

Architectural-ized Asia (SAH, Chicago, 21-25 Apr 10)

Vimalin Rujivacharakul

CALL FOR PAPERS

ARCHITECTURAL-IZED ASIA

Society of Architectural Historians, 63rd Annual Meeting

Chicago, April 21-25, 2010

Abstracts due August 15, 2009 (see details below)

Chair: Vimalin Rujivacharakul (U.Delaware)

Session: ARCHITECTURAL-IZED ASIA

Born of a Greek term referring to Anatolia, the roots of "Asia" are, from the very beginning, the projection of the Otherness. The immense plain and thousands of islands in the eastern section of Eurasia are grouped together, and many disparate cultures and traditions are thrown into the same pot with thousands of years of history. From Siberia to the Red Sea, from East Timor to the Ural Mountains, or from Colombo to Mongolia, how has "Asia" ever managed to become Asian?

In contrast to general understanding, the making of Asia in architectural history is a major enterprise that has continued from nineteenth-century European discourses to post-World War II's nationalist narratives. Considered a more neutral term, "Asia" is adopted and now used widely in place of "the Orient." And yet, the identity of Asia is simultaneously complicated by the actuality of its vast landscapes and the complexity of its historical settings. Courses on Asian architecture thus normally represent the continent with selected parts and only highlight its characteristics through particular examples identified by locations and traditions in design. Moreover, the lack of sustaining historical records and scholarly works on trans-continental design makes Asian architectural history incomparable to the long tradition of architectural history in Europe.

Identity politics is a longstanding problem in architectural history, but its discussion has often remained within the scale of national identity. This session proposes an opportunity to expand the discussion pan-nationally and pan-historically by focusing on "Asia" as the subject of inquiry. Proposals can be of diverse aspects, from those that work on case studies to those that offer new

methodological perspectives. Case studies of buildings at the margins of "Asia" (both geographically and politically) are notably welcome. Ultimately, this session seeks papers that aim to offer new ways of reorganizing our museographical understanding of the Asian continent through a re-reading of architecture.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted by August 15, 2009, to Vimalin Rujivacharakul Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Art and Architectural History, Department of Art History, Old College #318, University of Delaware, DE 19716, USA; 302-831-8415; vimalin@udel.edu. Submit with the abstract a short curriculum vitae, home and work addresses, email addresses, telephone and fax numbers.

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Reference:

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