

Session at SAH (St. Paul, 18–22 Apr 18)

International Conference Society of Architectural Historians, Saint Paul, Minnesota,
Apr 18–22, 2018

Deadline: Jun 15, 2017

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The Architecture of Commercial Networks 1500–1900

Improvements in communications and transport technology during the early modern period enabled new forms of global connectedness. Exploiting these technologies, European kingdoms were able to extend their reach and influence throughout the world, establishing lucrative markets for exotic goods. Embedded within the processes of imperial expansion and international commercial competition were sophisticated networks of trade relations, embracing metropolitan financial centers and local markets. Characteristic of this chain of transaction were the buildings that gave it physical form—a facilities infrastructure that enabled the processing, storage, and shipment of goods.

This session invites proposals that engage directly with the history of trade and infrastructural architectures in the context of commercial networks. It asks participants to consider ideas of spatial integration and common enterprise that such networks relied upon and engendered. Questions include: in what ways were buildings concerned with trade shaped by their location within wider networks of related structures? What role did standardization and seriality play in the erections of such buildings? How did corporate identity affect type, style, and ornamentation? And, what relationships existed between spatial organization and technical specification in the ordering, processing, and conservation/preservation of goods?

The session especially welcomes proposals that engage wider historiographic frames of reference, such as regional, oceanic, and World/Global historiographies, methods of cultural and historical geography, the history of 'things,' as well as economic and business history, to provide further insight into the extended and systematized nature of networked space. This may include consideration of the colossal joint-stock corporations of the early modern period, such as the Asian and African trading companies of Britain, Holland, and France; smaller national and international mercantile syndicates of early modern Europe; or, later in the nineteenth century, large-scale agricultural, transportation, and mining corporations operating in Africa, the Americas, and Australasia.

Session Chairs: G. A. Bremner, University of Edinburgh, and Katie Jakobiec, University of Oxford

Please submit an abstract through the SAH website

Deadline: 15 June 2017, at 5pm CDT.

<http://www.sah.org/conferences-and-programs/2018-conference---saint-paul/2018-call-for-paper>

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