**ON THE MEANING OF ‘EUROPE’ IN ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY**

Call for Papers: Special Collection of *Architectural Histories,* the open accessjournal of the EAHN.

http://journal.eahn.org

On the occasion of the Tenth Anniversary of the EAHN, we invite scholars to join us in rethinking one of our founding questions, namely, how to interpret the inextricable ties between knowledge and geopolitics, an issue that arose from the naming of our network. How can we unpack the significance of “Europe” for our scholarly domain today? Specifically, we are interested in the shifting locus of the power to shape intellectual discourse. Within architectural history we have witnessed Europe cede its position as intellectual hub to North America. But in an increasingly global world, we ask how new distributions of power are currently affecting the production of architectural knowledge. We dedicate a special collection of the EAHN’s peer-reviewed, open access journal *Architectural Histories* to this question.

From our first meeting in 2006, we debated whether the “European” in our name refers to cultural identity, to a geo-political construct, or simply to its bureaucratic registration in Europe. From the start we acknowledged the significance of Europe’s fragile and dynamic boundaries for our discipline. Do they include the colonial expansion to Asia and Africa, or alternatively, the internal colonization by the ultimate Oriental other, the Ottoman Empire? Our symposia and conferences have taken place in sites ranging from Sao Paolo to Ankara, a geographical spread that complicates the “Europe” in our name. How do we reconcile the methodological move away from Eurocentrism with our own stake in a European disciplinary network?

We wish to foreground several inter-related historiographical issues. First, we want to draw attention to the relationship between the geopolitics of disciplinary organizations and the creation and dissemination of knowledge in our field. The SAH, the Society of Architectural Historians, considers itself representative of the profession worldwide, but the recent rise of other organizations that deal with architectural history calls for a new understanding of the discipline’s changing range and scope. While organizations such as DOCOMOMO and IASTE responded to scholarly developments in our field—a reaction to postmodernism and a response to post-colonialism respectively—organizations such as SAHGB and SAHANZ are geographically dispersed. More recently EAHN and mAAN—networks of scholars located in Europe and Asia—call into question the difference between a *society* and a *network* in a global world. More pointedly, we ask how this recent geopolitical spread is affecting the ways we assess the authenticity of knowledge in our field and the power of its related institutions.

Second, we want to locate "Europe" within the shifting locations of architectural narratives. Banister Fletcher’s classic *A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method* (1896), its audience the subjects of the British Empire, taught that the universal narrative of architecture has a European trajectory. Despite the rise of post-World War II nationalisms, survey classes throughout the developed and post-colonial world continued to follow this Eurocentric tale. The recent globalization of academia has challenged this narrative and put into question the impact of different world orders—colonial empires, nation-states, or global unions—on the production of architectural knowledge. How is Europe seen from the current de-centered positions of new global histories? If modernism is compatible with global trajectories, as Rem Koolhaas demonstrated in his call for the 2014 Venice Biennale, what about earlier architectures? Does the current global spread of knowledge relegate the architectural history of pre-1800 Europe to regional scholarly enclaves?

Third, we wish to question the position of “Europe” in the geopolitics of academia. In recent decades the study and research of architectural history has been gradually moving to architectural schools and specialized institutions, while also expanding to theory and criticism. This shift happened most visibly in North American universities – where it was also articulated self-consciously through the establishment of prestigious doctoral programs. What does this mean for the field in its entirety? Is North America, because of its resources, its power and its language, at the center of architectural history? Similarly, if North-America ‘invented’ History, Theory and Criticism as a sub-discipline by appropriating key European thinkers and importing leading scholars, can Europe be more than its ‘prehistory’? Where can the varied national, regional and local research traditions in Europe position themselves within this field of expertise? And a corollary question is inevitable: can the accessibility of information and online learning challenge the Eurocentric bent of our field from the Global South?

For the special collection of our journal *Architectural Histories,* we invite position papers of up to 3000 words (footnotes and references included) that address the historiographical questions raised above. We are looking for papers that deal with one or more topics such as the following: the status of history within disciplinary organizations given their geopolitical position; the implications for historical methodology of a disciplinary network as distinct from a disciplinary society; the ways in which major geopolitical shifts are affecting changes in the architectural canon; the changing position of Europe vis-à-vis the production of knowledge within the politics of the third millennium; the view from the metropole in the era of postcolonialism; the return of the colonial to the metropole; the relevance of the dominant “toolkit” of architectural inquiry—its language, politics and modes of distribution—to the changing views of history within the different parts of Europe and its margins.

Please send abstracts (500 words) to [editorial@journal.eahn.org](mailto:editorial@journal.eahn.org) by 31 December 2016. The publishing fee for accepted articles will be waived.