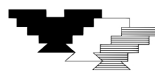


MUHON

**A Journal of
Architecture,
Landscape Architecture
and the Designed Environment**



University of the Philippines
College of Architecture

issue no. 3

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About the College

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Environmental Architecture... UPCA focus

"Green Architecture", "Sustainable Design" have insinuated themselves into the consciousness and interests of our profession in 'recent' years. The terms as well as the substance behind them have been used, as well as abused to no end. As global warming and environmental upheaval transition from science fiction to science fact, and as more and more attention is focused on architecture and design, we are besieged by the challenge and responsibility to sift through the rhetoric, and arrive at substantive approaches to insure that our architecture is truly environmentally sound. Easier said than done. As fast as "green architecture" becomes a marketing tool and catch phrase...the number of "foremost proponents of Green Architecture" increase exponentially.



Architectural thesis exhibited in Haraya 2008

In spite of its inherent limitations and the sometimes sound aspersions cast in its direction, the Academe nevertheless retains the burden, accepts the responsibility, and ultimately rises to the challenge of distinguishing truth from fiction, distilling fact from fantasy, ultimately validating the reality of the world around us. If the natural tendency of the universe is towards greater disorder...entropy, then architecture should seek to reverse entropy.

In one of its faculty meeting, the UP College of Architecture has decided to integrate environmentally-sound architecture as the core focus of its curriculum in both the undergraduate BS Architecture/ B Landscape Architecture programs and its graduate Master of Architecture and Master of Tropical

Landscape Architecture programs. The next cycle in the 5-year cycle of curriculum review/revision starts this 2008, the UP Centennial Year. The UPCA intends to develop a curriculum geared to developing an environmentally-sound Filipino architecture, relevant in its essential social, cultural, economic and technological facets.

During the Centennial Year 2008, the UPCA was intensively involved in efforts leading toward this environmental imperative. Our Alumni Homecoming on March 7, 2008 heralded our formal announcement of our goal. The annual "Haraya" last March 2008 manifested this environmental focus in the exhibition of works of students and faculty and lectures. On the same month, the UPCA hosted the 13th Inter-University Seminar on Asian Megacities, with the theme: "Asian Megacities, the next 100 years...Environmental Challenges to Architecture and Planning". Participants from leading universities in Asia converged on UP to present papers and researches on this theme. This jumpstarted future research collaborations, academic linkages and faculty-student exchanges with the foremost institutions in China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Thailand.



13th Inter-University Seminar on Asian Megacities (UP, March 2008)



Inter-university collaboration of UP and Tsinghua University

A continuing series of lectures is held at the UP College of Architecture. One was on the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) evaluation system developed by the US Green Building Council by a LEED Accredited Professional. In this and the coming lectures, the aim will be to cut to the core.

¹ Dean of UP College of Architecture, 2007 to present.

Acknowledgements

This third issue of MUHON
is now published online through
the U.P. Diliman Journals Online
(UPDJOL - <http://journals.upd.edu.ph>).

As a Center of Excellence,
the UP College of Architecture is
responsible for disseminating knowledge.

Thus, Muhon is launched as a vehicle for reaching out
to other architectural schools,
architects in academe,
in the architecture and building industry
and to the public at large.

The UPCA thanks

the Council of Architectural Researchers and Educators

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Introduction

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The architects' quest for knowledge, (must be) a quest for results!

The phrase 'creative research' was adopted in style to make the cover of MUHON 2005. The purpose was not style for style-sake however, but a clear and valued mission, at best, an inspiring one. It came to become ally to those architecture professionals mentoring in universities. Teaching architects represent a segment of the profession that is 'compelled' by norms to engage in research. *'Yes, scholarship precept purveys that research is what is expected of people in the academic community. Professors are themselves scholars who, aside from teaching do research.'*

..And who do not? Are architects of different breed, research-averse art punks? Is research a monopoly of the white-clad genius that boasts of 'ISI pedigree'?

MUHON 2005 believed otherwise. It proffered that the issue can be a matter of perception and recognition. And it is, to some extent. Architects are often a misunderstood lot. They ought to do extra effort to make other people understand the context in which they live. They should show that the practice of design is one of active combination of quest for knowledge and creative production of the artistic mind. And that there is need to demonstrate to others that producing building designs -being always in combination with search for knowledge, is in fact research and in the same league with that done in academe.

The MUHON 2005's argument was crisp! A valid metaphor of a parallel stream or a corollary track producing the same output is likely a tough one to refute. The logical soundness of the argument appeared relevant. It was destined to reap *even* modest results!

This year's MUHON (2009) stands on the same ground. It will continue building up a legacy that started when the journal came first into print. It is to reach out to fellow architects in not only academe but also elsewhere, emphasize the value of research, and at the same time demonstrate that they are actually a research-conscious, change-for-the-better kind.

However, MUHON 2009 goes many steps further this time. It now espouses the idea that if architects were to live up to that noble claim, the architects' quest for knowledge must be a *search for results*, not just a creative display of the imaginative mind, and certainly not a mere *desire for outputs*. Embracing this principle from now on may propel the profession onto a new height.

What is it? Is it not just a play of words, a recycled concept?

Well, when we architects build, we become agents of change particularly in the built-environment. In context, we perform our role as intervener, prescriber, or moderator of change in most works that we do. Whenever we design or implement policies, programs or (especially) projects in any station of work or organization we belong to, we *gun* for the highest order of things - and go against entropy, so to speak. Yes, we build housing for the poor, roads, schools or hospitals. We relocate settlers, redevelop urban communities and improve community health. We implement programs for public sector capacity building, energy development or promote sustainable livelihood. We reformulate our organization's thrust, institute new curriculums or revise our mission-vision. All these revolve around a common goal of improving the lives of people; uplifting the economy or saving the environment. Yes, reaching for the common good shall be the result by which our design, research or any endeavor at all must be measured. In fact, this is the very measure by which success must be recognized!

This is a direction where architects must now focus their 'research-creative' minds on. The need to reach for results shall be evident in the way we do things in the profession, whether it is in the academe, industry or anywhere else in the practice. We will not be contented in just designing programs, policies, or projects that only erect buildings, relocate communities or produce most Board passers & topnotchers. Buildings, relocation projects or new architects must be outputs that translate into results, i.e., improving people's lives; uplifting the national economy or protecting the environment, among other nobler of things.

And to accomplish these requires stronger search for knowledge that goes into the process of designing policies, programs or projects. There must be an evaluative knowledge component incorporated in all design endeavors. This knowledge shall include setting of standards, identification of targets, measurement of performance, and assurance of system's sustainability -all for a common purpose of measuring results.

It is a big challenge now. How could this be done is a BIG question for *researchers*. And in this respect, the architects are called upon to give the best in their creative research. The quest for knowledge must now be a search for results, and in doing so, creative research will be a noble quest for success.

The following adaptation from Osborne and Gaebler amplifies the challenge. *"...If we can measure results, we can tell success from failure. If we cannot recognize success, we cannot reward it. If we cannot reward success, we are probably rewarding failure. If we can recognize failure, we can correct it. If we can demonstrate results, we can win public support..."* (Adapted from *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit Is Transforming the Public Sector, from Schoolhouse to the*

¹ Ph D Arch Eng., Editor in Chief, Muhon issue no. 3.

Statehouse, City Hall to the Pentagon by D. Osborne and T. Gaebler, Perseus Books Group, 1992)

The quests of MUHON 2009 Papers

A modest selection completes the list of papers in this year's MUHON. Many in the list show common characteristics that could easily make categorizing possible, however, the lumping together of the studies into separate topics was waived in lieu of the emphasis put on the themes' cross-disciplinary character. Nonetheless, as one goes browsing through the substantive contents of the paper entries a thematic sense of commonality that ties up and distinguishes some studies from the other becomes evident. But one thing is more apparent, most papers are heavily expressive of creative research. This makes the whole collection worth seeing. The works are a good start for result-seeking research done by architects of the teaching kind.

Silvestre's *Architectural Design Guidelines and Deed of Restrictions for the Taal View Heights Farmlot Community in Talisay, Batangas* dwells on the delicate balance between semi-urban development initiatives and the preservation of suburban characteristics of rural neighborhoods. A proposal for guidelines that will influence decision making in design development and marketability consideration for farmlots subdivision development is a rich contribution from a creative research.

The *Pedestrian-Friendly Streetscape in a Tropical Business District* explored the relationship between pedestrians and the streets in a busy business district. Galingan and others investigate the result-seeking nature of landscape design and highlight how effective solutions are applied to reconcile conflicts between man's needs and the spatial constraints found in highly dynamic spaces of a business environment.

Tomeldan presents both a graphic and analytic demonstration of comprehensive development planning processes applicable to tourism sites in *Tourism Structure Plan of Busuanga and Coron, Northern Palawan*. He stresses the importance of tourism master plan in national development and the role of sustainable environmental management in tourism planning.



Proposed Camp Site at Calauit Island

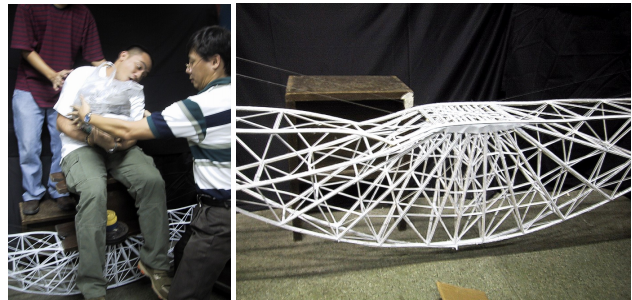
While Mata's *Heritage Conservation: Applying Scientific Method in Architecture, the Lingayen Capitol Building (1918)* advances a scientific approach to heritage conservation; it emphasizes in

parallel the intangible connections of the design process with the Philippine value systems and concepts. The study demystifies some myths on heritage conservation existing among architecture circles.

The Billboards: Are They Here to Stay? A Study of Billboards in EDSA, Philippines of De los Reyes et.al. is a timely contribution to the discourse on the relevance of billboards. The authors attempt to put order in a rather chaotic situation of the billboard industry in the country. The billboard industry structure is illustrated in the study in a more understandable fashion.

The *Case-Based Study of Three Tourism-Dependent Islands in the Philippines* might appear more of a tourism sales pitch than being a discourse on tourism issue when not reading deep into the paper. But as the study probes on how three popular tourism island destinations in the country respond to the challenges posed by the phenomenal ascent of Asian tourists, the work shows more substance. In the end, it advances a model that explains how touristic consumption affects the spatial character of the environment in the tourism islands.

Dytoc highlights the importance of graphic visuals as instructional tools for alternative teaching technique in the paper titled *Effective Graphics in Structures Class: Integrating Structures into Architecture*. He postulates that the pedagogic gap between architectural and structural courses needs to be bridged. The graphical feature of the paper arose from the intent of validating the proposed methods and ideas with the reader.



Students build bridges and have them put to the loading test

The study, *Adopting Organized Self-Help Housing Approach in Low-Cost Housing in Davao City, Philippines* by Santos-Delgado, puts into focus the good practices applied in helping solve the housing problem in the context of Latin American countries. It will strike a common chord in the local informal sector as it highlights how the concept of self-help can be a good alternative for housing the country's urban poor.

And finally, Villajuan's *An Initial Study and Application of Basic Plant Characteristics that Aid in the Reduction of High Urban Temperatures* gives us a deeper understanding of the urban heat phenomenon. Albeit initial in nature, the research demonstrates depth. It inclines us to read further and see how landscape architecture might provide a sound solution to the overgrowing problem of urban heat.