this age of digital renderings and algorithms, it is usually still possible to imagine what is meant by 'sense of place'. But can we actually explain what it means, and are those of us active in the world of architecture and heritage employing the same definitions and criteria? The *Nederlandse Encyclopedie* lists no fewer than sixteen

meanings of authenticity. The four most important are: genuineness, singularity, credibility and originality. We also read that 'Authenticity is a quality mark'.[3] This is undoubtedly one of the reasons why the term, like 'woolmark', is used so often. Unfortunately, that can also prove counterproductive, resulting in a concept that is not only hard to pin down, but also lacks credibility – as when the Government Architect Floris Alkemade describes *Panorama Nederland* (2018), the Board of Government Advisers' long-term perspective on the spatial planning of the Netherlands, as an 'authentic vision of the future'.[4] After reading the articles in this thematic issue of *Bulletin KNOB*, the meaning of authenticity may strike the reader as pretty fluid and perhaps even disingenuous. In these articles authenticity is examined from various angles, mostly in relation to dealing with spatial heritage and the difficult-to-define relationship with authenticity. According to Lex Bosman, the contemporary concept of authenticity is extremely complicated, and as good as useless when applied to Antiquity and the Middle Ages.[5] Finally, let's not forget I would just like to mention the 'most important' monuments: world heritage sites. Their authenticity has been 'proven' by their very designation as 'World Heritage'.

**OUTSTANDING UNIVERSAL VALUES**

To qualify for a place on UNESCO's World Heritage List, cultural or natural heritage properties need to possess values that are so exceptional that they transcend national interests: World Heritage and its preservation are deemed to serve the interests of all humanity.[6] These global values are referred to by the English term 'Outstanding Universal Values' or OUV. Heritage with outstanding universal values must meet at least one of the ten selection criteria in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*.[7] The guidelines include a separate section devoted to authenticity, in combination with integrity. Article 78 states: 'To be deemed of Outstanding Universal Value, a property must also meet the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity and must have an adequate protection and management system to ensure its safeguarding.' Further on in the text it is made clear that *all* potential 'World Heritage Sites' must satisfy the conditions of 'integrity', which is described as 'a measure of the wholeness and the intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes'.[8] Contrary to what we might expect after reading Steffen Nijhuis's article on the huge diversity of landscape authenticity, the measure of authenticity in World Heritage only applies to cultural heritage properties, which are selected based on one (or more) of the first six criteria.[9] 'Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values … are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes' (article 82).[10] This diversity of attributes is wide-ranging: form and design; materials and substance; use and function; traditions, techniques and management systems; location and setting; language and other forms of intangible heritage;

spirit and feeling, and other internal and external factors.

This creates a direct link with *The Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994), in which the evaluation of authenticity is based on the same wide range of [information] sources.[11] The Nara Document was drawn up because the international heritage world wanted to provide a broader base reflecting global cultural diversity and the concomitant variation in (the management of) heritage. For that reason, according to article 11 of this document, judgements of values or authenticity should no longer be based on fixed criteria.[12] As Gabri van Tussenbroek argues elsewhere in this issue, it would seem that according to Nara Conference thinking, everything is possible, so long as the OUV can be convincingly *recounted* from within the culture to which they belong.[13]

#### AUTHENTICITY AND THE MODERN MOVEMENT

In 2019, in an article about the restorations of the Rietveld Schröder House (1924) in Utrecht, I wrote that the 'Nara' had opened the door to wide-ranging and often personal interpretations of heritage.[14] The decisions made by the architect Bertus Mulder (b. 1929) during the restorations of the Rietveld Schröder House in the 1970s and '80s were certainly not in line with the then prevailing principles of the Venice Charter (1964).[15] While supervising the restoration of the exterior Mulder removed large sections of the existing facade finish. A decade later he took an even more rigorous approach to the interior, stripping off all the still largely original finish coats on the upper floor (fig. 1). It was precisely that materiality that Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1964) considered crucial to the spatial *experience*. Mulder, however, regarded the material as secondary; for him the recreation of an original spatial *image* was paramount. This view was based not so much on 'respect for the original material and on authentic documents', as stipulated by the Venice Charter, but reflected his own – authentic? – interpretation of Rietveld's principles. Because of this, it was not just original material that disappeared. The historicity, the genuineness and the testimonies of the place and the house, in the sense that Freek Schmidt describes in this issue, were entirely disregarded.[16]

Yet these radical restorations did not prevent the Rietveld Schröder House's inscription on the World Heritage List in 2000. According to the nomination dossier, the house had retained the authenticity of the design concept and the structure. It further claimed that 'in essence' the monument satisfied the authenticity criteria in every respect.[17] These criteria were not adopted from the Nara Document, but were based on four aspects of authenticity that apply in particular to Modern Movement buildings: authenticity of idea (the original design concept); of form, spatial organization and exterior; of construction and details, and, surprisingly enough, authenticity of materials.

Noor Mens explains in this issue why, from the 1980s onwards, the preservation of modern heritage buildings not only required a widening of the evaluation frameworks, but also strategies for dealing with the often poor material condition of this heritage.[18] It appears that in this area, authenticity of materials, rather than being interpreted as authenticity of the existing historical substance, refers implicitly to the *original* materials and to the design (concept). Restoration architect Wessel de Jonge (b. 1957) speaks of 'design authenticity' in this context.[19] Consequently, Modern Movement monuments are deemed 'authentic' according to different criteria and treated differently from monuments from preceding periods.

From 2000, De Jonge was the coordinating architect of the restoration and restructuring of Rotterdam's Van Nelle Factory (1925-1931, J.A. Brinkman and L.C. van der Vlugt), which was transformed into Van Nelle Design Factory (fig. 2). In 2014 this complex was added to the World Heritage List. The former factory for coffee, tea and tobacco is regarded as a good example of adaptive reuse and, according to the UNESCO nomination dossier, has survived the restructuring with its material and intangible authenticity intact.[20] According to the authors of the dossier, this is manifested in each of the various properties mentioned above: form; design; materials and substance; use and function; (day)light; location and setting; traditions, technique and management systems; other internal and external factors and other forms of intangible heritage. 'Also from a conceptual perspective, the integrity of the ensemble – and the related spirit of collectivity and creativity – forms the basis for the present use as Van Nelle Factory'; a fine description of 'spirit and feeling' in the 'Statement of Authenticity'.[21] The height of authenticity, it would seem, despite the fact that the complex had undergone substantial alterations and renovations.

#### AUTHENTICITY AS A UNIQUE MARK OF QUALITY

Ten years ago, in an article on 'Authenticity and spirituality', Wim Denslagen argued that the multiplicity of meanings, the freedom of choices and lack of clarity with respect to the concept of authenticity could lead to arbitrariness. His definition was short and sweet: 'Authentic is the surviving object, original is the original object'.[22] Denslagen believed we would do better to replace the confusing concept of authenticity with 'values'. But isn't the notion of 'values' just as arbitrary and fluid as authenticity? In her inaugural lecture as Professor of Heritage & Values at TU Delft in 2019, Ana Pereira Roders suggested that: 'We can define our own


3. Streetscape in Kyoto: a renovated, authentic *machiya* surrounded by more recent architecture (photo Hielkje Zijlstra, 2015)

values, or adopt the values of others'.[23] Defining values is tricky, yet adopting the values of others is even more complicated – or more arbitrary. And that is probably not what the Nara Document or the UNESCO Guidelines intend. Acknowledgement of global cultural diversity may well lead to a widening of the concept, but it still needed to be rigorously defined within each culture. A few years ago a joint project by TU Delft and the Kyoto Institute of Technology (KIT) focused on the restoration, renovation and potential conversion of traditional Japanese houses, the so-called *machiya* (fig. 3). Authenticity was a frequent topic of discussion and Kazuto Kasahara, architect and assistant professor at the KIT, could not have put it better when he wrote that: '... we should avoid referring to Japanese traditional culture out of context and using it to justify or explain non-Japanese architectural interventions.'[24] Authenticity can certainly be a mark of quality, but only within one's own cultural context and only if a clear and credible definition is applied.

1 See K. Somer, 'Material authenticity and historical falsification. The knob and authentic historical substance', *Bulletin KNOB* 119 (2020) 4, paginanummers; 'Discussie over de problematiek van de architectuurrestauratie', *Bulletin KNOB* 77 (1978) 3-4, 179-194.
2 J.E. Abrahamse and R. Rutte, 'The house as mass product. Authenticity in postwar housing estates' and L. Schrijver, 'Always the real thing. Authenticity in the age of digital reproduction', *Bulletin KNOB* 119 (2020) 4, paginanummers en paginanummers.
3 www.encyclo.nl/begrip/Authenticiteit.
4 F. Alkemade, *De toekomst van Nederland. De kunst van richting te veranderen*, Bussum 2020, 9. See also: www.collegevanrijksadviseurs.nl/projecten/panorama-nederland.
5 L. Bosman, 'Authenticity and material. A consideration of the concept based on examples from (late) Antiquity and the Middle Ages, *Bulletin KNOB* 119 (2020) 4, paginanummers
6 *Bitter en Zoet. Advies van de Expertgroep beoordeling werelderfgoenominaties*. Advisory report commissioned by the director-general of Culture and Media in the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, March 2015.
7 UNESCO, *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, II.E, WHC.19/01 10 July 2019, 26-29: whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/.
8 UNESCO 2019 (note 7), 26.
9 S. Nijhuis, 'Landscape authenticity. The landscape as living system, history and spatial experience', *Bulletin KNOB* 119 (2020) 4, paginanummers.
10 UNESCO 2019 (note 7), 27.
11 ICOMOS, *The Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994): icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf.
12 ICOMOS 1994 (note 11), 47.
13 G. van Tussenbroek, 'Reconstruction and resistance. On material authenticity' *Bulletin KNOB* 119 (2020) 4, paginanummers.
14 M.T. van Thoor, 'The restorations van het Rietveld Schröder House. A reflection', *Bulletin KNOB* 118 (2019) 4, 15-31.
15 ICOMOS, *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites (The Venice Charter)*, IInd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments, Venice 1964. Adopted by ICOMOS in 1965.
16 F. Schmidt, 'Genuine architecture. On authenticity and adaptive reuse', *Bulletin*

KNOB 119 (2020) 4, paginanummers.

17 R. de Jong, I. van Zijl and B. Mulder, *Rietveld Schröderhuis, Utrecht/(Rietveld Schröder House, Utrecht) The Netherlands*, Utrecht/Zeist 1999, 16-17: whc.unesco.org/uploads/nominations/965.pdf.

18 N. Mens, 'Form and context. On the role of authenticity in the evaluation of modern heritage', *Bulletin KNOB* 119 (2020) 4, paginanummers.

19 C. van Emstede, *Waardestelling in de Nederlandse monumentenzorg 1981-2009*, doctoral thesis TU Delft, 2015, 232: books.bk.tudelft.nl/index.php/press/catalog/book/450. See also: D. van den Heuvel et al. (eds.), *The Challenge of Change. Dealing with the Legacy of the Modern Movement. Proceedings of the 10th International DOCOMOMO Conference*, Delft 2008; S. Stroux et al. (eds.), *Reco.mo.mo. Hoe echt is namaak, hoe dierbaar is het origineel?*, Delft 2011.

20 M. Kuipers and T. Knibbeler et al., *Van Nellefabriek Rotterdam, Nomination File. Nomination by the Kingdom of the Netherlands for Inscription on the Unesco World Heritage List*, Rotterdam 2013: whc.unesco.org/uploads/nominations/1441.pdf.

21 Kuipers and Knibbeler et al. 2013 (note 20), 103-105, esp. 104.

22 W. Denslagen, 'Authenticiteit en spiritualiteit', *Bulletin KNOB* 109 (2010) 4, 135-140, esp. 138.

23 A. Pereira Roders, *WALL-E. Value . Conserv . Evolve*, inaugural lecture TU Delft, 27 November 2019.

24 K. Kasahara, 'Machiya Today. Concepts and Methods of Renovation Design', in: M.T. van Thoor and S. Stroux (eds.), *Heritage, History and Design Between East and West. A Close-UP on Kyoto's Urban Fabric*, TU Delft 2018, 53: books.bk.tudelft.nl/index.php/press/catalog/view/isbn.9789463660280/724/565-1.

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## AUTHENTICITY, A CREDIBLE CONCEPT?

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Several of the contributions to this issue on authenticity conclude by asking whether the concept of authenticity is a credible criterion. According to UNESCO's *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, a monument designated as world heritage possesses 'Outstanding Universal Values' (OUV). It also meets the conditions of integrity and authenticity, at any rate when it comes to *cultural* heritage. In accordance with *The Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994), and taking account of global cultural diversity, authenticity can be based on a wide variety of attributes.

Two Dutch World Heritage monuments, the Rietveld Schröder House (1924) and the Van Nelle Factory (1925-1931), belong to the architecture of the Modern Movement. In the nomination dossiers for these two heritage buildings authenticity was substantiated in different ways. But in both cases, as has become customary for Modern Movement monuments, 'design authenticity' was deemed of great importance. Has the concept of authenticity been expanded to such an extent that it has ended up being applied arbitrarily? In this author's view, authenticity can most certainly be a criterion of quality, provided a clear and credible definition is employed within the specific cultural context.