

SYMPOSIUM 论坛

ENTLANG DER GROSSEN MAUER: Architektur und Identität in China und der Mongolei
ALONG THE GREAT WALL: Architecture and Identity in China and Mongolia
中国、蒙古建筑的同一性与国家代表性

15. – 17. Mai 2009 | May 15th – 17th 2009 | 2009年5月15日-17日

TECHNISCHE UNIVERSITÄT WIEN | VIENNA UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY | AUSTRIA
Institut 251-1 Baugeschichte Bauforschung | Institute 251-1 History of Architecture and Building Research

In Zusammenarbeit mit dem Konfuzius-Institut an der Universität Wien und dem Institut für Vergleichende Architekturforchung
In Cooperation with the Confucius Institute at the University of Vienna and the Institute for Comparative Research in Architecture



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

mit Schirmherrschaft der
Österreichischen UNESCO-Kommission

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Austrian Commission for UNESCO

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Letter of Invitation

Symposium "Along the Great Wall : Architecture and Identity in China and Mongolia

May 15th - 17th 2009, Vienna University of Technology

We are proud to break ground by hosting the first interdisciplinary symposium on East Asian building traditions at the Department for History of Architecture and Art, Building Research and Preservation, Vienna University of Technology, Austria.

Nowadays, with China becoming an economically key player, the Middle Kingdom also claims a leading in role in modern architecture by providing an international playground for experimental buildings. Some of them were on display during the 2008 Olympics. The thrilling design of the Beijing National Stadium 北京国家体育场 by the Swiss architecture firm Herzog & de Meuron (also known as the "Bird's Nest" 鸟巢) even became the emblematic landmark for a "new China" and the Summer Olympic Games.

It goes without saying that architecture always conveyed a symbolic meaning besides providing basic shelter. The Great Wall of China for instance, became so familiar to the eye of the (Western) viewer that it came to serve as a symbol for the whole country itself. It became an icon for the political unity of the Middle Kingdom, despite the fact that it never was one coherent building complex but rather the combined result of individual parts built in different time periods. We would like to discuss the existence and nature of the traditional and modern symbolic architecture in China and Mongolia; moreover, to what extent an architectural monument, an urban design plan, a certain construction method or material in general can exemplify an entire geographic region, a time period or a political system.

The hand of the Middle Kingdom certainly shaped the political, cultural and architectural landscape of Asia in the past several thousand years. However, it eventually came into being through a mutual exchange between the indigenous Chinese culture and its neighbouring regions: For example, the influence of the nomadic and sedentary peoples from the North, such as Xiongnu and Xianbei confederations or medieval Mongolian tribes, as well as the artistic influences from the West such as Greco-Roman, Sassanian, and Indian vocabulary that existed in Central Asia at the time.

The fusion of the building traditions in East Asia is one of the last mysteries within the long tradition of architectural research in Austria. In the early 18th Century, the Austrian architect *Johann Fischer von Erlach*, leading master-builder of the Habsburg Empire in the Baroque Period, published the first discourse on world architecture. His copperplate print *A Plan of Civil and Historical Architecture* (1721) already included selected examples of Chinese architecture.

The 2009 Vienna Symposium aims to address the past, the present and the future of the field, by focusing on traditional architecture, preservation and reconstruction of historical buildings, as well as modern architecture and urban planning in China and the bordering region of Mongolia.

Since architecture is just one of the tools that can mirror a culture, we emphasize an interdisciplinary approach, and welcome scholars from related disciplines.

Furthermore, we aim to strengthen the network among scholars, research institutions and organizations in Austria that are engaged in East Asian Studies in order to facilitate the cooperation among them. The interaction between the different disciplines and experts will enable a profound discussion of the architectural development in Asia. Moreover, it will provide an insight into the position of the historic architecture within the current values of the population and the scope of the regional (state) planning.

Goals and Objectives:

The 2009 symposium "Along the Great Wall: Architecture and Identity in China and Mongolia" aims to provide an interdisciplinary forum for the exchange of ideas between the diverse research fields in Architectural History on the one hand, and Asian Studies on the other hand. We thus welcome applicants engaged in the disciplines of Asian Architecture or Asian Studies in general, including history, political studies, religion, art history, literature, and anthropology.

Application:

Submissions from all disciplines are welcome.

Please return the forms that are included in the attachment:

- 1-page abstract (250-300 words, in German or English) and
- Official application form (telephone, e-mail, mailing address, institution, major area of research, current CV, list of publications, and any audiovisual equipment needed for the presentation)

Furthermore, please send them by email to erich.lehner@tuwien.ac.at.

Application Deadline:

Incomplete or belated applications will not be taken into consideration after February 20th 2009.

Location: The conference will take place at the Vienna University of Technology, Austria, from 15th to 17th May 2009.

Conference Language: German, English optional

Travel Expenses and Living Costs:

A limited amount of funding will be provided for travel expenses for participants from Asia. We are unable to provide housing and meals. For hotel recommendations and information about Vienna please refer to the symposiums homepage.

For further information, please contact:

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