

Cross-Cultural Communication for International
Urban Design Practice: Lessons from a Field Studio in China

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Abstract

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Economic realities are leading more and more Western and American Architect-Engineer-Consultant (AEC) firms to work in China. To be successful, these firms must not only be skilled in physical design, but also in cross-cultural communication. Similarly, Chinese domestic designers who work with Western and American designers must also have these skills.

In this thesis, I consult existing literature, compare my own personal experiences, and report on interviews with international design practitioners to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of Western design firms working in China. I also describe a case study of a University of Washington international design field studio in which I participated in the summer of 2011, which provides a possible model for American and other Western design firms working in China.

This thesis intends to promote awareness of the difficulties and importance of cross-cultural communication between designers from different cultures working on international urban design projects. It highlights some major pitfalls and hopefully provides some solutions for designers to use to become more successful in international design practice.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Personal Background

1.2. Topic Introduction

1.3. Methodology & Limitations

1.1. Personal Background

From 2004 to 2008, I studied architecture design and urban planning¹ at Guilin University of Technology in China. At that time, all of China was preparing for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. There was a lot of new development and it seemed like every big, famous project was designed by designers from outside of China. Chinese cities were described as “Western architects’ weapons testing grounds.”² I did not understand how, if the Olympics were supposed to showcase China to the rest of the world, having all the famous buildings be built in non-Chinese styles was going to accomplish that. As a designer, I was disappointed to see a country which used to have its own distinct, traditional buildings now populated with funky, costly, and seemingly meaningless structures designed by Western and American architects.

I know this phenomenon was only a portion of the complex history of Chinese-foreign interaction in architecture and urban design. Some Western and American designers have attempted to bridge the gap between Western and Chinese architecture. A good example is Henry Murphy who worked in China for 20 years starting in 1914. Murphy attempted to preserve China’s rich architectural traditions while also designing new buildings using up-to-date Western technologies.³ However, not all designers have since followed in Murphy’s footsteps. In the book *Solutions for a Modern City: Arup in Beijing*, the designer of many high-profile buildings in Beijing summarizes his philosophy towards design with a quote from Buckminster

¹ Professionals majoring in architecture or urban planning in China are actually physical designers mainly engaging in the production of blueprints. Fulong Wu, a Chinese scholar, in his article *Challenges and Opportunities – Can Western Planning Theories Inform Changing Chinese Urban Planning Practices* (Yeh, A. G. O., Xu, X., & Yan, X. 1997) explained why planners’ roles are strictly confined to the production of blueprints: design/planning decisions are made by cadres [officials of the Chinese Communist Party] behind closed doors. In this paper when I refer to design professionals in China, I mean architects and urban designers who work on physical designs.

² Arthur, L. The China Syndrome. New York Time. 2012-06-21.

URL:<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/21/magazine/21beijing.html?pagewanted=all> . Accessed: 2012-06-21.

(Archived by WebCite[®] at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aE9h9LA>)

³ Cody, J. W. (2001). *Building in China: Henry K. Murphy's "adaptive architecture," 1914-1935*. Sha Tin, N.T., Hong Kong: Chinese University Press.

Fuller: “You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”⁴

It was hard to see the symbolic ties between the foreign-designed projects and China. I wanted to know why Western and American designers designed projects that did not seem to belong to China and instead mainly focused on high technology. I was curious about why Western and American designers came to China, what they thought about Chinese architecture and cities, and how they approached projects in China. I was also curious about how they were educated, what formed their design concepts and design philosophies, and what advantages they had over Chinese domestic designers.

With these curiosities I went to study urban design and planning at the University of Washington (UW). Over the past two years, I have participated in three design studios with the goal of understanding how my American classmates work and communicate in a team. I started to appreciate the differences and explore how our differences can be understood so that advantages of both sides – the Chinese designers and Western/American designers – can be combined to create wonderful work.

The first design studio, which I undertook before I was enrolled in any classes involving teamwork at the UW, was an international design studio done in cooperation with students in Taipei in the summer of 2010. The project was to develop a regeneration plan for an abandoned industrial district of Taipei. It was a great opportunity for me to learn about working with both American students and Taiwanese students. Because I had not yet studied design in the United States, the practices and outlooks of my classmates were strange to me. I quickly discovered that, despite working in the same field, American designers viewed projects completely differently than Chinese designers. I also discovered that even though the Taiwanese students and I (from Mainland China) spoke the same language, there were serious factors related to politics, history, and culture that we had to carefully consider in order to engage in harmonious conversations. The involvement of a few American students in the conversations only made our communication more challenging. Overall I struggled because I did not understand the way my

⁴ *Solutions for a modern city: Arup in Beijing*. (2008). Page 47. London: Black Dog.

American classmates worked and I was not aware how challenging it was to work in a complicated international team.

My second studio at the UW was a food systems project done locally in King County. It gave me the opportunity to work with American students in the United States. Because I had taken more classes by that time I was more familiar with the American teamwork style, although I had not yet mastered it. I observed and learned how my American classmates worked out a framework, developed concepts and conducted the work.

The third studio, a two-month-long design practice in China with both American and Chinese students, was another international project. This time, with my previous experiences behind me, I was in a position to provide positive input and help benefit the team. I ambitiously positioned myself to bridge the gap between the American design students and the Chinese design students. It was not an easy task.

In April 2011, I started as an intern working for an international AEC firm HDR on urban development projects in China. We completed a conceptual design/master plan for a new medical city in Beijing, which offered me a better understanding of international design work.

I decided to write about foreign firms' international design practice in China, describing how firms practice in China and what kind of products they are able to produce considering all the advantages, disadvantages, risks, and challenges. In writing this, I did not rely only on my own experiences. I talked to more than twenty international design professionals in the Seattle area who helped me understand their work. In addition, I reviewed a summary of interviews of Seattle firms practicing in Asia. The interviews were carried out by students in the Designing Asian Cities course taught by Dan Abramson, Jeff Hou, Ken Oshima and Vikram Prakash at the University of Washington.

Both my studio and internship experience led me to worry about communication between Chinese and Western/American designers: how much we know about our differences in culture, education, and profession; how we can achieve a mutual understanding of each other; and finally, how we can advance based on an understanding of the differences. It is often easy for designers to underestimate the difficulties in exchanging professional knowledge cross-culturally,

especially when some international practitioners believe design to be an inherently universal language which can be applied to every corner of the world.

As the world gets smaller, having cross-cultural professional communication skills is important both to Western designers and Chinese designers. It is critical for all designers to position themselves as international design professionals because designers and planners need to ensure that their work is responsive to the cultural, historical and ecological realities of all places where they have projects.

How designers process design is closely related to the education and training we receive. We tend to bring the skills and knowledge we have learned from one place to another place, assuming one solution solves the design issues that might exist in other places. One international practitioner with an architecture background that I talked to had completed a master plan for a district in my hometown. I reviewed his proposal; I saw many new urbanism principles in the plan. However, my hometown was already more compact than what new urbanism tries to achieve.⁵ He told me that after he completed the plan, he went to visit the site and could not believe the population density in the city: what is considered low-density in China would be considered by many to be high-density in the United States. Architects who do small projects in the United States sometimes do large-scale urban planning projects in another country, and there is little supporting literature on how to make that transition. Recent designers are not given much opportunity to think about or practice large urban design projects. More attention should be given to the differences between foreign projects and local projects.

All the above experiences lead me to think what education the American universities should offer to prepare international design professionals and what knowledge would be most useful for both American students and international students who come to study in American universities.

It is important to specify what I mean by the term *design professionals*. Professionals working in the architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning professions can be called design professionals. Those professions are inter-related, and all ultimately require design in the broader sense. It is true that the fields are more distinct in the United States: for instance, while both urban design and environmental planning are under the Urban Planning department at the

⁵ Wu, F. (2007). *China's emerging cities: The making of new urbanism*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.

UW, the former focuses on physical design while the later focuses on policies and community development. However, in China, it is not easy to differentiate between a designer and a planner. There is an assumption in China that because an urban planner should be able to handle large urban-design scale projects, then he/she must be able to handle small architecture design projects as well. Therefore, a Chinese urban designer is sometimes expected to do architecture or landscape architect as part of urban planning. In international practice, since a lot of work is about designing and building physical environments, when I refer to designers, I mean design professionals engaged in international physical urban development.

The third international design studio I participated in, Summer China Studio, is an example of a good approach toward training future international design professionals. I intend to use the studio as a case to address cross-cultural professional communication issues faced by Chinese and Western/American international practitioners. The issues I focus on between the Chinese and American practitioners are general enough to serve as a reference for Western and American professionals working in many other countries. I hope that this studio case can lead educators to think about what kind of professional education would best prepare design professionals for international practice.

I feel grateful that there have been so many academics and practitioners contributing to the international urban planning and architecture practice. My thesis advisors are among them; I can stand on their shoulders to move forward.

1.2. Topic Introduction

The central principle of sustainable design is to "meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."⁶ Architects and urban planners want their work (the decisions they make and plans they propose) to be sustainable, responding to the environment, economy, and society in which it is located. These are the three fundamental dimensions in sustainable development.

As design professionals, we are aware that natural resources can be used up faster than they are replenished; cities or towns can become less independent; the use of high technology does not necessarily improve people's quality of life; and societies can lose their culture. Design professionals can address some of these issues. The value of our work is reflected through the preservation and rehabilitation of natural environments; the flexibility to accommodate local and external economic developments; the improvement in healthy social life; and the richness of culture and history in a place.

In the U.S., there exists the AICP Code of Ethics⁷ for planners and the AIA's Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct⁸ for architects to remind professionals of the deep value of their work. Both the Codes define professionals' obligations to the public and to the environment. However, when those professionals work on projects located in countries where there are no such strict ethical principles and guidelines, these home principles can sometimes be left behind.

What value do international professionals hold when they design projects in a foreign land? Which factors do planners and architects consider the most: the place, the locals, or the opportunity and excitement to work on a foreign project? I have heard some Chinese professionals talk about their giant projects in Africa and I have heard some American professionals talk about the craziness of working on large-scale projects in China. My own experience and observations have disappointed me: a project in Seattle can take several years

⁶ World Commission on Environment and Development. (1987). *Our common future*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

⁷ Ethical Principles in Planning. American Planning Association. 2012-06-21.
URL: <https://www.planning.org/ethics/index.htm>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aEgqv0>)

⁸ The Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. American Institute of Architects. 2012-06-21.
URL: <http://www.aia.org/about/ethicsandbylaws/index.htm>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aEVOk4d>)

until it meets environmental regulations and satisfies the public's interests, while a project in China can be done roughly in only a few months by an American firm who only needs to satisfy the developer-client. But the land in China still has value and has a relationship with the environment, economy, and society. Design professionals are supposed to treat every piece of land in the world the same: showing respect to the local culture and history, giving respect to the relationship between people and nature; and taking local people's voice into consideration.

However, it is not easy to consider all these essential elements in an overseas project. The cross-culture communication barriers resulting from different languages and cultures have made it difficult for practitioners to work in a diverse team to understand the context, the people, and the site. In my view, international practitioners should have cross-culture communication skills in order to realize the values of a project in a foreign land and localize their design concepts; educators in high-level learning institutions should take the responsibility to train such competent design professionals.

Therefore, the topic of this thesis is about the cross-cultural communication for international urban design practice. International design practice refers to a team with design professionals mainly from Western and American countries working cross-culturally on projects located in a different country. Cross-culture professional communication refers to the communication between designers with different cultural backgrounds in architecture and urban design field.

I specifically locate this international design practice in China considering my experience and also the fact that China is currently one of the hottest markets for international design firms. The issue I intend to raise through a field studio case is that professional communication issues exist between Chinese and Western/American designers and not much attention is given to training international professionals.

I hope to provide insights to help both Chinese and Western design professionals to understand international design practice and to seek better approaches. International design firms have been rushing into China. Firms looking to sustain their business in the long run by practicing in China need to improve their communication with Chinese professionals as well as their understanding of the Chinese context to create more competitive work because the bar for being awarded projects is higher than before.

The studio case from which I draw most of my conclusions is an academic design studio. I understand that the nature of a design firm's practice is quite different from a university's studio approach. Universities are non-profit entities and the goal is education and research. Furthermore, the studio took place in a rural village, with the goals of engaging the entire community, addressing environmental and economic impacts, and trying to preserve the culture and history of the area. In many ways the goals are different from a design firm working in an urban environment and care must be taken in comparing the deliverables produced by a design firm in an urban setting and a university studio in a rural setting. However, the common ground is that participants in an international firm and in a studio both involve Westerners/Americans and Chinese from completely different cultures but practicing the same profession.

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 includes three sections. Section 1.1 is an introduction of my personal background, explaining why I am interested in writing this topic, what experiences I have, who I am writing this for, and my unique position in stating my perspectives. Section 1.2 introduces the topic, the fundamental value of this topic, and the structure of this thesis. Section 1.3 states the methodologies I used to gather information. In addition, I discuss the strength and limitations of this paper, and also addresses the future research direction based on this thesis.

Chapter 2 is divided into three sections. Section 2.1 discusses the design profession as an international practice due to its transferability and how globalization has been creating opportunities for international design practice since the 1960s and its impacts on built environments. Section 2.2 locates the international design practice to China and discusses the trend of foreign firms rushing into China, why those firms go to China, what the risks are, and what limitations Western/American designers face in designing and building projects in China. Section 2.3 discusses what kind of education can best prepare international design professionals who are able to work effectively in a cross-cultural working environment and create more competitive and valuable⁹ international projects.

⁹ *valuable* means project that is responsive to the local cultural and history, the ecological environment, the local livelihood, and the needs of the local people.

Chapter 3 introduces an international design studio practice which took place in the summer of 2010 in a Chinese village. The chapter explains how the project was initiated, how the studio as a team worked with various sectors, and what role each party played.

Chapter 4 points out communication issues raised in the field studio based on my observation and feedback from studio participants. While many cross-cultural issues occurred in the studio trip, what I highlight are issues that fit into three categories. The first category is cultural differences in language and customs; the second category is the differences in disciplinary training; and the third category is the differential familiarity with locality. I conclude the chapter with a reflection of the studio case summarizing the overall benefits the studio offered to the participants for their future international design practice.

Chapter 5 is a conclusion of the thesis.

1.3. Methods & Limitations

My methodology included literature review, informal interviews with international design practitioners in the Seattle area, participatory observation of my internship work with an international AEC firm HDR since April 2011, and a case study on an international design studio which took place in a Chinese village in the summer of 2010.

In my view, the strength of this thesis is the fact that I am a participatory observer. Because I have some experience in this topic, I was able to compare existing literature with things I have seen and dealt with first-hand. Furthermore, I was able to talk to other people with relevant experience not just as an interviewer, but as someone in the field. However, my approach has its limitations. Because I talk about the overall design field, it necessitates a broad knowledge of different fields at the expense of the particularities of each individual discipline. This may therefore lead to the sacrifice of depth of understanding for breadth of analyses. Furthermore, my attempt to apply lessons from an academic studio to professional design practice also raises problems of comparability.

My perspective is also of course subjective. I have only lived in the United States for three years and English is not my first language, I hope readers can understand it is not my intention (and of course I do not have the authority) to speak for either all Chinese or all Westerners/Americans. In writing this thesis I have the simple goal to bridge the gap between the Chinese and non-Chinese professionals so together we create meaningful places in the world.

The readers should keep in mind that the observations made in this thesis occurred in one specific context. This is not a research conclusion; it serves more as one interesting account to read and compare with other accounts and to raise questions for more intentionally-designed research that might be carried out in the future. My unique perspective in writing this thesis and the unique context of the studio should be remembered when reading this thesis.

Finally, there are currently not many existing references which address this issue. I hope my topic will lead people to think about issues relating to this topic, and that future researchers can conduct a more scientific survey on international design professionals to reach more specific conclusions.

Chapter 2: Globalization & International Design Practice

2.1. Globalization & Transferability in Urban Design Professions

2.2. International Urban Design Practice in China

2.3. Education Implementation

2.1. Globalization & Transferability in Urban Design Professions

Globalization creates an exchange of knowledge across different countries. It is now easy for people in one country to come into contact with ideas and methods from another country. Skills and abilities are often exported from one country to another.

Globalization also creates competition among countries. Cities now compete not just with their domestic neighbors, but with comparable cities all over the world. The nature of the competition has also changed, from comparing building height to measuring livability and sustainability.

Developing countries are constantly upgrading their built environments by employing Western theories and practices and are catching up with developed nations.

It would seem that the design profession is an inherently international profession due to its transferability. The concept of transferability refers to how well knowledge and work processes can be passed to others and used by them in their own contexts. Some fields are more transferable than others; technical fields like medicine or manufacturing, for example, tend to be more easily replicated across national boundaries than more politically and institutionally embedded fields like law and policy; the U.S. legal system cannot be transferred to another country like China with anything like the completeness that an automobile manufacturing process can be. But even the most technical forms of exchange need to negotiate cultural boundaries and practices.

The knowledge to design and build physical environments is being shared internationally with an exceptional ease and speed that belies the way it actually must accommodate local practice. It is undeniable that the modern architecture style can be found all around the world. The flow of design ideas and techniques across countries has made both positive and negative

contributions.¹⁰ It has been criticized that some design models and techniques have been replicated and reconstructed in many countries without consideration given to how effective those models adjust to the local context. This has resulted in a homogenization of building styles and city forms that do not address local needs.

It seems that through this globalization process big cities in different countries tend to look like each other. Rem Koolhaas, in his book *Generic City*, commented that the scale of this convergence must mean something. Acknowledging the trend toward sameness, he further questioned the validity of identity/culture and described his generic city like “a Hollywood studio lot, able to produce a new identity every Monday morning.”¹¹

Taking a different perspective, the geographer Fulong Wu disagreed with this convergence theory. In his book *Restructuring Chinese Cities*, he conveyed the message that it was inappropriate to read cities through the superficial surface form. He questioned “the validity of this (convergence thesis’) linear, causal, simplistic and essentialist view which masks the complex reality of cities more than its selected evidence purports to represent.”¹² Wu further pointed out that local politics and cultures have played an important role in shaping our cities.¹³

Anthony King has yet another perspective. He wrote:

“When ideas, objects, institutions, images, practices, performances are transplanted to other places, other cultures, they both bear the marks of history as well as undergo a process of cultural translation and hybridization.”¹⁴

Globalization can have both negative and positive impacts on the development of built environments. The negative is that cities compete with each other to establish a new, disingenuous identities which do not actually belong to them. Tourism developments like large resorts create similar destinations in many big cities to attract international tourists. It is not sustainable by any means when there are too many similar identities which are disconnected from the local culture and society. The positive impact of globalization is that it brings various

¹⁰ Olds, K. (1999). *Globalisation and the Asia Pacific: Contested territories*. London: Routledge.

¹¹ Koolhaas, R. (March 01, 1997). The generic city. *Domus*, 791, 791, 8-12.

¹² Ma, L. J. C., & Wu, F. (2005). *Restructuring the Chinese city: Changing society, economy and space*. London: Routledge.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ King, A. D. (2004). *Spaces of global cultures: Architecture, urbanism, identity*. London: Routledge.

ideas together and provides opportunities for the creative cultural translation and hybridization of design ideas and processes.

Some new urban spaces which now occupy the overall cultural, economic, and spatial structure of Chinese cities are:

- “The space of globalization typified by the creation of urban high-tech and financial districts and the construction of global image-enhancing projects such as the 2008 Olympic Games Village in Beijing (under construction) and Shanghai’s 2010 World Expo.
- The space of elitist consumption represented by glittering shopping centers, malls, chain stores, supermarkets, plush hotels as well as numerous fancy restaurants. What should be noted also is the rapid development of the urban tertiary sector (Lin 2004) that has created numerous spaces of consumption for the ordinary urban residents, including regular hotels, restaurants, small shops and personal services.
- The spaces of differentiation and marginalization exemplified by the emergence of exclusive gated communities and dilapidated migrant enclaves.”¹⁵

Many of these new urban spaces are either directly or indirectly influenced by Western design theories or practices. Although architecture and urban design are not inherently universal languages which are easily transferrable, they have been treated as such and have been applied to the whole world in the globalization process.

Despite the lack of effective transferability of design, many design firms have practiced internationally extensively throughout history. Jeff Cody in his *Exporting American Architecture: 1970-2000* illustrated why and how designers export their knowledge and skills to other countries between 1970 and 2000.¹⁶

Bradford Perkins, in his book *International Practice for Architects*, described how international firms entered different countries at different periods over the past 40 years according to shifts of

¹⁵ Lo, F., Yeung, Y., & Chinese University of Hong Kong. (1996). *Emerging world cities in Pacific Asia*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press.

¹⁶ Cody, J. W. (2003). *Exporting American architecture, 1870-2000*. London: Routledge.

global economies. He predicted that “the design professions in North America are now and will continue to be integrated into an increasing globalized world economy.”¹⁷

Rapid improvements in technology and the ability to outsource in this field have greatly enabled design firms to practice design across countries. Technology has greatly changed the way designers work, advancing the core production from hand drafting to digital drawing. These digital design technologies have enabled cross-country design practices. Coupled with the ability to quickly send large amounts of information, digital design technology allows project designers to be in different countries than their project sites. Large design and construction documents need to be sent back and forth among project participants. This requires an understanding of information technology. Many large firms have significant investments in information technology departments which allow them to conveniently share and access project related information.

Besides sharing documents, video conference and related technology allows all project participants to meet virtually face-to-face to discuss project issues and review files together. And if that is not enough and the project requires a literal face-to-face meeting instead of a virtual one, all major cities in China are now less than a day away by air travel. Donald McNeill explains how global architects coordinate their work at a distance. He specifically discussed the importance of information technology in creating a “seamless” design studio with an illustrative description of how KPF operates its trans-Atlantic design team through two principal offices.¹⁸

In addition, outsourcing has become an increasingly noticeable phenomenon in architecture firms. Both large and small firms benefit from outsourcing in their international work. The advantages of outsourcing are pretty straightforward. Outsourcing allows for a 24-hour work schedule where routine design work can be carried out in a different time zone while the project home team sleeps. More important from a business standpoint is the fact that labor in these other countries is usually much cheaper than labor in western countries thanks to currency exchange rates.

¹⁷ Bradford Perkins. (2008). *International Practice for Architects*. Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey.

¹⁸ McNeill, D. (2009). *The global architect: Firms, fame and urban form*. New York: Routledge.

2.2. International Urban Design Practice in China

The modern practice of international involvement in the Chinese market for design services began in 1978. Following a long period of a closed-door policy, Deng Xiaoping began reforms which allowed some open market activity and allowed foreigners to do business in China under certain circumstances. As the reforms took hold, the Chinese economy began to grow which stimulated the need for building and infrastructure construction. Although China's opening to international markets was part of a world-wide acceleration of globalization in the 1980s and 1990s, its path was unique. As John Friedmann comments: "China's urban transition is an unfinished story. Moreover, its outcome is unpredictable."¹⁹ For many people who try to predict the future of a developing country such as China, the urbanization process which occurred in other nations might not be repeated the same way in China.²⁰ Still, China's building boom, combined with increased international design practice on a global scale, tends to obscure its unique local and historical conditions.

In recent years, the U.S. domestic market has become saturated with designers at the same time that the economic downturn has hit the architecture industry badly. It is unsurprising that as a result, Western designers and planners are rushing into overseas fast-growing markets such as China, India and the United Arab Emirates. A large number of foreign firms currently practice globally. According to Engineering News-Record, "85% to 95% of the large AIA member firms work overseas. This translates to 30% of U.S. design firms, which employ 26,000 architects. There are more than 1,500 AIA members living overseas."²¹

Many U.S. specialty-based firms such as HOK, SOM, RTKL, NBBJ, HKS, Perkins & Will and so on are setting up branch offices overseas as more and more of their projects are located abroad. AECOM, one of the 500 top design firms, serves clients in more than 130 countries around the world.²² With 4,399 staff, AECOM has 400 offices in total all over the world. 45%

¹⁹ Friedmann, J. (2005). *China's urban transition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

²⁰ Zhang, Y., & Fang, K. (March 01, 2004). Is History Repeating Itself?. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 23, 3, 286-298.

²¹ Post, Nadine. Global Opportunities Grow for U.S. Architects. *Architecture Record*. 2012-06-21. URL:http://archrecord.construction.com/news/daily/archives/2010/100616global_opportunities.asp. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aF4zBD3>)

²² AECOM. History. AECOM. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://www.aecom.com/About/History>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aF9gcMd>)

of their work is outside of the United States.²³ A smaller but still well-respected international firm, Callison, has 800 staff in 10 offices around the world. More than half of its work is outside the U.S. and 30% is in Asia.²⁴

Some star architects such as Rem Koolhaas, Norman Foster, Steven Holl, Zaha Hadid, and etc have done many projects in China, under the influence of the famous “Bilbao Effect”. It has been recognized by clients from all around the world that a signature building designed by a star architect or a well-known design firm helps to brand their corporations and put their locations on the world map.

China has been the largest construction market, with plenty of cheap labor and low construction costs. According to Facts and Details, “constructions costs in China are about a tenth of what they are in the West and little as one 15th of what they are in New York and London.”²⁵ In 2006, Peng Pei Gen, a returned Chinese-Canadian who founded one of the first private design firms established in China after the Reform and Opening and is currently a senior professor of architecture at Tsinghua University, pronounced that Western architects were “using the Chinese as their new-weapons test field” in a New York Times article on construction in preparation for the 2008 Olympic Games.²⁶ A more recent article further explained:

“Drawn by a building boom unmatched in the world in recent decades, U.S. and European architects are flocking to China, turning Chinese leaders' bold visions into concrete and steel realities and giving Chinese cityscapes a distinctly foreign signature. At a time when many Western economies are stagnant and many construction projects have been delayed or scaled back for lack of financing, China is on a major push to urbanize - building new office towers, apartment blocks, exhibition halls, stadiums, high-speed train stations and nearly 100 new airports. The boom is offering U.S. and European architects new opportunities and an economic lifeline, as much of their industry is struggling. Many of modern China's iconic structures,

²³ Architecture Firms (US). DesignIntelligence. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://www.di.net/almanac/firms/>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aFLzoQD>)

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Modern Architecture In China. Facts And Details. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://factsanddetails.com/china.php?itemid=1912&catid=7&subcatid=40>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aFVvAbP>)

²⁶ Arthur, L. The China Syndrome. New York Time. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/21/magazine/21beijing.html?pagewanted=all> . Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aE9h9LA>)

including the New Poly Plaza and the World Trade Center in Beijing and the Shanghai World Financial Center, have been designed by U.S. and European architects.”²⁷

It used to be that most Western/American designers were either signature architects or from large design firms. Today, one can see various types of design firms and Western designers practicing in China. Not long ago, another New York Times article titled “Architects Find Their Dream Client, in China” talked about how China’s boom benefits U.S. architects and how middle and small size firms are rushing into the China market: “Mr. Silk’s 17-person firm is among scores of small to midsize architectural practices across the United States that are enjoying a startling boom in Chinese projects — whether in spec mansions for sudden multimillionaires or quarter-mile-high skyscrapers. Although a handful of big firms, like Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of Chicago and HOK of St. Louis, have extended global tentacles for generations, it has been only in the last half-dozen years that Chinese projects have gushed down to their smaller brethren.”²⁸

This trend has caught the Chinese media’s attention as well. The Chinese news has been reporting the phenomenon and interviewing Western practitioners in China. In the past decade, there were no standards to evaluate Western architects’ designs and all kinds of projects could be built up; but today, with increased access to technology and more lessons learned about foreign-designed projects on the part of local clients, the Chinese clients have higher expectations on design quality. Also, the increasing number of Western designers creates more competition among the designers to acquire Chinese clients. To succeed in the China market, it takes more effort now than before.²⁹

²⁷ Richburg, K.B. . Foreign architects put stamp on Chinese skyline. Washington Post. 2012-06-21.
URL:<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/13/AR2010121305792.html>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aFhhjh5>)

²⁸ Cheek, L.W. Architects Find Their Dream Client, in China. New York Time. 2012-06-21.
URL:http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/16/business/16build.html?_r=1&pagewanted=all. Accessed: 2012-06-21.
(Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aFpGe3j>)

²⁹ 中国周刊. 洋大师淘金背后: 中国建筑业畸形追捧. 新浪新闻中心. 2012-06-19.
URL:<http://news.sina.com.cn/c/sd/2012-05-23/172124465743.shtml>. Accessed: 2012-05-19. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68Xj9sDz2>)

Why is China so attractive to those international design firms? For one thing, the Chinese government has for a period of two decades succeeded in maintaining a more stable growth rate than has occurred elsewhere in the world.³⁰ It has been predicted by many that China will still have a large demand for further construction considering the population and the urbanization process in China.³¹

China does not have a long history of modern city development. Western countries have more advanced theories and practices in city and building design in creating modern cities. A reason that international design firms have an advantage over Chinese firms is that most Chinese firms are not specialty-based design firms, while many international firms are and are moving toward that direction. There is a large demand for specialty-based firms in China.³²

Lastly, the Chinese top-down planning approach ensures that big construction projects can be completed seemingly overnight. Rem Koolhaas simply put: “What attracts me about China is that there is still a state. There is something that can take the initiative of a scale and of a nature that almost no other body that we know of today could ever afford or even contemplate.”³³ Considering these benefits and temptations, design firms cannot ignore China in today’s highly competitive market.

Some excellent Chinese designers have stood out on the world stage and have established themselves as both Chinese and international designers such as Yung Ho Chang, who was Head of the Department of Architecture at MIT; Qingyun Ma, Dean of the USC School of Architecture; Li Xiaodong, Prof. at Tsinghua University School of Architecture and designer of projects both in China and the Netherlands; etc.. Two outstanding designers are particularly worth mentioning: the first one is landscape architect Kongjian Yu, and the second is architect Wangshu. Both of them make the world hear the voices of Chinese landscapes and buildings. Through their

³⁰ Naughton, B. The Policy Challenges of Post-Stimulus Growth. Global Asia. 2012-06-21. URL:http://www.globalasia.org/V5N2_Summer_2010/Barry_Naughton.html. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aFxmrlR>)

³¹ Page, J. & Davis, B. & Areddy, J.T. . China Turns Predominantly Urban. Wall Street Journal. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203735304577166652002366514.html> . Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aG9Vmaq>)

³² Real Estate Process course lecture given by guest speaker Scott Wyatt, from NBBJ, at the University of Washington, December 2011.

³³ Risen, C. . Conscience of a Constructor: Why it matters when good architects take on big projects for bad governments. Democracy Journal. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://www.democracyjournal.org/9/6627.php?page=all>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aGHnpSv>)

successful practices they are showing the world what a good relationship should be between people and the land and what a modern Chinese building is like.

Kongjian Yu, the founder of Turenscape, a well-known design firm with 600 staff in China, has been advocating a revolution in Chinese architecture, landscape architecture and urban design. His firm's philosophy is described in his own words: "Tu-ren is two characters in Chinese. Tu means dirt, earth, the land. Ren means people, the man, human being. Once these two characters come together, it actually means earth man, which also expresses my understanding about land and people."³⁴ His design approach is based on environmental ethics and the deep understanding of urban ecology rather than superficial makeup on urban spaces. Today, 2/3 of Chinese mayors have become his clients.³⁵ He has given numerous lectures to Chinese mayors suggesting the sustainable way to build a city.

Wangshu, a Chinese architect, won the 2012 Pritzker architecture prize. He is the very first Chinese architect to win the award which is seen as the Nobel Prize for architecture. Pritzker states: "The fact that an architect from China has been selected by the jury, represents a significant step in acknowledging the role that China will play in the development of architectural ideals. In addition, over the coming decades China's success at urbanization will be important to China and to the world. This urbanization, like urbanization around the world, needs to be in harmony with local needs and culture. China's unprecedented opportunities for urban planning and design will want to be in harmony with both its long and unique traditions of the past and with its future needs for sustainable development."³⁶ Perhaps this is a sign that Chinese domestic designers are catching up.

Currently, foreign architecture or planning firms are only allowed by law to provide conceptual design services in China. The work after the conceptual design stage is largely conducted by local design institutes (LDI). For master plan conceptual designs, the final products produced by

³⁴ Interview with Kongjian Yu, Designer of the Red Ribbon, Tang He River Park . American Society of Landscape Architects. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://www.asla.org/contentdetail.aspx?id=20124>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aGSup2Q>)

³⁵ Kongjian, Yu. 2012. Asian Cities' Future. Lecture delivered to the Seminar, UW College of Built Environment, Winter Quarter, 2012. Unpublished manuscript.

³⁶ Wang Shu of The People's Republic of China Is the 2012 Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate. Pritzker Architecture Prize . 2012-06-21. URL:<http://www.pritzkerprize.com/2012/announcement>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aGa1EGS>)

foreign firms usually include programming and projection, development objectives and goals, case studies, a site study, a site master plan layout, detailed street design, sustainable design features, etc.³⁷

There are many ways a firm can make overseas connections and thus start business there. Perkins provides a detailed summary of methods for making such connections.³⁸ In China, “guanxi” (relationship) plays a very important role in business.³⁹ A common way for a firm to secure a project in China is to use a staff member’s personal connection. Thus some firms would send one or two Chinese staff to make connections with Chinese clients and hunt for projects. Some firms get in touch with clients through media, international conferences/exhibitions, or showing a firms’ work somewhere potential clients might notice. After those very first projects, firms then start to strategically plan for their international business, and either designate offices to work remotely or set up branch offices.

It is known by international professionals who have worked on a Chinese project that all the projects have extremely tight schedules. Besides the stress of working in impossible schedule and the inevitable burnout of staff, there are many other risks and challenges⁴⁰ which I only chose a few to talk about:

- Weak control on design quality.

Because foreign firms are only allowed to do conceptual design then hand the project over to a local design institution to further develop the concept and complete construction drawings, the project can turn out to be nothing like what the design firms envisioned. Working with local design institutes requires sophisticated cross-cultural communication skills and experiences.

A widely heard story in this field is as follows: A developer has to complete a project in a certain time and has an obligation to government officials to use a foreign firm for the design. Due to the time restriction, the developer first hires a local firm to design the site because they are able

³⁷ International Design Project Collection. 优 80 设计空间. 2012-06-19. URL:<http://www.u80news.cn/index.asp>. Accessed: 2012-06-19. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68Xjk7oam>)

³⁸ Bradford Perkins. (2008). *International Practice for Architects*. Canada: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., Hoboken, New Jersey.

³⁹ Bielefeld, B., & Rusch, L.-P. (2006). *Building projects in China: A manual for architects and engineers*. Basel: Birkhäuser.

⁴⁰ Perser, Jana. "Local Architects Global Practices: Interviews with Seattle-based Designers on their Projects in Asia," unpublished report for the course *Designing Asian Cities*, edited by Prof. Daniel B. Abramson, University of Washington, Seattle, June 11, 2008.

to work day and night to get the job done in an almost impossible schedule. Then, the developer hires a foreign design firm to create a design for the site, which is a much longer process. Before the foreign firm has finished creating the conceptual design, construction has already started on the site!

- Lack of transparency in design competitions.

Even though there are laws which regulate how projects are awarded, requiring a formal business process, the transparency and fair evaluation in this bidding is problematic. There is always “guanxi” (relationship) beyond what the general public can see. Design competitions in China have a notorious reputation because of this lack of transparency and disregard for the formal process. Despite the regulations, the reality is that Chinese clients usually have determined which design firm they will hire before they set up the bidding process. This requires firms to have a deep and comprehensive understanding of the context.

- Inexperienced clients.

It is important to know the client’s expectation with the foreign firm. Generally, how much work the foreign design firm is responsible for when creating the conceptual design depends on the contract.⁴¹ However, in China, people do not see the concept of contract the same way as in Western culture. Contracts are seen as the beginning of a relationship, and it is common for clients to ask for more work beyond what is included in the contract.

In addition, with inexperienced clients, firms constantly worry about whether they will get paid or not. These and other potential legal issues such as liability add tremendous stress on designers. For all the above reasons, doing international work is not as exciting as it sounds. The design fee which Chinese clients are willing to pay is decreasing. A friend of mine who is responsible for hunting for projects in China for an international firm said she had no hope for the future for this business: some experienced Chinese know what poor quality work some foreign firms do, and therefore they are unwilling to pay very much. Even if they agree to sign a contract with a foreign firm, often it is only for show or to obtain approvals; the Chinese clients have already decided not to use the foreign firm’s proposals.

⁴¹ Lu, X., Gardiner, L., & Robinson, H. (2008). *China, China--: Western architects and city planners in China*. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz.

2.3. Education Implementation for International Design Professionals

As I have discussed previously, the reality is that Chinese domestic designers are becoming more competitive with international designers; more and more firms from all over the world are competing for a certain amount of work; and there is a considerable amount of uncertainty in the future for continued rapid growth in the country. To sustain themselves, international design firms need to complete more competitive international projects, reduce operation cost, and enlarge and diversify their markets.

In my view, a strong international team needs team members who can understand the context of a site, no matter where it is located in the world, to create design proposals that are responsive to the ecology, economy, and the local culture and history; it needs members who are able to work effectively in a complicated multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary team; and it needs members who are equipped with skills and knowledge to understand the globalization process and analyze the potential markets. International design firms need capable professionals to conduct competitive and meaningful international projects.

These requirements for competitive international team members leads to an essential question: what kind of professional design/planning education would best prepare professional designers for international practice? A comprehensive answer to this question will take several books to address. But some basic considerations for the design of such an education can be proposed here.

First, who are the major participants involved in an international practice? Professor Tridib Banerjee wrote: “The community of academics and professionals interested in the Third World development and planning consists of three types of people: those who are “Westerners” by birth and training, who, while based in the West, are interested in the problems of developing countries; those who are “Third Worlders” by birth (with training from home countries or abroad) and have remained in their native settings to pursue a career in planning and development; and the Third World expatriates with advanced training in the West who have chosen a Western “base” for career development, but who remain vitally interested in the problems of the developing countries.”⁴²

⁴² Banerjee, Tridib. (1990). Third World City Design: Values, Models and Education. In *Breaking the boundaries: A one-world approach to planning education*, edited by B. Sanyal, 173-189. New York: Plenum Press.

Much literature has talked about globalization and internationalization in higher education.⁴³ In Zha Qiang's article *Internationalization of Higher Education: towards a conceptual framework*, he introduced a comprehensive definition of internationalization, reviewed the approaches toward internationalization, and pointed out various motivations/rationales to integrate an international dimension in to higher education.⁴⁴

In the book *Strategy for a Global University: Model International Department Experiment*, the authors addressed how U.S. educational institutions internationalize, with detailed guidelines for curriculum development, training qualified faculty, implementing various internationalization teaching models, etc. The lesson from the Urban and Regional Planning Program at Michigan State University is that Planning schools should strive to educate the “barefoot” professional who

- “Has a firm grounding in the basic skills of the profession;
- Has the communication skills to assist local residents in utilizing basic professional tools to solve local problems;
- Has the ability to learn and adapt to new situations and continues to learn throughout his or her professional career.”⁴⁵

However, the question Gill-Chin Lim raised in the book is whether American design and planning students are adequately prepared to work on projects in less developed countries; therefore the focus was on how to train American professionals to be international. In international practice, students from other countries, those “Third Worlders” mentioned above, who come to the U.S. for education also play an important role. International student enrollment in the U.S's higher education system has been increasing: from less than 50,000 students in 1954/55 to 723,277 in 2010. The growth was heavily reliant on two countries: China and Saudi Arabia.⁴⁶

⁴³ Foskett, N., & Maringe, F. (2010). *Globalization and internationalization in higher education: Theoretical, strategic and management perspectives*. London: Continuum.

⁴⁴ Zha Qiang (2003) Internationalization of Higher Education: towards a conceptual framework, *Policy Futures in Education*, 1(2), 248-270. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2304/pfie.2003.1.2.5>

⁴⁵ Gill-Chin, et al. (1995). *Strategy for a Global University: Model International Department Experiment*. U.S: Michigan State University.

⁴⁶ McMurtrie, Beth. International Enrollments at U.S. Colleges Grow but Still Rely on China. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 2012-06-19. URL:<http://chronicle.com/article/International-Enrollments/129747/>. Accessed: 2012-06-19. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68XIZmds5>)

Whether the international students are adequately taught with knowledge that they can apply to their home countries is another serious question worthy of educators' attention. Some courses U.S. universities offered may not be relevant or sufficient for international students from developing countries. Hooshang Amirahmadi, a professor of the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, pointed out that "the flight of a significant portion of their (less developed countries') skilled manpower, including planners, to developed countries of the West drains less developed countries of their most talented people," and "the education that students receive in planning programs of universities in developed countries only partially meets the challenge of the reality back home."⁴⁷

Many scholars have advocated an approach that would benefit both American and international students called "comparative education." Instead of teaching methods and knowledge which is only relevant in an American context, in a comparative education approach educators teach methods and knowledge aware of multiple contexts and which is transferable. International students benefit by learning skills that can be more easily applied in their home country, and American students gain greater knowledge of the world at large. This encourages cross-cultural communication by giving both groups of students background information and an understanding of other cultures.⁴⁸

In the article *Why New Perspectives are Needed*, the author commented: "In an increasingly interdependent world, planning programs need to focus on theories and techniques related to comparative approaches to planning rather than separate contextual approaches. In fact, it is an opportunity for making planning education relevant for all planning students, both international and American. It is a "one-world" approach, where a "knowledge network" prevails over a "world divided between knowledge producers and knowledge consumers."⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Amirahmadi, H. (1990). Incongruities between the theory and perception of regional development in less developed countries: Toward bridging the gap. In *Breaking the boundaries: A one-world approach to planning education*, edited by B. Sanyal, 211-230. New York: Plenum Press.

⁴⁸ Sanyal, B. (1990). *Breaking the boundaries: A one-world approach to planning education*. New York: Plenum Press.

⁴⁹ Chatterjee, Jayanta. (1990). Why New Perspectives are Needed. In *Breaking the boundaries: A one-world approach to planning education*, edited by B. Sanyal, 251- 256. New York: Plenum Press.

To make the benefits of comparative education more specific, Professor Amirahmadi wrote: “Students from less developed countries should become able to see the superficial/ideological nature of some of the notions they hold as well as their rejectionist attitude toward unfamiliar conceptions. This will help them become pragmatic and screen their experiential knowledge; abandon some notions, preserve some, and elevate others to a higher level of sophistication. Views of students, as well as teachers, from developed countries should be affected in a similar way. They should also become aware of flaws in the uncritical applications of their largely abstract perceptions of less developed countries and modify them accordingly.”⁵⁰

A similar approach is called reciprocal learning. Professor Qadeer, listed five guide points to intentionally conduct the reciprocal learning process:

- “Start with Western theories/concepts and examine their applicability in a Third World situation.
- Explore the scope and limitations of the external views by counterposing them with internal views and empirical evidence. This step can also be described as particularizing the universals.
- Lay bare functional imperatives and cultural meaning of similar structures and practices.
- Reflect back on the external views and their social context.
- Compare the two situations functionally and contextually.”⁵¹

Taking a further step, Professor T. Banerjee discussed what type of previous academic or professional background should be required: “Two general requirements: first, the program should involve at least two years of graduate professional studies; second, the students must have an undergraduate degree in a field of design arts, preferably in architecture or landscape architecture. This latter requirement is to ensure that students are adequately skilled in graphic communication and are competent to describe and understand space and place qualities.”⁵²

⁵⁰ Amirahmadi, H. (1990). Incongruities between the theory and perception of regional development in less developed countries: Toward bridging the gap. In *Breaking the boundaries: A one-world approach to planning education*, edited by B. Sanyal, 223. New York: Plenum Press.

⁵¹ Qadeer, M. (1990). External Precepts and Internal Views: The Dialectic of Reciprocal Learning in Third World Urban Planning. In *Breaking the boundaries: A one-world approach to planning education*, edited by B. Sanyal, 193-210. New York: Plenum Press.

⁵² Banerjee, Tridib. (1990). Third World City Design: Values, Models and Education. In *Breaking the boundaries: A one-world approach to planning education*, edited by B. Sanyal, 173-189. New York: Plenum Press.

I feel that the second requirement might exclude some talented designers who do not have the *right* undergraduate degree. I agree that it is important to have visualization skills; however the design profession is also an inter-disciplinary field which needs input from people with diverse backgrounds.

Banerjee also suggested what content should be included in urban design curricula.⁵³ He strongly suggested Kevin Lynch's work. In his view, a competent international designer should have substantial knowledge that focuses on a place's politics and social and economic development aspects; should have a "facility with design as a way of thinking and have an understanding of the theories, techniques, values and models of design"; and should be a good observer and be able to interpret and understand what he or she sees. As Lynch said, a competent international designer needs a "sharp and sympathetic eye for the interaction between people, places, place events, and the institutions that manage it."⁵⁴

I agree with Banerjee that "Lynch's works, although generally written against the backdrop of Western cities, are basically universalistic in nature and, in an ideal sense, culture-independent. Furthermore, they are not necessarily rooted in the Western cultures. Indeed his latest notes on the values of good city form draw heavily from comparative cultural norms of good environments."⁵⁵

Based on the above messages, international design studio courses offered by many American universities seem to be a good vessel to implement comparative education across countries. Two of the international studios in which I participated were conducted overseas. The participants included faculty and students from the University of Washington and host country institutions. The working environments were highly diverse. The major activities included project site and surrounding place visits, community engagement events, cooperating with local students/professionals, and final product presentation to the host country officials.

⁵³ Ibid. "Three major types of knowledge and skills: substantive, reflective, and instrumental." Page 183

⁵⁴ Ibid. Page 184

⁵⁵ Ibid. Page 185

“Compared to most other academic courses, these opportunities (design studios) offer an education that extends beyond the classroom, and is far likely to be remembered above all others. Because they offer a myriad of pedagogical benefits, such courses should be mandatory in the education of urban designers.”⁵⁶

Daniel B. Abramson,⁵⁷ my thesis advisor also commented:

“It (the studio abroad) is therefore one of the most effective modes in which students can engage an unfamiliar environment and society, especially when the studio involves collaboration with students and teachers from the host country.”⁵⁸

Having participated in three urban design studios, I agree that the design studios were the most useful and memorable courses among the academic courses I took and I was able to gain enormous knowledge despite the short course length; but they were also the most challenging courses for faculty and students due to their complexity.

In my view, an international design studio is a comparative education approach which encourages cross-cultural communication between students from different countries; it is a practical education course for training future competitive international design professionals. However, to successfully handle a design studio in an unfamiliar context takes sophisticated leadership and team management skills. To a large extent, how effective the studio could be depends on preparation. This preparation includes a thorough understanding of the purpose of the kind of practice; the understanding that there are tremendous differences between different cultures; and the understanding that there are differences between a local project and a foreign project.

⁵⁶Anthony, Kathryn. Design Studios. (2011). In *Companion to urban design*, edited by Banerjee, T., & Loukaitou-Sideris. 223-237. Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge

⁵⁷ Daniel Benjamin Abramson is Associate Professor of Urban Design and Planning, and a member of the China Studies faculty at the University of Washington, Seattle. He received his doctorate in urban planning from Tsinghua University in Beijing, and Masters in Architecture and City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He organizes demonstrations of participatory planning and design work in urban, peri-urban and rural communities in China and in immigrant neighborhoods in the United States and Canada, and is currently researching informal Chinese urban development and property rights.

⁵⁸ Abramson, D. (January 01, 2005). The “Studio Abroad” as a Mode of Transcultural Engagement in Urban Planning Education: A Reflection on Ten Years of Sino-Canadian Collaboration. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 25, 1, 89-102.

There is great potential for such studios to better serve the purpose of international planning education in American universities and colleges, and to better prepare competitive international professionals. Unfortunately, there is not much literature addressing issues encountered by international design studio teams in their practice or addressing the interaction among design professionals with different cultural backgrounds.

In the following chapters, I will introduce an international design studio in which I fully participated during the summer of 2011 in China. Through this case study, I intend to show the complexity and difficulties of engaging a highly diverse team with members from different cultural backgrounds and summarize the insights on cross-culture communication issues between American and Chinese students which might inspire more people to explore a better approach of managing an international professional team and working on projects in a foreign land.

Chapter 3: Summer 2011 Field Studio in China

3.1. Field Studio Mission

3.2. Project Background

3.3. Working Process & Products

3.1. Field Studio Mission

There have been many new planning-related interactions between Chinese and non-Chinese institutions over the past decade and many faculties from different North American universities have been conducting urban design-related studios addressing issues in China's urban and rural development.⁵⁹ The University of Washington's summer 2011 China Village Studio⁶⁰ was one of many studios in China that UW faculty in urban design and planning have conducted over the years.

The mission of the 2011 summer China studio was to develop options for sustaining traditional village in China, especially focusing on strategies to preserve vernacular structures and encourage community involvement, in light of current urbanization trends. Students were required to localize their design ideas for rural communities by communicating directly with villagers and learning what issues the communities faced.

A secondary goal of the studio was to train design students to work cross-culturally. Because the team was composed of students from both American and Chinese universities, the studio provided an opportunity for design students to work on an international team. Students were to be equally responsible for dividing tasks according to ability and for completion of the overall project, which required communication and cross-cultural understanding.

The studio actually took students to multiple villages in two provinces, Fujian and Sichuan. By working in and with more than one community and environment, students would also gain skills and understanding from a comparative experience. The common theme that connected the different villages was their mountainous environments; their disengagement from subsistence

⁵⁹ Abramson, B. A Trans-Pacific Planning Education in Reverse: Reflections of an American with a Chinese Doctorate in Urban Planning and Design. In *Crossing Borders: International Exchange and Planning Practices*, edited by Patsy Healey & Robert Upton. (2010). USA and Canada: Routledge.

⁶⁰ Abramson, D. China Village Studio. University of Washington. 2012-06-21. URL:<https://catalyst.uw.edu/workspace/abramson/20566/123865>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aH2GTRX>)

agriculture and subsequent ecological imbalances and degradation; and their increasing reliance on tourist income and wages from jobs their young adults held as migrants in distant cities. Originally the intent was to spend nearly a month each in Tianzhong (Middle-of-the-Field), a village in Fujian, and in Niuwei (Oxtail), a village in Sichuan. However, landslides and road blockages prevented access to Niuwei, and instead the studio group divided its time in Sichuan between two different mountain villages. As a result, the nature of the work was significantly different in Fujian from what it turned out to be in Sichuan. The Fujian portion of the studio maintained its original client-oriented, professional planning intent, but the Sichuan portion became instead an exercise mainly in surveying and documenting rural communities and cultural landscapes, and had to truncate the aspect involving developmental and design proposals.

The remaining chapters therefore focus only on the Fujian portion of the studio, in order to describe and reflect on lessons from that more complete experience in preparation, surveying and analyzing local conditions, and proposing strategies for development and design.

3.2. Project Background

The “clients” for the Fujian portion of the studio were Ms. Ruoxi Zhang and Mr. Victor Wu, a Chinese-American couple, who originally came from the prefecture of Zhangzhou in Fujian that included the village of Tianzhong. In the 1980s, they immigrated to the United States and currently live in Seattle. For many years, they have been working on improving the living conditions in their home village through donations, building basic infrastructure, making connections with the local and city government officials, and looking for overseas experts to help develop the village. Herself a technical expert in natural resources information management and sustainable development with King County, WA, Ms. Zhang had collaborated with the University of Washington’s Department of Urban Design and Planning in previous years on China-US exchanges in sustainable development.⁶¹ On this basis, she and Professor Abramson of the UW faculty decided to lead an urban design studio to help develop Tianzhong.



Figure 1 Summer 2011 China Studio Participants
Source: Daniel B. Abramson, July 2011

⁶¹ China-US Professional Workshop on Regional Sustainable Development. University of Washington. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://courses.washington.edu/uschina/2009/>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aHHpPFz>)

The studio course was organized as a service-learning studio, in coordination with other faculty and students in China. Twenty-two students from UW and three other US universities were enrolled for credit in the studio (see Figure 1). They ranged from sophomores to doctoral students, and included architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design and planning majors, as well as urban studies, China studies, and materials engineering majors and professional degree candidates. One student was a professional contractor. Two U.S. design firms, CollinsWoerman and Paramatrix, each sent a planning principal to join the design studio, and CollinsWoerman also sponsored scholarships and a portion of studio expenses. The group was also assisted by two graduate student teaching assistants; by a doctoral student in planning from IUAV Venice, Italy, with expertise in historic architectural restoration and rehabilitation; and by two undergraduate exchange students from Sichuan University who had spent a year at UW through a long-standing program between those institutions. The most engaged Chinese institutional partner was Sichuan University, based on a collaboration that began in 2008 and included a joint field studio in 2009⁶² to assist with earthquake recovery in Sichuan. Professor Li Wei, a traditional Chinese architecture expert from Sichuan University, brought five Chinese students to work with the studio. Architecture faculty and students from Xiamen University and Wuyi University (in Jiangmen, Guangdong) also participated for brief periods during the studio.

⁶² 2009 Taoping Studio. University of Washington. 2012-06-21.
URL:http://courses.washington.edu/belab09/page_homepage.html. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aHQ7K4a>)



Figure 2 Qingxing Tulou

Source: June 22, 2011, Ting Chen

Ms. Zhang and Mr. Wu accommodated the team in the Qingxinglou, a traditional dwelling in the village which they leased from the villagers for 30 years to preserve and use as a base for education in sustainable development and eco-tourism. Qingxinglou (see Figure 2) is a four-story rammed earth building called a Tulou, one of the most impressive vernacular architecture styles in China.

Tulou are mainly distributed across the southeastern part of China. Fujian Tulou are the most well-known Tulou in China due to their size, distinctive shape, large quantity, high quality, and numerous types. The history of this Tulou dwelling type dates back to the 11th century. It was originally built for defensive purposes and each structure can house between 400-800 residents. Throughout the years, numerous interesting stories accumulated to enrich Tulou's history and Tulou have become one of China's most popular tourist attractions.

There are many types of Tulou. Most Tulou we saw were either in a circular or square shape. Their locations were carefully chosen with Fengshui principals to achieve harmonious relationships with their surrounding environment such as mountains and rivers.

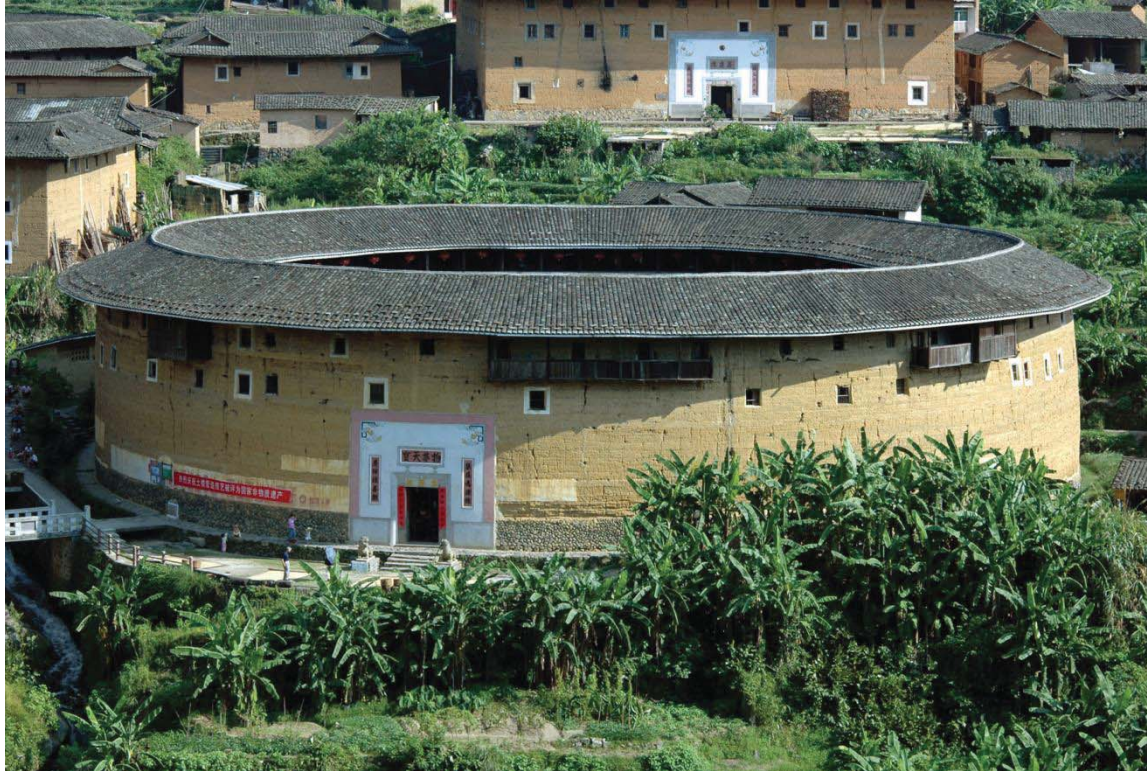


Figure 3 A Typical Round Tulou in Southern Fujian

Source: June 22, 2011, Ting Chen

A typical round Tulou building (see Figure 3) is 3-5 stories, with a two-side sloping roof of tiles and a central court yard. In a more traditional Tulou, there are smaller ring walls occupying the inner court and in the center is the Hakka people's ancestral hall. Tulou almost always have a clear central axis which runs through the main gate and the ancestral hall. Each level of Tulou has a defined use. The first storey is mainly used for kitchens; the second storey for bedrooms, and the third storey for storage. The construction method to build a Tulou is interesting and unique. It takes a whole year to build one storey.

46 Fujian Tulou were registered as World Heritage Sites by UNESCO.⁶³ The structure consists of rammed earth walls as the outer ring and wooden frames supporting internal space. The

⁶³ Fujian Tulou. UNESCO. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1113>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aHaHyQx>)

structural stability, defensive functions and the drainage system meet the needs to have the whole clan live together, fend off enemies and educate the youngsters. In addition, it is warm in winter, cool in summer, and can protect the residents from strong winds and earthquakes.⁶⁴

Tianzhong is in Nanjing county, Zhangzhou city (a prefectural level city in Fujian province). There are 11 towns and 183 official villages in Nanjing, with a population of 360,000. Like many other surrounding villages, Tianzhong is one of the villages that the local government desires to develop into a tourism attraction.

When we were there a lot of construction work was going on, building modern Tulou buildings, new hotels, tourist centers, new government buildings, etc. The local government had been pushing new development forward at a typically rapid pace.

Under the influence of the Chinese New Village Construction Movement,⁶⁵ Tianzhong identified a nearby tea field as the new village construction site. The proposal intended to accommodate 150 housing units. However, the previous tea field plan was not carried forward.

⁶⁴ Fujian Tulou UNESCO Nomination Application Document: Nomination of Fujian Tulou for Inscription on the World Heritage List - The State Administration of Cultural Heritage of the People's Republic of China.

⁶⁵ The New Socialist Countryside. China Daily. 2012-06-21. URL:http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-10/20/content_11436582.htm. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aHjlO4V>)

“In the 11th Five-Year Plan, China proposed to build a new socialist countryside according to the requirement of advanced production, improved livelihood, a civilized social atmosphere, clean and tidy villages and democratic administration.”



Figure 4 Tianzhong Village Tea-Field

Source: Daniel B. Abramson, July 2011

According to conversations with Ruoxi, she envisioned the future use of the Tulou to be an education/research/conference center. She was not sure how the structure of the Tulou could be enhanced to accommodate necessary spaces and she was expecting the studio team to explore as many potential alternatives as possible, with the bottom line that the new Tulou had to be sustainable. One of her biggest concerns was the redevelopment of the tea-field (see Figure 4) adjacent to the major road. The proposed plan completely blocked the view of her Tulou building from the road. Therefore, our working scope included a new site plan for the tea-field, and creating adaptive reuse plans for the vernacular Tulou buildings.

3.3. Working Process & Products

In the 2011 spring quarter, all UW participants were required to take a 2-credit preparation course taught by UW faculty prior to the summer field trip.

The course was held once a week for the students to discuss logistical preparations, project site information requests, ethics, goals, and methods/tools for use in the field. Course lectures given by guest speakers and extensive literature research provided comprehensive knowledge to understand the Chinese context including the general background of China's development and urbanization, the relationship between urban and rural, the issues faced by both urban and rural areas, the political, social, and environmental influences on rural developments, and the planning system in China. We also explored cutting-edge design theories and practices that might apply to our project site in China. Our study focused on seven topics: vernacular dwelling culture and construction, green infrastructure, village tourism development in regional context/urban-rural relations, agriculture and agri-tourism, traditional ecological knowledge, resilience and social-ecological systems, and livelihood and community development.

After the initial preparation we decided to break into three subgroups dealing with building, village and regional issues respectively. The region team was expected to produce a series of development strategies for the village, with a regional Strength/Weakness/Opportunity/Threat analysis, feasibility studies, and action plans. The village team was responsible for village and the tea-field redevelopment design. The building team was responsible for the preservation and adaptive reuse plans of Ruoxi's Tulou building. One of the professional planners was assigned to instruct the building team; the other was to instruct the regional team; and Prof. Abramson was to instruct the village team.



Figure 5 Tian Luo Keng Tulou Cluster
Source: June 25, 2011, Ting Chen

We arrived at Tianzhong village on June 22nd. In order to better understand the context, the villages, and rammed earth buildings, we traveled to adjacent villages.

The sites we visited including Yunshuiyao, Hongkeng, Taxia, and Tian Luo Keng (see Figure 5), which are all popular tourist attractions. Each of these places include UNESCO-registered World Heritage sites. We intended to:

- 1) Understand the principles, protocols, policies and plans underlying the UNESCO World Heritage nomination and listing of the Fujian Tulou “properties”;
- 2) Observe differences in developmental possibilities between the protected areas and Tianzhong, which is outside the protected areas;
- 3) Explore possibilities for the future of Tianzhong and its Tulou.

When travelling to each of the sites, we were required to take field notes to record what we saw and write down our thoughts. Notebooks of observations were submitted to the faculty for evaluation as part of the grading process.

After the team gained an understanding of the context and had a comparison of our project site with other villages, the group returned to Tianzhong on the 26th and started preliminary survey work. Five Chinese students from Sichuan University joined us and were quickly divided among

the three teams. Each team sent out people to interview the villagers, gather site specific information, and collect online data. On June 30th, three teams reported their preliminary inventory work.

The region team's initial data collection intended to address the question: What is Tianzhong village's position in the region? Based on their collected information, the team conducted a Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats analysis.

Potential development strategies proposed by the team included: agri-tourism to encourage longer tourism visits; eco-tourism focusing on sustainability; strategic linkage through trails and public transit systems; programs to promote art in the area allowing culture to grow; programs for tea production cooperation; education programs for organic farming; and other business incubator programs.

The village team conducted a thorough inventory of the village to show what assets the village had and what the villagers' needs were. Based on those, the team drafted a village development mission statement:

“As a multinational and interdisciplinary group of students and advisors we will work toward collection of development alternatives. Our vision will be influenced by the residents of Tianzhong Village and aim at improving the quality of life in the face of future cultural, economic, and environmental pressures.”

The building team measured and created an existing building floor plan for each level of Qingxing Tulou. In addition, they conducted a 24 hour observation of Tulou recording when and how the space was being used by the residents.

After the initial survey study, the next step was to brainstorm creative design ideas for Tianzhong village and Qingxing Tulou. Each team provided a series of concepts and among which a few development schemes were chosen. The studio working schedule of the village group that I was in is attached in Appendix A.

Together the studio team created a Facebook website for Qingxing Tulou and presented the work to the Zhangzhou municipal government (the presentation is attached in Appendix B).

Chapter 4: Cross-Cultural Communication in the Field Studio

- 4.1. Clarification
- 4.2. Differences in Language & Customs
- 4.3. Differences in Disciplinary Training
- 4.4. Differential Familiarity with Locality
- 4.5. Reflections on the Studio's Implications for Practice

4.1. Clarification

The studio team spent 21 days in Tianzhong village. All participants (mostly American, some Chinese, and a few students from other countries) lived in one Tulou building and worked closely with each other on a daily basis, which provided a great opportunity for various active interactions.

In writing this chapter, I contacted some studio participants through email for their reflections on cross-cultural communication. Below is the question I emailed to them:

Can you think of a few cross-culture communication issues you observed or experienced?

Anything you think that could have been improved to allow better communication between us?

It had been almost a year after the end of the studio when I sent the question. The reason for the phrasing was that participants would only point out the most memorable issues in their reply – something they felt deeply and remembered.

The statements in quotation marks are reflections expressed by studio participants in their reply to my question. I used their words carefully, including those which addressed the issues relevant to my topic. My focus is more on issues affecting our professional work. For the sake of writing structure, I organize the most obvious and crucial issues in three categories: communication issues caused by language and custom, caused by different education and professional training; and caused by different familiarity with local knowledge.

My words sound as if I am stereotyping both the students from America and students from China. However, this is only partially true. I may not be representative of students from China, but I am not an exceptional case. There are common characteristics which exist in people from the same country.

4.2. Differences in Language & Customs

Even though it seems like an obvious issue, language barriers are easy to ignore because they are hard to overcome. But if both sides do not address language barriers early, they can create severe problems. In the studio, most of the Chinese students knew English to a certain extent and were able to speak clearly. However, each individual student's ability varied greatly. Furthermore, the English ability of the Chinese students was much different from what Americans are used to.⁶⁶ The non-Chinese students need to be aware that Chinese students' language skills vary and it is not easy to tell how much they can actually understand of a conversation. Just because one can speak an unaccented English sentence does not mean the person could understand that same sentence if it had been spoken to him or her – much less a more complex sentence. It is easy to overestimate a person's language skill if the main basis for evaluation is pronunciation and accent.

One American student in our group commented that one Chinese student's English was good enough to communicate without any barriers. However, the same Chinese student wrote: "In those brainstorming/discussion meetings, I would actually think about what I want to say in Chinese first then translate the Chinese into English. This translation process delays my response. Not responding in time made the American students think I was stupid and sometimes they would lose patience."⁶⁷

Another Chinese student wrote: "I knew there would be a language barrier. But I didn't realize how hard it would be until I participated in group discussions. Not being able to fully understand what the others said and not being able to actually participate in the discussion was painful."⁶⁸

⁶⁶ While it is common for Americans to interact with people for whom English is not their first language in the United States, those people are surrounded by English speakers and must speak English – however heavily accented – to get by. As a result, comprehension is often higher than pronunciation. However, the Chinese students learned English in a purely academic setting, with pronunciation and vocabulary drills but with little focus on practical comprehension. As a result, pronunciation is often far higher than comprehension.

⁶⁷ The original Chinese texts: "就是比如我在小组讨论的时候, 思考讨论的主题, 其实还是用的母语的思维, 然后要经过转换成英文才能交流, 然后我觉得中国人的思维很多就是要想的比较完善了才会说出自己的观点, 这样一来这个过程就有些滞后, 然后就会显得迟钝。然后长此以往, 有些外国人就会觉得你是 stupid, 然后有时会失去耐心。"

⁶⁸ The original Chinese texts:

去年暑假, 很偶然的答应李老去福建参与于美国华盛顿大学合作的福建土楼项目。因为之前得知要与外国师生合作, 心里做好沟通不畅的准备。然而, 当真正到了分组调研时出现了比想象中大的问题。首先是语言问题。相互之间只能进行极其简单的日常交流, 涉及到学术、专业知识方面的, 要通过很长的描述才能

On the other hand, the Chinese students need to know that if they do not speak up when they do not understand something, no one would know they do not understand, as one American student put, “it is difficult to know when someone does not understand if they don't speak up.”

However, some Non-Chinese students were aware of Chinese students’ struggle with language, one wrote: “I think the language barrier was also an issue to some degree, especially in those larger group discussions. Chinese students, who were already uncomfortable to the style of discussions, were at another disadvantage because most discussions (within the school group) were in English, making it harder for them to contribute. There was also the expectation that they would be able to follow along with the discussion, which was conducted in English.”

Some American students who had more cross-cultural communication experience mitigated the conflicts. As one American student said: “when I lead our group I tried to do my best to ensure that the Chinese students also understood the goals of the group and made a special effort to include the Chinese students in the group discussion, but I am sure there were times I made mistakes and people left a group setting not understanding the tasks asked of them.”

I also felt it was hard to keep up with the pace of group discussions and we tended to move fast. One non-Chinese student even mentioned, “It does seem like American students are more accustomed to leading discussions, but that sometimes there progressed through topics too fast for all participants to get a chance to express their opinion.”

My observation is that as long as students realized the barrier existed, they took great initiative to slow down conversations. I remember in village group’s discussion, a few American students consciously turned to the Chinese students and asked questions such as “Do you understand what we just said?” “Are you still with us?” “What do you think?” I know these questions could sound offensive between two Americans and normally those American students would not ask such questions. However, the Chinese students in the group would more likely feel that they were respected upon hearing such a question. Overall, this slowdown helped the whole group to progress together.

让对方了解，甚至无法理解。尤其是在小组讨论时，无法迅速的去理解发言人所说的，以致无法跟上会议的节奏，自己也无法参与到讨论中，这个过程及其痛苦。

Another difference is that the Chinese students tended to think through an idea before they spoke up while the Americans seemed to throw out an idea before it is fully supported in order to learn from the reaction it generates. Both of these two attitudes have pros and cons. In the former one, it has an advantage of being efficient; however it can result in an elite team making decisions.. The latter one encourages as many alternatives as possible; however it can be difficult to form leadership and the meeting can take more time to be productive. Being aware of this difference can help avoid negative results as one non-Chinese student pointed out,

“I feel like generally, American students were more willing to be more vocal about issues, and are more ok with large group discussions in making decisions, whereas it seemed like Chinese students preferred to make decisions in small groups. And sometimes what I feel like what ended up happening was that because of the differences in decision making process, sometimes the end product from the Chinese students ended up changing more from what had been originally agreed upon.”

Several non-Chinese students mentioned in their reflections that Chinese students were uncomfortable with voicing their concerns in a group setting. My school and family education in China did teach me that if I talk, I should better know what I am talking about. One Chinese student said, “We speak only when we have formed a sound and logical idea. I realized that the American students would throw out all kinds of things no matter how mature the idea; then others would help to build the idea up. I think that’s the point of having that kind of discussion and it shows the advantages of team work.”⁶⁹

Because of the different ways to discuss issues and to make decisions, some members in the group actually kept their opinions to themselves. It is risky to assume that everyone in the group would follow the *agreement*, even if no one expresses disagreement. In my previous Taiwan studio, an American classmate and I worked with ten Taiwanese students; those ten students ended up changing our plans several times in their separate group meetings.

⁶⁹ The original Chinese texts: “然后在交流的过程中，我发现其实很多美国人都是想到什么想法就蹦出来，也没有形成很缜密的逻辑后再说，但是大家在讨论的过程中，可以完善或者驳斥某个人的观点。然后我经过这些以后觉得，讨论的意义可能就在于此，大家都将不完善的点状想法抛出来，有些灵光一现的点子在大家的讨论中就逐渐被润色，形成非常好的 idea。这也就是团体胜于个人的地方。”

The lesson from this is that someone in the group needs to frequently check with individuals or sub-groups to make sure the instructions made for the whole group are consistently carried forward.

A vivid case in our studio can serve as a good example of the cultural differences I am writing about. Two Chinese students formed as a subgroup of the building team (Student A and Student B). Student A had an architecture background; however she was not fluent in English. She replied to my email question saying she could not provide any reflection on the communication in the studio because her English was not enough for her to actually communicate with the English speakers. Student B was capable with English but did not major in a design-related field. Student B wrote in his reflection, “Sometimes, the culture difference challenges us. Examples in our projects were; why to put so much efforts in preserving the old buildings while some of which have been functionless for quite a long time; why not install very-modern structure in building-renew process; ... and etc.”

Both of these students were left out in group discussions. Student A did not make the group aware of her struggle with language and Student B did not raise his voice when he did not understand group’s reasons for trying to preserve the vernacular Tulou building. Due to those difficulties, the two Chinese students did not attend any meetings with the other students. No suggestions were given to them about their work from the other students.

In the final presentation, the two Chinese students presented their theme with a walkthrough video showing the reuse of the Tulou and the surrounding landscape. The residential houses surrounding the Tulou were American single family houses, see Figure 6. The other students were shocked at their ability to create such a walkthrough, and it was a surprise for even those students' subgroup.



Figure 6 A Snap Shot of the Walkthrough Video Illustrating the Adaptive Reuse of Tulou
Source: Weizheng & Xiaofu, July 2011

There was miscommunication in the use of technology to represent a vision convincingly. Although expertise in a technology like Sketchup can be fairly universal, its power to convince is culturally embedded. Thus the students who produced the animation felt that placing American suburban houses in the landscape of the Chinese Tulou village made their vision of modernization for the village more vivid, while the Americans saw those same houses as terribly mundane, and an insult to a village landscape that was rich in character.

From what I observed, the best way to deal with language and cultural barriers is to reject all assumptions (such as that someone from another culture would express comprehension in a certain way, or that silence means the same thing in every culture). A culturally savvy designer does not need to know how to communicate effectively in every culture; instead, they only need to know that they *don't know* how to communicate effectively. They must constantly ask themselves, “Did I really understand? Did this person really understand me? Did my message come across as I thought it did?”

Similarly, I think it is important to avoid looking at interactions on a superficial level. Instead of listening only to the words, participants should seek the actual meaning in the whole context of any cross-cultural conversation.

There are many solutions to address these issues but only if we are aware of them. For instance, written messages are easier to be understood than fast verbal messages (especially for Chinese, who spend years reading written English in school but rarely hear live spoken English). Besides, as design professionals, using drawing to communicate ideas is a fundamental skill. Ultimately, these barriers will only be overcome through intentional, considerate effort on everyone's part.

4.3. Differences in Disciplinary Training

The Chinese students and non-Chinese students had different perceptions of design work. My observation was that the non-Chinese students in the studio invested more time in their preliminary survey work and focused more on the process of forming design concepts while the Chinese students focused more on the graphic production of the design. The Chinese students were trained to see design as something which created design products while the non-Chinese students in our team emphasized the overall programming *and* design process.

Professor Abramson explained: “The dominance of design in their (Chinese students’) education is driven by the simple fact of how much there is to build and how few people can be trained to build it. Urban planners are among the most highly paid professionals in China—often due only to their design skills. The types of planning problems to which design skills can be applied are of course quite diverse, from housing to historic preservation, open space design, infrastructure improvement, and so on, but in China all these tasks are almost entirely carried out in the context of a relatively simple professional-client relationship. Even within the realm of design, formal Chinese planning education and practice rarely address the complexities involved in representing the public interest—a term that is quite new and ill-defined (if increasingly familiar) in Chinese political discourse, but that is arguably at the heart of the urban planning profession in North America.”⁷⁰

In presenting the work, the non-Chinese students adopted creative approaches. The region team used role-playing and conversational dialogues to convey their survey to the rest of the team. One student pretended to be the outsider proposing business development strategies to a local villager (played by another student). The “villager” answered with concerns about implementing those strategies. This presentation not only showed how much our students understood the place, but also showed that our work was responsive to local conditions, based on an understanding of community perspectives.

⁷⁰Abramson, D. (January 01, 2005). The “Studio Abroad” as a Mode of Transcultural Engagement in Urban Planning Education: A Reflection on Ten Years of Sino-Canadian Collaboration. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 25, 1, 89-102.

Two students from the village team read a moving story illustrating a villager's life change. There was a long silent moment after they finished reading the story. Many of us were deeply impressed by the creative way they presented their initial survey work.

After the presentation meeting, the Chinese students shared their thoughts. It is fair to say they were surprised at what happened. They simply did not realize the project had already started and they were in a design process. One of the students from Sichuan University questioned (in Chinese), "What are they doing? How this is related to design?"

My observation was the Chinese students were waiting to work on the *actual design work*, which was design drawings; they did not realize the importance of the preliminary survey work which mostly were community engagements.

If the Chinese students had understood in advance the way American students perceived design and how they approached the work, the Chinese students would have participated in the work and appreciated the creativity and the American students would not have complained that the Chinese students were lazy and turned in poor work, as one student phrased it:

"As I recall, we all mostly got along fine. But I also remember plenty of complaints on both sides, particularly in Tianzhong. I don't remember this too clearly and was not involved directly. But I remember the Chinese students complaining that the non-Chinese students were being arrogant and bossy. And it seemed like the non-Chinese students complained that the Chinese students were lazy, not following through, turning in poor work... something like that."

During the studio, one student from Sichuan University mentioned to the rest Chinese students that in a previous studio it was the Chinese students ended up working on the project, the American students did not contribute much. These perceptions were misunderstandings of each other's design work.

It is critical for the team to understand why it should adopt any specific process and emphasize the steps in the process, keeping everyone on the same page. For the Chinese students who are used to working with precise programs, accepting and understanding a more open-ended process takes time.

Taking advantage of the differences in training and education may result in practical value. Some scholars such as Robert Kaplan and Louise Dunlap have studied fundamental differences in the mode of thinking among different cultures.⁷¹ Compare the Chinese writing system and Western alphabetic system, “the concrete, pictographic Chinese writing system develops a holistic, intuitive and polytheistic civilization while the linear, abstract, and non-pictographic Western alphabetic system has led to a scientific, rational and monotheistic civilization.” Gill-Chill Lim further analyzed, “international education incorporating learning of foreign languages and cultures could have a profound impact on the “creative thinking process.” It can serve to nurture a new generation of people who can combine the best of East and West: People who can think holistically, intuitively, rationally, and scientifically at the same time. Such people will facilitate understanding across different cultures and deepen global understanding.”⁷²

⁷¹ Gill-Chin, et al. (1995). *Strategy for a Global University: Model International Department Experiment*. U.S: Michigan State University.

⁷² Ibid

4.4. Differential Familiarity with Locality

One interesting observation was that the Chinese students were foreign to the site location, despite being from China. The same situation occurred in one of Professor Abramson's previous studios in the city of Quan Zhou. He pointed out: "The cultural boundaries between students from Tsinghua and from Canadian universities broke down significantly as they all struggled to understand the perspective of the local community in Quanzhou, whose culture in many ways was as alien to the young people from Beijing as to their peers from Vancouver."⁷³

Even though I am Chinese, I could not understand the local dialect of the village; luckily many, but not all, villagers could still communicate with me in Standard Chinese. I did not know about the local culture very much either. The situation was a shock to me. I realized that I did not have as many advantages as I expected to have. I observed other Chinese students' silence when they were asked to explain something for non-Chinese students.

My own concept of a Chinese village was based on my grandparents' hometown, where villagers grew their own food. I believe the crops grown in my grandparents' hometown would qualify as "organic" produce today, although no one was concerned about such labeling at the time.

During the time we stayed in Tianzhong village, I heard villagers talking about how organic their food was; so when I was asked by my American classmates whether the crops were really organic I told them, "Yes." One day, however, a student asked me the question again. That time, he told me he saw villagers spraying pesticides on their crops. Later, I learned that what the student told me was true. We went to explore the reasons why the villagers had said their crops were organic. We found out that some villagers intentionally deceived customers in order to gain a good reputation for their village, and some villagers were not clear about the concept of organic.

⁷³Abramson, D. (January 01, 2005). The "Studio Abroad" as a Mode of Transcultural Engagement in Urban Planning Education: A Reflection on Ten Years of Sino-Canadian Collaboration. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 25, 1, 89-102.

The lesson to learn from this is that when working in a foreign land, it is important to realize that a team member from that country is not necessarily ‘local.’ The team should have the correct expectation for interpreters’ knowledge of the project site. To avoid unreliable information affecting the design work, designers should be cautious with what they hear and rely more on what they observe from the site and from the people living in the community.

However, the advantage I did have over non-Chinese students was that I was more familiar with the social and economic issues the villagers were dealing with. It takes time to understand how the urbanization process has affected villagers’ life in China. When I saw the left-behind children⁷⁴ in the village, I immediately thought of their parents migrating to big cities to seek work. I knew there would be a need to create spaces for the youth and to create more job opportunities to attract their parents back home.

In my view, having knowledge in the social and political aspects of a location are important because they are the basis of understanding a local person’s daily life. Based on that understanding, designers are able to create spaces that meet the community’s needs.

In the future, I might work in a country as a foreign designer. Knowing what I might or might not be familiar with in a place, and knowing what aspects of a place I need to learn about ahead of time, will be helpful.

⁷⁴ 关注留守儿童. 人民网. 2012-06-21. URL:<http://acwf.people.com.cn/GB/99061/102368/index.html>. Accessed: 2012-06-21. (Archived by WebCite® at <http://www.webcitation.org/68aHzVgRO>). Left-behind children are children whose parents are migrant workers and have left the village to find work in bigger cities. Left-behind children often remain in a home village to be raised by grandparents until old enough to leave and find work themselves.

4.5. Reflections on the Studio's Implications for Practice

The academic nature of the studio was a huge advantage in that students participated in the studio with the purpose of gaining cross-cultural experience. Thus, the participants started out with the understanding that there would be situations and circumstances they would not be familiar with. Identifying and addressing cultural miscommunications was one of their goals. This understanding enabled many of the solutions the participants created.

This contrasts against the situation an international design firm would face. A firm would be hired for its existing expertise, not for what it could learn during the project. A client would be rightfully unsatisfied if cultural miscommunications caused delays in the completion of any project, especially if the miscommunications were between Chinese and Western designers working as a team for the client. Therefore it is doubly important for international designers to gain cross-cultural communication skills from situations like the design studio before they enter into large international projects.

I believe these kinds of studio experiences can be an excellent resource for design professionals to gain the skills necessary to work in international design. The studio I participated in has certainly made all participants more competitive for our future work, especially in international design practice.

First, the studio participants have a better understanding of cross-cultural international work. The studio turned out to be more challenging than most of us expected. Students learned the difficulties of working in an unfamiliar context and will be more realistic and critical with future overseas projects. Through my conversations with international practitioners, I learned that one of the reasons firms hesitate to pursue international work is staff burnout. My colleague at HDR once told me that many staff in the firm wanted to squeeze themselves into fancy-sounding international projects; however, after one or two projects, no one wanted to do it anymore because it was harder than they expected. If a firm's staff can have the right expectations for such work and can better deal with the uncertainties and high pressure of an overseas project, they will be more successful and more willing to pursue such projects long-term.

Second, the studio participants are equipped with cross-cultural communication skills. Even in local firms, there are professionals from different countries. It takes effort to engage a diverse team. The studio provided students opportunities to develop skills in communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds and leading complicated international teams. In international practice, designers are very likely to cooperate with professionals from other countries; many decisions on the project would need agreements from both sides. I know in many Chinese projects, the Chinese clients require face to face meetings with designers. It is important to show respect to the clients and make the clients feel as comfortable as possible. I believe professionals who have similar studio experience would better know how to facilitate cross-cultural discussions, know how to take everyone's voice into consideration in negotiations, and know how important it is to follow up with partners to make sure everyone is clear about the project goal and is working in the same direction. One aspect of international design practice is having to work with local design institutes; professionals who have the kind of cross-cultural communication skills that we learned during the studio can help bridge the communication gaps between different firms.

Third of all, the studio participants are better prepared to recognize how to apply the values and principles of design into diverse projects. As I stated earlier, as international design grows more competitive, international design firms (and design professionals) will no longer be able to rest on the fact that they are foreign and will instead have to learn how to apply good design principles in every situation. The studio's fundamental design principles were to be people-oriented, ecologically sound, and economically feasible, which are the core values of any good project. Many of the students did not have experience applying these principles in a rural project, and instead had to learn the best way to do this during the project. The studio proved to the students that it is possible to conduct meaningful projects which are loyal to the principles of design in any context.

In addition, studio participants have absolutely learned the importance of developing our leadership skills, from leading big groups to small groups. International studios are undeniably complex. Almost every decision we made was challenging due to unexpected events and uncertainties. For instance, a trip to one major destination village had to be canceled because a mud slide blocked the only access road. Our leading studio instructors had to find another village to visit as a result. I believe it is a general lesson that all studio participants have learned through the studio that when one encounters uncertainties and obstacles, it is best to not complain but accept the situation and actively look for solutions. This lesson is valuable no matter what work we do in the future.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The phenomena of international designers practicing in China is not going away. However, it is changing from the extreme practice I observed during my undergraduate years. As Chinese domestic designers increase in skill, and as advances in technology allow smaller firms to take more advanced projects, the mere fact that a firm is foreign will not be enough to secure projects in China. Firms will have to understand the context and create works which uphold design values in order to be competitive.

To do this, firms could seek new ways to learn these skills. I suggest that international design studios can be an excellent resource for training future international design professionals. Firms who are interested in developing overseas business or who have been engaged in international work should explore and take advantage of this kind of studio. Universities have the responsibility to train new professionals that satisfy the needs of firms and firms have the responsibility to encourage professionals to realize their value in work.

In writing this thesis, I set out to explain my personal understanding of international designers practicing in China based on my experience and research. While it is a complex issue, if there is one take-away I think it should be that above all, communication and understanding are critical to success for international designers.

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Appendix A - Studio Working Scopes & Schedules (Village Group)

Objective	Activities	Products	Deadline
Maps	Identify official boundary of Tianzhong	Map of Tianzhong in AutoCad	7/6/2011
	Prep Work for ArcPad	Put resized maps for Arcpad onto Trimble GPS units	7/6/2011
	Convert AutoCad layers into GIS	Map of Tianzhong in GIS	7/6/2011
	Map land use in GIS	Map of land use in Tianzhong	7/7/2011
	Catalog agricultural diversity in Tianzhong	Data for agriculture map	7/10/2011
	Map agriculture production in GIS	Map of agriculture production in Tianzhong	7/10/2011
	Map of existing land use	Description of existing land use	7/10/2011
	Catalog pedestrian network/connectivity in Tianzhong	Photoshop Map	7/9/2011
	Identify building age	Map of Historic Development	7/7/2011
Identify public spaces and use	Land use data	7/7/2011	
SWOT Analysis	Compile and analyze research Need and asset inventory	SWOT Analysis - Existing Condition Element of Plan	
Development Opportunities	Evaluate current market opportunities	Ideas	7/5/2011
	Identify competitive advantages	Ideas	7/6/2011
	Define development strategies	Ideas	7/6/2011
	Develop multicriteria evaluation	Evaluation Worksheet	7/8/2011
	Test feasibility	Evaluation Report	7/9/2011
	Write Report	Report	7/10/2011
Organic Farming	Cost Benefit Analysis	Report	7/7/2011
	Market analysis	Report	7/7/2011
	Spatial requirement	Report	7/10/2011
	Time requirement	Report	7/10/2011
	Identify arable land	Arable Land Map	7/10/2011
	Images	Graphic Supplement	
Tea Cooperative	Cost Benefit Analysis	Report	7/8/2011
	Market analysis	Report	7/8/2011
	Spatial requirement	Report	7/10/2011
	Time requirement	Report	7/10/2011
	Images	Graphic Supplement	7/10/2011
Art, Heritage and Cultural Tourism	Inventory of existing crafts	Report	7/7/2011
	Spatial requirement	Report	7/8/2011
	Time requirement	Report	7/8/2011
	Identify sacred spaces	Map of Sacred Spaces	7/8/2011
	Images	Graphic Supplement	7/10/2011
Assessment of 2010 Plan	Identify issues	Report	After Studio
	Justify development strategy	Report	After Studio
Socialist New Village Construction	Review application process	Internal Report	After Studio
	New village standards	Internal Report	7/8/2011
	Village Head Vision	Internal Report	7/8/2011
	Prepare application	Application?	After Studio
New Spatial Schemes	Synthesize ideas and information	Internal Report - Critical Elements	7/5/2011
	Meet with Dan	Identify Strategies	7/5/2011
	Identify feasibility metrics and design principals	Internal Report - Common Framework	7/8/2011
	Assign teams - Total Development; Redevelopment; Hybrid Development	Workgroups	7/6/2011
	Evaluate current waste water treatment	Map of Waste Water Treatment	7/8/2011
	Develop suggestions for waste water treatment	Suggestions for Improved Treatment	7/9/2011
	Develop work plan for workgroups	Scope of Work	7/6/2011
	Develop village spatial scheme	Site Plans	7/8/2011
	Develop graphic materials	Vignettes	7/10/2011
	Develop Final sketchup models	Sketchup models of devt schemes	2011/7/13

Appendix B - Studio Final Presentation to Zhangzhou Government

田中村 试验项目

TIANZHONG
DEMONSTRATION
PROJECT

漳州市南靖县城乡
统筹可持续发展

Integrated Urban-Rural
Development in the *Tulou*
Villages of Nanjing County



报告提纲 PRESENTATION OUTLINE

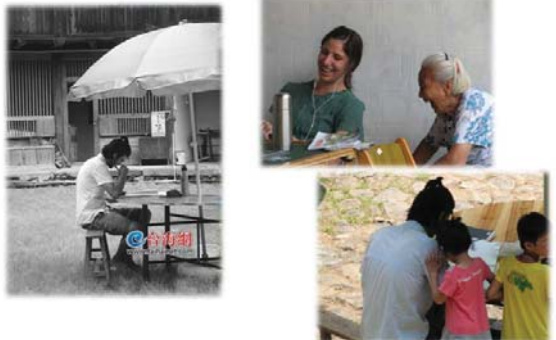
- 团队介绍 Introductions
- 华盛顿大学与中国城市规划
University of Washington's Urban Planning in China
- “区域-村落-建筑”方法
Region-Village-Building Approach
- 在南靖县与书洋镇进行的研究
Research in Nanjing County and Shuyang Town
- 目标 Objectives
- 与南靖县的发展优先次序相配合
Fit with Nanjing County Priorities
- 机遇 Opportunities
- 建议：建筑用途与设计 Recommendations: Programming and Design
- 未来计划与问题 Next Steps and Questions

团队介绍 INTRODUCTION

- 多国团队 Multi-national team
- 多校团队 Multi-university team
- 多学科团队 Multi-disciplinary team
- 领导者：教师，专业人员 Leaders: Faculty, Professionals
- 团队人员：博士硕士和本科学学生
Members: Ph.D., Masters and Undergrad Students
- 三个工作小组 Three work groups:
 - 区域 Regional
 - 村落 Village
 - 建筑 Buildings

简介 INTRODUCTION

我们的土楼生活 Living in a Tulou



华盛顿大学与中国城市规划

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON and Urban Planning in China

- 城乡统筹发展 Urban-Rural Integration
- 在全国的研究：福建和四川 National Research: Fujian & Sichuan Focus
- 农业旅游、探索旅游和教育对乡村稳定的潜在影响
Potential of Agri-tourism, Exploration Tourism & Education in Rural Stabilization
- 我们的试验项目强调和改善： Demonstration Project to Highlight & Refine:
 - 乡村发展方法和功能利用
Rural Development Approach & Programming
 - 经济、环境和社会的可持续进程 Sustainability Tools

可持续发展的三个原则

Sustainable Development



地域 – 村落 – 建筑的规划模式 REGION-VILLAGE-BUILDING APPROACH

在同一个项目中:

In one project....

- 思考和改善区域状况
thinking and acting for the region
- 与社区和谐互动
engaging the community harmoniously
- 尊重历史建筑、景观和当地实践，将其改造使适应时代需求
valuing and adapting historic structures, landscapes and practices

在同一个团队中，综合以下因素:

With one team, combining...

- 社会研究 social research
- 生态科学 ecological science
- 经济策略 economic strategy
- 环境艺术与设
environmental art and design
- 工程与建设
engineering and construction

南靖县的研究 NANJING COUNTY RESEARCH

- 学习南靖县的 Learn from Nanjing County's:
 - 成就 Accomplishments
 - 发展趋向 Regional Trends
 - 五年规划 5 Year Plan & Its Priorities



Statistics

Nanjing County: Impacts Of Tourism

- Tourists received (2010): 1,600,000
- Tourism revenue generated (2010): 480 million yuan
- 8th most popular tourist destination in Fujian in 2010.
 - About 1 million visitors, a 26.8 percent yearly increase
 - Yongding County: 5th overall, 1.4 million visitors and a 65 percent increase in growth.
- Peak daily visits to Nanjing County tulou: 20,000

TULOU VILLAGES EXPERIENCE: SURVEY OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- 34 Students
- From 6 Countries; Many Chinese Provinces
- 20 Evaluation Criteria
- Top Tourism Priorities:

1. Enjoyable for Visitors
2. Things to Do – Not Just See
3. Reveals Local Life
4. Safety



TOURISM SURVEY RESULTS

Tulou Villages Visited:

- Yongding
- Yunshuiyao
- Yuchang Lou
- Taxia
- Tianloukeng



Survey Preference:

1. Yunshuiyao
2. Yuchang Lou
3. Taxia
4. Tianloukeng
5. Yongding

目标 OBJECTIVES

乡村全面复兴 Overall Rural Renaissance

- 农民增加收入
Increase income for farmers
- 创造新的工作岗位、教育和训练机会
Create new jobs, training and educational opportunities
- 人口流动达到平衡
Reduce net out-migration
- 保留耕地
Retain arable land
- 保护生态功能
Protect ecological function
- 重新利用历史建筑和景观
Make use of historic buildings and landscapes
- 在城市和农村居民间建立相互理解
Cultivate understanding between urban and rural residents



目标 OBJECTIVES

旅游业发展 Tourism Development

- 将游客停留时间从1天增加到**3天**
Increase tourists' length of stay from 1 to **3** days
- 创造游客互动与参与机会
Create opportunities for interactive tourist activities
- 吸引多样化的游客
Diversify tourist demographics
 - 学生和年轻人
Students and young adults
 - 城市居民（父母和子女）
Urban families (parents with children)
 - 老年人 Elderly
 - 国际游客 Foreign visitors



与南靖县五年规划相配合

FIT WITH NANJING COUNTY 5-YEAR PLAN GOALS

- “构建旅游事业新格局” “build a new pattern of tourism”
- “构建现代农业格局” “build a modern agricultural pattern”
- “构建生态安全格局” “build an ecologically secure pattern”

南靖五年规划发展重点：旅游业

NANJING COUNTY 5-YEAR PLAN DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: TOURISM

- 发展生态旅游点 Develop eco-tourism sites
- 加强旅游业从业者的教育
Education of tourist service industry workers
- 目前旅游业从业者的教育缺乏是区域性的发展障碍
Current lack of tourism-educated workers noted as a regional drawback
- 增加游客活动的种类
Increase the number of activities for tourists
- 保护环境，保持旅游区风景优美
Preserve the environment to keep tourist area beautiful

南靖县十二五规划中突出的旅游业发展目标

NANJING COUNTY TWELFTH 5-YEAR PLAN HIGHLIGHTED GOALS OF TOURISM

在旅游发展规划中强调**生态旅游**和休闲旅游
Focus on **ecological tours** and leisure in tourism development plan for the county

发展与**农业产品**相关的节庆活动，包括茶、咖啡、菌菇和水果
Develop festivals related to **agricultural products**, including tea, coffee, mushrooms and fruit

保护和发展**生态旅游区**。鼓励**书洋镇**的休闲旅游和乡村旅游发展。

Protection and development of eco-tourism area. Encourage the development of leisure agriculture and rural tourism in **Shuyang**.

加强南靖县旅游营销
Strengthen promotion and marketing of tourism in the county

南靖五年规划发展重点：农业

FIVE YEAR PLAN DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

NANJING COUNTY: AGRICULTURE *

- 合作 Cooperation
- 品牌营销 Branding
- 有机种植 Organic farming
- 技术与产品质量进步 Technical Progress and quality
- 示范农场 Demonstration Farms
- 信息传播 Information sharing
- 经济作物：一村一品 Cash Crops- one village, one crop
- 加强金融借贷支持与补贴 Increase lending and subsidies
- 收益分配 Distribution
- 订单农业 Contract farming

机遇 OPPORTUNITIES

- 农业旅游 Agri-tourism
- 遗产与生态旅游
Heritage & Eco-tourism
- 增值活动： Value-Added:
 - 农业；林业产品
Agriculture; Forest Products
- 茶叶合作社 Tea Cooperatives
- 可持续工具 Sustainability Tools
- 新农村建设 New Village Construction
- 试验项目
DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

Agriculture in Nanjing County



书洋镇田中村 TIANZHONG VILLAGE 作为区域样板 A Model for the Region

- 人口: 1400以上 Population: More than 1400
- 气候: 亚热带 Climate: Sub-Tropical
- 地理: 3.2平方公里 Geography: 3.2 square kilometers
- 经济: 农业(茶叶、水果), 旅游, 矿业(辉绿岩、闪长岩、砾岩) Economy: agriculture (tea, fruits), tourism, minerals (diabase, diorite, conglomerate)
- 目前服务业、农业和工业占GDP的比例: 60%/30%/10%。过去农业占经济比重的80%。Currently a 60/30/10% split of GDP in the service sector, agriculture, and industry. 80% of the economy used to be agricultural.
- Most migrants return only for major holidays or to help with tea harvesting during peak season

OUTMIGRATION TIANZHONG

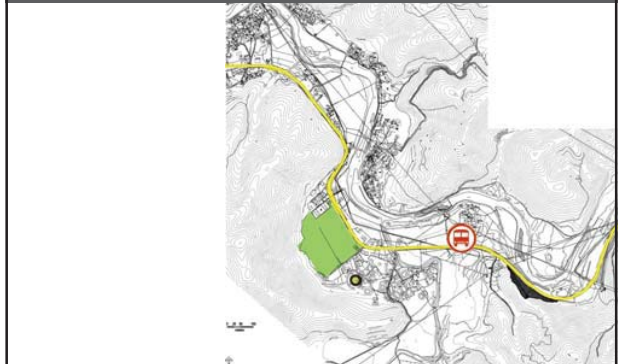
Based on interviews,...

- Most common destinations for migrants: Xiamen, Zhangzhou, Guangzhou, Quanzhou
- Most migrants return only for major holidays or to help with tea harvesting during peak season
- Most migrants stay in the original destination city
- Most migrants take their children with them
- Most migrants have no plan to return to the village, in spite of the growth in the area tourism

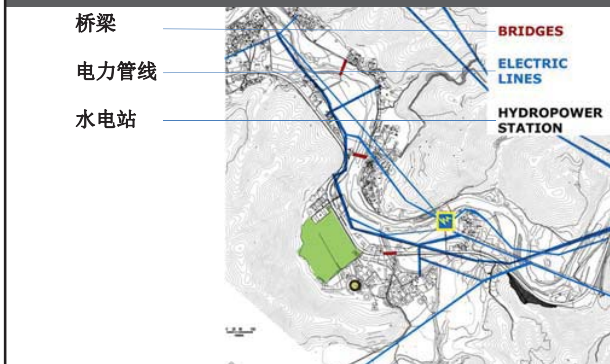
书洋镇田中村 TIANZHONG VILLAGE Central Location



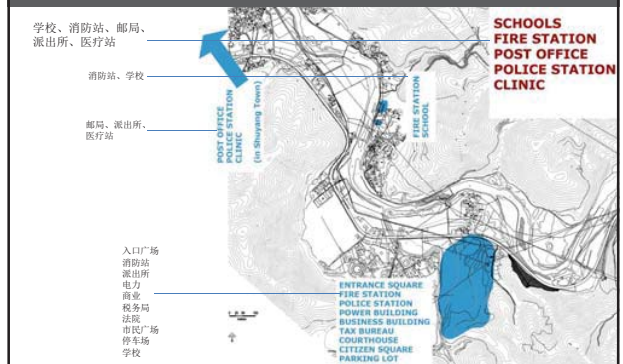
书洋镇田中村 TIANZHONG VILLAGE Transportation



书洋镇田中村 TIANZHONG VILLAGE 基础设施 Infrastructure



书洋镇田中村 TIANZHONG VILLAGE 公共设施 Public Facilities



建议: RECOMMENDATIONS: 建筑用途和设计 Programming & Design

Function... ...leads to form

农业旅游 AGRI-TOURISM 远期行动计划 Action Plan: Long Term

- 提高产品质量/茶叶品牌营销/
Work to improve quality/branding of tea/produce in region
- 有机食品作为旅游吸引点
Develop organic food as tourism draw
 - 与茶叶合作社和有机农耕相结合 Integrate with tea cooperative ideas and organic farming idea
- 增加小型家庭旅馆和农家乐数量
Increase number of farm guesthouses and homestays throughout Shuyang Town/Nanjing County



农业旅游 AGRI-TOURISM 经济收益 Economic Benefits

地点 Place	活动 Activity	价格 Price
浙江安吉县 Anji County, Zhejiang	农家乐食宿 Farm Guesthouse: 3 meals plus accommodation	每人每天100元 100 RMB/night per guest
北京安利隆生态度假山庄 Anlilong Eco-Resort, Beijing	租种果树 Rent a Fruit tree 租种田地 (每分) Plot Rentals (per fen)	每月100-888元 100-888 RMB/ per month 每月2000元 2,000 RMB/per month
北京古北口村 Gubeikou Village, Beijing	八菜有机餐和住宿 A Day at the Farm: 8-course organic farm meal and accommodation	每人每天100元 100 RMB/ night per guest
四川成都安龙村 Anlong Village, Chengdu, Sichuan	城市居民蔬菜订购 Vegetable Subscription for Urban Residents	每斤4元 4 RMB/per jin

农业旅游 AGRI-TOURISM* 全球网络营销——现有网页 Global Web Marketing – existing web page



农业旅游 AGRI-TOURISM 全球网络营销——推荐网页 Global Web Marketing – proposed web page





有机茶叶合作社 TEA COOPERATIVE * 现状 Current Conditions

- 支出 Expenditures
 - 农药化肥 (8-10亩) Chemical inputs (8-10 mu) 每年20000元 20,000yuan per year
 - 劳动力 (普通茶叶) Labor (common tea) 每季3000元 3,000yuan per season
 - 劳动力 (高品质茶叶) Labor (quality tea) 每季15000元 15,000yuan per season
- 收入 Income
 - 每年5000-10000元
 - RMB 5,000 - 10,000 per year
- 土地 Land
 - 2-10亩 2-10 mu
 - 分散种植 Disaggregated



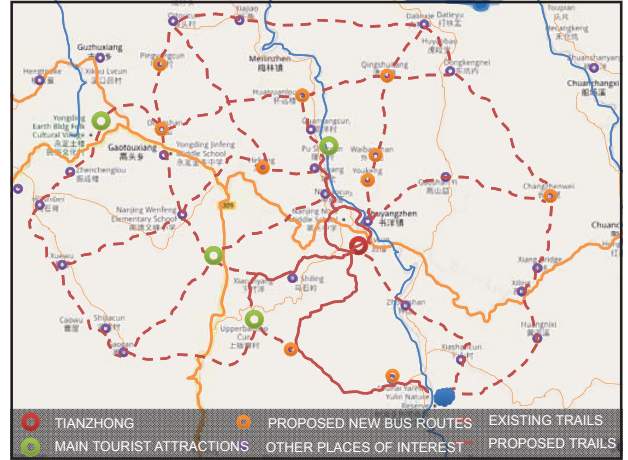
有机茶叶合作社 TEA COOPERATIVE * 经济收益 Economic Benefits

- 增加公共福利支出 Increase spending on public goods
- 杜绝农药化肥使用 Eliminate spending on chemicals
 - 20000元=166工作日 20,000yuan = 166 labor days
- 提高茶叶价格 Increase tea prices
 - 中等质量: 30元 → 100元
 - Medium quality: RMB 30+ → RMB 100+
 - 高质量: 100元 → 450元
 - High quality: RMB 100+ → RMB 450+
- 增加就业机会 Increases jobs
- 增加农业收入稳定性 Increases income stability
- 提高旅游吸引力 Increases tourism draw

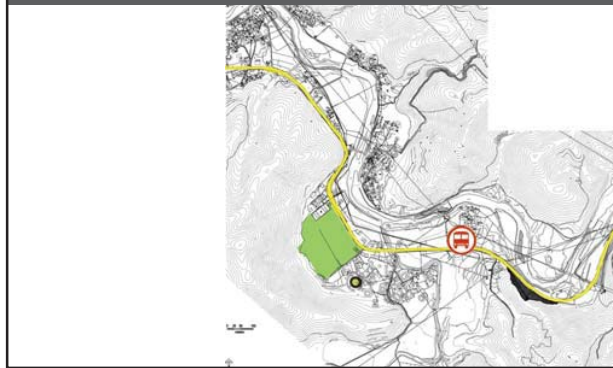
有机茶叶合作社 TEA COOPERATIVE 环境收益 Environmental Benefits

- 减少或消除农药化肥使用 Elimination or reduction of fertilizer/pesticide
 - 改善居民健康状况 Improvements in human health
 - 改善径流水质 Improvements in runoff water quality
 - 重建自然的土壤投入产出循环 Recreate a natural soil input-output cycle
- 改善土壤质量 Better soil composition
 - 减少土壤侵蚀 Decrease soil erosion
 - 减少河流沉积 Decrease sediment loads
 - 改善水体视觉效果 Improve visual water quality





田中央村：新农村建设
NEW VILLAGE CONSTRUCTION



田中央村：过去典型的新农村建设方案
A Previous Typical New Village Construction Plan for Central Tianzhong



保护耕地与开放空间的选择：预景之一
Options for Preserving Arable Land and Open Space: Scenario #1



保护耕地与开放空间的选择： 预景之二
Options for Preserving Arable Land and Open Space: Scenario #2



保护耕地与开放空间的选择： 预景之三
Options for Preserving Arable Land and Open Space: Scenario #3



设计原则 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

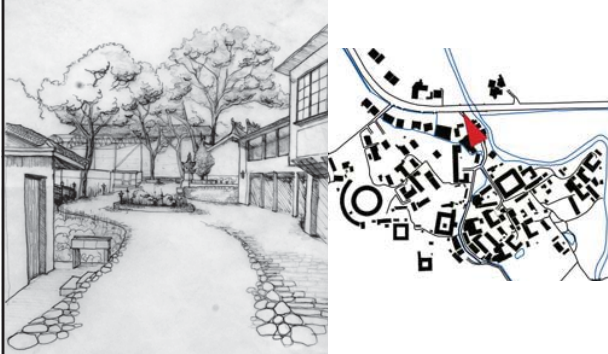
1. 将新建设和现有村庄环境以及历史建筑相结合，创造新的核心地带
 2. 突出历史建筑与风貌
 3. 保留耕地以及保护生态功能
 4. 确定和改善现有社会交往空间
 5. 在村庄内外加强步行联系和视觉廊道
 6. 在入口处加强到达感
1. Create new central places that combine new construction with existing village environment
 2. Put the spotlight on historic structures
 3. Preserve arable land and protect ecological functions
 4. Identify and enhance existing social gathering spaces
 5. Strengthen pedestrian connections and view corridors within and outside the village
 6. Enhance the sense of arrival at entry points

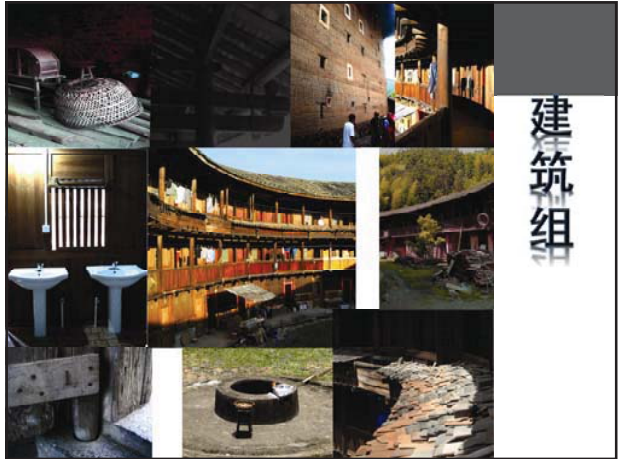
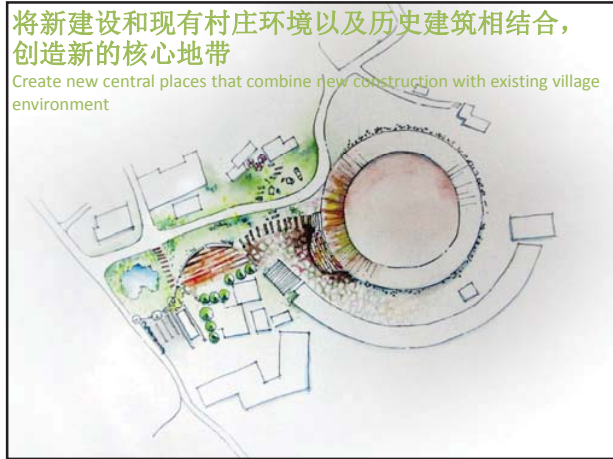
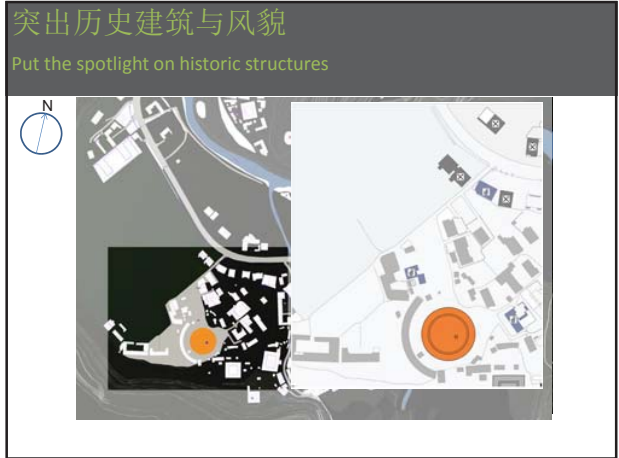
确定和改善现有社会交往空间
Identify and enhance existing social gathering spaces



寺庙周边是典型的传统 社会交往空间，需要保护与加强

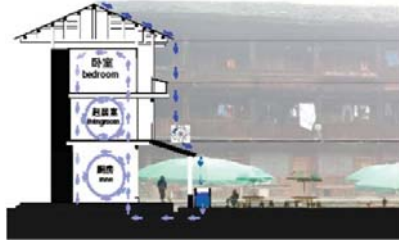
Areas around temples are typical traditional social gathering spaces worth enhancing





雨水采集

Water Catchment



结合微型水利能源与雨水的采集，重新使用二级水源

- Micro energy
- Water catchment
- Water collection and reuse

茶工坊

Tea Workshop



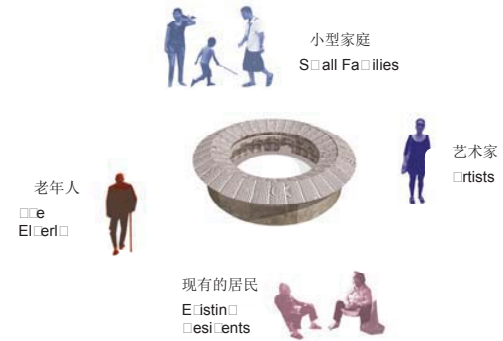
接待处

Reception



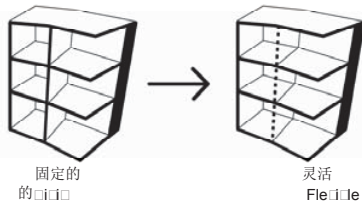
灵活的空间

Flexible Space



定义空间的使用

Program



Elderly Space:

- 1F - Kitchen - 12.5 square meters
- 2F - Living Room - 12.5 square meters
- 3F - Bedroom - 12.5 square meters

Artist Space:

- 2F - Living Room - 12.5 square meters
- 3F - Studio Space - 12.5 square meters
- 3F - Bedroom - 12.5 square meters

Single-Family Residence:

- 1F - Dining Room - 12.5 square meters
- 1F - Kitchen - 12.5 square meters
- 2F - Living Room - 18 square meters
- 3F - Bathroom - 9 square meters
- 3F - Bedroom (2) - 20 square meters

老年人使用空间:

- 第一层: 厨房 12.5 平方米
- 第二层: 客厅 12.5 平方米
- 第三层: 卧室 12.5 平方米

艺术家使用空间:

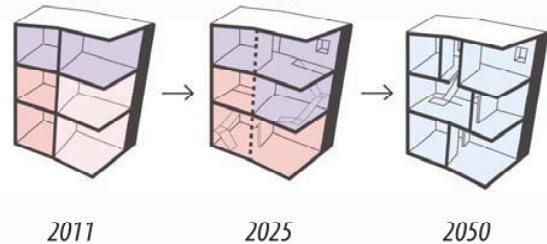
- 第二层: 客厅 12.5 平方米
- 第三层: 画室 12.5 平方米
- 第三层: 卧室 12.5 平方米

独户居民:

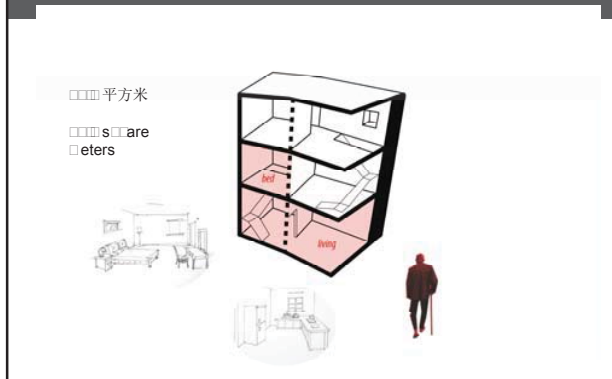
- 第一层: 餐厅 12.5 平方米
- 第一层: 厨房 12.5 平方米
- 第二层: 客厅 12.5 平方米
- 第三层: 洗手间 12.5 平方米
- 第三层: 卧室 12.5 平方米

可用的空间

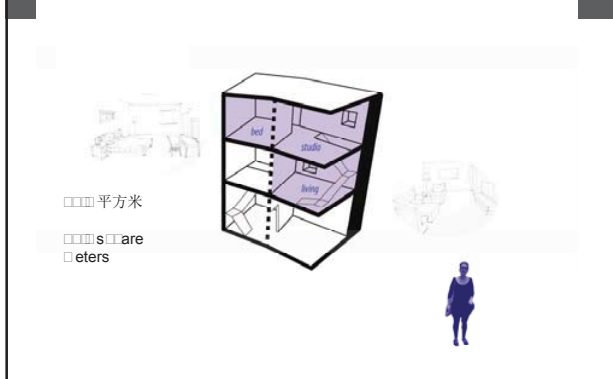
Availability



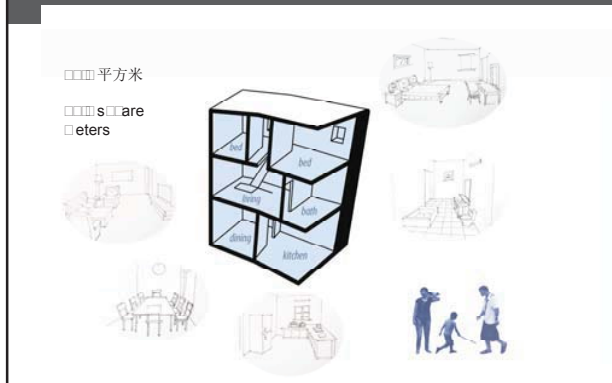
老年人使用空间 For the Elderly



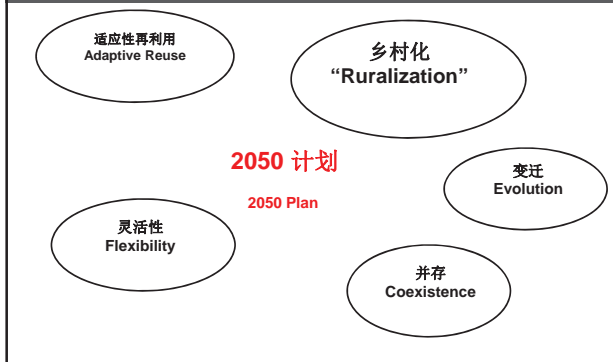
艺术家使用空间 For an Artist



小型家庭 For a Small Family



为什么? Why?



致谢 Acknowledgements

政府机构:
 漳州市人民政府
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 南靖县人民政府
 南靖和书洋土楼管理委员会
 书洋镇人民政府
 田中村村委会
 田中村和庆兴楼乡亲

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 漳州市碧湖开发指挥部
 Collins Moran
 Carabetri

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 清华大学城市规划设计研究院 Tsinghua University Institute of Urban Planning and Design
 厦门大学建筑与土木工程学院 Xiamen University College of Architecture and Civil Engineering
 广东江门五邑大学 Guangdong University of Foreign Studies
 哈尔滨工业大学深圳分院 Shenzhen Graduate School of Harbin Institute of Technology
 南佛罗里达大学 South Florida University

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 方维和, 卓越芬, 樊卫东, 朱志玲, 赵绿川, 陈月云, 吴义华, 郑婉瑜, 黄蕾, 陈达聪, 陈子建, 曹明, 陈碧盛, 林谦, 杨铁群, 吴丽丹, 朱斌杰, 陈...

过去、现在、未来: 下一步计划与问题
 PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE: NEXT STEPS and QUESTIONS

