

## POST -COLONIAL ATTITUDES IN THE DELIVERY OF WESTERN ARCHITECTURAL EDUCATION IN CHINA

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Western academics involved in the delivery of joint-courses in China are normally accorded the status of 'foreign experts'. This description, and a tendency among many westerners to be ignorant of the motivations and pedagogical underpinnings of educational policy in China, may lead to critical or even condescending attitudes when encountering the educational practices exhibited in Chinese universities. This can frustrate the development of a critical and co-operative teaching and learning relationship with Chinese staff and students. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that many Chinese academics without experience of western education show little interest, and sometimes suspicion, of educational practices different from those with which they are familiar.

This paper looks at the relationships which have developed over a period of almost 10 years between an architecture school in New Zealand and an architectural school in China. The work done by New Zealand staff in joint course which they established has been characterised by an unconscious assumption of superiority by the western academics which was reinforced by the favourable response which their teaching drew from Chinese students and occasionally from Chinese staff who have studied in the west. Over time, however, an undercurrent of critical resistance was observed in the Chinese staff. Analysis of this work's initially intended to be based on propositions contained in Edward Said's seminal essay on "Travelling Theory" (and the later essay "Travelling Theory Revisited") which explored what happens to theories and practices based on theoretical understandings when they move from place to place.

Very soon, however, it became clear that there was a need to acquire more exact information on what the attitudes of the different parties were before any more sophisticated analysis could be started. This paper therefore describes an initial survey of attitudes and responses to the existing joint course as perceived by western staff, Chinese staff who have been educated in the west, Chinese staff educated in China and the Chinese students to whom it is delivered. The results are collated and analysed and future paths for research and collaboration are identified.

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