

Special Issue

Paper-Thin: Imagining, Building and Critiquing Medieval Architecture

Message from the Guest Editor

Cutting and folding can actively generate ideas: according to the ninth-century geographer al-Ya'qūbī, the minaret of the Ibn Tulun Mosque in Cairo is modelled after a piece of paper (or perhaps papyrus) that had been rolled up absentmindedly by the commissioning sultan. Fragile paper was clearly a site for both highly controlled geometrical design and creative play, a freedom traditionally attributed to the Renaissance. This Special Issue will consider paper as an instrument and subject for medieval architectural imagination. Articles may focus on the usefulness and fragility of cut-outs, templates, drawings, and papier mâché models; on temporary, unrealisable, or fictional buildings; on cutting, folding, rolling, turning over as paper-bound forms of design. More broadly, they could consider paper's relationship to parchment and papyrus, and the role of paper as an artistic support in the historiography of medieval and Renaissance architecture.

Guest Editor

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