

**Twelfth Annual Conference
Construction History Society**

Building Practice: Regulation, Corruption and Adaptation



**Queens' College
Cambridge
25-27 September 2026**

www.constructionhistory.co.uk

Friday 25 September

DAY ONE

09.00-9.15	ARRIVAL & REGISTRATION	
9.15-9.30	WELCOME	
9.30-10.30	Session 1: Roundtable: Building Practice: Regulation, Corruption and Adaptation SARAH MESENS, ROBBY FIVEZ, SIMON DE NYS-KETELS, LAURENCE HEINDRYCKX	
10.30 -11.00	BREAK	<i>Tea, Coffee, and Biscuits served in the Bar</i>
11.00 -12.30	Session 2: Regulation FITZPATRICK HALL SESSION CHAIRS: SARAH MESENS & SIMON DE NYS-KETELS	Session 3: Building Practice and Culture ANGEVIN ROOM SESSION CHAIR: MICHAEL HEATON
	Kairavi Maniar <i>Documentary Practices and Making of Colonial Architecture in the Late Nineteenth-Century Public Works Department, India</i>	Ruiji Zhu <i>Contracting "Scamps": Canton Labour, Royal Engineers, and the Construction of Murray Barracks in Early British Hong Kong (1843-46)</i>
	Maria-Cristina Florian <i>Corruption as an Expression of Freedom: Discursive Practices and Space Creation in Post-Communist Romania</i>	Anastasia Romanova <i>From Construction to Symbol: Narrative of the Church of St. Alexei in Pohrebea (Republic of Moldova)</i>
	Louis Debersaques <i>(Un)built to escape inspection? Problematising the building sector as an industrial category in (inter)national statistics. Case study: Belgium, 1890s</i>	Priya Joseph <i>Terracotta Tiles from Marseilles to Mangalore: Reading Histories Through Mapping</i>
12.30-1.30	LUNCH	<i>Cripps Dining Hall</i>
1.30-2.30	KEYNOTE ADDRESS FITZPATRICK HALL	
	Dr Alexander Bubb <i>Innovation and Failure in an Unregulated Environment: the Travails of a Railway Contractor in 1860s India</i>	
2.30-3.00	BREAK	<i>Tea, Coffee, and Biscuits served in the Bar</i>

3.00-4.30

Session 4: Engineering, Heritage and Conservation

FITZPATRICK HALL

SESSION CHAIR: ALEXANDRINA

BUCHANAN

George M. Croitoru, Ciresica Micu-Croitoru

An innovative intervention from 90 years ago to save a historical ecclesiastical monument in Romania

Yichuan Chen

Parallel developments in structures for land reclamation: Water powered wing-gates in the Netherlands and China, 1800s-1980s

Lia Romano

Preserving Built Heritage with Rock Asphalt? Knowledge Transfer and Applications in Nineteenth-Century Naples

Session 5: Housing and Regulation

ANGEVIN ROOM

SESSION CHAIR: SIMON DE NYS-KETELS & ROBBY FIVEZ

Michela Bonomo

Negotiated Compliance: Luigi Moretti, Cofimprese and the Politics of Reconstruction in Post-War Milan

Yizhuo Gao, Xiaomao Cao, Gangyi Tan

Politics, Architecture, and Knowledge: The Design and Construction of "Gandalei" under War Preparedness during the Third Front Construction

Ayako Maeshima

The Investigation of Technology Transfer on Building Methods and Materials for Reinforced Concrete Apartments in African Cities Case Study Based on the Specification and Drawings of Rond-Point, Dakar, Senegal

4.30-5.00

BREAK

Tea, Coffee, and Biscuits served in the Bar

5.00-6.30

Session 6: Railway, Bridges and Infrastructure

FITZPATRICK HALL

SESSION CHAIR: NINA BAKER

Rosa Caruso

The Dictionnaire des ponts et chaussées by Abram Henri Exchaquet (1787) and its dissemination in Naples

Mike Chrimes

Construction of the Ouse (Balcombe) Viaduct, London & Brighton Railway (1838-1842)

Soheil Shahnazari

Iranian Labourers and Foreign Contractors: The Construction of the Trans-Iranian Railway

Session 7: Materials, Methods and Media

ANGEVIN ROOM

SESSION CHAIRS: ALEXANDRINA

BUCHANAN

Katharina Herrmann, Stefan King, Sabine Kuban

Lightweight vaults by Christian Friedrich von Leins – the use of hollow pots in the reconstruction of medieval ribbed vaults.

Vladimir Ladinski

Construction Related Periodicals in Croatia and Serbia (1878-1918)

Saturday 26 September

DAY TWO

09.00-9.15 REGISTRATION DESK OPEN FOR NEW ARRIVALS

9.15-9.30 WELCOME

9.30-11.00 Session 8: **Adaptation**
FITZPATRICK HALL
SESSION CHAIR: ROBBY FIVEZ

Jonathan Guillemin
Repair, Improve or Replace? Regulation, Compliance and Adaptation in Historic Buildings in France, 1891-1955

René Heusler, Jasmin Schäfer, Christiane Weber
Patent Patterns in Engineered Timber Construction (1900-1950): Case Study of Karl Kübler AG in Southwest Germany and the 'Crisis-Material' Hypothesis

Daniel Alonso Saldaña Ayala, Angela Anchante Bautista
Roads, Concrete and Politics: The Foundation Company and the Emergence of Peru's Cement Industry, 1920-1931

Session 9: **Knowledge Transfer and Building Technologies**
ANGEVIN ROOM
SESSION CHAIR: SARAH MELSENS

Mahnaz Mahmoudi Zarandi, Elaheh Azarnoush
Tracing Building Knowledge without Codes: Literary and Travel Accounts as Evidence for the Regulation of Windcatcher Construction in Iran

Meenakshi A
"A Concatenation of Circumstances": Building Collapses, Responsibility and Regulation in Bombay, 1890s-1940s

Yangjie Wu, Shuopeng Lin, Zhaohui Li
Water Conservancy Project in The Birthplace of a Great Leader: The Debate and Practice of Prefabricated and Cast-in-Place Construction Techniques in the Shaoshan Irrigation District

11.00 -11.15 BREAK *Tea, Coffee, and Biscuits served in the Bar*

11.15 -12.45 Session 10: **Standards, Regulation, and Governance**
FITZPATRICK HALL
SESSION CHAIR: SARAH MELSENS & ROBBY FIVEZ

Miao Li, James W.P. Campbell
Bureaucracy and Corruption: How Yingzao Fashi seeks to Prevent Corruption in Song Dynasty State Construction

Liliana Ninarello
Regulatory Frameworks, Material Control, and Contractual Conflict in Public Construction Projects in Post-Unification Rome

Robert Carvais
The Importance of The Idea of the Expert and Expertise in resolving disputes in French construction 1600-1800

12.45-1.45 LUNCH *Cripps Dining Hall*

1.45-2.00 Annual General Meeting (AGM)
FITZPATRICK HALL

2.00-3.00

KEYNOTE ADDRESS
FITZPATRICK HALL

Dr Hannah le Roux
Cartels, canaletas and competitions: how to corrupt a mineral

3.00-3.30

BREAK

Tea, Coffee, and Biscuits served in the Bar

3.30-5.00

**Session 11: Water, Infrastructure
and Processes**
FITZPATRICK HALL
SESSION CHAIR: JAMES CAMPBELL

**Marina Döring-Williams, Luise
Albrecht**
*The Art of the Joint. Fine opus testaceum in
Roman Brick Tombs – Evidence of On-Site
Processing*

**Valentina Burgassi, Sara
Tagliagalamba**
*Hydraulic Construction and Acoustic Design
in Leonardo da Vinci: Technical Knowledge
and Experimental Practice from the Late
Fifteenth Century to the Early Modern Period*

Debbie Whelan
*A clash of mills: Socio-structural engineering in the
Pongola Irrigation Settlement*

Session 12: Building Innovation
ANGEVIN ROOM
SESSION CHAIR: MICHAEL HEATON

Yiwei Zhang, Shujie Zhao
*Shading Canopy, Steel Frame, and Spatial
Permeability: Two Case Studies of Large-Span
Steel Roof Buildings in Early Reform-Era
Shenzhen*

Heng Xia
*Across the Divide: A Comparative Tectonic
Study of China's Third Front Industrial
Architecture and Otto Steidle's Structure-Infill
Prototypes*

Tianjun Wang
*A Study on the Design, Construction, and
Mystery of the Designer of Wuhan Theater in
1950s China*

5.00- 5.15

BREAK

Tea, Coffee, and Biscuits served in the Bar

5.15-6.15

Session 13: Modern Building Culture
FITZPATRICK HALL
SESSION CHAIR: FIONA SMYTH

Benjamin Schmid, Baris Wenzel, Christiane Weber
*Standards in Structural Engineering – Between Innovation Constraint and Planning Certainty:
The Impact of Missing Standards Illustrated by the Munich Olympic Roof Project*

Marci S. Uihlein
Becoming the Modern Office Building

6.15-6.30

David Yeomans and James Campbell
CLOSING REMARKS

7.00

DRINKS IN THE OLD KITCHENS
[FOR THOSE THAT HAVE BOOKED DINNER]

7.30

GALA DINNER IN OLD HALL
[FOR THOSE THAT HAVE BOOKED DINNER]

Sunday 27 September

DAY THREE

8.00-9.00	BREAKFAST – <i>Cripps Dining Hall</i>
9.00-10.00	GUIDED TOURS OF COLLEGE
9.00-11.00	GUIDED TOURS OF CAMBRIDGE
11.00	Depart