

At 7:00pm President Sara Lowman welcomed the membership and invited the members to the 675th meeting of the society and encouraged them to enjoy dinner.



At 7:50pm a ten minute break was announced.

At 8:00pm President Sara Lowman introduced the speakers and the topic: “imageRio: a Diachronic Atlas of Rio de Janeiro’s Social and Architectural Evolution” by Fares el-Dahdah and Alida Metcalf. Mr. el-Dahdah is Professor of the Humanities and Director of the Humanities Research Center (HRC) at Rice University. Alida Metcalf is Harris Masterson, Jr. Professor of History and Chair of the History Department at Rice University.

Mr. el-Dahdah and Ms. Metcalf introduced a joint project they have collaborated on for several years to map the images of Rio de Janeiro’s through time from the founding of the city to the present online for scholars and the public to experience the growth and evolution of the city as recorded in contemporary records. These records include cartographic documents of the city and paintings and prints of the city. The platform connects the visual history of the city with the written history of the city in a new way that allows exploration of the development of major buildings, public spaces and infrastructure of the city. The lecture consisted of an explanation of the mechanisms that allow exploration of a database on a time and map continuum. One inputs a date and a location on a dated map that has a data point on it and the building, square or recorded view appears.

The pedagogical benefit of linking the two, generally separate set of archives into one easily searchable database appears to be very powerful. History as documented by words has been loosely related to the history of images. The map and its evolution

through time of a region is a powerful organizing device that holds the promise of a much more intimate look at a society and see how its legislative actions play out in the built environment. The built environment becomes a record of those changes as one watches the slave market evolve through time, for instance. The social events that were recorded in the spaces attest to the cultural standards of acceptance and final rejection of the practice over time.

One can imagine how this model can be updated and give us a current view of our cities and our cultures with photographic and aural data points being included in versions of this website practice for current cities.