



Merging Theory into Practice: Ecological Urban Design

3rd U21 workshop for Early Career Researcher development



The 3rd Early Career Researchers (ECR) Workshop will be held on 5-6th December 2012 at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China, on the theme of “**Merging Theory into Practice: Ecological Urban Design.**” It is a cross-disciplinary workshop to allow for open discussions between academics from diverse and complementary research backgrounds, (a majority of participants would be expected to come from humanities and design background though) to contribute to the definition of ecological civilization and apply it to real-life design project.

Theory: Ecological Civilization

The survival and development of humankind have been increasingly threatened by ecological crisis triggered by environmental pollution, global warming, ecological deterioration, resource exhaustion, etc. To tackle the severe challenges faced by humanity and to remedy all the ills and defects brought about by industrial civilization, a new concept, namely ecological civilization has come into being.

How to define “ecological civilization” and how to do research in this area has become an urgent issue for scholars in various academic fields worldwide. At present, several young researchers from the School of Humanities of Shanghai Jiao Tong University are collecting relevant data and work on the topic of ecological civilization in terms of its definition, origin, evolution, values, political systems, practices and evaluation system. We believe that the U21 ECR workshop will provide a global platform for early career academics with different professional backgrounds to exchange views and present their research achievements.

Open Discussion on the Definition of Ecological Civilization

Since people have different understandings of the concepts of “ecology” and “civilization”, they tend to have different definitions of “ecological civilization”. Some define it with the goal of a balanced eco-system (human beings included) in mind; some define it from the perspective of sustainable development; others deem that ecological civilization is not just about a better relation between human beings and nature, but it also entails work to improve our connection with society. We believe that ecological civilization is not merely a local social economic phenomenon, but rather a social economic formation, a new form of human civilization above agricultural and industrial civilizations. Ecological civilization refers to the virtuous cycle of economy, society and ecology. Ecological civilization is an important benchmark of the overall development of the human society.

About the Workshop

The workshop is a mix of presentations, discussion sessions and group design exercises - and we will draw on case studies and local information wherever possible to ensure the relevance of the ecological civilization theory and practice. Cross-disciplinary discussions and group work emphasize the interactive nature of urban design practice and thinking. It is not aimed at producing 'trained' urban designers but it encourages cross-disciplinary discussions and augments the skills of ECRs from a range of disciplines and cultures so that they will be better prepared to assess the design proposals and consider the implications of design decisions from an ecological perspective.

In the two-day workshop, there will also be ECR skills training session and a poster session for ECRs to present their ideas on ecological civilization.

Who to attend:

Early career academics in all disciplines are welcome to join us, especially those in Humanities, Geography, Environment, Architecture, Urban Planning and civil engineering.

Task and contents:

SJTU is going to build a Shanghai Zizhu International Education Park (SZIEP), with sponsorship from the Minhang District government. SZIEP is expected to host 4-5 joint colleges in partnership with international universities, 2-3 research centers, residential areas and other supporting facilities. The ECRs are expected to discuss in groups and work out a plan for the SZIEP.

Items of open discussion:

- Site analysis (i.e. Consideration for the railway: noise, safety and landscape)
- Design vision and goal: compact city, mixed use, amenity, green buildings, open space, pedestrian system, healthy neighbourhood, minimal impact, ecological landscape and local context, sustainable energy system
- Concept, plan and 3D images alternative
- Implementation strategy and design guidelines

Requirement from Users: For one teaching building:

- a central patio or garden
- a 2 or 3 floors building
- a central library on several floors with a view on the patio/garden
- a visible inside circulation
- a circulation design mixing the people (students, professors, admin...)
- an open cafeteria inside the hall with a possible outside terrace
- ground-floor teaching labs (for 2 of them)
- small classrooms around amphitheaters

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The morning session of the first day will be a couple of keynote speeches on ecological civilization. One presentation will focus on the cultural basis and philosophical basis of ecological civilization; another will take one of the gardens with Shanghai style as an example and analyze the essence of the spatial configuration, structures, and culture within it, such as “smallness”, “endlessness”, and “biophilia”. A combination of art and ecological design in Shanghai area; and a case study of the NUS CREATE campus design.

In the afternoon, participants of the workshop will make a site visit to the land, where they could study the environment and take notes. Then they will get back to the meeting room to make analysis of the situation, taking into consideration of the surrounding environment and the ecological philosophies that has been presented from the morning session. They will be asked to work in four groups, to brainstorm on the ideas for the plan of the SZIEP. Items to consider will include:

Green Buildings	Ecological Landscape and campus context
Open spaces	Sustainable Energy system and minimal impact
Pedestrian system	

In the following morning, a proposal plan of the SZIEP is expected to take shape in each group. And the afternoon session is left for presentation of the proposals.

Representatives from Minhang SZIEP construction taskforce and some students may attend the final presentation. They will vote on the most favorable proposal. And a secret prize will be given to the winning group.

The host institution

Established in 1896 as Nan Yang College, Shanghai Jiao Tong University is one of the first national institutions of higher learning in China. SJTU altogether has five campuses, the main parts of the workshop will be hosted in the largest campus of Minhang, which is also our main campus. The conference hall is located in the School of Humanities, and the discussion rooms are in the library or the Graduate School.

Registration and Accommodation

Registration for this event is by nomination from your institution. The workshop will provide all materials required, refreshments, and lunch on 5-6 December, and a welcome dinner on 5th December.

Accommodation is located on Hengshan Road in the downtown area, two options are provided with negotiated prices, one is Hengshan Hotel, the other is Jiangong Jingjiang Hotel, which are very close(five minutes' walk). Breakfast and free wifi are included in the price for residents of both hotels. We will arrange shuttle bus transfer from the hotel to campus. Hotel Booking forms should be submitted by 30 September.

Travel

The city of Shanghai has two airports; one is Pudong International Airport (1hr to the accommodation by taxi) while the other is Hongqiao International Airport (40 mins to the accommodation). In your spare time, you are encouraged to take a walk along Hengshan Road, the introduction of Hengshan Road will be found here: <http://home.51.com/hengshanhotel>.

Provisional Programme - U21 2012 ECR Workshop SJTU

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Tuesday 4th December	
9:00-17:00	Arrival and Check-in into Shanghai, China
17:00-18:00	Registration----Lobby of Hotels
18:00	Meals available for purchase in accommodation
Wednesday 5th December	
09:00-09:20	Welcome by Vice President Wenjun ZHANG, SJTU
09:20-09:40	Invited Speaker—Prof. Xuanyang Gao Topic—The cultural foundation of Ecological Civilization
09:40-10:00	Invited Speaker—Asso. Prof. Shaoming LU, SJTU Topic—Eco-Aesthetics and Its Logic of Spaces in the Garden with Shanghai Style
10:00-10:20	Invited Speaker—Prof. Thian Soon Tan, National University of Singapore Topic—A Case Study of NUS CREATE Building
10:20-11:40	Morning Coffee & Networking& Poster Session
11:50-13:00	Lunch
13:15-13:45	Introduction of Shanghai Zizhu International Education Park and the task, by Shiling Liu, SJTU
13:45-15:30	Field trips (International Education Park)
15:30-15:45	Afternoon Tea
15:45-16:45	Group work (Each group needs to elect a group leader)
16:45-17:15	SJTU History Exhibition
18:00	Welcome Dinner
Thursday 6th December	
09:30-10:30	Parallel Group Discussion
10:30-10:45	Morning Coffee
10:45-11:15	Preparing for the presentation
11:30-13:00	Lunch
13:10-15:00	Skills Session
15:00-15:15	Afternoon Tea
15:15-17:15	Presentations by each group
17:15-18:00	Comments and Conclusion