

Friend with an old book

2. Argument

The full title of the book: what is it revealing about the content of the book? Who is it speaking to?

The title of the book is : "A treatise on civil architecture". This mean it will speak about architecture but not every kind of architecture. It will talk about civil architecture, the one people use every day, it won't be about religious architecture or military architecture. In addition this book is a treatise which evocate the fact that this book is more aimed at already knowing people. People who as already be educated about architecture. But I also think that reader doesn't necessarily need to be an architect to understand this book, just need to be curious and well educated.

List of contents: Does the book have one? If so, what kind of sections does the book include? How are the chapters organized/listed?

No the book doesn't have a list of contents. The book opens with a chapter speaking about the origin of buildings and then goes through various theme like the five orders or some specific part of a building like doors, windows or balustrades.

Illustrations: Is the book illustrated? If so, what kind of images are there? If not, why do you think that is?

The first chapter doesn't have any illustrations but the following ones always have some illustrations letting the reader to figure out visually what the book is speaking about. At the end of the book there is a lot of views representing different style of architecture.

Size/format: Is the book large or small, thick or thin etc...? What does this mean in relation to the topic?

The book is rather big and heavy by today standard. This let us know that this book contains more than just a text but also some illustrations that might be pretty big and detailed.

Author: who wrote the book? What was their background and occupation? What do you think they wanted to achieve with this book?

The book was written by Sir William Chambers, born February 23, 1723 in Gothenburg (Sweden) and died March 10, 1796 in London. He was a Scottish architect. His work combines Palladianism, with symmetrical and well-ordered facades, with the early forms of neoclassicism. He spread the taste for Chinese architecture in England, and was commissioned to build several houses and distribute gardens in this taste. I think he wanted to create not an exhaustive book about civil architecture but more a general overview of this subject.