

Session at EAHN 2024 (Athens, 19–23 Jun 24)

Biennial Conference of the European Architectural History Network, Jun 19–23, 2024

Deadline: Sep 8, 2023

eahn2024.arch.ntua.gr/index.php/call-for-papers/

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Session: On Buildings that No Longer Exist.

Even though architecture carries cultural meanings, buildings often come with an end, meaning demolition. Occasionally, activists, scholars, and practitioners initiate campaigns to save these seemingly “throwaway” buildings, demonstrating that the notion of “throwaway” can only be fluid as socio-political circumstances alter hierarchies, priorities, and definitions in conservation processes. This gap between tangible and intangible value reiterates the significance of architectural history as a contributor to the meanings behind the architectural object. What is the role of architectural history even after the demolition of a building? How does the vanished architectural object relate to the narratives of architectural history? What methods and sources hold the information that may be missing? And, to what extent methods and sources can be inherently ambiguous or misleading in their space-making, stories, and make-believe narratives regarding the “life” and “death” of these buildings?

This session focuses on the conceptual and methodological challenges that relate to the production of architectural history of buildings that no longer exist. The lack of information and inconsistency of the archival material, as well as the fact that fieldwork, observation, and the lived experience are no longer possible, call for other ways of conducting architectural research. We aim to discuss alternative methodologies and new media that architectural historians utilise to look into less known or neglected cases of architectural buildings (from different chronological periods and irrespective of their geography) that have been vanished, yet they hold the potential of producing narratives that can be diverse, plural, and decolonial. These narratives may demonstrate an inherent ambiguity of the transposition of the building in words and images, positioning the building into a threshold between myth and reality, as well as “life” and “death.”

Buildings that no longer exist unfold stories that enhance a nuanced understanding of architecture, and they embody a plurality of interpretations questioning what is worth saving for. Currently, the issue of demolition becomes urgent, raising environmental concerns juxtaposed with social dilemmas. The narratives of architectural history that shift buildings to future heritage become equally essential, at a time when increasing efforts to breathe life into outmoded structures and to creatively reuse buildings from salvaged components try to prevail.

Abstracts are invited for the sessions and round tables listed below by September 8, 2023. Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted at eahn2024@gmail.com <<mailto:eahn2024@gmail.com>>

n2024@gmail.com> along with the applicant's name, email address, professional affiliation, address, telephone number and a short curriculum vitae, all included in one single .pdf file. The file must be named as follows: session or round table number, hyphen, surname e.g. S05-Tsiam-baos.pdf, RT02-Tournikiotis.pdf, etc.

Reference:

CFP: Session at EAHN 2024 (Athens, 19-23 Jun 24). In: Arthist.net, Jul 10, 2023 (accessed May 18, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/39745>>.