

Throughout time the passage and exchange of ideas has been fundamental to the development of architecture worldwide.

Consumerist civilization has recently witnessed the transformation of travel into a commodity for the masses. Once an exceptional journey for the privileged few, overseas trips are now a reality for millions of people. Modern inventions in communications such as the radio, telephone, television, fax and electronic mail all serve to bring the entirety of the world into our homes and within our spheres of influence. As one flips through the daily newspaper, watches the daily allowance of television or browses through their favorite magazine (perhaps the Fifth Column?) we are bombarded with images, tales and news flashes from as close as our own physical community to as far away as satellites orbiting the moon.

These media of modern communications are all impetus to the evolution of Marshall McLuhan's prophecy about the world becoming an electronically linked global village. Subsequently, as a result of the media our larger community has become physically boundless and the notion of travel has taken on new meanings.

With the world drawing closer it becomes more integrated and uniform. We have witnessed the development of an international governing body and the incredible growth of world economic markets. At the basis of global village realization is the export of modern technology to the lesser developed nations around the globe. For this reason, the relations within a global village are not, by nature, symbiotic. With the advent of modern means of communication the rate of exchange of architectural ideas and technology has rapidly increased, to such an extent that it has become a dominant factor in the evolution of architecture today.

During the first part of this century architects proposed an *International Style* that they advocated could be applied in a generic fashion around the globe. This seemed a logical progression in the evolution of architecture under the terms of reference discussed. Consequently, with the popularity of modern architecture, we find today the same buildings in Damascus as we do in Dallas. In too many places traditional building styles and methods have had to move from the street into the museum. This phenomena promised an attitude in which western architects imposed their lifestyles and ideals on others in distant places. However, to truly understand and appreciate the different ways of the village and its inhabitants we must 'experience' travel first hand.

Modern media and communications constitute a reality that helps to make us both more aware and critical of the environments that we share in the global village. The architect has an important role in the new global society as an enlightened trader of ideas and technologies. How do we approach this position with a respect and appreciation of foreign culture and lifestyle?

Bon Voyage !!

Mark Guralnick



