

gta papers: Macroeconomics & Architecture

Deadline: Dec 13, 2024

Matthew Critchley

gta papers: Macroeconomics & Architecture.

Between 1979 and 1981 Paul Volcker, the Chairman of the U.S. Federal Reserve, pushed interest rates up to 20% to tackle inflation. After his death in 2019 this decision was presented in various hagiographies as nothing shy of heroic. But Volcker's champions elided the full consequences of his rate increase: it had rendered the debt of many economies unserviceable. Debt was taken on to service debt. By the end of the 1980s the IMF was already pushing many countries for debt to be repaid, and as a material consequence, countless public building projects were cancelled or indefinitely interrupted. It was a macroeconomic decision with consequences for the built environment on a global scale.

This issue of gta papers is dedicated to specific macroeconomic decisions and their effect on architecture, the city, and landscape. We ask authors to look at the effects of decisions on tax, trade, goods, tariffs, labour, energy, currency, pricing and debt – in short, any political decision on the economy. Papers should use architecture as a measure of the material consequences of such decisions: What were the reasons or contingencies behind these specific macroeconomic decisions? How do those reasons map (or not) onto their consequences for the built environment? Were those consequences understood in advance? How does architecture, either in its form or use become evidence of such decisions?

We encourage submissions engaging with any period or region. We ask authors to consider macroeconomic controls or developments which shaped architecture from antiquity to the 21st century. Interest rates were already organising construction in London in the 18th and 19th centuries and Ledoux's gates around Paris survived the revolution because they were an instrument of tax revenue. Beyond Europe, how have macroeconomics influenced built space in precolonial or indigenous societies? In which ways can investigations of particular economic policies shed new light on architecture, colonialism and the postcolonial?

We welcome proposals of 300 words to academic.editor@gta.arch.ethz.ch by Friday, 13th December 2024. Please state if you would like to write a short (2000-word) or long (6000-word) article. In addition, please indicate the number of images you would like to use. Accepted articles will need to be submitted in full by Thursday, 17 April 2025.

gta papers is a peer reviewed journal produced by the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (gta) at the Department of Architecture at ETH Zurich. Each issue is dedicated to innovative research and new writing in architectural history, theory, and practice. It features senior scholars, early career researchers, doctoral students, and practitioners. All articles are published simul-

taneously in print and electronic open access formats. We are committed to an engaged editorial process where we work closely with authors to develop each paper and provide individual support as needed for the writing, peer review and editing phases.

Reference:

CFP: gta papers: Macroeconomics & Architecture. In: Arthist.net, Nov 14, 2024 (accessed Jun 24, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/43160>>.