

# A

## Architectures: Emancipation



Mathias Rollot

École nationale supérieure d'architecture de Grenoble – UGA, Cresson, Grenoble, France

### Synonyms

[Indigenous](#); [Vernacular](#); [Revolutionary](#); [Oppositional](#); [Insurgent](#); [Liberation](#); [Resistance](#)

### Introduction

Infinite debates of the theme of “emancipation in architecture” took place over the centuries, so that the history of this issue would be tedious to trace. For example, even a reading of Vitruvius’ classical *De Architectura* alongside authors like Lefaivre and Tzonis (2021) could be seen as an explicit attempt to use architecture for the means of the imperialist, racist, globalist Roman Empire *against* other form of popular, regionalist, libertarian, or spontaneous architectures. In other words, it could be seen as a plea for an imperialist architecture as a new tool for the Empire’s domination, as much as that a trial to thwart architecture’s ability to *emancipate*. More recently, however, it seems possible to observe a new turn in this subject, as seems to grow the number of authors and papers explicitly discussing the possibility of “emancipation” and

precisely questioning the emancipatory (or non-emancipatory) character of “architecture.”

This renewed field, which could in a way be called “emancipation studies” for architecture, is nowadays built around a set of questions that are more fundamentally and systematically linked to multiple fields and methods of research than before—from the disciplines of space (geography) and design (landscape, urban planning...), to the humanities and social sciences (history, anthropology, sociology, philosophy) and, more recently, to environmental humanities and decolonial studies—making it a complex field to practice in and a tricky issue to deal with. Thus, the sum of studies that could be commented on to document the conditions of possibility of emancipation “through” and “with” architecture, although recent, is immense. This sum is even more important given that studies on the subject rarely spell out exactly what they mean by ‘emancipation’. If emancipation refers to liberation from a structure of oppression, which oppressive system is it: patriarchy, colonialism, dictatorship, capitalism? Is emancipation necessarily collective, or can it be individual? Not to mention that processes of emancipation can be complete or incomplete, visible or invisible, conscious or unconscious... And the fact that, as Can Onaner is right to point out, “emancipation today must be understood in a broad sense: on the one hand, as the dynamic of a group’s liberation from objective oppression, but also, on the other hand, as an

individual's awareness of the burden that weighs subjectively on each of us" (Onaner 2017, p. 60).

In addition to this important task of defining what kind of emancipation we are talking about, there is a second, no less difficult one: that of specifying what we are entitled to understand by "architecture" in the question "*Can architecture be an emancipatory project?*" (Lahiji 2016). This, because, as always, we don't arrive at the same conclusions on the subject depending on which definition we *choose* (because these definitions are obviously a question of epistemological, ethical, and political *choices*—whether these are implicit or explicit, assumed or not).

On the one hand, one could *choose* to say and believe that architecture is what is built by "the architect" according to a learned culture, a closed discipline whose sole aim and interest is to reconcile its own interests within a corporatist logic, in alliance with the powers that be. We would then logically associate ourselves with the definitions of architecture defended by historical theorists such as Ruskin for whom it is "necessary" to "distinguish carefully" between "to build" and "Architecture," which would be "one of the fine arts." He explicitly warns us: "it is better not to run the risk (...) of the confusion which would arise" from a larger understanding of Architecture (Ruskin 1849, pp. 27–28). Doing so, we'd end up with conclusions about the difficulty of thinking in the same tone about "architecture" and "emancipation" (hence, no doubt, the absence of this idea in classical treatises on architecture).

On the other hand, we could just as well choose to understand "architecture" as something broader, constantly renewed, moving and multiple at the same time (Awan et al. 2011; Paquot et al. 2012; Rollot 2018; Harriss et al. 2020; Rudin and Pellegrino 2022; Lange et al. 2023). Thinking with this second option implies accepting that the definition of 'architecture' is not fixed, that we are collectively free to dispose of it, to transform it in depth, and to put behind this word whatever we wish to put behind it. In other words, that architecture itself can emancipate itself from what it has historically been in order to become something else, freed from its own history and its "problematic legacies" (Rollot

2024). This might lead us to conclude that there is a fundamental structural link between architecture as a tool of emancipation, on the one hand, and the emancipation of architecture itself, on the other. In other words, *there can be no emancipatory architecture without the emancipation of architecture*. This is a first conclusion, which in no way implies that the emancipation of architecture is something new, given that the concept of architecture has long been the object of metamorphosis and redefinition (all of which are political struggles), and that at the same time, within the architectural order, there seem to have long been facilitators of counter-powers, architects at the service of the people and not of the prince, designers in resistance to the Empire, designers of the common good. This possibility has been explored by researchers Liane Lefaivre and Alexander Tzonis in their numerous works on resistance to the standardization and globalization of the world (see Lefaivre and Tzonis 2001, 2003, 2021).

In synthesis, we are led to different conclusions on the subject depending on the definition we choose and depending on the possibility of historical evolution of the definition we accept (or not). From now on, therefore, the relationship between emancipation and architecture will be approached from different angles in this article, to highlight the multiple choices of definition and their possible impact on the subject; each one reinforcing each other thanks to their differences and complementary approaches.

## Emancipating Architecture(s)? Engaged Practices and Designs

Firstly, if it seems possible to say that architecture can be an instrument of emancipation, it is by considering architecture as a discipline and as a learned professional practice—provided that the architects place themselves at the service of the peoples, their desire for autonomy, self-organization, and freewill, and their own capacities (for spatial situation and problematization, diagnosis of territories, buildings and uses, project-based thinking, spatial and systemic

representation, support for material suppliers, building sites, and craftsmen, etc.). This possibility is quite easily demonstrated by studies published on the work of architects such as Yasmeen Lari (Fitz and Krasny 2023), DAAR (Petti et al. 2014; Hilal and Petti 2018, 2021), Carin Smuts (Frey 2016), Anna Heringer (Heringer and Gauzin-Müller 2024), Francis Kéré (Lepik and Beygo 2016), Max Bond (Goldstein), Forensic Architecture (Weizman 2017), Sergio Ferro (2024), Rural Urban Framework (Bolchover and Lin 2013), Sophie Ricard (Hallauer 2016), and much of the alternative practices invented by the “collectives” (Raumlabor 2008, 2015; Paquot et al. 2012; Rollot and Georges 2018; Pouzenc et al. 2023). As can be seen from the corpus of these examples, these architects with emancipatory practices for communities may or may not have come from the indigenous communities they work with, and may or may not have graduated from prestigious schools. Likewise, whatever their continent of origin, whatever their continent of commitment, whatever their age or mode of action, it doesn’t change the bottom line: their committed designs seem capable of generating social changes (even small ones) in favor of peoples and situations (Hertweck 2018). It may try to “enable and empower” the people by the redefinition of new “universal” principles (Frankowski and Garcia 2023; Ryhl 2024), or perhaps opens up the issue of “ability,” “as a means of refusing the normalisation” of bodies and spaces and as a way to liberate from the normative oppression (Boys 2017). All this already explains why a few authors can consider that “architecture” can take “a leading role in economic progress and the cultural emancipation of society” even when realized by professional architects and public means (Staničić 2024, p. 162). And all this also proves that there’s no need to set up a clear and definitive opposition between “architect,” “architecture,” and “emancipation.” Yet Can Onaner is probably right to write that is it “certainly impossible to imagine a project that responds to the desire for emancipation” (2017, p. 62), at least in the sense that emancipation can’t just be added to the program like a few more square meters, an extra

room, or the desire for a particular material, and also in the sense that emancipation processes, exactly as inhabitation processes, cannot be planned, perfectly anticipated, or controlled without being destroyed (Rollot 2017). Yes, it is clear that emancipatory events and processes overwhelm architecture on all sides. But, once again, this doesn’t mean that architects can’t do anything, or that architecture plays no role (or only a counter-revolutionary role). It simply means that, once again, the architect and architecture are negotiating with things that operate far beyond them, and that they cannot contain it within their limits—which is both something quite banal in the discipline, and in fact quite healthy and lucky.

### Emancipating Architecture(s)? Indigenous and Convivial Tool

Then, if architecture can be an emancipatory tool, it might be in the second sense of an “appropriate technology” (Schumacher 1973; Hazeltine and Bull 1999) or a “convivial tool” (Illich 1973; Roddier 2024)—that is, architecture as a popular tool owned and shared by the communities themselves, forming capable, “bioregional” territories and defining “constructive sovereignties” (Rollot 2024, 2025a); architecture as an indigenous know-how, an indigenous “*sentipensar*” (Escobar 2014), or even better: a “*sentipensar-construir*” (“feel-think-build”). There is no doubt that nowadays, many thinkers feel the need to reconsider entirely and to highlight the ethical and aesthetical qualities and political potentialities of vernacular—folk, indigenous, non-expert...—architectures.

Indeed, in front of the anthropocenic issues we all need to face urgently, a new need to consider architecture in a radical “pluriversal” way has emerged. As narrated by Julia Watson, “we might have been inspired by the *traditional ecological knowledge*—which was suppressed, subjugated and erased in horrific ways across the globe. What would our world have looked like? That’s the ideal that so many of us are now struggling to recreate (...) I think we are a place where we are trying to decolonize the [architectural]

discipline and question ways of thinking that don't work anymore. The transition will be difficult, but we're not starting from the beginning" (Watson 2023, p. 444, 446). And if we're not starting from scratch, it's because indigenous built heritage and indigenous architectural living heritage still exist all around the world, and constitute, for many analysts, the most precious ecological and social knowledge that we urgently need to rediscover today. It should then become a compulsory need for any inquiry on "emancipation & architecture" (as much as "pluriversal architecture") to work with the *indigenous voices in architecture* (Kiddle et al. 2018; O'Brien et al. 2021; Grant et al. 2018; Watson 2019, 2025). This would help to consider "architecture" not only as the "Master's tool" but also as a tool of indigeneity; and would therefore transform all debates on its "emancipation" potentialities.

By turning our attention to other continents, other cultures, other ways of making the world, other cosmologies, the question of the vernacular/indigenous doesn't so much invite us to other forms, styles, or modes of construction; it invites us to move away from architectural expertise and corporatism, as well as from the historical Western-centrism of the discipline. At the same time, it leads us to re-read our own Western histories in a very different way, through the prism of a different reading, a different filter—in line with the work of Sibyl Moholy-Nagy (1957), Ivan Illich (1982, 1992) and bell hooks (1995). In *Black Vernacular: Architecture as Cultural Practice*, bell hooks insists on the importance of a broad understanding of the term "architecture" that includes all vernacular forms, as the only way to take into account the structural connections between cultural and political struggles, spatialities and architecture, and to avoid tendentious discourses: « In this expansive and more inclusive understanding of architecture, the vernacular is as relevant as any other form of architectural practice. This perspective allows critics to theorize black experience in ways that promote documentation of our historical and contemporary relationship to space and aesthetics. Few scholars theorize black experience from a standpoint that centralizes the perspectives of poor and working-class

folks. Yet to ignore this standpoint is to reproduce a body of work that is neocolonial insofar as it violently erases and destroys those subjugated knowledges that can only erupt, disrupt, and serve as acts of resistance if they are visible, remembered. Documentation of a cultural genealogy of resistance invites the making of theory that highlights the cultural practices which transform ways of looking and being in a manner that resists reinscription by prevailing structures of domination" (hooks 1995, p.151).

### **Emancipating Architecture(s)? Revolutionary and Insurgent Activisms**

From another point of view, we should open up to the possibility of considering seriously the kind of constructions used by oppositional or revolutionary forces as possible typologies of emancipatory architecture. Yet the difficulty in speaking of 'architecture of resistance' lies in the fact that the authors who use this expression do so for very different reasons, and that the objects they seek to characterize with this concept fall into several categories (see, for instance, Lewis 2011; Sharif 2017; Sioli et al. 2024). The same observation could be made with the nearby term 'insurgent architect' (Corser and Gore 2009; Swyngedouw 2016; Lambert 2019)—not to mention 'revolutionary architect', 'activist architect', and so on. The debate then turns not only to the definition of these terms, but also to the criteria, the methods of evaluation, the legitimacy of those who define and evaluate these criteria: firstly, the practices and discourses of architects; secondly, the values, effects, and potentials of buildings; and thirdly, the uses, the processes of inhabitation of the direct and indirect users of architecture. What interests us in this contribution on emancipation and architecture is the capacity of these categories to help demonstrate and illustrate the possibility of an emancipatory architecture. And to show that, once again, it seems interesting to notice that the debate has been opened up by broadening the definition of the term 'architecture'. From this point of view, it is interesting to read in some of these books that they aim to describe

“emancipatory projects” (Sioli et al. 2024, p.19); confirming once again the possibility of thinking of “architecture”—whatever it means—as a tool for emancipation.

In this third category, the aim is to open our eyes to ‘oppositional’ architectural practices (Delprat 2023), such as those carried out in places like ZADs (Laurens et al. 2018; Comm’un collective 2019), territories in conflict, contested grounds, communities in resistance, and so on. The question raised is that of the role of architecture, construction, and public spaces invested in these places of resistance. We would then go as far as theories such as that of Etienne Delprat, who suggests that the installations created by the “Gilets Jaunes” uprising on the roundabouts of France in 2018 are “architectural situations”; “situational architectures,” not necessarily constructed but no less serious and no less “architectural” (Delprat 2023, 2024). The architect Can Onaner goes even further, considering that an “architectural becoming of the crowd” can even exist in certain situations, so much so that “the crowd plays on equal terms with architecture” and that in the end there is “an architecture of events, an architecture without plans and without architects” (Onaner 2017, p. 61).

In all this, if architecture as a practice can be emancipatory, it is both for itself and for others: whether it is a chosen or an imperative practice, whether it is practiced as a hobby, as a revolutionary weapon or as a free art—in all cases, it is undeniably in that it has an *existential* ground (Younès 2018) that goes far beyond both the “discipline,” its elitist “professions” and community codes, but also far beyond its cultural, communal, “vernacular” practices. In this sense, “architecture” as a practice is seen here as an everyday action, an “architecturing”—“an architecturing of space that does not belong to the expert architect, but also, and above all, to every inhabitant who is engaged in caring for the living spaces he or she frequents. In this way too, architecture – this time as an art of appropriation – will once again appear capable of inspiring freedom, stimulating autonomy, sharpening the singularities of cultures and beings; in short, capable of offering a

first-rate weapon against the dispossessions at work” (Rollot 2018, pp. 77–78).

### **Emancipating Architecture(s)? “Reclaimed” and Reversed Systems and Situations**

Even for the most dubious authors on the subject, it is accepted that “architects, (...), can and do co-animate political events and inscribe themselves in emancipatory political sequences” (Swyngedouw 2016). This welcome distinction between “architecture” and “architect” in turn leads to further necessary clarifications on the question of claim and its representation. Indeed, it’s clear that the “emancipatory” character of architecture is not and need not become a question of claims, branding, displayed ethics, self-talk; it is a question of results and facts, whatever the rhetoric of the designers. Thus, questions about emancipation and architecture don’t seek to define who is entitled to make emancipatory claims but what role “architecture” could play in emancipatory processes. In this sense, if architecture has something to do with emancipation, it is perhaps less in the sense that its progenitors want to see it as an instrument of liberation for peoples, than in the sense that everything about it can be turned into its opposite at any moment. In other words, no matter what you want to do with it, it escapes your intentions. Virtue ethics don’t work in architecture! Or, to put it more clearly with Can Onaner, “you cannot say I am more ethical, I care more about people, assuming that if I am more humanist the result will be better” (Onaner 2017, p. 60). Not only do intentions not automatically translate into effective changes but intentions and built forms can be reversed at any time. For example, although its protagonists developed architectural modernism for laudable humanist reasons and perhaps for issues of popular education, it is now rather clear to most thinkers that “modernism has lost its claim to be emancipatory” (Hertweck 2018, p. 7) and that the real urgency is now to deconstruct the “structural racialism” that shapes “modern architectural theory” through its “historical contexts of imperialism, colonialism”

(Cheng et al. 2020, p. 134). In other words, modernism itself has changed, from the original “emancipatory project” to “counter-emancipatory structures.” So what are we to make of the fact that buildings are often perfectly suited to the purpose for which they were not designed—i.e., that a building could perfectly be a revolutionary tool, an emancipatory space, a libertarian structure, even if it was originally conceived by the most “autonomist” architect (Till 2009) as a tool of domination for the most brutal political system? It seems quite obvious to remark that architecture and its constructed results—buildings—can be used for the emancipation of peoples especially by redirecting the original function of buildings, so that even the most colonial heritage can be *reclaimed* (Sengupta and King 2024) and even the most “international architecture” may be considered as a possible “tool of national emancipation” (von Hirschhausen 2018)! From this point of view, even the most oppressive architecture can be seen as a potential heritage to return in a post-colonial situation and with a decolonial logic; and even architecture designed to be the object of the most patriarchal society can be a shell to be seized for the invention of new feminist and/or *queer* forms liberated from this domination—in exactly the same way as the worst of the capitalist factories can always be recuperated by a Marxist struggle and transformed into a collective tool belonging to the workers and serving themselves. In other words, the question posed is the one already formulated by DAAR during the 11th international Istanbul Biennial in 2009: “How to re-inhabit your enemy’s house?”. And while the answer to this question is by no means simple, unique, or definitive, it has to be said that Alessandro Petti and Sandi Hilal have both worked hard over the years to fuel thinking on this subject (see in particular Petti et al. 2014; Hilal and Petti 2018, 2021). This is by no means a simplistic way of saying that architecture is a single “means” in the service of an “end” that can be freely chosen. It is more a question of pointing out that the future of buildings and their occupants eludes intention and is much more complex than expected—in short, it is a question of saying that

the “inhabitability” (Rollet 2017) of a place always depends on its reinvention and diversion from any expert and authoritarian logic, and that this is a fairly banal process, carried out daily on different scales by the inhabitants. In other words, emancipation is not just about spectacular and bloody revolution; it’s also about the daily individual and collective expression of one’s rights and demands, albeit in a discreet or even unconscious way.

### **Emancipating Architecture(s)? More-Than-Building Architectures: Critical Knowledges and Communities**

Lastly, architecture must be seen as a complex set of cultures and knowledge, theories and analytical and critical skills; architecture is not just “the building” and “the architects,” but also refers to a set of institutions, communities, imaginaries, and narratives that transcend objects and people. This vast ensemble, which could be called “*more-than-building architecture*,” is probably what Florian Hertweck is trying to describe in his book *Positions on Emancipations* when he talks about the possibility to view “architecture and urbanism not so much as experimentations with form and spaces, but rather as analytical fields,” or to consider architecture as a field whose objective is also to “develop a more or less utopian narrative based on critical research, through the use of architectural drawings” or other means (Hertweck 2018, p. 14). Once again, it is hard to believe that “architecture” can be condemned to remain on the side of domination, colonialism, patriarchy, or capitalism. Even when it comes to architectural institutions! This is borne out by attempts at liberation, such as the African Futures Institute founded in 2021 by Lesley Lokko—“a new kind of institute of architecture and the built environment” designed “to tackle some of the world’s most pressing and difficult challenges” (<https://www.africanfuturesinstitute.com/our-vision>), including “questions of decolonization” that are considered “a gift to the canon,” that “enrich” rather than “destabilize or diminish”

architecture in the way that it forces it to change radically (Lokko and Zacks 2022). Apart from this precise school, many new “architectural pedagogies of the Global South” had been recently mapped by scholars (Harriss et al. 2022) as places where people can learn differently, far from Western-centrism and its “universalism,” in favor of *architectures of spatial justice* (Cuff 2023), and, perhaps through contact with multiple “theories of emancipatory architecture” (Deamer 2016, p. 106). Is it efficient to document and to present to students at the architecture school historical attempts realized by “architects, and planners (...) to challenge a host of gender hierarchies and divisions in the design and usage of urban spaces, to increase the visibility and mobility of women, and to emancipate them from what they viewed as oppressive traditional practices” (Ziaee 2019)? Is it enough to try experimental, decolonial, or feminists pedagogies, liberated from the teacher’s domination, and “to discuss with students the concept of emancipation” (Uludag et al. 2024) to insufflate new wishes to co-create architecture with people in their full diversity, rather than *for* them and *without* them? If many authors argue in favor of “Architecture as an agent for the emancipation of citizens” (Contal and Revedin 2019), yet the way to produce such an architecture can’t be defined once-for-all and all strategies could be criticized and seen as insufficient. What is certain is that the only way to train architects who are more aware of the logics of domination at work in architecture is through an architectural education that is free of the ‘building/architect’ binomial; it can only be a critical, analytical education that grapples with complexity and multidisciplinary; a pedagogy nourished by the hybrid and the impure, by futures and uncertainties, by otherness and incompleteness. And all the calls “towards a decolonial metamorphosis of architecture” (Rollot 2025b) won’t be sufficient but compulsory to consider.

## Conclusion

As we can see, the vast majority of works agree in outlining the many reasons to believe in

emancipatory possibilities for/with architecture. So that to the question “*Can architecture be an emancipatory project?*” (Lahiji 2016), the answer from most serious studies on the subject is undeniably a resounding “yes.” Indeed, it would be hard to argue otherwise, since to say that architecture is only colonial, imperialist, authoritarian, and/or domineering would be to simultaneously deny all indigenous peoples the possibility of making and having “architecture,” i.e., of claiming that both built architectural heritage and indigenous architectural know-how don’t exist. Yet the existence of so-called “vernacular” (non-expert, non-Western, non-dominant) architecture isn’t refutable. It is therefore a priori impossible to deny “architecture” the possibility of belonging to an order other than that of domination. At the same time, it is possible to say that when a discourse is fiercely convinced that architecture can only be “counter-revolutionary,” that it can only be a tool of domination, used solely and necessarily for the colonization of settlements, the authoritarian control of bodies, the repression of freedoms and the even wider deployment of a capitalism based on principles of colonial productivity and extractivism, it ultimately means only one thing: that the definition of “architecture” at work behind this discourse is extremely restrictive (restrictive enough to adhere, tautologically, to what the discourse wants it to be in order to go along with it).

Thus, it is not that important whether or not we agree on the binary distinction that should be made between ‘architecture’ (colonial, capitalist, authoritarian) and ‘architecture’ (vernacular, insurgent, disruptive) on the one hand, and between ‘architects’ (corporatist, collaborationist...) and ‘architects’ (insurgent, revolutionary...) on the other. In all cases, each author agrees on the basic point: while not all architectures and not all architects participate in emancipatory processes, *some architectures and some architects can*. Since every architectural quality and capacity is obviously conditioned, it is of course trite to point out that the emancipatory nature of architecture is also conditioned. Not all architecture is inherently emancipatory, just as not all architects aspire to be. And to say that architecture *can be*

emancipatory alongside others, and that the architect *can be* an emancipatory agent alongside others, does not say under what conditions or how often they can be so. But in conclusion we can say that the answer to the question is clearly a unanimous: *yes, there is indeed a possibility of contributing to the processes of emancipation through architecture and/or as an architect.*

## Cross-References

- ▶ [Architectures—Bioregional & Decolonial](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—Colonial Bias in AI's Global Architectural Knowledge](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—Decolonial Design Practices in Africa](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—Decolonial Urbanism](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—Decolonised Pedagogies](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—Degrowth Perspectives](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—Development & Aesthetics: Critical Perspectives](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—Ecofeminist Perspectives on Vernaculars](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—From Bastardised Forms to Pluriversal Considerations: Asian Perspectives](#)
- ▶ [Architectures—Reimagining Praxis in a Post-humanist World](#)
- ▶ [Art/Environmental Education: A Transdisciplinary Construct](#)
- ▶ [Decolonising Time](#)
- ▶ [Indigenous Epistemologies](#)
- ▶ [Indigenous Science\(s\)](#)
- ▶ [Intercultural Paradigm: Contributions, Criticisms, and Projections](#)
- ▶ [Mapping Disembodiment](#)
- ▶ [Plantationocene](#)
- ▶ [Queer Ecologies](#)
- ▶ [Stubbornness of Colonial Appropriation](#)
- ▶ [Traditional Ecological Knowledge and the Anthropocene in Ladakh](#)

**Competing Interest Declaration** The author(s) has no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this manuscript.

## References

- Awan, Nishat, Tatjana Schneider, and Jeremy Till, eds. 2011. *Spatial agency: Other ways of doing architecture*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Bolchover, Joshua, and John Lin. 2013. *Rural urban framework. Transforming the Chinese countryside*. Basel: Birkhauser.
- Boys, Jos, ed. 2017. *Disability, space, architecture: A reader*. Routledge.
- Cheng, Irene, Charles L. Davis III, and Mabel O. Wilson, eds. 2020. *Race and modern architecture: A critical history from the enlightenment to the present*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Collectif comm'un. 2019. *Habiter en lutte. Zad de Notre-Dame-des-Landes. Quarante ans de résistance*. Le Passager Clandestin.
- Contal, Marie-Hélène, and Jana Revedin. 2019. L'architecture comme agent d'émancipation des citoyens. In *Sustainable design 7*, éditions Alternatives, 7–15.
- Corser, Robert, and Nils Gore. 2009. Insurgent architecture: An alternative approach to design-build. *Journal of Architectural Education* 62 (4): 32–39.
- Cuff, D. 2023. *Architectures of spatial justice*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Deamer, Peggy. 2016. Architecture/agency/emancipation. In *Can architecture be an emancipatory project? Dialogues on architecture and the left*, ed. N. Lahiji, 106–122. ZED Books.
- Delprat, Etienne. 2023. *Architecture(s) oppositionnelle(s). Prolégomènes*. Editions du commun.
- Delprat, Etienne. 2024. *Ar(t)chitectures situées*. Rotolux Press.
- Escobar, Arturo. 2014. *Sentipensar con la tierra: Nuevas lecturas sobre desarrollo, territorio y diferencia*. Medellín: UNAULA.
- Ferro, Sérgio. 2024. *Architecture from below: An anthology*. London: Mack.
- Fitz, Angelika, and Elke Krasny, eds. 2023. *Yasmeen Lari: Architecture for the future*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Frankowski, Nathalie, and Cruz Garcia. 2023. *Universal principles of architecture: 100 archetypes, methods, conditions, relationships, and imaginaries*. Beverly: Rockport Publishers.
- Frey, Pierre. 2016. *Cs studio: Carin smuts, urs schmid architectes*. Actes Sud: Anatomie d'un rêve.
- Goldstein, Brian D. (to be published) *If architecture were for people: The life and work of J. Max Bond., Jr.* Princeton University Press.
- Grant, E., K. Greenop, A. L. Refiti, and D. J. Glenn. 2018. *The handbook of contemporary indigenous architecture*. London: Routledge.
- Hallauer, Edith. 2016. *La permanence architecturale*. Hyperville.

- Harriss, Harriett, Rory Hyde, and Roberta Marcaccio. 2020. *Architects after architecture. Alternative pathways for practice*. Routledge.
- Harriss, H., A. M. Salama, and A. Gonzalez Lara. 2022. *Routledge companion to architectural pedagogies of the global south*. Routledge.
- Hazeltine, B., and C. Bull. 1999. *Appropriate technology: Tools, choices, and implications*. San Diego: Academic.
- Heringer, Anna, and Dominique Gauzin-Müller. 2024. *Form Follows Love. Une intuition construite – du Bangladesh à l'Europe et au-delà*. Birkhäuser.
- Hertweck, Florian, ed. 2018. *Positions on emancipation, architecture between aesthetics and politics*. Zurich: Lars Muller.
- Hilal, Sandi, and Alessandro Petti. 2018. *Permanent temporariness*. Stockholm: Art & Theory/Royal Institute of Art.
- Hilal, Sandi, and Alessandro Petti. 2021. *Refugee heritage. World heritage nomination dossier*. Stockholm: Art & Theory Publishing.
- hooks, bell. 1995. Black vernacular: Architecture as cultural practice. In *Art on my mind: Visual politics*. New York: The New Press.
- <https://www.africanfuturesinstitute.com/our-vision>. 31 January 2026
- Illich, Ivan. 1973. *Tools for conviviality*. London: Marion Boyars.
- Illich, Ivan. 1982. *Gender*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Illich, Ivan. 1992. *In the mirror of the past*. Newcastle upon Tyne: M. Boyars.
- Kiddle, R., P. Reid, and K. O'Brien, eds. 2018. *Our voices. Indigeneity and architecture*. Novato: Oro.
- Lahiji, N. 2016. *Can architecture be an emancipatory project? Dialogues on architecture and the left*. Alresford: ZED Books.
- Lambert, Leopold, ed. 2019. *Insurgent architects. The Funambulist*.
- Lange, Torsten, et al., ed. 2023. *Contemporary feminist spatial practices. Arch+*.
- Laurens, Christophe, Jade Lindgaard, et al. 2018. *Notre-Dame-des-Landes ou le métier de vivre*. Loco.
- Lefavière, Liane, and Alexander Tzonis. 2001. *Tropical architecture, critical regionalism in an age of globalization*. Chichester: Wiley Academy Press.
- Lefavière, Liane, and Alexander Tzonis. 2003. *Critical regionalism, architectural identity in a globalized world*. Munich: Prestel Pub.
- Lefavière, Liane, and Alexander Tzonis. 2021. *Architecture of regionalism in the age of globalization, peaks and valleys in the flat world*. London: Routledge.
- Lepik, Andres, and Ayca Beygo. 2016. *Francis Kéré: radically simple*. Berlin: Hatje Cantz.
- Lewis, Michael. 2011. *An architecture of resistance*. Raleigh: lulu.com
- Lokko, Lesley, and Stephen Zacks. 2022. Lesley Lokko and the African Futures Institute. *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*.
- Moholy-Nagy, Sibyl. 1957. *Native genius in anonymous architecture*. New York: Horizon Press Inc.
- O'Brien, K., R. Kiddle, and P. Steward, eds. 2021. *Our voices II. The DE-Colonial project*. Novato: Oro.
- Onaner, Can. 2017. L'architecture comme théâtre de l'émancipation. *Tous Urbains* 17: 60–65.
- Paquot, Thierry, Yvette Masson-Zanusso, and Marco Stathopoulos. 2012. *Alterarchitecture manifesto*. Infolio: Eterotopia.
- Petti, Alessandro, Sandi Hilal, and Eyal Weizman. 2014. *Architecture after revolution*. Berlin: Sternberg Press.
- Pouzenc, Joanne, et al., eds. 2023. *Constructlab, convivial ground*. Berlin: Jovis.
- Raumlabor. 2008. *Acting in public*. Berlin: Jovis.
- Raumlabor. 2015. *Building the city together*. Raumlaborberlin.
- Roddier, Mireille. 2024. "Degrowth, energy sobriety, low-tech: Towards an architecture of conviviality," a reading list. *Places Journal*. <https://placesjournal.org/reading-list/degrowth-energy-sobriety-low-tech-towards-an-architecture-of-conviviality/>
- Rollot, Mathias. 2017. *Critique de l'habitabilité*. Libre & Solidaire.
- Rollot, Mathias. 2018. *Les territoires du vivant. Un manifeste biorégionaliste*. François Bourin.
- Rollot, Mathias. 2024. *Décoloniser l'architecture*. Le Passager Clandestin.
- Rollot, Mathias. 2025a. *Critical strategies for ecological architectures*. Springer. Pluriversal-Bioregional-Decolonial. <https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-032-02522-7>
- Rollot, Mathias. 2025b. Eleven ways towards a decolonial metamorphosis of architecture. *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*.
- Rollot, Mathias, and Atelier Georges, eds. 2018. *L'hypothèse collaborative, conversation avec les collectifs d'architectes français*. Hyperville.
- Rudin, Jake, and Erin Pellegrino. 2022. *Out of architecture. The value of architects beyond traditional practice*. London: Routledge.
- Ruskin, John. 1849. *The seven lamps of architecture*.
- Ryhl, Camilla. 2024. *Universal design in architecture – On enabling and empowering a diverse population*. Danish Architectural Press.
- Schumacher, E. F. 1973. *Small is beautiful: A study of economics as if people mattered*. Blond & Briggs.
- Sengupta, T., and S. King. 2024. *Reclaiming colonial architecture*. Routledge.
- Sharif, Y. 2017. *Architecture of resistance: Cultivating moments of possibility within the Palestinian/Israeli conflict*. London: Routledge.
- Sioli, Angeliki, Nishat Awan, and Kristopher Palagi. 2024. *Architectures of resistance. Negotiating borders through spatial practices*. Leuven: Leuven University Press.
- Staničić, Aleksandar. 2024. Politics and architecture of border crossings. The case study of Gevgelija in North Macedonia. In *Architectures of resistance. Negotiating borders through spatial practices*, ed. Angeliki

- Sioli, Nishat Awan, and Kristopher Palagi, 155–177. Leuven: Leuven University Press.
- Swyngedouw, E. 2016. On the impossibility of an emancipatory architecture – The deadlock of critical theory, insurgent architects, and the beginning of politics. In *Can architecture be an emancipatory project? Dialogues on architecture and the left*, ed. N. Lahiji, 48–69. Alresford: Zero Books.
- Till, Jeremy. 2009. *Architecture depends*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Uludag, Zeynep, Gülşah Güleç, and Neva Gerçek Atalay. 2024. Architecture as an emancipating ground: Emancipatory architectural designs of Atelier 1. In *Novel approaches to urban design and architecture education*. New York London Beijing: IGI Global. <https://www.igi-global.com/>. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2329-8.ch004>
- von Hirschhausen, Ulrike. 2018. International architecture as a tool of national emancipation: Nguyen Cao Luyen in French colonial Hanoi, 1920–1940. *Hungarian Hist Rev* 7 (2): 331–347.
- Watson, Julia. 2019. *Lo-TEK. Design by Radical Indigenism*. Cologne: Taschen.
- Watson, Julia. 2023. We are trying to decolonize the discipline, Interview by Lisa Eikaas. In *Critical coast*, ed. Josephine Michau. Copenhagen: Danish Architectural Press.
- Watson, Julia. 2025. *Lo-TEK. Water*. Cologne: Taschen.
- Weizman, Eyal. 2017. *Forensic architecture: Violence at the threshold of detectability*. New York: Zone Books.
- Younès, Chris. 2018. *Architectures de l'existence. Éthique, Esthétique, Politique*. Hermann.
- Ziaee, Armaghan. 2019. On contradictions: The architecture of women's resistance and emancipation in early twentieth-century Iran. *Architecture Beyond Europe Journal* 16. <https://doi.org/10.4000/abe.7059>