FIELD NOTES

Seven Views on the Meaning of 'Europe'

The first part of these field notes consists of three perspectives from Germany, Estonia, and Portugal on the meaning of 'Europe' for the historiography of architecture. The second part contains four reflections on the history and role of the EAHN in opening new and inclusive venues of inquiry vis-à-vis the fragile concept of 'Europe'.

I. On Architectural Historiography in Europe

Architectural History as a Part of the Humanities Tradition in Germany

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The limited goal of this contribution is to reveal the changing condition of European architectural history as an academic discipline in Germany. Since the 19th century, architectural history has been intimately linked to the discourses, curricula, and publications in the domain of the history of art — and not so much to those in the domain of architecture itself (see Freigang 2015). Franz Kugler, one of the founders of the history of art as an academic discipline among the humanities, published two multivolume works in the middle of the 19th century. One of them, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte* (*Manual of art history*), first edited in 1842, traces a kind of global art history, including painting, sculpture, and architecture, from the Pacific Isles, ancient America, and Northern Europe, via Greek and Roman ancient art and the Middle Ages in Europe, up to a detailed description of the arts in the 18th century in Europe (Kugler 1842). His other work, considerably larger, is the *Geschichte der Baukunst* (*History of architecture*), in five volumes, first published in 1856. As in the *Handbuch für Kunstgeschichte*, Kugler begins with a global overview of architecture in prehistoric times, in Asia, Egypt, America, and so forth, to focus finally on European architecture since the Middle Ages. Kugler presents a broad and decidedly non-nationalistic view, which nevertheless culminates in the notion of Europe (Kugler 1856–1873). Despite this, one has to admit that he proposes a considerably broad understanding of Europe, comprising not only Germany, Italy, France, and the British Isles, but also, for example, the Iberian Peninsula and Poland. Both publications were continued or reedited by the famous Jacob Burckhardt.

Kugler's work laid the foundation for a widely shared notion of the place of architectural history within the historiography of art that has held sway for more than a century. Implicitly, up to the eighties and nineties of the 20th century, European architecture was regarded as a kind of culmination of world architecture that was considered either as predecessor of European architecture or — in the case of classical antique architecture — as distant ideal. Insofar as the culmination is essentially European, one could even say that it constitutes a western and Christian vision of what should be considered to be Europe. Significantly, and due to the flourishing of classical and oriental archeology as specialized disciplines mainly concentrated on excavations, the history of architecture begins in Merovingian or Carolingian times, encompasses all regions of Europe, and ends before — and not in — the present time. This notion of architectural history is far from narrow, for it is open to all sorts of historiographic approaches, linking for example social and political history or, more specifically, the history of art with the history of architecture. Despite those interdisciplinary links, or even despite its integration in a developed methodological approach to art history, European architecture has always maintained an institutional autonomy. Once again, this can be traced back to the second third of the 19th century. The naissance of an institutionally organized preservation of monumental heritage, in which Kugler played a key role, as well as the completion of medieval churches and buildings such as the Cologne cathedral or Ulm *Münster*, demanded a specialized demonstration of architecture as a complex of specific techniques, forms, and syntaxes (Karge 2014).

We can trace an uninterrupted tradition of this understanding of the history of European architecture as part of an academically organized, scientific historiography. Burkhardt, along with Hans Sedlmayr, Richard Krautheimer, and many others, treated both art and architecture in their teaching and their publications. Generally, architectural history was in most cases not written by architects but by art historians sharing, at least theoretically, rigorous methodical standards in historiography (documentary evidence, principles of causality and plausibility). Those close relations and interdependencies among architecture, art, and history explain how strong intertextual cross-references appear fascinating for scholars and students, but they have for a long time tended to affirm and reaffirm the notion of Europe, including, of course, as far as the periods after the 18th century are concerned, all 'European-influenced' regions, especially North America. According to this perspective, history is mainly European, and the arts, including architecture, are European as well.

It is the integration of architecture and its subdisciplinary autonomy within a history of art that has characterized the understanding as well as the curricula of numerous departments of art history at German universities up to the present time. All three universities of Berlin, as well as those in Cologne, Munich, Heidelberg, Regensburg, Marburg, and Frankfort, maintain at least one professorship with an appointment in the history of architecture and architectural theory. Such relative autonomy of architectural history chairs is justified because it allows those chairs the potential to sensitize students about issues of preservation and heritage services. By the same token, experts in the domain of preservation and heritage very often contribute to the curricula with practical courses.

Positioning the history of architecture in the way I have just sketched may sound old-fashioned, traditional, and quite politically incorrect. But I am not talking about the content and methods in teaching and research. A multitude of interdisciplinary approaches and intense contacts with sociological and literary disciplines and methods have become normal among scholars. Nevertheless, the materiality of architectural objects leads to some specific approaches. Faced with the recent shift of art history to *Bildwissenschaft*, these approaches tend to exclude architectural history and theory from current discourses in the field of visual culture. Comparable shifts can be observed within the ever-growing demands in transdisciplinarity, mainly from the perspective of cultural studies or the poststructuralist and postcolonial turn. While being able to communicate across the boundaries of disciplines, in terms of heterotopia, discourse, whiteness, and so on, certainly generates fruitful insights, such approaches across disciplines also necessarily weaken the autonomy and the relevance of specialized methods in the domain of architectural history, such as technological or archival competencies. It is sometimes not easy for an architectural historian to discuss both Foucault and masonry with his students and his colleagues! As a result of such developments, some art history departments are tending to eliminate architectural history from their curricula.

For the most part, however, the history of architecture remains a part of the humanities. But it should be underlined that it differs from Christian archeology (dealing mainly with the early medieval period) on the one hand and 'Bauforschung' (archaeology of buildings) on the other. Both forms of archeology aim to precisely document of all sorts of buildings in detail. Those approaches require intense technical and financial support. Therefore, they typically belong within technical universities and departments of architecture. Given the importance and dominance of rigorous, positivist investigative methods, clearly hostile to wide-ranging hypotheses, archeologists and architectural historians are very often divided into two factions, which take the form of competing institutions, scientific communities, and discourse cultures, even if they share the same object of research: the historic building. Those conflicts often seem exaggerated, and I myself prefer to cover a wide range of methods, indeed from masonry to Foucault. There are also deeply rooted and

institutionally fixed subdivisions within other branches of architectural history: classical archeology as well as oriental or provincial Roman archaeologies limit their investigation to late antiquity, where the 'European history of architecture' begins. The range of objects and methods within that understanding of European architectural history is open-ended, and covers a variety of investigative domains, from monographic studies to urbanism, from vernacular architecture to the theory of architecture, from political contexts and gender issues to topics of architecture as a metaphor, from circa 800 to the present.

To summarize, the notion of Europe in architectural history has a very long and specific tradition and is related to particular historiographic perspectives and preservation purposes. In the last few years that range has been widening. In Berlin, at the Freie Universität (Free University), for example (one could cite other universities), the traditional scope of appointments in the department of art history — Medieval, Renaissance, Modern, Contemporary — was enlarged by chairs dedicated to Southeast Asia and to Africa as well as to Islamic art, including, at least theoretically, both the art and architecture of these regions.

Addressing Europe's Unevenness

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I would like to suggest that the founding of the EAHN ten years ago coincided with longer-term processes that have changed the audiences for architectural history and affected the professional culture of history writing more broadly. This includes not only the processes of cultural globalization (with its intensified information exchange, intellectual trends, and contacts, among others) and the so-called cultural and critical turn in history writing, but also the changes in institutional and support structures that through their framework of scholarly output have determined a different kind of professional form and knowledge exchange in architectural history. I will try to sketch some of the attributes of this shift from my position in what could be called the European (architectural) periphery. By periphery I mean less the lack of economic development or a geographic remoteness from the center and more the ways in which a nation or a culture has been 'incorporated within the system' (WReC 2015) of architectural history production: its place vis-à-vis the dominant institutions of research, museums, and publishers. Addressing this unevenness of center–periphery relations, foremost inside Europe itself, but increasingly also in areas other than Europe, could be seen as one of the defining strengths (as well as challenges) of the EAHN as a new kind of scholarly network.

During the late Soviet period, art and architectural history writing in the Baltic countries became a means to

construct a common cultural identity characteristic of the area. Refuting the ideological demands posed to the humanities by the official doctrine, scholars in these disciplines distanced themselves from social history in their orientation, demonstrating aesthetic preferences and politics primarily through the choice of research areas: the modernism and avant-garde of the inter-war independence period, architecture and art before Russian occupation, etc. (Saar 2003). As such architectural history gave shape to the national culture, distinguishing itself from the Soviet-dominated past and emphasizing historical links to the Nordic-Baltic region and indexing its location within the Western cultural space. The Estonian art historian Krista Kodres explains that 'the cultural prestige of an older, more established culture was used to enhance the standing and value of the local, peripheral cultural heritage' (Kodres 2010). This history writing also had a very precise public in mind, meant as it was for bringing together an 'emerging' nation. Architectural scholarship of that period enjoyed high visibility and prestige among the national public. In addition to monographs of national histories, architectural magazines devoted significant space to historical research, and history surveys made their way onto national TV programs. Even if the writing by architectural historians appeared in research journals elsewhere (mostly in Scandinavia and Germany), that work remained similar in approach and tone to their work for a local audience.

After the fall of the wall, and under new socioeconomic circumstances, this approach quickly lost its critical meaning, with the previous subaltern nationalism switching now to a dominant position within the nation-state. For architectural history this was a defining feature in the growing heritage industry and museum culture, thus sustaining its public attention. Indeed, for several architectural historians a strong heritage movement provided a way to stand in opposition to the neoliberal property development boom and the rapid rebuilding of the city, especially with regards to the architectural heritage of the Soviet period. The shift in tone is well represented by Mart Kalm's publication *Estonian 20th Century Architecture*. Narrated as social history, its chapters determined by political periods, the book also presents a history of architects and their ideas (Kalm 2001). In the popular press and in professional media, however, historical and critical subjects were increasingly replaced by accounts of architecture as a luxury consumer item or a desirable sign in the new symbolic economy (Lillemägi 2002).

Concurrent with this withdrawal of criticality from the popular public sphere was the institutional change in university funding systems. Long-term state funding was replaced by project-based research, assessed through peer-reviewed articles published in international, rather than national, journals. This brought about a significant transformation in audience and the adoption of a different language (usually English) for publishing. But these changes also turned the attention of authors to a different set of problems. With a new, international audience in mind, authors relied initially on the usual scholarly practice of introducing new material to a new audience, but they also had to acknowledge several notions that so far had been taken for granted. For example, the relationship between center and periphery could be now thought of in different ways, and questions of influence and canon could be re-imagined. If the writings of scholars in the 20th century had demonstrated a sense of 'absence or insufficiency' (Kodres 2010) that characterized local culture, then these new discussions brought into focus how the idea of 'influence' is not a neutral concept but rather carries a hidden power relationship; traditional art historical comparisons have often worked to downgrade non-Western production as simply derivative of Western originals (see Elkins 2006). The Latvian scholar Stella Pelše has in turn referred to a possible point of intersection between Western and Eastern European scholarly interests: the quest to expand or deconstruct simplified schemes of stylistic development in the West coincided with an Eastern European interest in taking their knowledge beyond the confines of narrow local contexts (Pelše 2010: 40).

It is these discussions, then, that form the background for the processes in the 1990s and early 2000s that could be called an internationalization of architectural history, first in organizations like DOCOMOMO, but later also through the EAHN. Educational standards also went international, as did research assessment within the EU and large research grants modeled upon the logic of the natural and social sciences. But in case of the EAHN this new expansion of the audience for architectural history followed a different structure. Not insignificant, for example, is the idea of a network, as opposed to a more traditional disciplinary society, where the latter would represent a divided realm of the national space while the former replaces it with the potentially open (that is, open toward diversity) and horizontal realm of the network, representing a new trans-national (specialist) audience. It is not surprising, therefore, that one of the largest and most active interest groups within the EAHN during its first decade was East European, in which scholars gathered who saw in the network an important channel for bringing their work to a new audience and a new context for discussion.

The idea of the network itself does not guarantee immediately a level ground on which scholarship can circulate and communicate problem-free. In addition to one's position on the center–periphery axis, there are different national traditions and schools, languages and disciplinary settings, etc. However, acknowledging this unevenness and providing a space where it can be voiced is an important advantage of a network. The questions to be posed here for the future are, How can the network be kept open to difference on the global scale and not become itself a specialist enclave? How might an international network composed of specialists relate to a traditional segmented national realm? And if supposedly the networked realm has relied on knowledge production taking place in the national realms, then might we imagine different kinds of movement and structures that would influence the national realm through common networked activities and mediations?

The Significance for an Architect's Training of a Contemporary Critical History of Architecture

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The history of modern Western art is also that of the resurrections of the arts of many civilizations that have disappeared. … Modern tradition erases the oppositions between the old and the contemporary and between what is distant and close. The acid that dissolves all these oppositions is criticism. … Modern tradition contains a greater paradox than the one that reveals the contradiction between the old and the new, the modern and the traditional. The opposition between the past and the present literally evaporates, because time passes with such celerity that the distinctions between the different times — past, present, future — are erased or, at least, become instantaneous, imperceptible, and insignificant. We can speak of modern tradition without being in contradiction because the modern era has smoothed out, even made to completely vanish, the antagonism between the old and the contemporary, the new and the traditional. The acceleration of time not only turns idle the distinctions between what has happened and what is happening, it also cancels the differences between old age and youth. … [T]he modern era is that of the acceleration of historical time.[1] (Paz 1974: 21)

Reflecting on the deep roots of the past, Octavio Paz, the renowned Mexican poet, addressed the challenges of the future: 'Modernity was separated from the past and forced to leap forward at a pace that did not allow putting down roots, pushing it toward fleeting, day-to-day survival. Modernity's capacity for renewal depends on its knowing to return to origins' (Paz 1974: 26). In *El laberinto de la soledad*, published in 1950, Paz reflected on the paradox between development, which he considered 'a false freedom', and the so-called 'culture of poverty' (Paz 1981: 323). It seemed to him that the dichotomy between rich and poor, between development and the lack of it, as a complex of attitudes, had become fundamental and immutable in contemporary culture.

Later, in 'No son genios lo que necesitamos ahora' ('It is not geniuses that we need now'), which appeared in *Domus* (published in Milan) in November 1961, and in *Arquitectura* (published in Lisbon) the following month, the Spanish architect Josep Coderch placed himself in a timeless context in his defence of the non-heroes and of the time of 'longue durée' (Coderch 1961). In a way I believe he was anticipating Jurgen Habermas's idea that architecture, as it is an art and a technic so intimately involved with the process of everyday life, is part of the unfinished modern project (Heynen 1999).

The writing of a contemporary critical history of architecture has been deeply challenged in the last decades by the expansion of architectural research over vast territories, not just in geographical terms but in the way it has brought to light new and multiple thematic questions. New ideas have been considered concerning people and society, power and gender, postcolonial circumstances and digital era, places and time. This process contributed both to overcoming western classical historical periodization that was mainly based on styles as well as to breaking free from current Eurocentric canonical categories.

In addressing the EAHN, in my role as chair of DOCOMOMO International, and also as an architect and a professor of architectural history, I wish first of all to take note of several concerns. I strongly believe that architectural history is a fundamental basis for the education of architects. I have reached this conclusion because while I am myself trained as an architect, ten years after I received my degree, I completed a master's in art history because I thought I needed it. As a result, I am convinced that the history and theory of architecture are key to the education of architects and essential for the future of the built environment. You can well imagine I have had to fight to defend this position in my school, which is a technical university. But the curious thing is that the students themselves staunchly support history and insist that it is the basis of their education because history is not just about information or current knowledge, but overall about critical analysis.

Let's examine what is at stake in this integration of architectural history in architectural pedagogy. We can take as an example the situation with which I am familiar, the Portuguese one, where the architectural approach to the built environment is often more superficial than the historical one. Yet a strong disciplinary method, a theoretical approach, and a historical awareness are all essential to design.

Let us consider the question of European identity and culture. The creation of the EAHN was a great revolution. We have seen how it was generated as a reaction to the SAH. It is very important, even imperative, to have a network that operates in Europe, but without prejudices, extending to Africa or Asia, making connections with North America or Latin America, indeed with all the world. It is my fervent hope that cultural and geographic prejudices can be avoided, that the privileging of the Western in history can be replaced by the search for what is most stimulating and constructive, to overcome marginalized histories and bring out emerging regions or themes that were previously overlooked and suppressed. For instance, in Africa a postcolonial approach is currently dominant, but it is impossible to deny that one hundred years ago Europe was carving up the continent. Historians tend to emphasize one set of facts and forget others.

I wish to suggest that the vision from Europe is fundamental for studying many geographies. For instance, such a study would include the construction of the Brazilian conception of modern architecture, which is a metaphoric image. Lúcio Costa (1902–1998), a Brazilian architect born in Toulon, France, developed the strategy for an architecture that would represent the country. We now cannot think about Brazil as a nation without thinking about Brazil's architecture; the image of the culture, the image of the nation, is now the image of the architecture. Costa's

primary source of inspiration was the former colonial built environment, the prehistory of modernity in Portugal, characterized by a style that the art historian George Kubler identified as the 'Portuguese plain style'. The Portuguese themselves had not been able to appreciate that style because in their eyes it held nothing of interest. This architecture, with a simple vocabulary and little to no ornamentation, emerged in the 16th century, and Kubler described it as appearing between the Manueline style, which is a kind of an elaborate Gothic that turns toward the Renaissance, and the Baroque—'between spices and diamonds', as Kubler put it. This is an important point. Indeed, it was Kubler, a North American, who presented this corpus in his book *Portuguese Plain Architecture: Between Spices and Diamonds, 1521–1706* (1972), which has become important to our knowledge of Portuguese architecture. It was that concept of 'plain Portuguese architecture' that Costa used to culturally legitimize his architectural synthesis. His Brasilia is all new architecture, *tout court*; it is all plain. Furthermore, before the Portuguese themselves looked to vernacular architecture as a source, Costa, in the late '40s, toured Portuguese vernacular sites making drawings (his sketchbooks have recently been discovered) (Costa, Pessao, and Costa 2013). These historical examples of the relationship of European to Brazilian architecture reveal a key intersection between history and architecture, particularly in the case of Iberia. Another *Schwerpunkt* is the French art historian Henri Focillon (1881–1943) and his *Vie des Formes* (1934); we see a strong French influence on architecture between the 19th century and my generation.

It is important to consider that the history of architecture and theory is indeed basic to architectural education and thus to a better built environment. It logically leads to the questions of heritage, preservation, and conservation that in turn generated an organization like DOCOMOMO (the International Committee for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement), which uses documentation to prove that historical knowledge and critical interpretation is central to intervention and decision making. At the moment we are discussing a major issue in DOCOMOMO, because some fear that its work is growing out of control and that the organization should grow no further. The Chinese declare that they have more buildings to include in the DOCOMOMO Virtual Exhibition,[2] as do the Vietnamese. Some of the Africans consider that the buildings being documented in their countries, since they date from the colonial times, are not of their own heritage. Given this constellation of questions around which so many are debating, it is easy to recognize the importance of having a network based in Europe but open geographically and conceptually. I believe that the EAHN's role in architectural education has been a great achievement and that these ten years of EAHN have made a difference to our world. Let's reinforce our commitment to architectural expertise for the next decade to profit from the digital revolution we are going through, so as to deepen and strengthen the knowledge from the humanities that is so crucial for the future.

II. On the Designation of 'Europe' for the EAHN

'My' Europe

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What One Can Find (or Not) Behind a Name

If I can trust my memory, when we founded the EAHN and discussed the inclusion of 'European' in its name, I thought of it as a distinction: a way of saying 'we would like to adapt the methods of the Society of Architectural Historians' — whose work and functioning was certainly an incentive in establishing our association — 'but we are not the SAH; we are different; we are Europeans'. However, by referring to Europe we did not have in mind either geographical or methodological limitations. One might say that the 'European' in the name did not mean anything specifically — aside from the need to find a name for our gathering. But the distinction reflected — and this is important — the desire to think and act differently. In that sense the terms 'Europe' and 'European' came to have a special significance for me.

That significance will become clear as I sketch the *modus operandi* I developed to help the network function. Reflecting on it now, I realize that my approach overlapped that of my own scholarly research. The two of them intertwined: my understanding of the idea of Europe — or should I say of a historiographical territory — has largely fueled my actions within the network; but the reverse has been true as well: the strategy I adopted with regard to the EAHN has definitely helped to clarify my research by opening new horizons and allowing me to test and assimilate new methodologies.

I do not think of my work within the EAHN as activism — unless activism is the desire to make things happen. Rather it reflects an attempt to translate a scholarly vision into real life. At a certain point, my work for the EAHN somehow represented my endorsement of seeing and writing architectural history in a different way.

There are three threads composing this intertwined approach.

Expanding the Field

To be able to ask the question 'What is Europe?', or in a more targeted manner, 'Is it possible to imagine a European historiography?', one should start by looking at its geography. This is more a matter of considering the space of 'Europe' as a disciplinary territory rather than as a physically bounded one. I was and still am interested in the necessity of expanding the discursive limits of the current historiography: how can we speak of European architectural history — as do several specialized surveys — when the Europe being discussed is reduced to only a few countries?

The idea behind proposing architectural tours for the EAHN was part of this approach. In January 2006, when we held our first business meeting in Berlin, I thought that architectural tours would represent an enjoyable and

effective way to start making connections among ourselves as well as a way to enlarge European territory historiographically. With this in mind, our first tour explored Slovenia, under the guidance of Breda Mihelić. My initial proposal had been Serbia — because it appeared to be so radically different from what was usually considered to be European architecture (among other considerations), but the time was not yet ripe for this. The EAHN finally travelled to Belgrade almost ten years later, in the fall of 2015, for its second themed conference. Meanwhile, the tours continued to feature locations at the 'periphery' of Europe, such as Romania (2007), Portugal (2010), and Scotland (2011).

In terms of alterity, the tour to Scotland (2011) introduced another type of difference, tackling the object of study. Hence, the tour, led by Miles Glendinning, was composed of two itineraries: in addition to some of the famous Scottish castles, it viewed several examples of mass housing between Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Creating Connections

But expanding the field was not enough if this 'filling in' of 'blank' spaces entailed no dynamics. What one would need to understand the larger picture is rather to 'connect the dots — to examine circulation, transfer, and exchange. In a certain manner, bringing together scholars from different horizons equals the effort to contextualize architectural history, to understand it at the same time as a process and a 'constellation' (to paraphrase Erwin Panofsky, but also George Kubler and Sigfried Giedion). This is what motivated the proposal of creating themed groups within the EAHN membership and encountering local scholars during the architectural tours. Bringing people together meant, once again, crossing different borders of the discipline — epistemological, geographical, methodological. But this aspired, in the meantime, to respond to the need of dealing with historiography in terms of a choral vision.

Keep the Engine Working

Still, that was not enough. Expanding the field, creating connections is not enough if there are no mechanics to keep them turning. Exploring geography is almost useless if one is not able to grasp its geopolitical dimension. Creating connections might resemble mere socializing if one does not pull together the threads of all these links. This is what a network is: projecting a bidimensional scheme into a tridimensional process, to enable functioning through all the elements of the machine. Even more important: such mechanics help to make sense out of all the parts, all the pistons, cylinders, and spinning wheels.

Imagining themed conferences fueled this approach. After the smaller-scaled test of the mass-housing conference in Edinburgh (2011), the conferences in Sao Paolo (2013) and Belgrade (2015) followed. These embodied the two viewpoints I have briefly developed here: expanding the field and creating connections. Their topics reflected this approach explicitly: the conference in Sao Paolo,

chaired by Anat Falbel, was dedicated to the affinities of architecture, the correspondences, transfers, and inter- and multidisciplinary approaches to its study, while the conference in Belgrade, chaired by Ljiljana Blagojević, addressed the plurality of historiographical discourses, looking at entangled histories and multiple geographies. What mattered, beyond the relevance of these topics to the current state of historiography, was how the mechanics of the two conferences contributed to shaping our network, to its enlargement and refinement. Being present at those events, considering their issues and debating possible answers, was essential to defining what the EAHN is and what it wants to be.

Is There an EAHN 'Discourse'?

If I would like to believe that the EAHN has contributed to changing the making of architectural historiography, at the same time I hope that this will not generate a 'discourse' in the canonical sense. Supporting any canon would imply losing the very inclusiveness that was a critical element in the creation of the EAHN. Rather, I believe that there is indeed an EAHN 'philosophy', one that is close to what Michel Foucault designated as general history and Karl Popper as piecemeal engineering, both of which reject the dictatorship of historicity. This is my understanding of a meaningful historiography, clearly distinct from the global history much debated today, which I think is both a delusion (in terms of achievement) and a concealed manner still favoring a dominant discourse. In my opinion the solution might be a choral vision, one allowing several voices to speak at the same time while also providing an intelligible discourse. It seems to me that this harmonic multiplicity, paralleled by a desire to establish connected histories (as Sanjay Subrahmanyam has put it), could be seen as the foundation of the EAHN 'philosophy.' And I think that here lies its force as a network — as opposed to an association.

Returning to the idea of Europe, I think that the way we can defend it in our name might be to consider it as a hidden episteme, one that could inspire while at the same time asking for transgression.

EAHN is almost Grown Up — But is it Still a Network?

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It is really amazing how successful the European Architectural History Network is today. So of course we must celebrate this, but as historians it is only natural to look back while moving into the future (I cannot resist quoting Benjamin's angel).

It is interesting to see that some questions remain the same after ten years, although the possible answers have changed dramatically. The title of the SAH/INHA (Institut national d'histoire de l'art) conference, held in 2005, where we first proposed a pan-European organization, was 'Repenser les limites: l'architecture á travers l'espace,

le temps et les disciplines' — 'Changing Boundaries: Architectural History in Transition'. At that conference, under the pressure of ongoing globalization, Antoine Picon foresaw more and not fewer 'limites' — that is, not only boundaries, but also limits. From the beginning of my career as an architectural historian, I have looked for new limits to the discipline. In 1977 I co-organized the international conference 'Architectural History: A Social Science?' in Utrecht. I also studied and taught the theory and history of landscape. To a greater extent than is the case with art history, there is a serious connection between architectural history and the design, conservation, and reconstruction of architecture. There is also the growing tendency toward 'research by design'. Meanwhile, 'urban history', the 'history of town planning', the 'history of physical building/Bauforschung', and the 'heritage industry' (the fastest growing 'creative industry') seem sometimes to do better without architectural historians than with them. Indeed, fictional history, that is, speculative reconstructions loosely connected to archaeological data, is far more popular than the history of architecture; for many people there is hardly any difference between reconstructed environments based on historical hypothesis and the sets of the *Game of Thrones* or *Lord of the Rings*.

When we began, most of us still believed in the growing importance of an open European culture with enough potential to overcome nationalism while keeping and even fostering regional and ethnic cultural differences. In our discussions that began in Berlin but that are never ending, we tended to stress that Europe was from the beginning of history the 'end of the world' to the North but open and undefined to the South and the East. When you take the idea of world architecture seriously, you cannot refuse to somehow define Europe because of the fiction of a nation-state in which we share cultural values different from, let's say, those ten kilometers away. After all, the Chinese student who is traveling to Delft or Eindhoven to study architecture is not going to the Netherlands to see Dutch architecture, he's going to Europe. So we have no choice, even if we want to be Dutch or Frisian or whatever; we are Europeans to the rest of the world. It is also true that the fiction of a common identity for Europe is expressed, in the strongest but also the most hilarious way, on Euro banknotes with images of architectural historical fiction.

Looking at the way the destruction and reconstruction of national buildings and landscapes is instrumental in creating new or suppressed identities makes it impossible to believe in the innocence of architectural historical research. We firmly believe it must be possible to use architecture, its design and applications, as a reality check and not, or not only, as a tool in the creation of myths. In doing so our organization should extend and maybe even redesign its network(s) to establish connections and organize thematic conferences together with other organizations. That would make the 'reality check' of our discipline at the biannual conferences and in our scientific publications even more challenging. We hope the EAHN will never become an exclusive society and will further evolve in an ever wider and more interesting network.

But is it Really a 'European' Network?

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This statement has been written from an American perspective. 'Europe' has long exerted a seductive power on American intellectuals, reinforcing an even longer current of American cultural inferiority vis-à-vis Europe, the knock-kneed New World in awe of the wise Old World. Henry James built an entire literary career out of that differential.

In American academia, deference to Europe has been more than evident. American universities shaped themselves on German models in the late 19th century, so much so that as late as the 1970s professors could state unequivocally, 'You must learn German,' even to students whose research interests did not warrant it. German was simply the language of scientific, scholarly work! And certainly, the work of Rudolf Wittkower and Richard Krautheimer, among other German refugees to the United States, was critical to the development of architectural history there. By the 1970s, of course, many of us were caught up in Anglo-French conflicts as our intellectual horizons were defined somewhere between E.P. Thompson and Raymond Williams on the one hand, Braudel, Foucault, Lefebvre, and Bourdieu on the other. German influence continued as well, particularly from such figures as Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin. The American doctoral student of the late 20th century largely turned to Europeans for theoretical guidance.

Yet a glance at the genesis of the EAHN reveals that it was an American model that attracted some Europeans. In the 1990s, more and more European scholars were attending the annual meetings of the very American-flavored Society of Architectural Historians (SAH). They were welcomed with open arms and appeared to appreciate the conferences. However, their participation did not transform the SAH into a fully international society. The organization itself had barely budged from an American orientation, and to this day its board of directors nearly entirely represents American institutions. Interestingly, the society was founded in 1940 as the 'American Society of Architectural Historians' and only dropped the 'American' in 1945, harbinger of a new world order. The new name, the 'Society of Architectural Historians', clearly had universalizing pretensions, but in its early years the society's preoccupations tended toward a certain parochialism. The papers presented at its annual meetings and published in its journal focused almost exclusively on the history of American architecture plus those parts of European architectural history considered relevant: classical, medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque.

Still, it speaks to a certain maturity of the field of architectural history that by the 1990s there was sufficient trans-Atlantic exchange to warrant the need for venues where Europeans and Americans, among others, could meet to discuss issues of common interest. And the annual meetings of the SAH amply fulfilled that need, albeit requiring

of the Europeans the inconvenience of crossing the pond. By the 2004 SAH meeting in Providence, the steadily increasing flow of European scholars making that journey led Helene Lipstadt and me to approach Christine Mengin and Rob Dettingmeijer with the question, 'Why is there no European equivalent to the SAH?' Before we could turn our heads, the two of them were off and running, exploring the possibilities. The SAH/INHA (Institut national d'histoire de l'art) conference held in Paris in 2005 proved that a demand existed for a pan-European venue at which to exchange ideas in the discipline. The first organizational meeting of what was eventually to become the European Architectural History Network took place then. It is interesting to note that those most closely associated with the earliest creation of the network were not only Dutch, French, German, Belgian, Italian, Romanian, Portuguese, and Swiss, but also Israeli, Turkish, and American.

I would like to suggest that it is now time to whack off that 'European' from the name of the network just as the Americans so long ago abandoned their own geographical designation for their disciplinary society. For one thing, the idea of 'Europe' is as contested as ever and European cooperation is under various threats. As the boundary line being constantly drawn and redrawn around Europe is as indefinite as ever, it's not even clear what 'Europe' designates. But more importantly, it is certainly unclear what significance these issues have for the aims of the EAHN. Are the questions around the 'meaning of "Europe"' central to the EAHN's identity? Do they impinge on the mission of the EAHN? In my opinion, they do not. The 'Europe' in the name of the EAHN is merely a vague indication of location; this is simply a network with headquarters in Europe and members from over fifty countries on five continents who share an abiding interest in the history of the built environment.

From its beginnings, the EAHN was never supposed to be only for those studying European architectural history. Nor was it ever restricted to European architectural historians. A quick perusal of the session topics at the biannual conferences, the essays published in the journal, and the venues of conferences will confirm that. The mission statement of the EAHN is quite explicit: from the start the organization was meant to 'overcome limitations imposed by national boundaries'. Through the dynamic process of networking among individuals, it was intended to 'promote scholarly excellence', 'encourage communication', 'facilitate open exchange', and perhaps most pointedly, 'foster inclusive, transnational, interdisciplinary, and multicultural approaches to the history of the built environment'.[3] None of these aims were specifically European; inclusivity rather than boundary restriction was meant to be the hallmark of the new network. And this meant, in addition to geographical openness, methodological inclusion as well. The EAHN was not to be a European mirror of the SAH but a new type of disciplinary network, one not only open to but encouraging of methodological diversity, of voices usually suppressed by the culturally dominant or hegemonic.

After ten years, the time has come for the network to consider whether it has fulfilled the potential of its mission statement, whether the values that statement expresses are still central to the network, and to identify where progress is needed or where amendment and adaptation of those aims is required. My point would be this: either the mission of the network should be reconfigured or steps should be taken to make sure the network continues to fulfill the existing mission.

Please understand that I am most certainly not arguing against the validity of historical research generated from particular socio-geographical positions. Nor am I arguing against the necessity of national disciplinary societies with more or less porous boundaries of their own. Rather, I am suggesting that the EAHN was founded to foster an autonomous identity for architectural history that is open-ended on a number of levels. This has meant inventing new structures and formats to foster voices otherwise not heard on the international stage and to encourage varying forms of exchanges. The conscious aim of the network has been to develop bridges, connectors, and nodes in service to the growth of knowledge. We have made a number of attempts, some more successful than others, to accomplish these goals: the original low-budget tours that brought visiting scholars in contact with local scholars, the network of correspondents who reported on activities in the field, the multiple formats for keynote addresses at our biannual meetings, the variety of symposia, the thematic interest groups, an open-access on-line journal that requires only an internet connection to read, plus, originally and most recently, free membership. Of course, there is still a great deal of work to be done. We have yet, for instance, to figure out how to create a level playing field for those coming from under-resourced universities or to encourage scholars who do not publish in English. We continue to wrestle with those and other problems that reflect current inequities. But one thing should be quite evident: we can lose the 'European' in the 'EAHN.' The emphasis should be on 'network'. Long live the Architectural History Network!

The Improbable Creation of the EAHN

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To be honest, the network began after a total miscalculation on our part. We expected to begin as the European chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH). We were motivated by our younger colleagues who appreciated the annual gatherings of the SAH — formal and informal — and meeting so many people of the same discipline and experiencing the broad scope of approaches to the history of architecture. Some said they learned more and were more motivated by these experiences than a year of study. But they also realized that it was almost certainly

a one-time experience because they did not expect to find enough funding for additional visits.

So yes, organizing conferences in Europe, and mostly about Europe, seemed an operational and sustainable solution. Not trying to invent a new organization but using the knowledge of an old and respectable society, as one of its chapters, seemed a good idea. We started exploring this possibility with a small group of people at the SAH meeting in Providence in 2004. We then proposed the idea at the SAH meeting in Vancouver, in 2005. Later that year, the international symposium 'Changing Boundaries' that was organized in conjunction with the SAH on the occasion of the creation of the INHA (Institut national d'histoire de l'art) seemed a good place and a good time to present this idea to a wider European audience. We held a public meeting at which we presented our proposal for a European chapter of the SAH. To our surprise, most French and English colleagues who had not been present in Vancouver opposed the idea of being part of an American organization. They also doubted if anybody really needed another top-down and formal organization. They found it astonishing to hear such a proposal and insisted that we needed to start an independent network.

Can you imagine what that would entail? We were just a handful of scholars with no institutional backing and no funding. To start a network from scratch was a mad idea. Christine had had a lot of experience within institutions and she figured it was simply out of the question. Fortunately, during discussion in the Labrouste Salle, Rob told Christine, 'Listen, we could do it, and there is this guy, Bernd Kulawik, who can create a website for us overnight'. In addition, we had disseminated a questionnaire asking people what they expected from a European network and whether they were willing to contribute to it. In the end there were ten people ready to go to work, so we decided to start it. Bernd immediately created a website named EAHN, the only combination of letters referring to the history of architecture and Europe still available on the Internet.

At the end of the conference we proposed the formation of an informal network using email and our new website as forms of communication. All we had at that point was the website, a mailing list of the attendees at the INHA conference provided by Alice Thomine, and a brief preparatory meeting that had been held at the subsequent SAH meeting in April. On that basis we agreed on the tentative notion of an association, without much sense yet of what it would become. However, on 19 November, 2005, the bylaws of the EAHN were published in the French *Journal officiel*, officially establishing the organization. Then in January 2006, in freezing Berlin at the very crossroads of the two former Europes, thirteen of us from ten countries met in person at the Museum for Communication, a meeting arranged by Bernd. There we discussed what we were up to and decided how we would do it. We discussed the draft of a mission statement that had been composed by Alona Nitzan-Shiftan and Belgin Turan Ozkaya. We decided to have a collective activity of viewing architecture together and Carmen Popescu offered to organize study trips. Those tours were to be done not to raise money, on the SAH model, but as a way to create

scientific networking, knowing that everybody enjoys discovering architecture together. The very first study tour, a few months later in July 2006, was organized for Ljubljana with the able assistance of Breda Mihelic. In January 2007, Carmen Popescu managed to overcome hurdles to open a bank account. We had almost no funds and what we had came from voluntary contributions from those attending our organizational meetings. Then something crucial happened. In January 2007 we met again at the invitation of Jan Molema at TU Delft, and he was able to persuade the university to provide us with an administrative assistant for one day in the week. That was absolutely critical to developing the network. Karin Theunissen also played an important role in managing the relationship with Delft. In Delft the mission statement was hammered out in the form in which it can still be found on the EAHN website.

We also benefited enormously from the creativity of the designer Reto Geiser, who gave us a house style and our first logo, which everyone was happy with. Meanwhile, an extremely professionally produced newsletter was designed to gather information coming from a network of correspondents in countries across Europe. That was the creation of Susan Klaiber and Nancy Stieber. Academic activity followed, with the joint ETH/EAHN conference 'Transfer and Metamorphosis', organized by Dietrich Neumann in Zurich, in June 2008, and the joint SAH/GB conference 'British Architecture Seen from Abroad', organized by Andrew Ballantyne in London, in May 2009.

Most of the exchanges and decisions during this amazing development were made via email, thanks to the strong mutual trust within a team able to meet only once a year, during the business meetings organized in turns by an EAHN member (Jan Molema: Delft 2007; Hilde Heynen: Leuven 2008; Belgin Turan Ozkaya: Ankara 2009; Maristella Casciato: Bologna 2010). Altogether, a solid core of around twenty people were involved, with the occasional help of many others.

But what really launched the network was the first international conference in Guimaraes in 2010, an effort initiated by Jorge Correia that established high scientific standards. When he came with the offer to host the conference at his university, we were convinced it was an excellent idea, because by the end of the Paris SAH/INHA conference we had witnessed an auditorium full of people listening to Antoine Picon's conclusion about the state of architectural history; we then realized how important it was to have such a platform for disciplinary self-reflection. We, that is Rob and Christine, could then step down from our positions as founding president and vice-president of EAHN, thankful to our successors: Adrian Forty, president; Mari Hvattum, vice-president; Maarten Delbeke, secretary; and Tom Avermaete, treasurer.

We are thankful that another new team with new energy and a new vision is working on the network now. It is fantastic to see the child leading its own life. It began, in the first place, with the American way of building consensus and volunteerism, that is, on committed dedication rather than the French or Latin way of contributing only when you have the time. That turned out to be the American legacy based on the experience with the SAH. For the rest,

the EAHN adopted methods that were distinctly our own, starting with those study tours and continuing with the introduction of themes in our international conferences and keynote events in varied formats. We would like to return to our first presidential message in the first EAHN newsletter, something we still endorse. We wrote:

> Europe's built environment includes some of the most beautiful cities and buildings of the world; fortified reminders of a violent history as well as modern dwellings signifying domestic tranquillity; planned and unplanned cities as well as cultural landscapes.
>
> Studying the built environment in Europe implies transcending political boundaries in order to provide new insights into European identity, an identity whose visual continuity is often overlooked by Europeans themselves when they stress local, regional, or national differences. Architectural history has too often been instrumentalized for the construction of national identities. A European identity, by contrast, has no fixed borders and is defined precisely through its unlikely combination of different people, different languages and different beliefs. On the one hand, European architectural traditions are not confined to Europe, but have informed architectural practice elsewhere in the world. On the other hand, scholars from other parts of the world participate in defining the contours of the European architectural identity.
>
> [We think that we should] continue to build the European Architectural History Network into a reliable, recognized and respected clearinghouse of information and knowledge for architectural history and its related disciplines.

Notes

[1] Free translation from the original: 'La historia del arte moderno de Occidente es también la de las resurrecciones de las artes de muchas civilizaciones desaparecidas. [...] La tradición moderna borra las oposiciones entre lo antiguo y lo contemporáneo y entre lo distante y lo próximo. El ácido que disuelve todas estas oposiciones es la crítica. [...] La tradición del moderno encierra una paradoja mayor que la que deja entrever la contradicción entre lo antiguo y lo nuevo, lo moderno y lo tradicional. La oposición entre el pasado y el presente literalmente se evapora, porque el tiempo transcurre con tal celeridad, que las distinciones entre los diversos tiempos-pasado, presente, futuro se borran o, al menos, se vuelven instantáneas, imperceptibles e insignificantes. Podemos hablar de tradición moderna sin que nos parezca incurrir en contradicción porque la era moderno ha limado, hasta desvanecerlo casi del todo, el antagonismo entre lo antiguo y lo actual, lo nuevo y lo tradicional. La aceleración del tiempo no sólo vuelve ociosas las distinciones entre lo que ya pasó y lo que está pasando sino que anula las diferencias entre vejez y juventud. [...] la época moderna es la de la aceleración del tiempo histórico'.

[2] The DOCOMOMO Virtual Exhibition — MoMove (http://exhibition.docomomo.com) was created by DOCOMOMO International in 2015, to showcase a selection of buildings, sites, and tours of the Modern Movement around the world. Under permanent update, it is the result of the volunteer work of DOCOMOMO members from 70 different countries all around the world on all five continents. It is important to mention that DOCOMOMO International has an open understanding of the Modern Movement, which admits very different architectural expressions in accordance to the local interpretation (www.docomomo.org).

[3] The EAHN mission statement, which can be found on the organization's website, https://eahn.org/about/, reads as follows:

> The Network seeks to overcome limitations imposed by national boundaries and institutional conventions through pursuit of the following aims:
> · Increasing the visibility of the discipline among scholars and the public.
> · Promoting scholarly excellence and innovation.
> · Fostering inclusive, transnational, interdisciplinary, and multicultural approaches to the history of the built environment.
> · Encouraging communication among the disciplines that study space.
> · Facilitating the open exchange of research results.
> · Providing a clearinghouse for information related to the discipline.

Acknowledgements

Competing Interests

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