Architectural Implications of Globalisation

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ABSTRACT

The urban phenomenon of globalisation through the proliferating networks of electronic communication is indeed being observed in all corners of the world. This transregional interconnectedness has brought about not only networks of social activity and power, but also the catalyst to economic activity through this collapsing of the time-space dimension.

Populations and functions, once constraint to the city by high costs of interaction and transaction, are now able to prosper no matter where they happen to locate within the national landscape. With the convenient access to the different states and nations all over the world, the nomadic tribe no longer focus on settlement patterns within limited metropolitan areas, but rather on settlements within the country and even global regions all over the world. Enjoying this privilege of mobility through the advanced infrastructure systems- transportation and communications, these populations of highly specialised and affluent persons already live in non-place societies. In this “borderless” world, it is no longer fitting to consider a single city as a unitary place- to treat a city as a place-defined phenomenon.
While the capitalist mode of production is characterised by its relentless expansion, always trying to overcome limits of time and space, it is only in the late twentieth century that the world economy was able to become truly global on the basis of the new infrastructure provided by information and communication technologies. The telecommunications revolution has triggered a spatial revolution in terms of the geography of economic activity. With this, a whole new economy of information emerges from this flexible information technology milieu that the technopolis is able to support.

It is therefore important for the urban planners to understand how the urban milieu can provide for the innovation flux and maintain the quality of the urban living environment. This challenges further the planners of this dynamic urban site. What then will be the strategic planning that is able to respond to this city of a new economy.

Along with emergence of new practice and thinking, contemporary architects begin to acknowledge the power of the New Economy. The city is no longer just being by idealistic urbanist planning but also the invisible hand of market forces, particularly that of private enterprise. With the uncertainties and constant change in of the urbanscape, embracing the time factor, designs will require a high-powered conceptual framework as well as the space created for countless combinations and substitutions.

With the above discussion about the emerging of the new economy, and translating this into a possible typology of architecture in the future, we may have a projective kind of buildings, work nodes. The trend of the rising number of nomadic population that requires a high level of mobility within a country for business, needing work nodes that programatically allow them a level of flexibility to touch and go.

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