

PhD in Architectural and Landscape Heritage

Research Title: Urban Structure and Open Spaces: the Role of Landscape Design in Twentieth-century Kyoto and Turin

Funded by	Politecnico di Torino
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Context of the research activity	<p>The research project focuses on the role of open spaces and green areas (both public and private) in the search for a local identity and the construction of a regional idiom in twentieth-century Turin and Kyoto. Despite obvious differences, both Kyoto and Turin experimented with past traditions in the construction of open spaces and the conservation of local heritage. By analyzing the evolution of open space making and landscape conservation during the twentieth century in Piedmont and Japan, the project aims at defining which historical elements and models found effectively application into open space design and into historic gardens restoration as well as into historic landscape conservation. Through a deeper understanding of the processes that informed open space design, garden restoration, and historic landscape conservation, the project also aims at defining and implementing methods and strategies for future projects of urban open spaces and green areas, as well as at contributing to the current theoretical debate on historic landscapes conservation.</p> <p>In exploring the instrumental role of history, memory, and the past in strengthening geographical specificities and local cultures through open spaces, the project will tackle four general themes:</p>
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	<p>1) Landscape preservation and conservation: the theme addresses the relationship between preservation of historic natural landscape and preservation of the local cultural heritage as well as the evolution of approaches to landscape preservation.</p> <p>2) Historic garden restoration: the theme addresses the evolution of approaches to garden restoration as well as the role of the development of historicism and the study of local traditional garden models in garden restoration.</p> <p>3) Design of new gardens and open spaces: the theme focuses on the role of historic garden models in the reassessment of a geographical specificity and local culture in Piedmont and Japan; focusing on the work of prominent twentieth-century landscape architects, the topic aims at investigating how local garden traditions and typologies were used and reinterpreted in the design of new gardens and open spaces; it further investigates the cultural and ideological reasons that supported the reinterpretation of those models; it also addresses the role of the development of historicism and modernism in informing garden and open space design.</p> <p>4) Urban open spaces: the topic will discuss the evolution of open spaces (in terms of design, use, function) throughout the twentieth century in relation to the urban development; it will study how transformed urban areas were designed to convey a sense of localness and identity; it will further discuss if and how models derived from local garden traditions were applied to open spaces designed in urban areas under transformation.</p> <p><u>The project will be developed in cooperation with the Kyoto Institute of Technology (KIT), Japan. It is part of the research activities to be developed at the Polito/KIT Joint Research and Education Center, a collaborative research infrastructure, with headquarters both in Turin and Kyoto, that is currently being established between Polito and KIT.</u></p> <p><u>The selected PhD candidate is expected to spend an 18-months stay period in Kyoto, at the Kyoto Institute of Technology. The scholarship will cover the mobility costs. The mobility period will be tentatively divided into 3 stay periods of 6 months each. The first mobility period could ideally start in January 2018.</u></p>
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Objectives	<p>Within the framework of this collaborative research project between Politecnico di Torino and the Kyoto Institute of Technology, the dissertation topic that the selected PhD candidate from Polito will develop will focus on the reinterpretation of historic gardens and open spaces in the twentieth century.</p> <p>Through a comparative study between Kyoto and Turin, the dissertation</p>
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	<p>will investigate how local garden traditions, Modernism in landscape architecture, as well as the development of historicism informed restoration of historic gardens, the production of new gardens and open spaces, as well as the implementation of measures for landscape conservation and preservation in the search for a distinctive local specificity and identity. By focusing on selected key figures (such as the Japanese landscape architect Mirei Shigemori and the Italian landscape architect Pietro Porcinai) and case studies, the thesis will explore the continuing influence of historic garden typologies in landscape architecture practice.</p>
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<p>Skills and competencies for the development of the activity</p>	<p>Applicants should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a Master of Science Degree, preferably in Landscape Architecture; relevant expertise in landscape architecture; proficiency in written and spoken English. <p>Ability to a multidisciplinary approach to research and interest to work with an interdisciplinary team and in an international environment are considered assets.</p>
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