

REGENERATION: DISCOVERING TRADITION THROUGH CROSS CULTURAL DESIGN EDUCATION

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This paper analyzes the manner in which two architectural design studios, one Afghan and one American, explored designs for a new College of Architecture, Planning and Design for Kabul University, Kabul, Afghanistan. The Afghan students insisted upon a design that was both modern and also directed by Islam. They focused primarily upon the future and used traditional architectural strategies as a basis from which change could be imparted. The American students focused upon traditional Afghan architecture and sought ways to reinterpret it to fit a contemporary architectural college. The strengths and weaknesses of both studios make a case for such collaboration.

For many decades Kabul University has served in the frontlines of contested ideologies as well as civil war. During the late 1960's and early 1970's, the life of the campus was open to the interactions of different groups with different values. Many Afghan leaders of recent decades fiercely argued their philosophies as students and later engaged in life and death struggles for control of the country. Following Soviet domination, civil war and the Taliban era, Kabul University is undergoing its latest transformation juxtaposing the assistance of numerous western nations against diverse Afghan aspirations.

The design of a new College of Architecture, Planning and Design is not about creating blueprints for a building but rather engaging in a process of inquiry concerning the confluence of global forces and Afghan disorientation from recent decades of war. An underlying hypothesis is that both Afghan and American students and faculty may learn more about themselves through the thoughtful reflection of difference with the other. It is through the identification of primary differences in values that discovery of tradition, in the present discourse, can be identified. Tradition is not seen as some latent unified subconscious past but rather a field of values, beliefs and aspirations that must appear in today's dialogue as evidence of tradition's continuity and validity.

The cross-cultural collaborative design studio served as an incubator for reflecting upon the interactions of indigenous traditions and global cultural exchange. The critical appraisal of alternative

design propositions identifies key social, cultural and environmental forces operating within Afghanistan. Ultimately, the design project promotes Afghan reflection upon their cultural identity and pedagogical implications for architectural education in Afghanistan.

TWO DEPARTMENTS WITHIN TWO UNIVERSITIES

The architecture departments at Kansas State University and Kabul University share a common heritage in that both programs were spawned under the auspices of an engineering program. Kansas State is one of the oldest land grant universities in the United States. Land grant universities commonly included departments of architecture within colleges of engineering. Like most American schools of architecture, an independent College of Architecture, Planning and Design was established at Kansas State University in the early 1970's. The Department of Architecture at Kansas State celebrated a 100th anniversary in 2004.

The early 1960's USAID master planning of an expanded Kabul University possessed the educational organization of the American land grant tradition (Fig. 1). Consequently, a Faculty of Engineering, and within it a Department of Architecture, was established. The location within the Faculty of Engineering reinforced an architecture curriculum with a strong emphasis upon building science, particularly structural design. As a Peace Corps Architect, I taught this curriculum within the Kabul University Department of Architecture during the early 1970's.

The history of Kabul University's Department of Architecture reflects the larger history of the country whereby its very existence was discontinued for parts of the Soviet occupation and the civil war. A mere ghost of its former self existed during the Taliban era, trying to operate within a shell of a destroyed university. Following 2001, a number of noteworthy Afghan architectural alumni returned to Kabul as design professionals who also donated their time to reestablish the quality of architectural

education at Kabul University. Since 2001, the department has hired five new Afghan architectural faculty members who have benefited from a slowly improving architectural education.

The Department of Architecture at Kabul University aspires to become its own independent faculty. However, the department recognizes its future for the near term is strongly tied to the Faculty of Engineering. It was only in 2007 that the Faculty of Engineering finally received its first major educational assistance via the World Bank. This assistance came in the form of a ten-year partnership agreement between Kansas State University and Kabul University. The goal of the partnership is in line with the larger strategic plan of Kabul University to raise university education to international accredited standards by 2015.

ENVISIONING A NEW KABUL UNIVERSITY FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND DESIGN

The existing architectural curriculum remains largely as it was in the 1970's. Collaboration with the Afghan faculty during the past year has resulted in a substantially revised curriculum that has recently been approved by the entire Faculty of Engineering. While Afghan architectural educators and practitioners continue to stress the importance of building science and structural design, they are also painfully aware of the lack of urban design and planning content within the curriculum. This need is made dramatic by the fact that the population of Kabul has multiplied from about half a million in the 1970's to an estimated 4 million in 2008. The new curriculum creates new courses in sustainable environmental systems and also the socio-cultural content of environmental design. Single courses in landscape architecture and interior design contain the seeds for what may eventually become new departments within a new independent faculty. Developing the project program for a new Faculty of Architecture, Planning and Design at Kabul University built upon the aspirations of the newly approved curriculum.

Implementing the collaborative design studio encountered many difficulties. Both universities use a semester calendar but Kabul's academic year begins in late March with a month break in August

and a fall semester ending in December. No classes are held during the winter months due to an absence of heating in the campus buildings. Given the difference in academic calendars of the two universities, the program document could not be simultaneously created by students of both universities. Therefore, the project program was created by Kansas State students under my leadership. Input from Kabul students came in the form of e-mail responses to a questionnaire created by the Kansas State students.

The completed project program was delivered to the Afghan professor of architecture intended to teach the subsequent Afghan design studio. This program was shared with the head of the Department of Architecture at Kabul University who was to join the Kansas State design studio for the first six weeks of the Kansas State spring semester. The Afghan department head's early presence in the Kansas State studio was meant to clarify assumptions of the project program as well as provide an important Afghan perspective from the earliest design stages. Despite six months of bureaucratic planning, the Afghan department head was not able to secure permission to travel to the United States. This event was the first major difficulty encountered in our real world engagement with Afghanistan.

A second major difficulty occurred when the Afghan professor intending to collaborate with me during the Kabul spring semester decided to quit teaching. The Afghan department head decided to teach the Kabul studio as a teaching overload but this was after losing the first four weeks of the Afghan studio calendar and also losing any opportunity of students of the two studios to collaborate during their projects. The net result was therefore a linear sequence of the project first being done at Kansas State and then later done by Kabul University. The Afghan department head and I remained as the bridges linking the two projects but real time student interaction was unfortunately lost.

THE KANSAS STATE STUDIO PERSPECTIVE

The theme of the Kansas State architectural design studio was "The architecture of culture and the culture of architecture". Readings and discussion focused upon cultural identity, architecture and the

impacts of technology and globalization. Students also researched topics such as cultural issues of the Afghan built environment, vernacular Afghan architecture, principles of traditional Islamic architecture, contemporary Middle Eastern architecture, campus planning in western and middle eastern contexts, and tectonics and sustainability in high altitude desert climates. As a capstone graduate studio project, the class made formal presentations of their progress to a committee comprised of two professors and two practicing architects. The committee members brought a rich background including teaching and working in Afghanistan, research in vernacular architecture and sustainability, and design of educational facilities.

In the process of focusing their attention upon the educational needs of the Afghan college of architecture, Kansas State students also grew aware of the many shortcomings of their own educational environment. Various sources of information had underscored the importance of the informal social space and activities for the Afghan college. Such design qualities did not show up in a conventional project program and the students also realized the lack of these qualities in the Kansas State facilities.

The method for addressing this need was to look at how a thriving campus design supports the many informal as well as formal needs of students and, by extension, individual colleges can be seen to replicate these services at a smaller scale. This perspective led to very interesting research because first of all, the campus of Kabul University has the legacy of an early 1960's campus design created in Los Angeles and imported to Afghanistan by the United States Agency for International Development. The campus design is alien both culturally and also temporally in that it's architecture and planning reflects a modern school as factory philosophy. The campus buildings are isolated objects scattered across a large empty expanse of space. The design of the new school of architecture at Kabul University clearly needed to address not only its own educational needs but also provide a critique and a new direction for Kabul University campus planning. Sources for this new design came from looking at examples of the Afghan built environment possessing thriving social interaction. Logical examples included the traditional bazaar, serai, public garden, and vernacular village cluster. These traditional examples were studied in terms of

social, spatial and environmental interaction and reinterpreted in terms of their implications for a vital educational environment.

All of these vernacular sources suggested new and meaningful ways in which the new college of architecture would interact with the campus context. In all cases, the message was to promote a higher density of built form to open space. Figure – ground comparisons of the Kabul University campus and the vernacular built form were vivid graphic evidence of both the problems and also the direction for improvement. Students grew to understand the vital inside / outside relationships absent from the campus plan but always evident in the traditional built form. An even deeper issue of significance was the student's appreciation of the vernacular response to the larger environmental setting, the place. The traditional examples exhibited a clear reason for why they were located where they were located. The examples also clearly expressed how they interacted within a larger network of built form.

Armed with this knowledge, the Kansas State students reappraised the Kabul University master plan and discovered some important design concepts that were implemented at the largest scale of overall campus placement and layout of two major armatures. While these largest planning elements have significance, they were lost in subsequent campus construction. Students observed occasional positive qualities of the existing campus buildings but they appeared to be fortunate accidents rather than designed intentions. More recent modifications of the original buildings also furnished insight into the shortcomings of the original campus.

These observations resulted in the identification of a tentative set of alternative campus locations for the new college of architecture. These options were shared with a UNOPS architect who had recently consulted on the Kabul University campus plan and other parties working on campus. This led to four alternative campus locations for the design of the new college (Fig.2). Different sites were chosen by the different Kansas State students based upon which site most closely supported their prior research and

conceptual investigations. All of the locations provided the opportunity for a strategic intervention with the larger campus plan.

Predominant conceptual design themes of the class included the following. In response to the floating object buildings of the campus, some students sought ways to convert the campus into a unified field. Strategies included conceptualizing the campus as a torn carpet needing mending, a potential garden with buildings integrated within a formalized landscape, and the fragments of a village needing to replace lost buildings of its clustered organization. Other students sought an urban analogy whereby campus pathways promoted an urban response of building as bazaar or as serai, (Fig. 3). One student was fascinated by the use of brickwork as both solid patterned walls and also open pattern screening. This led her to the study of degrees of porosity and transparency and its multiple meanings for this culture, this project and this place. The different approaches also led to a deeper common consideration of the meaning of infinity in the physical as well as the socio-cultural context.

While these concepts had real promise in addressing the larger contextual issues, students soon discovered that these concepts led them to developing building designs very different from what they were accustomed to. It was at the schematic design phase of the project that the Kansas State students began to discover they had learned certain norms or rules of thumb and that the rules did not always apply in the Afghan context. One good example of this concerns the use of pattern. Whereas the student concepts were demanding a repetitive use of pattern at multiple scales, the American students were used to solving different components of their design in different ways. This became most dramatic in terms of the initial external images of the designs where typical western building materials were unthinkingly applied. The use of computer aided design also promoted this calamity since ready-made materials libraries and templates were at the student's disposal. The disappointing results were self evident to the students and reminded them of important materials and technology research done the previous semester

for project programming. Additionally, this experience helped the American students understand why many of the new “modern” buildings rising in Kabul look like their first schematic designs.

Interior functional and spatial ordering was difficult because of the general complexity of the project itself as well as the need to combine this ordering with the underlying conceptual themes of the design. Certain activities, such as a proscribed prayer space, were especially difficult for the Kansas State students to understand within the context of their design. It would later prove that this topic was equally conflicted by the Afghan students who agreed upon such a provision but differed markedly on just how it should be designed.

An interesting constraint that helped refine the order of the student designs was the requirement of basic primary structural systems. Afghanistan does have access to minor sized sections of structural steel and other metals but the predominant structural material and system is site cast reinforced concrete. Steel is most often seen for necessary long span conditions and this will usually be in the form of trusses utilizing smaller individual structural members. Recent western infatuation with cement stabilized earth construction is being advocated by a number of western sponsored agencies in Afghanistan and some of the American students saw this as a great opportunity to hybridize local rammed earth construction with modern modifications. Students wanted their designs to possess a didactic quality in terms of the use of structure, materials and sustainability and found these objectives to be compatible with their previous underlying design concepts.

Another important issue that came from the design development phase and linked back to the conceptual design phase concerned the concept of the building roofs as catchment areas for valuable water resources. It was at this point that students saw new opportunities for how their buildings could meaningful enrich the adjoining campus landscape. They also rediscovered the lessons of the vernacular architecture, this time viewed through the lens of “sustainability”. It was through the design development

stage that response to climate and culture was almost lost and it required the students to reject standard solutions to building construction learned in previous years and become more creative.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the student's final design presentations was that the class discovered that each of them had addressed a broad set of design issues in their own sequence and according to their own conceptual agenda, but, none-the-less had all covered the same ground. More than any previous time, the class saw how designs that appeared to be very different actually shared many deeper common qualities. The reviewing committee saw this as an indication of a comprehensive investigation by most students of the class and indicative of a successful final master's degree design studio.

This project was arguably the most challenging of the master's studios at Kansas State for the 2007-2008 academic year. As such, inevitable shortcomings were also observed. Criticism was leveled at the lack of reinterpretation of the vernacular architecture in terms of contemporary times and in relation to how much these examples needed reinterpretation to address the open space of the campus plan. Whereas the vernacular examples were inevitably within dense clusters, the American designs still had a certain isolated objectness not unlike the campus itself. It was pointed out that if the Faculty of Engineering and the Department of Architecture at Kabul University could undertake creative new local building material design and testing, this could have profound impacts on an emerging, contemporary Afghan architecture. This also points to the critical importance of local Afghan research in the ultimate development of Afghan architecture and the goal of a revived Kabul University and Afghan professional society.

THE KABUL UNIVERSITY STUDIO PERSPECTIVE

The Afghan fifth year architectural design studio began four weeks late due to the absence of a professor. When the Department head assumed responsibility, he organized the twelve Afghan students into two design teams. The Kansas State project program came in two volumes and each team was

assigned a volume to study. As fifth year students, many of them had reasonable English speaking abilities and at least three of them have good reading skills. The stronger members of each team helped other students understand the program requirements. A major objective of reconstituting the Department of Architecture is instituting a new curriculum, taught in English. This process has just begun in the 2008 academic year.

As a partner with the Afghan department head, I communicated electronically for the four weeks prior to my arrival in Kabul. During this time, five assigned discussion assignments were sent. The first discussion involved the study of the design of the Kabul University campus in terms of the Kabul city plan and dramatic topography. The second assignment was for the class to make a quick study model of the Kabul University campus and begin exploring building design ideas in conceptual models. The third assignment was to begin thoughts about the major interior spaces of the building. The fourth assignment was asking the students to compare the design of the 1960's international school Faculty of Engineering building with the new Afghanistan Center of Kabul University designed by a consortium of Afghan and international architects. The fifth assignment asked the class to explore alternative ways of trying to give the Kabul University Campus Plan more unity and cohesion. A number of strategies were demonstrated and it was hoped the Afghan students would have their own method for making a meaning pattern out of fragments.

Although the students assured me they had digital copies of all of the assignments, physical evidence was lacking for most of them. Upon my arrival in Kabul the studio presented a large bubble diagram exploring the zoning and desired adjacencies for the program activities. Each team also presented a number of image studies of what they foresaw to be a desirable form for the new design. A small 1:2000 massing model for Kabul University was also nearing completion. Each team had its leaders who spoke English well but it was apparent that they were unaccustomed to making a reasoned oral presentation of their design intentions. Strengthening the class design vocabulary became the first task. Some of the

students had studied Francis Ching's *Form, Space and Order* and I decided this was the text that best matched the student's needs. Many of the student sketches of massing and image exhibited specific types of formal ordering so I also gave the class a lecture on four generic types of formal organization. These lessons gave the students the vocabulary to discuss what their designs already possessed. An additional language assignment was to ask the student to identify one or two keywords that most represented what each design proposal was about. The keywords given by the Afghan students were: growth, inspiring, and freedom to change.

In discussing the Kansas State proposed program of activities for the new school, a number of interesting points were raised by the Afghan students. These issues were raised as a class and were not presented as ideas of one individual Afghan student. The class was adamant about the addition of an Islamic calligraphy studio for the school. I asked them why and they stated that all architects must first learn how to letter. They also saw the calligraphy studio having a very different ambience than the rest of the school. I asked them if the entire school should have this special ambience but they insisted that it should not. I sensed that the calligraphy studio was an important way of retaining their Islamic heritage but I could not get them to voice any concerns of this type. I suggested that I had read that calligraphy is considered by Islam to be the most important of Islamic arts and that the art of calligraphy could be seen as a foundation for creating their architectural design. Either the class could not or would not engage a discussion on this point so that is where the inclusion of a calligraphy studio rested. The other programmatic concern was the inclusion of a prayer space. It took several occasions before the class, with the leadership of the department head, reached a consensus that what was called for was not a mosque, that is used for prayer five times a day but rather a space for prayers during the noontime. It was also clarified that other appropriate social gatherings could also occur in this space although it was not to be considered a lounge. No discussion was made as to provision for the women of the school concerning prayer activity.

Most of the Afghan students of the class were also working in professional offices in Kabul and this proved to be an asset in a number of ways. One student worked in the UNOPS office that is overseeing the final design and eventual construction of the Kabul University Afghanistan Center. The chief UNOPS architect sent a 1:200 scale presentation model of the Center to school with the student and the studio enjoyed a detailed discussion not only of the design but also of the importance of architectural models. The class was able to discuss the formal and spatial ordering of the design using the vocabulary they had learned. Prior to this studio, models had only been used by Afghan students for final presentations and not as an intrinsic part of the design process. The class was asked to construct a 1:500 scale model of a segment of the Kabul University campus that contained the project sites for both teams as well as nearby buildings, monuments and landscape. Examples of loosely scaled concept models were shown to the students using the book, *Designing with Models*, by Criss Mills. This will become a textbook in the new second year design studio. The fifth year students then proceeded to make concept model expressions of their earlier massing image sketches of their designs. Students have always made massing models and see buildings as objects so it took several attempts to get them to use less material and show the interior space of their designs. From this point forward, both groups began presenting their designs in concept model form and the entire class would conduct class surrounding the class context model.

A formal presentation of the progress of the studio was held with the UNOPS architect as a guest reviewer. The department head and I sent the class via e-mail a formal description of the presentation requirements the week prior to the review. I was delighted to see all of the students holding a printed copy of the file at the beginning of the following studio session. Each group was asked to create a set of drawings to accompany their concept models and this process of developing drawings after the model was a major shift in their educational experience. Reviewers at the presentation included the UNOPS architect the department head, myself, and another Kansas State professor of architecture who is also part of the Kansas State / Kabul University partnership team, (Fig. 4). Each student team presented at least four

alternative design concepts and the morning long discussions resulted in each team identifying a set of desirable design characteristics coming from several of their concepts. This led to the logical next step of developing a new hybrid design synthesizing the strengths of their earlier work.

Visually externalizing the design process, a vital aspect in design education, is not part of the current Afghan architectural education for a number of reasons. First of all, students have limited drawing tools and supplies and this reinforces an emphasis upon presenting a final design rather than design process. Second, both the physical and the social environment of the Kabul classrooms discourage the posting of student work. There is no display space, taping onto always dusty walls is problematic and, worst, non-architectural students will vandalize posted work. Third, architecture students do not have a personal desk nor do they have a lockable storage cabinet so everything must be carried home with them even if they have no place to work in dormitories with twelve students in one room. Working with the Afghan faculty and administration, the Kansas State team has taken a number of measures to address these critical issues but solutions do not come overnight.

Many advanced Afghan students buy their own laptop computers and carry them to class. While this solves certain problems, it also reinforces others. The students know that mastering AutoCad will give them a job at many of the Kabul NGO's. Their laptop also gives them access to the new wireless internet system of the Faculty of Engineering. As with senior American students, they stop using hand drawings and never print out any of their work because the only plotter in the school is used for final presentations at the end of the semester. Students and faculty are always eager to exchange files, and viruses, on USB drives but it is very difficult to see how this material is being used.

Consistent with the unpredictable nature of the larger events in Afghanistan, day to day classroom work was erratic. Advanced students make significant social and economic contributions to their parents and siblings and daily school assignments sometimes must take a lower priority. Working in

teams helps smooth out these personal interruptions but as a professor, one never knows the daily composition of the class. It was clear that the social obligations of preparing for an outside reviewer weighed heavily upon the class. The entire class succeeded in working collectively for this review but then informed the faculty at the end of the review that they would not be attending class the next day due to postponing studies for exams in other subjects.

Besides the socio-cultural obligations towards guests, each student group had a few clearly identified leaders. It was these student leaders who met outside regular studio hours after finishing their exams and who advanced the team designs prior to the following scheduled class. These team leaders had gained insight from the guest review and made significant refinements to their conceptual schemes. It was at this stage that the hybrid nature of their concepts became clearer. The courtyard archetype emerged as the deepest formal-spatial ordering principle but with significant reinterpretations.

Unlike either the totally enclosed courtyard of Afghan vernacular architecture and also unlike the very open compositions of the 1960's campus buildings, both design teams transformed the courtyard concept in response to particular site, campus planning and larger place considerations. Additionally, both teams developed unique design strategies for the interaction of the calligraphy and prayer space with the order of the rest of their designs. Both design concepts reflect the powerful interactions of tradition, modernity and the role of Islam in Afghan higher education.

THE AFGHAN CONCEPTUAL DESIGNS

Team One wanted a design expressive of growth and progress and wanted this expressed in different ways for the regular programmed activities versus the Islamic calligraphy and prayer space. At the same time, the design needed to have an overall coherent order while also responding to the particular project site location chosen by the team. The team developed their design through the evolution of five successive conceptual models, each of which had the approximate required programmatic scale and

activities. All conceptual models were evaluated, in part, by the model's interaction with the surrounding segment of the Kabul University campus. Team One composed a set of building masses so as to define a central courtyard space with some special attributes. First, the primary entry to the new college building was via the central courtyard with an inviting opening defined by two flanking dynamic masses. These masses possess a quality like that of two large opening doors. From within the courtyard one discovers secondary visual openings outward to the larger campus. One opening frames the view of the monument of Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani¹ and the other opening leads to a secondary courtyard where the college workshops are located. The seeds of building expansion answer the need for physical growth while the view of the monument answers spiritual growth.

The most dramatic element of the Team One design is the Islamic calligraphy and prayer space mass. In contrast to the more basic disposition of the other building masses, this mass is strategically located within the overall design composition. Formed of a special structure and material, this linear mass shoots through the courtyard enclosing mass. One end of this mass cantilevers outwards towards the monument of Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani while the other end forms a bridge between both courtyards in one direction and two separated masses of the enclosing courtyard in the other direction. Through its form and position, the Islamic element expresses both the primary spiritual guidance of Islam and also the role of calligraphy as literally the bridge to inspired artistic craft.

Team Two wanted a design that was to be inspiring and expressive of the freedom for growth and change. An openness to inside / outside relations to the building and the landscape was also important to them. The earliest formal concepts of this team were focused upon heroic building masses that lacked the capacity to grow and to respond to the surrounding campus for the project site chosen by the team. Later designs developed a more open composition of building masses but lacking a larger order. A conceptual breakthrough occurred when the team anchored the building masses to a centralized exterior spatial datum. This strategy was more geometric than archetypal and it was only after several additional

design iterations that the students began seeing the design as having fragments of a central courtyard. The team saw an expressive relationship between the prayer space, the calligraphy studio and the nearby monument of Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani that was in marked contrast to the courtyard datum. Whereas the primary orientation of the building design was aligned with the adjoining campus streets and walkways, a contrasting visual axis was formed so as to break open one corner of the courtyard datum and visually relate the monument of Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani outside the college with the prayer space strategically positioned as an isolated mass of the building composition. The calligraphy studio is located at the corner opening of the college massing that links the monument and the prayer space. Both team design concepts can be seen in the evolution of their conceptual models, (Fig. 5).

CONCEPTS AND REALITIES / AFGHAN AND AMERICAN STUDIOS

Despite the significant conceptual achievements of the Afghan studio, the final reality crunch occurred on the last day of my attending the class. The Afghan professor had just returned from a faculty meeting where it was announced that the Afghan Ministry of Higher Education decided to end the spring semester two weeks early. This meant that no time was allowed for the Afghan studio to do the important work of translating their promising concepts into workable and buildable design propositions. No time was allowed for the Afghan students to discover how advancements in local building methods and materials could inform their designs. Perhaps this is a metaphor for the dilemmas confronting the country whereby progress occurs in spurts and stops. None-the-less, the Afghan students had undergone a different architectural educational experience whereby, instead of learning how to quickly document whatever design was at hand, they spent their time considering the deeper meanings that architecture can possess. As Terry Eagleton has said; “If you do not know who you are in the West, postmodernism is on hand to tell you not to worry; if you do not know who you are in less well-healed areas of the globe, you may need to create the conditions in which it becomes possible to find out who you are”.²

What the Afghan studio lacked, the American studio possessed in strength, namely the ability to painstakingly translate their design concepts through the design development stage of completion, (Fig. 6). Ultimately, this can be seen as an argument for how the capabilities of the Afghan and American architects could best benefit through collaboration. The irony however is that instead of the Afghans serving as the production service of the professional office, they should be the major contributors to the conceptual design phase of the projects. Of course this is based upon the premise of designing significant institutional architecture for Afghanistan and not just commissions for military installations.

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Afghan Head of the Department of Architecture and studio professor:

Sayed Maqbool

Professional advisor in Kabul:

Sebastian May, UNOPS Architect, Kabul, Afghanistan

Students of the Kansas State design studio:

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Affiliated Kansas State University Faculty and Professional Advisors:

Miriam Neet, Assistant Professor; Paul Holmquist, Assistant Professor, Murali Ramaswami, architect; Chris White, architect

NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹ The Makbara-i-Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani memorial is a twelve meter tower of black marble columns supporting an elevated shallow dome. The scholar's tomb is located beneath the dome upon a raised plinth accessible by stairs from all sides. Sayed Jamaluddin Afghani was a 19th century Afghan scholar who called and failed for reform and modernization in Afghanistan. He traveled and wrote extensively about his dream for the unification of all Muslim states into a single Caliphate. His tomb and monument was completed on the Kabul University campus in 1968. The monument provides an important focal point on the campus.

² Terry Eagleton, *The Idea of Culture*. Blackwell Manifestos Series, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2000), p. 75.

FIGURES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

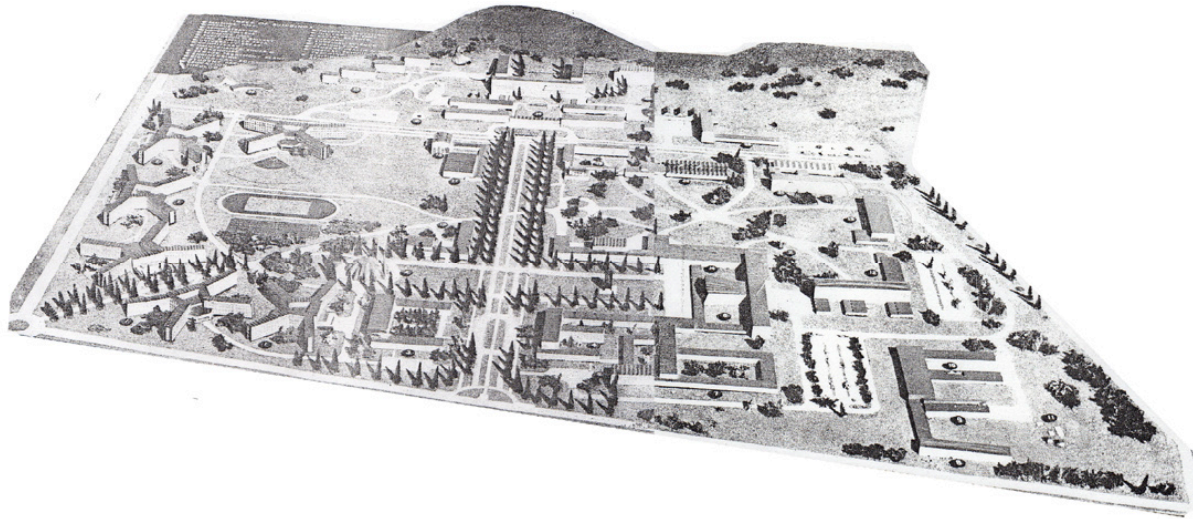


Fig. 1 Kabul University Master Plan. Principle construction was completed by 1964.
Source: Dodge, J. Robert. *Report on Project to Assist the Royal Government of Afghanistan with the Design and Construction of Kabul University*. International Housing Service. Kabul: Housing and Home Finance Agency, 1957.

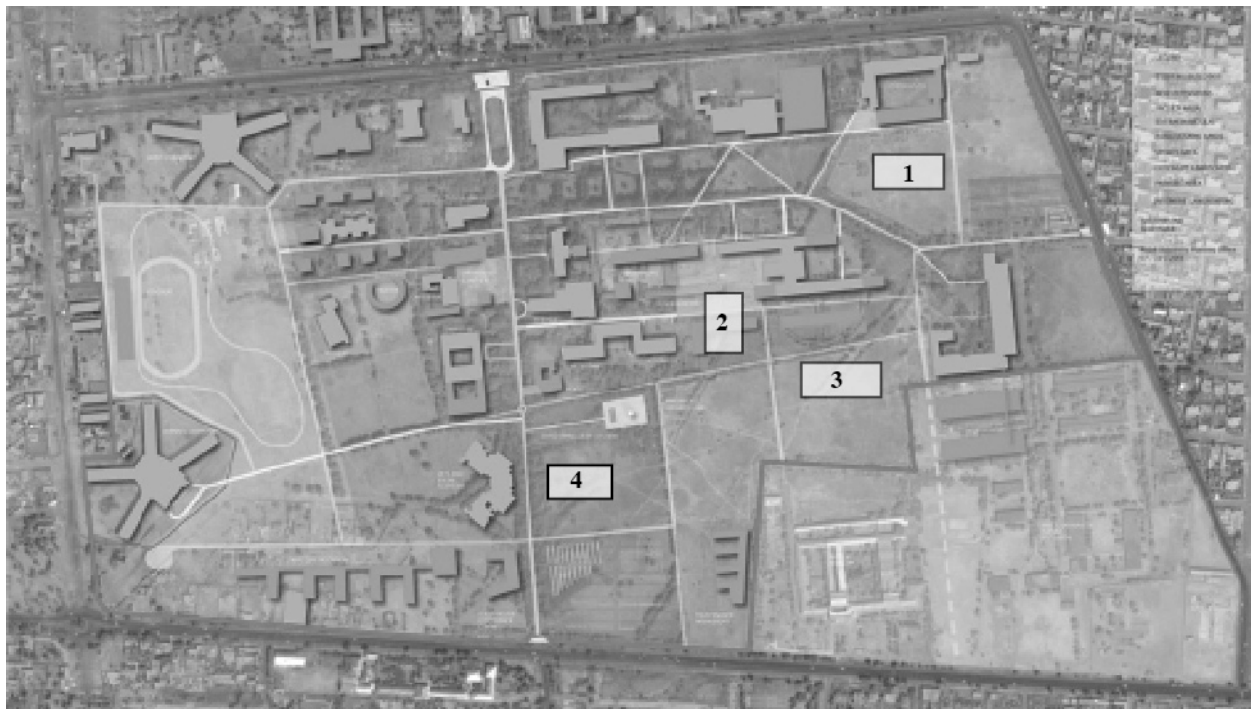


Fig. 2 Alternative selected building sites chosen by KSU students. Site number one was later discredited due to master planning commitments of adjoining College of Agriculture

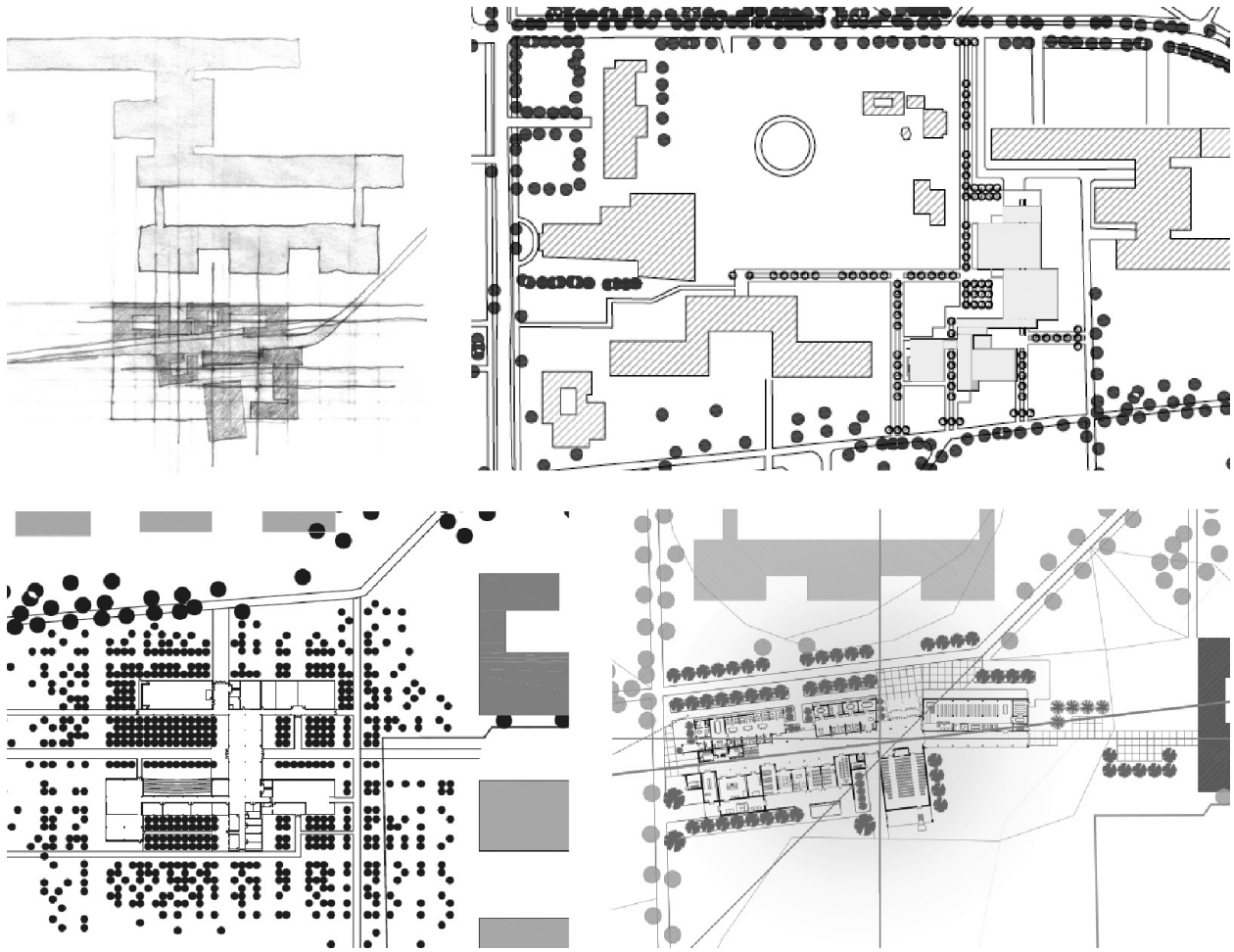


Fig. 3 Examples of alternative campus interventions for KSU student building designs. From upper left, student designers are Konstantin Gregorian, George Hess, Sean Heiman and Benjamin Strain.



Fig. 4 Conceptual design review. UNOPS architect Sebastian May is discussing the alternative concepts presented by the Afghan student team one upon the campus context model constructed by the class.

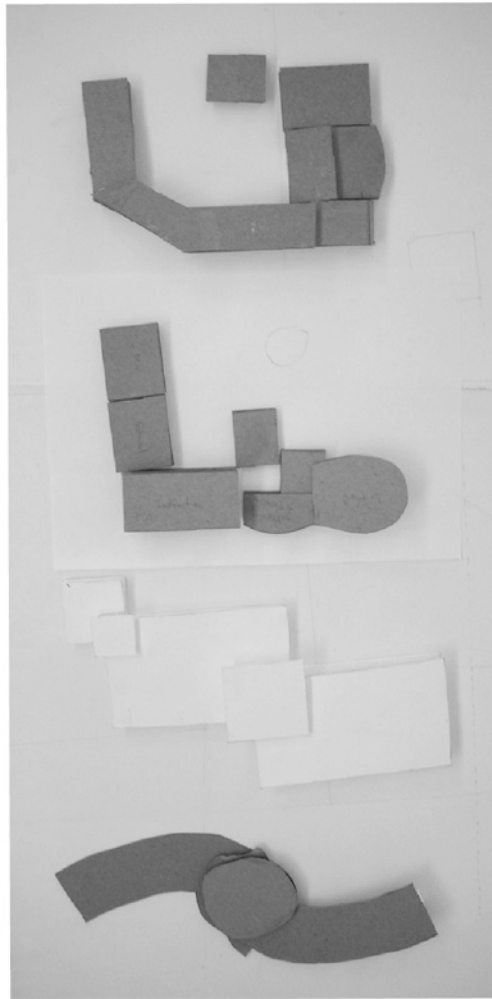
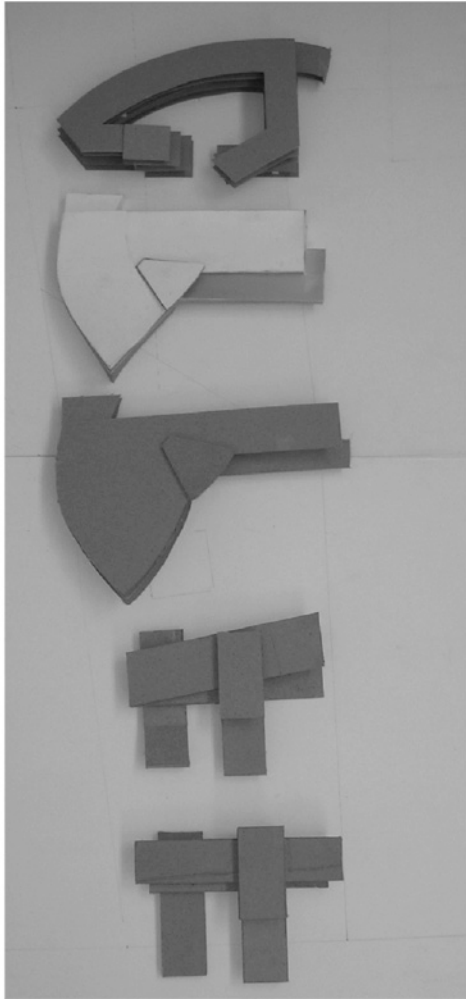
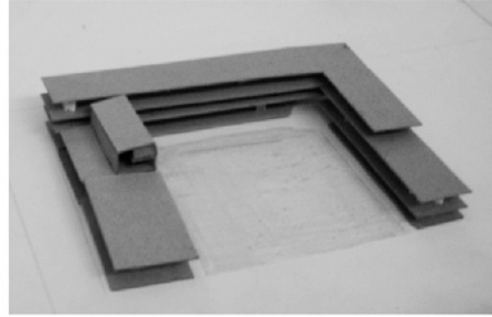
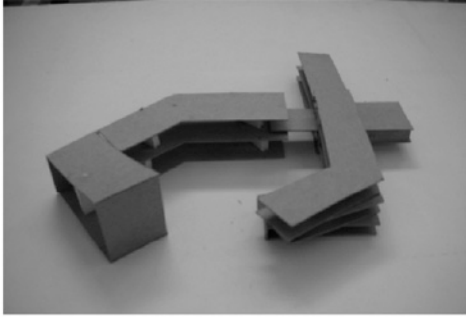


Fig. 5 Evolution of Afghan student conceptual models with first ideas at the bottom and last idea two weeks prior to beginning of final exams appearing at the top. Team one is on the left and team two is on the right.



Fig. 6 KSU student Michael Anderson making the final presentation of his individually designed College of Architecture, Planning and Design for Kabul University.