

DESIGN STUDIO: ARCH 5111C
CONDITION / SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURES
Redefining China's Middle Ground
2019-20 Term I

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DESCRIPTION



"The vital principle is not the love of Knowledge, but the love of Change"

J. Ruskin, On the Art of Life, 1853

What can architecture do? Does society no longer expect anything from architecture? Have architects become impotent vis-à-vis powerful construction companies and an over regulated system? This design studio wishes to challenge these assumptions in an attempt to empower the discipline again by venturing into the "Middle Ground", an undefined "terrain vague" (Sola-Morales - Rubio, 1995) land, poised between ever expanding urbanization and disappearing rural villages. China's middle ground is a paradoxically infinite territory that interests few (architects) and seems to relentlessly develops via a lethal combination of market forces and design osmosis. We have an opportunity to propose and establish a new integrated vision.

In all senses we will start from the Middle. So often Design Studio students run out of time to actually design a building. Think about it, you have: Analyze the agenda, Map the Context, Study Case Studies, Think of a programme, Conceive an idea before you can even contemplate the spaces you will eventually design. By design I mean the materialization of spaces within a building, the elaboration of matter into form. We will not work chronologically, we will CHEAT and go directly to the main dish, like a novelist we will not follow rules.

We will work specifically in a network of villages and small towns in Guangdong province located around the village of He Xin Wu. Your task, working in teams, will be to develop new relationships between the market building as "Social Infrastructure" and the existing context. We will design a series of market spaces, commercial spaces for public trade. Most public life in these areas centers around places of commerce, the street, the shop, the restaurant. Rather than dismiss this phenomenon you will work out methods of how the market typology can be adapted, transformed and improved. China's Middle ground

has a specific method of construction based on reinforced concrete frame, a defined set of materials typically glass, blocks, bricks, timber and glass. We will study the tectonics behind the ordinary and use our findings as the starting point for our designs.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the studio are to develop an architectural design knowledge and skills with the emphasis on the on the following topics:

1. Apply design thinking to real-world projects
2. Understand team dynamics, develop collaborative skills
3. Develop design project implementation skills
4. Develop confidence in presenting creative design solutions
5. Develop a design approach that differentiates between architectural idea and form
6. Develop prototype solutions through model making
7. Develop practical material knowledge
8. Understand the importance of failure in design thinking, honour your errors.
9. Acquire proficiency in developing an architectural argument from idea to spatial proposal
10. Acquire deep understanding concerning Chinese Middle Ground

LEARNING OUTCOME

By the end of this one-semester course, it is intended that students develop the following skills and capacities:

1. Ability to undertake a focused and analytical study into a new research topic.
2. Ability to adapt and react and understand the cultural and sociological implications of the site.
3. Ability to formulate a critical position regarding China's Middle Ground.
4. Ability to perform a comprehensive site analysis from macro to micro.
5. Ability to translate an abstract concept into an architectural design proposal, through a defined process of empirical testing.
6. Ability to use photography as a design tool to articulate their design.
7. Ability to develop a set of architectural drawings that explains the project's intention

COURSE SYLLABUS

The course is organized into 4 phases.

Phase 1 – Space and Light (2 Weeks)

- Make a 1:50 Model of one of the following buildings that explains how light, material and space work in tandem.

Louis Kahn -	<i>Bangladesh National Parliament Building</i>
Carlos Scarpa -	<i>Castel Vecchio</i>
Alvaro Siza -	<i>Santa Maria de Canaveses</i>
Alejandro de la Sota -	<i>High School Madrid</i>
Carlos Villanuova -	<i>Architecture School of Sao Paolo</i>

- Deliverables
 1. Team model 1:50

2. 3 black and white photographs of the space generated by the model

Phase 2 - Spaces for a Community Market (4 Weeks)

- Having studied how various architects manipulate space now consider how various spaces come together
- Challenge how a market works
- Consider the tectonic elements that make up a market: Roof, Walls, Façade, Structure
- Consider the appropriate scale for various activities
- Consider programme and future flexibility

- Deliverables:
 3. Team model 1:100
 4. 3 black and white photographs of the space generated by the model

Phase 3 - Adapt your Design to the given Context (4 Weeks)

- We will locate your project in a network of villages around the village of Hexin Wu (何新屋), located in Guangdong Province, China.
- The site visit is dependent on several factors and may or may not happen.
- After selecting a specific village, a process of calibration will take place where each team will consider, scale, programme, spaces, material and other elements in light of the given context

- Deliverables:
 5. Site model 1:200
 6. New 1:100 model of market
 7. Drawing set of plans and sections of the building

Phase 4 – Representation (2 Weeks)

- Each team is expected to deliver a comprehensive set of architectural drawings and models

- Deliverables:
 8. Including Sections, Plans, Elevations
 9. 1:50 Sectional Model
 10. 1:100 Final Model
 11. Narrative line with progress sketches, photographs of the process
 12. 6 B&W images of the scheme taken from the models

Important Dates:

Midterm Review: 29.10.2019
Final Review: 09.12.2019

TECHNICAL STUDIES

M1 studios are to initiate a technical component of their Design Studio (DS) project in conjunction with the two technical required courses:

ARCH5422_Advanced Structures & Construction (Fall semester)
ARCH5421_Advanced Environmental Systems (Spring semester)

Deliverables:

Students are required to submit a mandatory A3 report, coordinated with the respective course instructor, highlighting how their DS projects addresses both structural and building services issues.

The report should commence between week 7 and week 9 and will be assessed independently.

ASSESSMENT SCHEME

50% for final project

30% for process, research, etc.

20% for mid-term review

COURSE FORMAT

We will work in the third floor, AIT Building. Our studio will have a designated space

Teams are expected to work in studio

All tutorials will be conducted as a team, no solo tutorials

FIELD TRIP

The site visit is dependent on several factors and may or may not happen.

Students will not be expected to visit, but may if they think it could help their project.

If the site visit takes place, the dates will be between 9-12th October 2019.

REQUIRED READINGS

Abraham, A. (2015). *A New Nature: 9 Architectural Conditions between Liquid and Solid*. Zurich: Lars Muller Publications.

Alexander, C., Ishikawa, S., & Silverstein, M. (1977). *A Pattern Language*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Frampton, K. (1995). *Studies in Tectonic Culture*. Massachusetts: MIT Press.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. London: Penguin Books.

Bolchover, J., & Lin, J. (2014). *Rural Urban Framework: Transforming the Chinese Countryside*. Basel: Birkhäuser.

Bolchover, J., Lange, C., & Lin, J. (2013). *Homecoming: Contextualizing, Materializing and Practicing the Rural in China*. Berlin: Gestalten.

Ellrichshausen, P. V. (2016). *Spatial Structures*. Copenhagen: Architectural Publisher.

Ferretto, P. W. (2017). *Adapting Villages: An Architectural Framework For Regenerating Dong Minority Settlements*. S.Arch 4th International Conference 2017. Hong Kong.

Frampton, K. (2017, January). *Wemcun Village*. *Domus*, pp. 64-65.

Heidegger, M. (1971). *Building Dwelling Thinking*. In *Poetry, Language, Thought*. New York.

Latour, B. (1993). *We Have Never Been Modern*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

Messmer, M., & Chuang, H.-M. (2013). *China's Vanishing Worlds: Countryside, Traditions and Cultural*

Spaces. Cambridge: MIT.

Rudofsky, B. (1964). *Architecture without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture*. New York: Doubleday & Company.

Sennett, R. (2012). *Together: the rituals, pleasures, and politics of cooperation*. . New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Siza, A. (2015). Architects don't invent, they transform. *Architectural Review*, Issue 1416.

Till, J. (2013). *Architecture Adapts*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, United States: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

IMPORTANT NOTE TO STUDENTS:

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is required in all courses. For an excused absence, the instructor must be notified and presented with documentation of illness or personal matter.

ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at: <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. With each assignment, students may be required to submit a statement that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

STUDENT WORK:

Submission of studio documentation must be complete and correctly formatted. Missing or incomplete submission of the documentation folder will result in the grade for the course being withheld. This will prevent registration for the following term or delay graduation. In addition, a grade deduction of *one letter grade* will be made.

SCHEDULE

Please see attachment