

# Graduation Plan

Master of Science in Architecture, Urbanism & Building Sciences

MSc Landscape Architecture 2023 - 2024

Wenlan Jing



## Graduation Plan

Submit your Graduation Plan to the Board of Examiners ([Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl](mailto:Examencommissie-BK@tudelft.nl)), your mentors and delegate of the Board of Examiners one week before the P2 date at the latest.

### I Personal information

Full name	Wenlan Jing
Student number	5563380

### II Studio / Lab information

Name / Theme	FLOWSCAPES – Landscape principle lab LAP	
Main mentor	Denise Piccinini	Landscape Architecture
Second mentor	Machiel van Dorst	Urbanism
Argumentation of choice of the LA graduation lab	Designing a symbolic and meaningful cemetery has been haunted me for more than 1 year, because cemeteries have been a very special and memorable location for me since my grandparents passed away. Besides, compared to large scale projects, I'm always fascinated with small scales interventions and Mysticism that relate to local culture and identities more. In LAP lab, there is no specific location and topic limit that I could amplify with my cemetery design smoothly. For this year, scale continuum is the main requirement of LAP lab, from which I could reflect my design by zooming in and out to discover new and important connections with the larger context of the urban landscape and with the specificness of the place, its atmosphere and spatial composition.	

### III Graduation project

Title of the project	<b>Revival of memory</b>	
<b>Context and aim of the project</b>		
Location (region / area / site)	Xi'an, Chang'an district, Ci'en Yuan cemetery	
Problem statement	In China, death is a solemn topic, somehow forbidden and avoidable. However, tombs always link people with their memories, therefore we can say that a public cemetery is a place full of collective memory.	

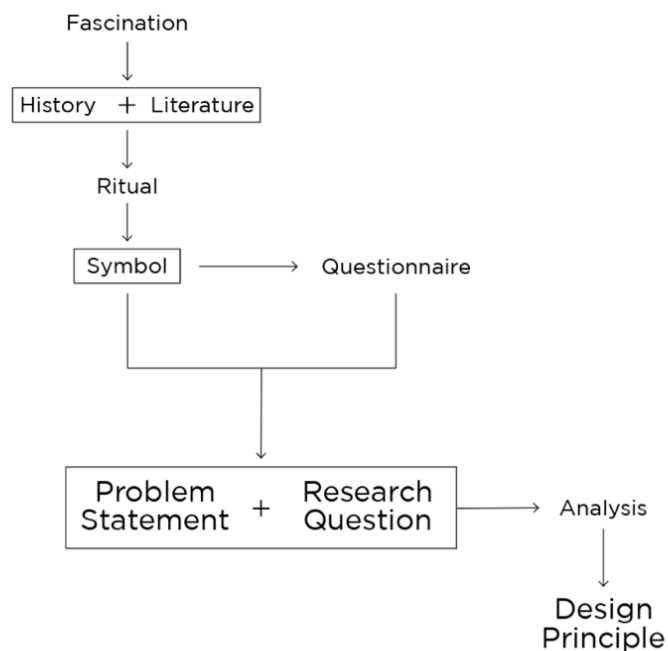
	<p>In 1844, the first public cemetery was built in Shanghai by the British, which was a strong strike towards Chinese burial traditions. Up to now, fairly speaking, public cemeteries are still new for the Chinese people with a less than 200 years history. Large part of traditional Chinese are not affected deeply because of the strong local death culture, especially in Shaanxi, Xi'an.</p> <p>Throughout history, the emperor's Lings have left many symbols. Some of them are still used currently in many public cemeteries, which are the only legal place to bury the dead. Those symbols strongly ruin the atmosphere inside public cemeteries. Meanwhile, new Chinese generations regard death quite differently, they ask for more types of spaces inside public cemeteries instead of only remembrance.</p> <p>On a larger scale, the connections between each public cemetery in Xi'an are hardly observed. Under these circumstances, public cemeteries are important, either for each person or for the society. Public cemeteries need a revolution to balance all the needs. The Chang'an Ci'en Yuan Cemetery, will be used as an experiment in this creation process.</p>
Research question(s)	How can public cemeteries be transformed to better vitalize collective and individual memory for the future generations? (Take Chang'an Ci'en Yuan Cemetery as an example)

	<p>Sub-question</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the burial rituals and (memorial) symbolism of public cemeteries in Xi'an nowadays?</li> <li>2. What is the role of public cemeteries in the urban context in Xi'an nowadays?</li> <li>3. What are the future functions of public cemeteries in Xi'an?</li> <li>4. What are the needed changes of public cemeteries in Xi'an to create a desired atmosphere and spatial composition that future generations would identify with?</li> </ol>
Design assignment	Reformation and expansion of Chang'an Ci'en Yuan Cemetery

[This should be formulated in such a way that the graduation project can answer these questions. The definition of the problem has to be significant to a clearly defined area of research and design.]

#### IV Graduation process

##### Method description



Structure of research



## Literature and more applied references

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## V Reflection on the project proposal

1. What is the relation between your graduation topic, the lab topic, and your master track?

Generally speaking, for me, every topic could suit with our lab topic –scale continuum. Because it acts as a basic discipline that we have to consider during the design process, not a single design could live without a series of scales. It helps us designers to think broadly from different perspectives. Take my graduation topic for example, on the “site” scale, public cemeteries are perceived the atmosphere, the aggregations of landscape elements - this would be scale 1;

Then zooming out to the surroundings of these cemeteries, they become a part of the entire environment, in which visitors could feel a larger landscape and the relationship between each other, and this is defined as scale 2. The 3<sup>rd</sup> scale can only be seen through aerial maps, and public cemeteries are regarded as some small points, we tend to analyze the whole structure linked by those small points, and in this scale, we try to conclude at the functional level. Therefore, 3 scales correspond with 3 intentions to understand a site completely, that’s the aim of our lab.

For the whole master track, I have learned about small-scaled spatial design in Q1, water-oriented non-urbanized planning and design in Q2, even larger scale of energy/cultural urban planning in Q3 and Q4, and a little bit knowledge of architecture and model making during my exchange. The graduation lab is the combination of these all, since we have to consider the 3 scales throughout the knowledge of the whole master track, and enable our storyline in every section, so all these 3 are closely connected.

2. What is the relevance of your graduation work in the larger social, professional and scientific context?

Everyone cares about after-death life in China, either spiritually or bodily because people want to be remembered and memorized when they pass away. In this way, public cemeteries are important for modern people. However, existing public cemeteries are not bringing satisfaction to most people, so it’s necessary to know what people want and their needs for public cemeteries. Therefore, I design a questionnaire to collect opinions and advice, from people. It was my first time conducting this experiment, I felt very close to the public and heard their voices. This procedure truly helps me to better rethink of public cemeteries, how they could bring more vitality to cities, and how they make up of great part of people’s lives.

In the professional and scientific context, it’s worth to try this topic, because sacred spaces are not profitable, in China, the design of public cemeteries is not taken seriously at all. Some professors are advocating combining public cemeteries with public green spaces, expanding green spaces for people, which is what I want to experiment with in the graduation lab as well. The other aspect is symbolism, and iconic elements are rarely mentioned, but very much connected with sacred places like public cemeteries, which seem to be very significant shown by the results of the

questionnaire that I received. Moreover, this is the biggest point to distinguish public cemeteries and public green and the biggest challenge. Sometimes, people are afraid of the atmosphere shaped by those symbols, but not of cemetery itself.

To sum up, I really believe and hope that this design experiment (will) achieve a lot for public cemeteries in China, in any perspective in the future.