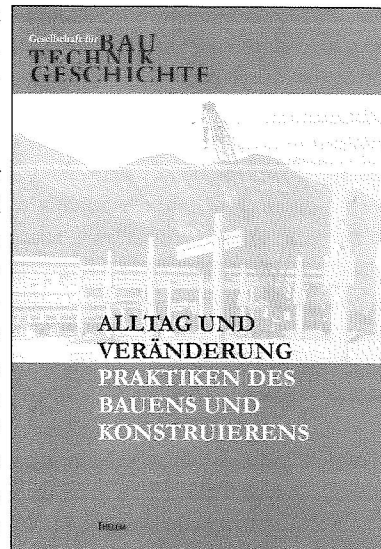


Alltag und Veränderung: Praktiken des Bauens und Konstruierens

[Everyday and Transformation: Practices of Building and Constructing]

Werner Lorenz, Klaus Tragbar, Christoph Rauhut, Torsten Meyer and Christina Krafczyk (eds) Dresden: Thelem, 2017. 306 pp., 122 b/w ills. €39.80 paperback. ISBN: 978-3945363768

The present book is the first publication of the Gesellschaft für Bautechnikgeschichte, the German-speaking society in the field of construction history, which was founded in 2013 in Berlin (<https://gesellschaft.bautechnikgeschichte.org>). Among its many activities the society holds conferences, the first in 2013 in Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen), the second in 2015 in Innsbruck and the third in 2017 in Potsdam. The volume contains the Innsbruck conference proceedings and was edited by the former chairman of the society, Werner Lorenz, and the whole 2015/17 management committee. Klaus Tragbar, former and current vice-chairman of the society, organised and hosted the Innsbruck conference. All papers are accompanied by German and English abstracts. The poster session of the conference is part of the volume.



The conference addressed the processes of building and constructing with their ever-new challenges, which can be tackled, as Werner Lorenz explains, with knowledge and experience, consideration and venture, models and experiments. The conference papers examine from different perspectives the historic dimension of how building tasks were solved and show the variety of themes and approaches in the discipline. At the conference, the papers were organised into three sections, a division which has been taken up for the proceedings volume.

The first section's topic is 'Between Theory and Practice.' Atli Magnus Seelow examines how natural stone, thanks to new systematic exploitation techniques, played a specific role in the development of the national romantic architecture in Scandinavia. Ekaterina Nozhova studies Vladimir Shukows Moscow Radio Tower on the basis of new archival findings. Daniel Richter and Stefan M. Holzer examine to what extent technological advancement and adaptation in the long-standing practice of light shell ceilings construction took a different pace when it came under the patent of Carl Rabitz in 1878 and what the boom this technique experienced from that moment onwards meant for the construction industry. Anke Fissabre looks at how supporters of flat roofs and pitched roofs argued their positions in 1920s Germany and how this controversy between industry and crafts also mirrored political attitudes. Volker Wetzke analyses the interaction of theory and practice in nineteenth century German bridgebuilding focusing on the crucial detail of the moveable bearings in iron and steel. He links his in-depth historical study to questions of current heritage conservation and construction practice. By linking both realms he puts into practice one of the explicit goals of the Gesellschaft für Bautechnikgeschichte.

The protagonists are the focus of the second section 'Rivals and Partners.' By analysing contemporary sources and publications Ralf Dorn and Roland May analyse (within the framework of a larger project) nature and significance of the interaction of architects and civil engineers in Weimar Republic Germany and examine how the respective 'other' was perceived. Sven Tornack highlights the not so well known contribution of Dessau-based aircraft engineer and producer Hugo Junkers to modern architecture.

Junkers transferred knowledge from aircraft to building production and designed prefabricated steel houses. His contribution enriches the notion that modernism in Central Europe in many cases originated in industrial construction and production. Anke Zalivako deals with the in-situ beamless slab and mushroom slab which were applied in Russia no later than 1907 through the almost unknown contribution of Russian-German engineer Artur Ferdinandovich Lolejt. Klaus Thiele and Christina Krafczyk describe the realisation of the *Neues Bauen* housing development Blumläger Feld in Celle in steel and the active contribution of its architect Otto Haesler to establish and optimise this construction technique for housing developments. Not just physical persons can be protagonists. The importance of the creative contribution of construction firms is mirrored in the paper of Georg Maybaum, who studies the firm Bernhard Liebold & Co.A.-G. in Holzminden (Lower Saxony), which was nationally active especially in concrete construction and bridge building prior to WWI.

The history of knowledge is at the heart of the third section 'Construction Knowledge and its Transmission.' Wolfgang Lehnert studies the Tomoika silk mill and the Franco-Japanese construction knowledge transfer, which is at the basis of this industrial heritage. Japanese-Western interaction is also the topic of Beate Löffler's contribution. On the basis of historic sources and publications she analyses the ambiguous impact of Western experts on Japanese building construction in the second half of nineteenth century. This is exemplified through the discourse regarding earthquake resistance. Imported Western construction techniques were in fact not improved with regard to earthquake resistance while longstanding Japanese experience was systematically disregarded – with important exceptions like Christopher Dresser, who understood and appreciated the consuetudinary use of a heavy pendulum, which improved the earthquake resistance of pagoda constructions. Christoph Duppel studies the recent building archeological findings concerning the main dome and the supporting structures of the Hagia Sophia in the context of the written sources from the erection and the various repair processes. Alexander von Kienlin analyses the dilemma of neoclassicist architects, who on the one hand followed the model of classic buildings but who on the other hand saw themselves precluded to give an architectural expression to new steel and glass construction techniques. New light is shed on the role of Henri Labrouste who has always been seen as the person who overcame this impasse. Stefan M. Holzer studies Nicola Cavalieri San-Bertolo's engineering construction manual, which was published in 1826/27 and which through critical reassessment brought the most recent French developments to Italy. Sabine Kuban deepens our knowledge about the 'fortuitous time' between the *Monier-Broschüre* (1887) and the first issuing of regulations for construction in reinforced concrete by the German authorities (1904) and sheds further light on the role of the engineer Matthias Koenen.

The editors of the book did a great and important job, making visible current topics and approaches in the German-speaking construction history, which at the same time proves to be a closely integrated part of the international construction history community. The papers all went through a thorough peer review process, which is best practice for all proceedings and publications in our field.

Hermann Schlimme (Technische Universität Berlin)

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Books for review and notification of new and forthcoming publications should be sent to The Editor, Construction History, c/o Department of Architecture, University of Cambridge, 1-5 Scroope Terrace, Cambridge CB2 1PX.

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