

## Fabrications, vol. 37, no. 3: Decolonisation x Architecture

Deadline: Jan 29, 2027

Isabel Rousset

Fabrications: The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia & New Zealand invites papers for a special issue (Vol. 37, No. 3) "Decolonisation x Architecture" edited by Isabel Rousset and Susan Holden. The deadline for full papers is January 29, 2027. The publication of the issue is scheduled for November 2027; however, accepted papers will be published online individually as soon as they have gone through the journal's standard review and production process.

Decolonisation has been perhaps the most significant global phenomenon of the twentieth century, yet it is also one of the most contested and difficult to define. Against the standard interpretation of decolonisation as the rejection of colonial rule through formal independence and the formation of modern nation-states, scholars have in recent decades complicated the view that there was any singular "project" of decolonisation. Decolonisation has been variously linked with histories of global indigenous movements (Adom Getachew and Tracey Banivanua Mar), Cold War battles (Odd Arne Westad), and the global expansion of capitalism (Lachlan McNamee). The intellectual history of the term is equally fraught. Decolonisation has stood for opposing political positions. It has been associated at times with classic modernisation theory, at other times with anti-modern critique. Its institutional and professional meanings have likewise shifted across times and geographies.

While the political, economic, and intellectual histories of decolonisation have been extensively studied, architecture's role in shaping its diverse meanings has received comparatively little attention. Nonetheless, efforts to globalise the discipline of architectural history have produced a growing body of work in this area, often framed as "global modernism" or "third world modernism."

This call for papers invites historically-grounded contributions that ask how architecture as a profession, institution, and discipline has been deployed in the name of decolonisation.

Papers might also take as their focus architecture's engagement with parallel concepts, including self-determination, sovereignty, independence, indigenous worldmaking, self-government, third-world internationalism, non-alignment, development, and modernisation. Considered in these terms, "architectures of decolonisation" encompass an exceptionally broad spectrum of activities, ranging from architects working within colonial trusteeship systems in preparation for independence to architects enlisted in radical resistance struggles.

At key moments, architecture has been mobilised to give symbolic expression to ideals of political sovereignty (from liberation monuments to capital cities – Le Corbusier's Chandigarh being

the best-known example). At other times, architecture has been imagined as an indispensable tool in projects of economic self-sufficiency linked to independence (from designs servicing large-scale industrial development and extraction schemes to local community development projects such as Albert Mayer's famous Etawah pilot project).

If understanding of architecture's relationship to decolonisation has often been sought in built projects, some of its most significant effects may be located within the postwar expansion of professional networks and conference cultures associated with Third World internationalism. The 1976 United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat I) looms large in this history; yet equally important was the proliferation of regional networks and organisations that often consciously sought to assert a decolonising imperative through advancing situated forms of professional cooperation and knowledge-sharing.

The question of how decolonisation has reconfigured the discipline itself also warrants closer historical examination. When was architecture recognised as being in need of "decolonising" as a discipline and a practice, and what epistemological and methodological changes accompanied this growing imperative? Are there longer intellectual genealogies to the present usage of the term decolonisation to mean a disciplinary reorientation towards new pedagogical models, epistemologies, and environmental ontologies?

We are particularly interested in contributions that explore the historical ambiguities and conflicts implicit in decolonisation, including moments where architects navigated competing decolonising projects. We welcome papers that concern histories of Australia, New Zealand, the South Pacific and South-East Asian regions, as well as those that cast the geographical net further afield.

The CfP can be found here: <https://www.sahanz.net/publications/fabrications/calls-for-papers/>

Questions about the special issue can be directed to the journal's editors: Isabel Rousset ([isabel.rousset@uts.edu.au](mailto:isabel.rousset@uts.edu.au)) and Susan Holden ([s.holden@uq.edu.au](mailto:s.holden@uq.edu.au)). For submission instructions and portal, go to: <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/rfab20>

Reference:

CFP: Fabrications, vol. 37, no. 3: Decolonisation x Architecture. In: ArtHist.net, Jun 26, 2026 (accessed Jun 26, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/52811>>.