From the Global South: Pedagogical Encounters in Architecture.

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ABSTRACT: The aim of this issue is to contribute to the global debate on architectural education with a view to complement the discourse advanced in the Global North rather than to compete, compare or contest. Both the five research-based essays and project-based articles selected for this issue of *Charrette* deal with critical arguments and frameworks for architectural and urban design pedagogy in the Global South. While the research-based essays are supported by empirical investigations or case studies and reflective discussions and conclusions, the project-based articles establish links between research and context explorations, where the milieus and realities of design actions become fundamental aspects and where the design learning is purposive, inquisitive, informed, methodical, and communicable. Primarily, these contributions are envisaged to offer eight encounters and eight voices presenting key aspects of architectural pedagogy in the Global South and to postulate potential opportunities for bringing writings on architectural education and design studio teaching/learning practices to the mainstream discussions generated in the Global North.

KEYWORDS: Authenticity, Cross-cultural Practices, Cultural Diversity, Environment-Behaviour Studies, Gender-Sensitive Studio, Iconicity, International Summer School, Trans-disciplinarity, Urban Sustainability.

Prelude

The main body of knowledge on architectural education and design pedagogy is primarily created and shaped in the English-speaking world and is interrogated, debated, and reproduced mainly in the larger context of Western Europe and North America. The architectural academic community in other parts of the world; the Global South, is deeply influenced by such a discourse as well as by various pedagogical trends typically introduced in Western academia to reflect the needs of budding professionals and the profession of architecture at large. Largely, these represent tendencies that are instigated and practiced within the contextual particularities of Western academia including the ambitions and constraints of academic institutions, the professional milieu, and the way in which architecture is practiced and produced. Classically, such an influence manifests itself in the fact that in any discussion about pedagogy in architecture in Global South' academia the discourse which characterises the Global North dictates and thus overshadows opportunities for developing another parallel, or in fact different but equally important, discourse which can be generated and developed to address other unique particularities that exemplifies the Global South.

Initial Key Questions: Relevancy to the Global South

The underpinning aim of this special issue of *Charrette* is to contribute to the global debate on architectural education with a view to complement the discourse advanced in the Global North rather than to compete, compare or contest. One way towards achieving this aim is to create an opportunity for accommodating various voices and teaching practices, entrenched within the contextual particularities of the Global South. On this basis, a call for contributions was announced in the website of Association of Architectural Educators (aae) and various online portals in January 2017. The call presented a short statement that contends that the body of knowledge on architectural education can be enriched and its scope can be expanded when both historical and contemporary imperatives are clearly contextualised.

An integral part of the call was a number of questions and possible topics, offered as a trigger for potential contributions. Questions included: How various contemporary interests—such as tradition, identity, modernity, vernacularism, post-colonialism, poverty, sustainability, globalisation—originate within architectural curricula and how these interests act as drivers for studio projects, how international accreditation approaches and processes address the particularities of the Global South, and how international partnerships and summer schools can inform studio practices were among the key questions. While these are important questions, it should be noted that the call was presented to interested contributors in an inclusive manner where potential contributors are offered the opportunity to generate the questions that they feel relevant to their experience and context.

In response to the call, 23 contributions were received under the three categories of *Charrette* —essays, projects, and freespace— addressing various pedagogies, positions, practices, and teaching experiments within the global south, either undertaken by local educators or by international academics or both. After a multi-step submission process that involved double blind review procedure five comprehensive essays and three project-based articles were identified to demonstrate key efforts and diverse interests explored within the context of the Global South.

Earlier Endeavours on Architectural Education in the Global South

It is important to note that in developing this issue of *Charrette* there is no claim that this is the first endeavour that integrates experiences on architectural education in the Global South. There are continuous efforts by individual scholars and educators to present issues of interest or concern to a specific school of architecture or relevant to an educational studio experiment within a school in the Global South. There were also earlier efforts emerged to offer platforms for debating architectural education in key parts of the South or for juxtaposing the dialectic relationship of Global North/Global South discourse. While there seems to be a growing interest in debating architectural education within the non-English speaking world, it appears that such an interest is limited to a circle of academics or specific regions within the Southern hemisphere. Four examples of these efforts over the past few decades are identified as outlined in the following discussion.

Architecture Education in the Islamic World (Ahmet Evin, ed. 1986) seems to be the first of its kind, an important edition that was based on the tenth seminar in the series of Architectural Transformations in the Islamic World, held in Granada, Spain. The book offers important arguments that contextualise architectural education within unique cultural and religious locales, with contributions from world renowned scholars, theorists, and art and architecture historians including Christian Norberg-Schulz, Gulzar Haider, Hasan Uddin Khan, Ismail Serageldin, Jamel Akbar, Mohammed Arkoun, Renata Holod, and Spiro Kostof. Issues related to architectural education and the content of knowledge needed in an Islamic milieu are debated. The book includes discussions on the history and evolution of architectural education in Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Iran, Iraq, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey. This is coupled with a discussion of the content and structure of the Aga Khan Programme for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and how architectural education in the countries represented in the book was influenced by various schools of thought and curriculum models within the Global North including France, Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States. While the book reflects a historical moment of architectural education in the Islamic world, it does not cover the overall context of the Global South.[1]

Architectural Education Today: Cross Cultural Perspectives (Ashraf M. Salama, William O'Reilly, and Kaj Noschis, eds. 2002) is a collection of intergenerational views and thoughts from both emerging and veteran academics. It calls for a revisionist approach to architectural pedagogy, one that is responsive to the needs of contemporary societies and trainee architects and designers within their unique contexts. The book discusses four aspects of architectural pedagogy: knowledge content, professional demands, experiences and experiments and tools, as they relate to current educational practices. It encompasses articles covering various parts of the developing world including explorations of architectural education in Africa and the Middle East.[2]

In 2006, the journal 'Open House International, OHI' published a special issue entitled '*Design Studio Teaching Practices: Between Traditional, Revolutionary, and Virtual Models*.'[3] The issue focused on the increasing importance of studio pedagogy within the context of contemporary architectural and urban design education. While not limited to the Global South, this special issue includes experiments and positions from Northern Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates. Overall, the discussions within these articles offer a new thrust towards active and interactive learning taking into consideration how a sound, holistic and collaborative design pedagogy that integrates emerging communication technologies can positively impact students to provide them with the requisite skills they will need and to instil in them a curiosity about the world they will work in and build for.

An additional attestation of the upsurge of interest in architectural pedagogy is the proliferation of articles in the field. In 2010, 'Archnet-IJAR: International Journal of Architectural Research' published a special issue entitled '*Design Education: Explorations and Prospects for a Better Built Environment.*' This special edition published 32 articles from over 45 contributors from 12 countries including Australia, Brazil, Egypt, India, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.[4] The edition classifies the articles into several pertinent categories; for example, some articles are classified under 'paradigms and positions.' These address the transformations in philosophical foundations, approaches, program contents and structures, curriculum development, and teaching processes. As well, it includes descriptive analyses of teaching models that had been adopted and advocated at the institutional level or by professional organisations. Other contributions in the same category explore specific ideologies and doctrines, as reflected in the development of theories on design pedagogy and as adopted by individual educators.

Another category 'practices', which include articles that advocate the incorporation of new pedagogical ideas and visions; these were implemented and validated frameworks of teaching models initiated in lecture halls and design studios. This category also includes alternative learning/teaching methods, predicated by valid pedagogical theories or key design issues, and those that involve approaches concerned with community-based design learning, service learning, experiential learning, inquiry-based learning, and outcome-based learning. These timely and highly relevant articles not only underscore a rising

interest in writing about educating future architects and urban designers, but also manifest an ongoing commitment to the field of architectural design education in its broadest sense, within both the Global North and the Global South.

The Venture of *Charrette* in the Global South

This issue of *Charrette* capitalises on some of the preceding efforts and can be regarded as an enabler or catalyst for widening and deepening the discussions. Articles addressing contexts in or experiences undertaken within Australia, Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Japan, and New Zealand present important issues rooted in their present realities. While not covering the entire geography of the Global South the contexts within which cases and experiences are developed offer unparalleled lessons. It is noted that some scholars argue that Australia and New Zealand cannot be classified as part of the Global South since they are in essence English speaking and can be viewed from a Western perspective due to their cultural roots. However, the position taken in this issue is that geographically both are in the Southern hemisphere and that contextually they are migrant countries having cultural commonalities with their neighbouring contexts such as China, Malaysia, and Indonesia. This warrants considering both as part of the Global South.

Highlighting some of the key issues argued and validated in the five research-based essays aim to provide concise statements in an attempt to capture the essence of each. Maturana and McInneny argue for the need to root urban sustainability within the architectural design studio and introduce a case from the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism at the University of Chile. Building on the theoretical tenets introduced by Habraken on learning from the everyday built environment[5] and other theorists on experiential[6] and reflective learning,[7] they construct a discourse on integrating research, teaching, and practice into the learning process. Utilising housing developments as a paradigm for learning, they present three case studies which attempt to get as close as possible to the realities being studied. In essence, their work offers guidance for future possibilities of the desired integration of various built environment scales and different modes of knowledge production and re-production, i.e. education, research, and practice.

In the context of Egypt, Samak, El-Kholei, and Ibrahim present an encounter with the issue of gender in architectural education as an academic discipline that continues to be male dominated. Examining the extent and impact of gender inequality in architectural education in Egypt, they utilise a qualitative research approach that results in identifying difficulties faced by female architecture students. Situating their discussion on architectural education in quasi-rural settings, these difficulties are presented as challenges at different levels that include lack of consideration to cultural and behavioural needs as well as various educational and communication practices including jury and review processes. Their work conveys dramatic differences between the opportunities offered to female students in universities located in urban contexts and those that are located in rural settings. While relating the findings of their study to earlier research undertaken in other contexts,[8] they present a number of recommendations that pave the road for a more just architectural education in the context of Egypt.

The work of Mota and van Gameren undertaken Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment at the TU Delft, The Netherlands addresses the context of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. They offer a concise review of various practices undertaken earlier within cross-cultural agendas. Within a call for a fresh look about thinking of the other half—part of the Global Housing Design Studios—they offer a clearly validated framework for reconciling mass housing and vernacular traditions which complement inherited models of the 1950s and 1960s. In assessing Global Housing Studios, their work highlights the importance of integrating various critical accounts relevant to vernacular socio-spatial housing traditions and the need for incorporating disciplinary methods and positions inspired by cross-cultural practices.

Inspired by earlier endeavours in integrating research and environment-behaviour studies into the educational process of future architects,[9] Smita Khan offers a reflective narrative as a result of her teaching approach in a lecture based-class undertaken at the Department of Architecture and Planning, Visveswaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT). Following the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) paradigm.[10] Khan's work presents the intellectual and theoretical underpinnings of the class, its methodology and presents

selected student responses to in-class and out of class tasks. In essence, her work can be seen as a positive response to the concern that current development visions for Indian cities are technology and engineering-based with little room for integrating socio-behavioural parameters as part of these visions.

Bruno Marques and Jacqueline McIntosh offer an eloquent argument on the value of architecture and states that '*The value of architecture is no longer appraised merely as a formal object but by its ability to elicit relevant transformations.*' In the context of Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, Marques' work examines the dimensions of 'iconicity' and 'authenticity' in the built environment. He presents reflections on the experiences of postgraduate architecture, interior architecture and landscape architecture students from New Zealand resulting from their visits to iconic architectures and landscapes in three European cities. His work emphasises the differentiation of what is authentic and real and what is imaginary and fictitious in the built environment.

In the category of project-based articles, three contributions are included in this issue and clearly respond to some of the initial questions raised within the call for papers. On the one hand, between Australia and Japan Dupre and Higashino present analytical reflections on the results of research-based design assignment as part of the Australian Japanese architecture design summer school. From an internationalisation perspective, their reflection involves an assessment of the effectiveness of the validity of the summer school following a timeframe approach on how the premise of the programme was achieved. This includes maximising social interaction and cross-multicultural knowledge transfer among the participants while interrogating and contrasting traditional architecture and modernity.

On the other hand, addressing modernity within the context of Cuenca, Ecuador, Rivera-Muñoz and Bernal present a series of design investigations as part of the Masters programmes in Human Settlements and Urbanism and Strategic Planning at the Department of Architecture of the University of Leuven. This was also based on a series of design workshops undertaken in Cuenca tackling questions related to water, topography and dispersion as part of the urban development process. The first set of investigations involves confronting various urban issues from a 'landscape urbanism' perspective. The second set aims to bridge the gap between architectural and urban scales through various public space conceptions and interventions. These investigations contribute to the development of speculative interpretations and design strategies for use by the Planning Department of the Municipality of Cuenca.

Finally, the work of Tenorio, Mani, and Hirth presents a trans-disciplinary and multicultural two-week design workshop held at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore. Utilising a community engagement approach, housing design refurbishment proposals were developed following an exploratory research process that interrogates traditional housing construction processes in Karnataka (Southern India). As part of the research-design process issues relevant to sanitation, waste management, traditional materials, thermal performance, community resources and needs were examined and debated. The experiment involves putting students in the driver's seat by offering the opportunity to reshape the brief based on the evolving experience they gain throughout the design process.

Eight Encounters and Eight Voices on Architectural Education in the Global South

Both the five research-based essays and project-based articles selected for this issue of Charrette deal with vital, tenacious, and sensible arguments and frameworks for architectural and urban design pedagogy in the Global South. Interestingly, they still base their work on the literature and the body of knowledge developed in the Global North, an aspect that continues to characterise the global flow of knowledge and ideas in architectural education and also in other areas of knowledge.

The research-based essays are substantiated by empirical investigations or case studies and reflective discussions and conclusions. However, the project-based articles appear to follow the "Designerly Ways of Knowing" approach,[11] where linking research and context explorations with the milieus and realities of design actions is imperative, and where the design learning is purposive, inquisitive, informed, methodical, and communicable.

Overall, the eight contributions can be recapitulated in terms of encounters and voices that are outlined hereunder:

- Maturana and McInneny encounter the issue of expanding the scope of studio pedagogy by integrating urban sustainability. They voice the need for integrating different modes of knowledge production and re-production through research, design, and practice.
- Samak, El-Kholei, and Ibrahim encounter with the issue of gender-sensitivity in the architectural design studio and voice the need for a more just architectural education in underrepresented areas.
- Mota and van Gameren encounter the issue of designing for the other half and voice an advocacy for integrating a critical approach to vernacular traditions and the need for incorporating cross-cultural methods and practices.
- Smita Khan encounters the introduction of research in environmental psychology in lecture-based classes and voice the need for the preparation of future architects and designers capable of contributing to current development visions within socio-cultural and socio-behavioural milieus.
- Bruno Marques and Jacqueline McIntosh encounters authenticity and iconicity in architecture and voice the need for a clear differentiation between both.
- Karine Dupre and Adriana Higashino encounter the role, extent, and validity of summer schools and voice the importance of cross-multicultural knowledge transfer while questioning traditional architecture and modernity.
- Monica Rivera-Muñoz and Ana Karina Bernal encounter the scope of pedagogy in architecture and urbanism and voice the importance of community outreach while integrating academic exercises into the realities, challenges, and constraints of designing in context.
- Rosangela Tenorio, M. Mani, and R. Hirth encounter the notions of trans-disciplinarity and multiculturalism in a design setting where various issues relevant to different disciplines are integrated and where staff and students come from diverse cultural backgrounds. They voice the importance for community engagement while utilising socially active design approaches.

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