NEDERLANDSE KASTELENSTICHTING
Kenniscentrum voor kasteel en buitenplaats

NKS BIJDRAGEN ENCOUNTER CONGRES
Gammel Estrup, Denemarken, september 2017

De NKS zal twee papers presenteren op het congres. Hieronder een korte samenvatting over de onderwerpen en de NKS onderzoekers die deze papers zullen presenteren.

Over Fred Vogelzang


Onderzoeksvoorstel

New Functions for Castles and Country Houses. Fall and Rise of Heritage?

In 2008 the Dutch Foundation for Castles and Country Houses initiated a long-term research project on modern uses of castles and country houses, in contrast to historical use as private homes and the effects on the monumental and heritage values these new ways of utilization have. This project, implemented in cooperation with students from different Dutch universities, has resulted in reports, articles and a book that synthesizes the findings.

This paper focusses on the various ways of utilising castles and country houses in The Netherlands, Germany and England. Peter Mandel’s important study on British stately homes shows different approaches owners have tried to find ways to maintain their country houses and estates. Government, the public, owners and heritage institutes all contribute to the intricate power play that surrounds the conservation, transformation or disappearance of country houses and castles. Are the same mechanisms at work in Germany and the Netherlands as those described by Mandel for the UK? Are the results comparable or is the German and Dutch experience fundamentally different?

I will try to show that although developments in the three countries certainly show parallels, there are also fundamental differences in periodization, contribution of the different players and the way castles and country house are perceived as part of history and part of the national heritage. Heritage images transform through time and that has effects on the way countries deal with castles and country houses and the way they are used in modern society. Which uses are acceptable and for what reasons? What are the effects of modern utilization of monuments on their heritage and economic values?
Onderzoeksvoorstel
Private heritage and public functions

Since 2008 the Dutch Foundation for Castles and Country Houses annually initiates the Castle and Country House Day. On this day, over one-hundred castles and country houses open to the public. The day originated from The Year of the Castle, held in 2005, also initiated by the Dutch Foundation for Castles and Country Houses.

After explaining the goals of the Dutch Castle and Country House Day, I will place this day in a broader perspective of heritage initiatives implemented in the Netherlands. In 1928, the Nature Conservation Act was adopted, followed by the Monuments Act in 1961. The year 1975 was appointed the European Architectural Year and the European Heritage Days resulted from this.

Based on these initiatives, I will research the social function of Dutch castles and country houses, which are often privately owned. Did the events mentioned above change the perception of these monuments by Dutch society? (how) Did these initiatives (in particular the Castle and Country House Day) help improve the image of castles and country houses and their owners to the wider public? Did it lead to more owner participation: more homes being opened to the public? Furthermore, what are their reasons to participate (touristic/commercial motives vs. social 'duty')?

The nationwide Dutch Castle and Country House Day originated from the initiatives mentioned above, but its direct predecessor was a regional initiative. At present, castle day participants have a strong regional scope. How do the national and regional levels relate to one another in organizing public heritage events like the Castle and Country House Day?

After zooming in on the Netherlands, I will take a quick look at how heritage events are organized in Britain, Germany and Denmark. On the one hand, castles and country houses everywhere seem to be rooted locally. On the other, this heritage eminently crosses borders: both local and national. Is a European Castle and Country House Day the next step?