Part V: PLACE IDENTITY, ARCHITECTURE, URBANISM, AND GLOBALIZATION
Identity and Identification: The Role of Architectural Identity in a Globalised World

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Abstract: The last 20 years have been marked by the expansion and liberalization of international capital and major advances in communication which have created the phenomenon known as globalisation. The breakdown of national barriers to trade and communication and the increased movement of populations have had a significant effect on the stability of communities and have affected their sense of identity. Place identity has also been transformed as cities adapt and project themselves on the global market. Architects are the agents of the symbolic visual markers of identity and, at the top of their profession, have been instrumental in major changes in the built environment. As social identity is challenged by the effects of globalisation, geographically stable place identity can be a palliative to vulnerable communities. The architectural profession has a unique opportunity to influence the character of places to the benefit or dis-benefit of the resident and incoming communities. A broad view of how the architectural profession itself fits into an emerging global society and how it has responded to these challenges and opportunities will reveal if it is acting as a positive or negative force for newly destabilised communities and their sense of identity.

Keywords: Identity, globalisation, architectural profession, modernism, city, community.

INTRODUCTION

People identify with the places they live and identify places as different. While there may be some relationship between these two types of identity, the way a place contributes to personal and community identity and the way people recognise different places are not the same thing. Both aspects of identity are, however, important to architects and urban designers. Architects and urban designers have a unique responsibility in their ability to transform and create the built symbols that contribute to the complex series of phenomena that make up the identity of people and communities. In this transforming and creative process designers will make - and will usually wish to make - buildings and places that are in some way distinctive. It is, however, possible for these two aspects of identity - and let us now call them identity and identification - to work in opposition to one another. While a new or transformed building or place may be highly distinctive or identifiable it could undermine the particular character of a place that the community regard as a critical part of their identity. On the other hand, that same distinctiveness could reinforce or even create an enhanced sense of identity.

The relationship between identity and identification can be a source of conflict between designers and those who must live with the public face of their designs. Although it is not usually expressed in these terms, the importance of identity to the individual is of such significance that any threat of change in their home environment can be seen as a threat, not just to the character of where they live, but also and consequently to their own personal identity. In other words, a strongly identifiable design may be seen to run contrary to the accepted identity of the place to those who identify with it. The resultant strength of feeling is well-known to all experienced designers. It must be clear that identity as a psychological and sociological phenomenon is of importance to anyone who seeks to transform the built environment.

IDENTITY

The basic principles of identity are quite straightforward and move from identification in general to

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personal identity. Identification is fundamental to human perception and indeed that of any living creature. We have to identify phenomena in order to understand them and interact with them. We identify things as the same and different: as humans we give a common identity and name to groups of things we categorise as similar; to do so we must identify a group of things as different from other groups of things. We can also identify social groups. Each person seeks their identity as an individual and does so through the social groups to which they belong. Identity is established through sameness and difference: in the sense of sameness with groups of people who it is assumed share this sense; in the sense of difference from other groups. As Jan Aart Scholte explains, this goes to heart of self and community. “Understanding and affirming the self - both as an individual and as a group member - is a prime motivation for, and major preoccupation of, social interaction. People seek in social relations to explore their class, their gender, their nationality, their race, their religious faith, their sexuality, and other aspects of their being. Constructions of identity moreover provide much of the basis for social bonds, including collective solidarity against oppression. Notions of identity underpin frameworks for community, democracy, citizenship and resistance. In short, identity matters (a great deal)” (Scholte, 2005, p. 146-7).

Group identity is a fundamental part of human behaviour. In 1970, the psychologist Henri Tajfel (1970) conducted a series of experiments which reduced the identity of a series of individuals, one to another, to the absolute minimum by identifying only similar scores in trivial tasks. These individuals, knowing no more about their relationship with the others than a correspondence of score, consistently gave preferential treatment to those whose scores came closest to their own. This is known as Social Identity Theory and establishes the principle that for each of us there is an “in-group”, which we favour, and “out-groups”, which we do not.

Marliynn Brewer puts this into an evolutionary perspective: “our ancestors chose cooperation rather than strength, and the capacity for social learning rather than instincts. As a result humans are characterized by obligatory interdependence (...) Clear group boundaries provide a compromise between individual selfishness and indiscriminate cooperation or altruism. In effect, defined in-groups are bounded communities of mutual obligation and trust that delimit the extent to which both the benefits and costs of cooperation can be expected. (...) If human survival depends on bounded communities of mutual, obligatory interdependence, then humans must also have evolved psychological characteristics that support functioning in such a social context. The capacity for symbolic self-representation, the need for belonging and contingent, group-based trust are all cognitive and motivational mechanisms that support and maintain interdependent group living. Similarly, social identity and the need for positive distinctiveness can be viewed as psychological mechanisms that bind individuals to groups and commit them to the preservation of intergroup boundaries” (Brewer, 2000, p. 122-123).

From our evolutionary origins in small social groups or tribes of about 150, ("Dunbar's number") (Dunbar, 2010), joined together for mutual benefit and survival, we have now expanded a genetic predisposition to in-group identity into a much wider field. From an existence where there was mutual recognition and shared activities to a modern life in a nation state, where we share carefully protected and even enforced identities with populations numbered in the millions, we find ourselves in a much more complex condition in which we must find our identity. In both tribes and nation states, this complexity is managed through the use of symbols. In The Symbolic Construction of Community, Anthony Cohen shows that, "the consciousness of community has to be kept alive through manipulation of its symbols. The reality and efficacy of the community's boundary - and, therefore, of the community itself - depends upon its symbolic construction and embellishment" (Cohen, 1985, p.118) We can recognize these symbols from the ceremonial of state to the use of distinctive language and dress amongst social groups.

Much as communities do not spring from nowhere, the symbols that define them are not spontaneous but are often traditional. "As sets of assumptions, beliefs and patterns of behaviour handed down from the past, traditions provide some of the symbolic materials for the formation of identity both at the individual and at the collective level. The sense of oneself and the sense of belonging are both shaped - to varying degrees, depending on social context - by the values, beliefs and forms of behaviour which are transmitted from the past. The process of identity formation can never start from scratch; it always builds upon a pre-existing set
of symbolic materials which form the bedrock of identity” (Thompson, 1996: 91-3) As they are traditions rather than history, these symbols are not fixed. They can evolve with the community and even be invented (Hobsbawm & Grainger, 1983) but, in all cases, their effectiveness as traditional symbols requires a convincing pedigree, real or imagined.

As the scale and variety of community expands, identity becomes less clear cut. As Judith Howard points out, (Howard, 2000, p.367-8) “At earlier historical moments, identity was not so much an issue; when societies were more stable, identity was to a great extent assigned, rather than selected or adopted. In current times, however, the concept of identity carries the full weight of the need for a sense of who one is, together with an often overwhelming pace of change in surrounding social contexts – changes in the groups and networks in which people and their identities are embedded and in the societal structures and practices in which those networks are themselves embedded” And indeed, it is not necessary to choose any single one of these and for most of us, “individual identification is revealed as, to a considerable extent, a customized collage of collective identifications” (Jenkins, 2004, p.142) Now, Salman Rushdie, can ask of the modern condition, “Do cultures actually exist as separate, pure, defensible entities? Is not melange, adulteration, impurity, pick'n'mix at the heart of the idea of the modern?” (Rushdie, 1991, p.394).

In as much as we can describe our age as the global age, identity can now be seen as a problem. As Jan Aart Scholte says, “globalisation has tended to increase the sense of a fluid and fragmented self, particularly for persons who spend large proportions of their time in supraterриториal spaces, where multiple identities readily converge and create ‘lost souls’. In more globalised lives, identity is less easily taken for granted; self-defininitions and associated group loyalties are much more up for grabs. Hybrid identities present significant challenges for the construction of community. How can deep and reliable social bonds be forged when individuals have multiple and perhaps competing senses of self - and indeed often feel pretty unsettled in all of them?” (Scholte, 2005, p.253)

If group identity is, as the evidence suggests, a fundamental human need necessary for the proper function of family, community and nation, this rootlessness could undermine all these essential pillars of society. It is perhaps at this moment that the identity of place becomes significant. Manuel Castells describes how people try to manage threats to their identity, “When the world becomes too large to be controlled, social actors aim to shrink it back to their size and reach. When networks dissolve time and space, people anchor themselves in places, and recall their historic memory. These defensive reactions become sources of meaning and identity, constructing new cultural codes out of historical materials” (Castells, 2000, p.69-70).

If society is fluid and symbolic markers of identity are ambiguous, almost all of us have at least somewhere we call home. As Stephanie Taylor points out, “Discussions of place and identity, whether among academic theorists or research participants, almost inevitably return to the concept of home” (Taylor, 2010, p.43-4) Home is a place that is at least geographically stable; “one’s home is where in the world one most truly belongs” (Matthews, 2000, p.192) “This dwelling or residence always involves different levels of choice, in terms of location, neighbourhood, cost, size, typology, image, it is also part of our identity - whether that identity is professional, class, social, ethnic, cultural, or, in particular places, racial. The location and dwelling where we live is one (important) way of how we either choose to, or are seen to, represent ourselves to others” (King, 2004, p.129). Simon Anholt describes how, as the secure foundation of our identity of place, home is the bedrock of all other geographic identities: “The identity and image of the places we inhabit are really a seamless extension of the identity and image of ourselves; it is a natural human tendency for people to identify themselves with their city, region or country. Our sense of self isn't bounded by our own bodies: it extends out into family, neighbourhood, district, region, nation, continent, and ultimately to the human race” (Anholt, 2010, p. 157). The tremendous significance of the places we call home makes any challenge to the security or stability of place identity particularly critical. “To be without a place of one's own - persona non locata - is to be almost non-existent” (Gieryn, 2000). And now it seems, as we enter a new age, as Marshall McLuhan said prophetically in 1967, "The old civic, state, and national groupings have become unworkable. Nothing can be further from the spirit of the new technology than 'a place for everything and everything in its place.' You can't go home again" (McLuhan & Fiore, 1967, p.16).
Here, above all, is a cause where architecture and urban design can make a meaningful contribution to a recognisable and significant modern problem. Designers are, however, frequently carried along in the same fast-flowing flood of uncertainty and instability and, as often as not, become unwitting contributors to the problem rather than agents for its remedy. To understand the problem and how architecture fits into this picture, we must look further into the way identity has been affected by globalisation and how architects and urban designers identify themselves in a globalised working environment.

GLOBALISATION AND IDENTITY

Globalisation is most frequently represented as a homogenising force. It is generally considered to be simply the internationalisation of corporations and capital. The homogenisation of culture, in particular under the influence of a worldwide consumer economy, is also widely observed and is seen to be driven by the same global corporations and capital. As the major political and industrial power in the globalisation of capital, the influence of the United States has been particularly prominent and globalisation is often characterised as Americanisation.

Alongside the liberalisation of international capital transactions and the opening up of trade, information technology and international travel have increased global connectedness, have exported largely north Atlantic media and have facilitated the movement of people across borders. As identity is always a matter of sameness and difference, any reduction in the difference between communities is bound to erode the distinctiveness of community identity.

The first and most widely acknowledged political outcome of this process is the decline of the nation-state. Nation-states were most vulnerable to the globalisation of capital and global connectedness as their power has traditionally resided in the ability to exercise and contain financial power and to control and contain their citizens. Both financial control and containment have declined but the nation state is still the primary political unit in world politics and is likely to remain so (Halliday, 2006). The nation state is also vulnerable as most are relatively recent creations, some of the oldest in their current political form dating back only to the nineteenth century. In the inter-state power politics of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the size and unity of the nation state was of paramount importance and considerable effort was devoted to the creation of national identities and, frequently, the corresponding suppression of ancient regional and local identities or minority nations within the state. Globalisation and a decline in the power of state have allowed suppressed national, local, ethnic and tribal identities to re-emerge. There have been a series of reforms of states, heralded by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 but stretching far beyond the Russian Empire. Alongside this, less dramatically but equally significantly, has been the regionalisation of large states and the political recognition of constituent nations, ethnic populations and distinct self-identified groups. The picture that emerges is highly complex, fluid and unresolved.

The nation state, its political role and the promotion of a sense of national identity has not gone away. “The ability of people to take advantage of economic opportunities depends heavily on the quality of their state. True, as the world economy integrates and spill-overs across borders become more important, global governance is likely to become still more essential. But that need come not at the expense of the state, but rather as an expression of the interests the state embodies. As the focus of Identity, source of order and basis of governance, the state remains as essential in an era of globalisation as it has ever been” (Wolf, 2005, p. 277). At the same time, two apparently divergent forces have emerged: localisation and globalisation, one potentially atavistic and the other modern. While the effect of these two forces is quite different in terms of identity, “It would seem,” as Mike Featherstone notes, “that the processes of globalisation and localisation are inextricably bound together”. (Featherstone, 1995: 107) In this context, globalisation, rather than homogenising, society has been an agent of fragmentation. It has set in motion a break up of previously stable and established identities. Ronald Nitsen describes its impact: “The very freedom that makes borderless thinking increasingly possible also contributes to the re-imagination and reinvigoration of micro-nations, local epistemologies, and languages of limited distribution” (Nitsen, 2004, p.78) Globalisation has no coherent singular identity with which to replace them as, “Humanity isn’t, in the relevant sense, an identity at all” (Appiah, 2007, p. 98).
Localisation is a relatively stable factor in an otherwise unsettling break down of familiar identities. Mike Featherstone shows how the significance of localism has been reinforced by unstable identities: “The difficulty of handling increasing levels of cultural complexity, and the doubts and anxieties these often engender, are reasons why ‘localism’, or the desire to remain in a bounded locality or return to some notion of ‘home’, becomes an important theme. It can also be ventured that this is regardless of whether the home is real or imaginary, or whether it is temporary and syncretized or a simulation, or whether it is manifest in a fascination with the sense of belonging, affiliation and community which are attributed to the homes of others, such as tribal people” (Featherstone, 1995, p.107) This localism is not, however, simple retreatment to former condition but is supported by the very globalised conditions that created the instability in the first place. “Numerous indigenous groups have been able to reframe their disadvantageous relationships with the nation-states that encompass them by redefining their projects in the global space of environmentalism and human rights” (Kearney, 1995, p. 560).

Fragmentation is more problematic. An increased movement of people, the largest since the great migrations of the late nineteenth century, has transplanted whole communities away from their country of origin but, at the same time, information technology and the ease of international travel has allowed them to retain a sense of identity with their country of origin – a phenomenon known as deterritorialisation. For example, the worldwide emigration of Sikhs has established an invented non-spatial homeland called Khalistan (Appadurai, 1996) and President Aristide of Haiti has referred to the large numbers of Haitians in the United States as constituting a "tenth province", in addition to the nine within the national territory of Haiti. (Kearney, 1995) To complicate matters further, information technology has re-indigenised long-standing emigrants. Television and VCRs, cultural productions, mostly films produced in Mumbai, have had a notable impact on the re-Indianization, and re-Hinduization of Indo-Trinidadians (Bodemann, 2002). Third-generation Brazilian Japanese living in Sao Paulo go to Japan to seek employment as migrant workers (and are disparagingly called "Nickeys") (Featherstone, 1995, p.9). Native Americans are returning to their home territories only to be disparaged in their turn as ‘red apples’ – red on the outside, white on the inside (Featherstone, 1995). As Ulrich Beck says, “The association of place with community or society is breaking down. The changing and choosing of place is the model for biographical globalisation” (Beck, 1997, p.74). In cities at least, The Economist reports that, “there are fewer and fewer places left in this globalised world where you can and feel utterly foreign when you get there” (The Economist, 2009/2, p. 93). Agnes Heller identifies the paradox in universal familiarity: “In the absence of alien places, we know that there is no home” (Heller, 1999, p. 192). Identity is based as much on difference as familiarity; if nothing is different there is no discrete place called home.

The westernising influence of global communication and consumerism has undermined the symbols of identity as less developed countries open up their markets to free trade, creating the so-called “McDonaldization” of the world. While the highly visible and uniform branding of the McDonalds’ franchise and its global reach has become the butt of protests against uniform north-Atlantic cultural homogenisation, (Klein, 2002) it is only a symbol and caricature for a much wider phenomenon that includes blue-jeans, the dark business suit, MTV, Hollywood films, high-value motor cars, glass office blocks and much more besides. As McDonalds itself fights a marketing battle to promote its local credentials, many of these headline global products have a more complex relationship with local cultures than a simple alien transplant. “Ideas, products and processes transplanted from one part of the world to another invariably undergo a process of ‘cultural translation’. Words, ideas, material artefacts are used for different purposes, get adapted for different functions, become invested with different meanings and, in many cases, simply become attached to already existing forms or ideas to become both hybridized and indigenized” (King, 2004, p.199, 201) But much as the branding that gives these global products their market position is symbolic of a modern, often western, affluent lifestyle, so the impact on established symbolic markers of identity will survive indigenisation and people will either welcome or regret the effect they are having on the identity of discrete social groups.

The attraction of branded global products and the creation of a transnational consumer group is only one of a series of new identity formations that cross over national and local identities. “Market identity .... is based on belonging to no particular place, rather to the market in both its material and cultural forms -
in market-based identity, one's home is all the world” (Matthews, 2000, p. 9) These so-called ‘third cultures’ have existed for some time but largely in small elite groups such as the pre-industrial aristocracy and the mid-twentieth-century “jet-set” and also, most significantly, in religious faith. Now, in particular with the growth of the electronic communication, they have proliferated to become a significant part of the identity make-up of an increasing number of people. “More than ever before, people are being brought together in global networks and basic institutional resemblances by the very strategies that they use to assert their distinctiveness” (Nitzen, 2004, p. 80-81).

These third cultures can be political. The human rights movement, itself one of the key elements of modern globalisation, has an active global membership. “The human rights movement ... is a source of rationalist world identity, which constitutes a system of universal morality that has become the world's most popularly accepted system of law. ... the human rights movement is now divided between the desire to preserve distinct societies through collective rights and the need to change them through individual rights and the levelling mechanisms of law and bureaucracy. Human rights therefore have the potential to be both socially liberating and a powerful force of cultural homogenization and global integration” (Nitzen, 2004, p. 5) To this can be added the environmental movement, American evangelical Protestantism, organisations like the World Wildlife Fund and Greenpeace as well, ironically, as the anti-globalisation movement itself.

As identities can be increasingly made up of a self-selecting series of local, national, transnational and issue-based components, individuals can take on different identities according to their immediate circumstances. This is what Sigmund Bauman calls ‘cloakroom communities’, ‘conjured into being, if in apparition only, by hanging up individual troubles, as theatregoers do with their coats.... Cloakroom communities are patched together for the duration of the spectacle and promptly dismantled again once the spectators collect their coats from the hooks in the cloakroom. Their advantage over the ‘genuine stuff’ is precisely their short lifespan and the pettiness of the commitment required to join and (however briefly) enjoy them. But they differ from the dreamt-of warmth and solidarity community in the way the mass copies on sale in a high-street department store differ from the haute couture originals ...” (Bauman, 2004, p. 30-31).

Discretionary identity combined with a sophisticated world view has created particular self-identified transnational social and political groups: cosmopolitans or communitarians. Cosmopolitans can trace their origins back the Enlightenment and the Kantian idea of a unified humanity. In 1788, Christopher Martin Wieland wrote, “Cosmopolitans ... regard all the peoples of the earth as so many branches of a single family, and the universe as a state, of which they, with innumerable other rational beings, are citizens, promoting together under the general laws of nature the perfection of the whole, while each in his own fashion is busy about his own well-being” (Wieland, 1788). Its principal modern exponent is the London-born, Ghanaian, American academic philosopher, Kwame Anthony Appiah, who defines cosmopolitanism in its current form. “Cosmopolitans believe in universal truth ... though we are less certain that we already have all of it. It is not skepticism about the very idea of truth that guides us; it is realism about how hard the truth is to find. One tenet we hold to, however, is that every human being has obligations to every other. Everybody matters: that is our central idea. ... Cosmopolitans think that there are many values worth living by and that you cannot live by all of them. So we hope and expect that different people and different societies will embody different values” (Appiah, 2006). The German-Israeli-American sociologist, Amatul Elzioni, is the called the ‘guru of communitarianism’. “Communitarians ... hold that community can be clearly defined as a group of individuals in possession of the following two characteristics: a web of affect-laden relationships that often criss-cross and reinforce one another (rather than merely one-on-one or chain-like individual relationships); and some commitment to a core of shared values, as well as a shared history and identity - in short, to a particularistic normative culture” (Elzioni, 2009, p. 25).

As the biographies of the proponents of these sophisticated trans-national principles indicate, while the principles may exist in some form in certain sectors of society, voluntary membership is likely to be restricted to international intellectual elites. Leslie Sklair has, however, identified a similar but spontaneous transnational social group in the corporate world, what he calls the ‘Transnational Capitalist Class’, or TCC. According to Sklair it comprises:
Owners and controllers of TNCs [Transnational Corporations] and their local affiliates;
Globalising bureaucrats and politicians;
Globalising professionals;
Consumerist elites (merchants and media).

.... together, leading personnel in these groups constitute a global power elite, dominant class or inner circle in the sense that these terms have been used to characterize the dominant class structures of specific countries (Sklair, 2000, p. 2-3).

This is a similar group to that identified by Manuel Castells, as an “information elite that transcends the cultural borders of all societies” who “create a lifestyle and to design spatial forms aimed at unifying the symbolic environment of the elite around the world, thus superseding the historical specificity of each locale” (Castells, 2000, p. 446-8).

Sklair has, furthermore, identified major international architects as typical examples of the TCC and relates them to the four sectors listed above:

1. Those who own and/or control the major transnational corporations and their local affiliates (corporate fraction). In architecture these are the major architectural, architecture-engineering and architecture-developer-real-estate firms, listed in the magazine World Architecture. In comparison with the major global consumer goods, energy and financial corporations, the revenues of the biggest firms in the architecture industry are quite small. However, their importance for the built environment and their cultural importance, especially in cities, far outweigh their relative lack of financial and corporate muscle.

2. Globalising politicians and bureaucrats (state fraction). These are the politicians and bureaucrats at all levels of administrative power and responsibility who actually decide what gets built where, and how changes to the built environment are regulated.

3. Globalising professionals (technical fraction). The members of this fraction range from the leading technicians centrally involved in the structural features and services (including financial services) of new buildings to those responsible for the education of students and the public in architecture. (There is obviously some overlap between the technical and corporate fractions).

4. Merchants and media (consumerist fraction). These are the people who are responsible for the marketing and consumption of architecture in all its manifestations (Sklair, 2005, p. 485-6).

He goes on to identify their characteristics:

The transnational capitalist class is transnational in the following respects, in architecture as in any other sphere:

1. The economic interests of its members are increasingly globally linked rather than exclusively local and national in origin.

2. The TCC seeks to exert economic control in the workplace, political control in domestic and international politics, and culture-ideology control in everyday life through specific forms of global competitive and consumerist rhetoric and practice.

3. Members of the TCC have outward-oriented globalising rather than inward-oriented localizing perspectives on various issues.
4. Members of the TCC tend to share similar life-styles, particularly patterns of higher education and consumption of luxury goods and services.

5. Finally, members of the TCC seek to project images of themselves as citizens of the world as well as of their places of birth (Skilair, 2005, p. 486).

As architects they also belong to another international community: their own profession. The liberalisation of world economies has been accompanied by the globalisation of architecture and architectural education. The Modern Movement, named the International Style since the Museum of Modern Art exhibition in New York and the associated publication in 1932 (Hitchcock, 1932), had become ubiquitous in the capitalist economies by the early 1960s. This was supported by international architectural periodicals such as A + U from Japan and the Architectural Review (itself a propagandist publication for early modernism) from London but, until the 1990s, circulation was largely restricted to capitalist countries. When the Russian and Chinese markets opened up, so did their educational systems and their architects, already interested in what seemed to be more up-to-date architecture, quickly sought to join a global community of modernist architects. At the same time, competition between cities to attract global investment through 'iconic' buildings, had led to the creation of a new class of global star architects and the requirements of global corporations had encouraged the growth of a new generation of large global architectural practices. These correspond, respectively, to Skilair’s 'globalising professionals' and 'owners and controllers of TNCs'. Both of these groups sit at the top of their professions in work-load, income and aesthetic status. While architects are more often than not working locally, they belong to an international profession with its own distinct identity that is dominated by a Transnational Capitalist Class and the outlook characteristic of that class.

The dominant modernist ideology of the architectural profession, with its central avant garde principle of modernity as innovation expressed stylistically, corresponded to the ambitions of emerging nations to promote their modernity as an expression of their up-to-date membership of the north-Atlantic global economy. This provides cities with the symbolic markers to market themselves on the world stage as a destination for corporate investment with the corresponding trading and economic benefits for its citizens. As reported in Progressive Architecture in 1995, "a shift of historic proportions (was) taking place and architecture is the premier symbol of that transformation . . . the Chinese, as well as many other Asians, tend to want buildings as tall as possible and in an ostentatiously Modern style as can be found" (Dixon, 1995).

"In Malaysia, the aim was reported to be to advertise 'the country's arrival as a modern industrial nation' and enable its Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohammed, according to another source, 'to stand tall among Asia's tiger economies'" (King, 2004, p. 16-17).

This has placed architects in a shared transnational 'third culture' that sees modernity itself as cosmopolitan unifying objective. Peter Berger identifies a complex relationship between this modernity, tradition and the freedom of the individual: "It has been understood for a long time that modernization undermines the taken-for-granted authority of tradition and collectivity and, therefore, by default, makes the individual more self-reliant. This is a "liberation," but it may also be experienced as a great burden. "Individualism" as an ideology legitimizes the "liberation" and, if necessary, helps alleviate the burden. In either case, the new global culture has a built-in affinity with the modernization process; indeed, in many parts of the world today it is identical with it" (Berger, 2002, p. 9). Some commentators in the European Union, itself an experiment in communitarianism, believe that "Moving the focus to space and away from history and culture might offer a possible route to a post-national European identity that will also be sufficiently rooted in social practices to be meaningful" (Delanty & Jones, 2002, p. 456). It follows, therefore, that "traditionalists stand in the way of those seeking some form of global unity. For the perfect world order to be realized along the lines of utopian cosmopolitanism, these recalcitrants must be vanquished or converted (or both, preferably in close succession)" (Nilzen, 2004, p. 175-6).

The impact of this outlook by the profession responsible for the design of most of the major buildings and urban spaces in the world will be significant. Jordi Borja and Manuel Castells tell us: "In a world in which communication is becoming globalised, it is essential to maintain distinct cultural identities in order to stimulate the sense of belonging in a day-to-day manner to a specific society. As against the hegemony of
universalist values, the defence and construction of distinctive identities on a historical and territorial basis is a basic element of the meaning of society for individuals” (Borja & Castells, 1997, p. 3-4). If a universalising modernity is, indeed, the objective of the ‘third culture’ of architects and other members of the TCC who will shape the places from which we draw critical parts of our identity, the impact could go beyond the built environment. A British Government briefing paper warns us of the potential outcome: “if people lack a sense of attachment to the place where they live, they are less likely to want to participate in its civic life and political institutions; a strong sense of collective identity is thought to underpin participation in voluntary organisations and social movements that are the life blood of any democratic society” (IPPR, 2007).

Architects and urban designers are, however, perceptive and responsible professions. We need to understand their response to the acknowledged problem of identity, community and place.

ARCHITECTURE, GLOBALISATION AND IDENTITY

Roger K. Lewis, writing in the Washington Post in 2002, sets down the “two opposing forces” behind architectural globalisation. One force seeks to safeguard and promulgate established indigenous architectural traditions, forms, decorative motifs and technologies. It advocates historical continuity, cultural diversity and preservation of geographic identity, all symbolized by a particular architectural vocabulary, just as spoken languages and local dialects impart identity. The other force promotes invention and dissemination of new forms using new technologies and materials in response to changing functional needs and sensibilities. It places a premium on systematization, flexibility and interchangeability. As commerce, transportation, communication and information become globalised, it argues for internationalized, innovative architecture transcending local conventions and constraints. (Lewis, 2002). These two “forces” are conventionally called “traditionalism” and “modernism” respectively.

Modernism was founded on both the idea of internationalism and the end of tradition. As Eric Mendelsohn said in 1919, “All trends seem necessary to achieving the goal, and hence to solving the problem of a new architecture. ... Naturally, this era will not be brought into being by social classes in the grip of tradition. ... just as every epoch that was decisive for the evolution of human history united the whole known globe under its spiritual will, so what we long for will have to bring happiness beyond our own country, beyond Europe, to all peoples” (Conrad’s, 1970, p. 55). These ideas have had a remarkable persistence amongst the architectural profession. By 1951 modernist architects were confident that “The “traditional architecture”, which bulked so large in 1932, was all but dead. The living architecture of the twentieth century would from now on be called merely “modern”” (Hitchcock, 1995, p 261). In 1995, Philip Johnson showed how the International Style had shaped the architecture of major contemporary architects, “Le Corbusier influenced Richard Meier, Mies influenced the Chicagoans, and the International Style in general helped shape the work of Sir Norman Foster and Sir Richard Rogers” (Johnson, 1995, p. 15). In 2006, the leading British architect, Bob Allies could confirm that “the social, technical and aesthetic agenda of modernism continues to provoke and sustain architectural practice today” (Allies, 2006, p. 11) The continuing dominance of Modernism in architecture and architectural education makes the numbers of traditionalist practitioners of Lewis’s first “force” extremely rare.

The small group of surviving traditional practitioners specifically set out to reflect local traditions in building design in a literal way that would be recognisable to most non-professional inhabitants of a place. While that does not mean that they are either uniformly successful or immune to local objection, it can be assumed that local identity is a specific objective and so the architecture and urban design will at least be an attempt to maintain or reinforce that identity in the built environment. They will be less likely to conform to the third culture of global modernity but, nonetheless, their work will be, in one sense at least, a modern response to the global phenomenon of localisation.

The situation is more complex with urban design. In urban design, building design or style are secondary or even tertiary concerns. The use of urban patterns that are derived from local examples has become widespread, if not universal, amongst practitioners. In some cases, the building design is simply left to
others but, more usually, some indication of the built intention is given or can be controlled by the use of codes or regulations. As building design is an easily understood and symbolic expression of a design theory and as it is precisely through the use of such symbols that, as Anthony Cohen noted above, "the consciousness of community" is kept alive, building design remains a significant aspect of identity in urban design. Indeed, although urban design is a distinct discipline, it is commonly practiced by architects and many of the leading global architects are engaged in the preparation of major urban master-plans (Marcus, 2008). The ideology of many of the practitioners of urban design, who otherwise use street and block patterns derived from local examples, will therefore still be Roger Lewis's second "force" or Modernism. Bearing this in mind and for the sake of clarity, the discussion below will be limited to mainstream modernist architecture.

One of the most significant developments in mainstream architecture in the last twenty years has been the advent of so-called "iconic" architecture and a star architecture system that supports it. Charles Jencks defines an iconic building according to two criteria: "On the one hand, to become iconic a building must provide a new and condensed image, be high in figural shape or gestalt, and stand out from the city. On the other hand, to become powerful it must be reminiscent in some ways of unlikely but important metaphors and be a symbol fit to be worshiped, a hard task in a secular society" (Jencks, 2005, p. 23). There have been iconic buildings since antiquity and star architects for centuries but the current international fashion for large and extraordinary buildings and the existence of a distinct group of architects that provide them are directly concerned with globalisation and identity.

The construction of iconic buildings is part of the widely recognised phenomenon of urban "boosterism". Sharon Zukin identifies the drivers: "city boosters increasingly compete for tourist dollars and financial investments by bolstering the city's image as a center of cultural innovation, including restaurants, avant garde performances, and architectural design" (Zukin, 1995, p. 2). In the global economy, where services and corporate activity are no longer nationally contained, cities compete internationally as destinations for global capital and tourism. "Analysis of the 'global city' as the production site of the informational, global economy has shown the critical role of these global cities in our societies, and the dependence of local societies and economies upon the directional functions located in such cities" (Castells, 2000, p. 442-6).

The key cities - New York, London, Tokyo - are established destinations for capital transactions and the businesses that cluster around this activity. For other cities to compete, they must promote or "boost" their identity on the world stage. From declining industrial cities like Middlesbrough in northern England to major second-tier cities like Paris, with an established and even famous existing identity, there is a common drive to use architecture and its modernising image as a marketing device. Extraordinary ambitions for a new district of Middlesbrough have been advanced by employing the star architect Will Alsop, "Middlehaven will include a collection of iconic structures conceived by the most talented and creative architects working today. There will be no other place in Europe with so many daring and exciting, yet sustainable and practical buildings standing side-by-side" (e-architect, 2007). The similarity of objectives with a city like Paris are so inappropriate as to be almost ironic. Phillipe Chaix, head of La Defense Development Corporation, announces a proposed transformation of the one of the world's most valued historic cities to try and make it more attractive to global business, "Greater Paris will be revolutionary. It will change our image on the world stage" (The Economist, 2009/1, p. 43-4).

This striving for identity is rarely anything to do with the existing identity of the place for the present inhabitants, except in as much as any success will consolidate the local economy. As Bella Dicks points out, "High profile, high investment cultural programmes dedicated to economic gain run the risk of neglecting decentralized, community-based cultural provision for low-income social groups. The rationale behind flagship redevelopment projects is to generate new consumer spend by attracting visitors and shoppers into the area; it is rarely directed primarily at improving the quality of life of existing residents. Such planning approaches risk reducing the question of culture to aesthetics: to 'issues of embellishment and beautification' rather than the more anthropological definition of how people use and relate to their living environments" (Dicks, 2003, p. 82) As an established set of global star architects are usually chosen to provide the flagship product, what identity there is will most likely be expressed through deliberately
extra-ordinary designs by architects from elsewhere. Rem Koolhaas, a star architect himself, is a first-hand witness to the process. “The idolatry of the market has drastically changed our legitimacy and status even though our status has never been higher ... It is really unbelievable what the market demands [from architecture] now. It demands recognition, it demands difference and it demands iconographic qualities” (Jencks, 2005: 101) This not only runs contrary to an understanding of the how communities identify with place but, in the end, it is self-cancelling. This is observed by another firm of star architects, Foreign Office Architects, distancing themselves from their older colleagues, “Gehry is peppered the world with Bilbao Guggenheim lookalikes and if you’ve seen one building by Calatrava or Meier, you’ve seen them all” (Fairs, 2003).

The phenomena of star architecture and iconic buildings can be seen as products of a wider ‘third culture’ of universal modernity. In Spain in 1992, when Barcelona held the Olympics, Seville a World Expo and Madrid the European City of Culture title, the events “were explicitly intended to celebrate Spain’s coming of age as a modern, democratic European nation-state, marking the end of a period of political transition (and uncertainty). But these popular celebrations of Spain’s new status tended to neglect the past and glorify the present. Indeed this seemed to be part of an official attempt to represent Spain’s new, ‘modern’, democratic national identity as if it were built on a tabula rasa, thus avoiding confrontation with the cultural, social, regional and political tensions that have plagued Spain since its emergence as a nation-state” (McNeil, 2009, p. 87-8). A disdain for earlier, and in this case colonial, interest in national identity, led the Malaysian architect Lim Chong Keat to promote independence through modernity. “If [nationalist] tendencies are unchecked, there is a real danger in many of the developing nations that architectural development would become a stylised expression, based on the myth of cultural independence, instead of taking root as a progressive discipline that can offer newer and better technological and aesthetic solutions” (Crimson, 2008, p. 592-3). In China, “Connecting with the international track” is a slogan adopted in the new millennium. It reflects the Chinese government’s determination to join the global village. Working methods and urban architecture are expected to refer to ‘advanced’ Western models” (Xue and Li, 2008, p. 325).

The architects, as members of the TCC (also called by Saskia Sassen the ‘transnational elite’) are themselves part of this wider culture that “requires a physical infrastructure - the hyperspace of global business: state-of-the-art office buildings, residential districts, airports, and hotels. At its most developed, this is the worldwide network of about forty global cities that functions as an organizational infrastructure for the management side of the global corporate economy” (Sassen, 2007, p. 176). Operating almost exclusively within this third culture, practical limitations tend to standardise the output of global architects.

International status acts as a natural check on the number of famous designers or star architects. Amongst the international group that commission their work, frequently with little knowledge of architecture, there can only be so many architects that are sufficiently well-known for their reputations to add value to the global aspirations of the cities. As the international architect, David Chipperfield says, “It’s easier to know about architects than architecture. A banker won’t know about architecture but will know that ‘Zaha Hadid’ or ‘Rem Koolhaas’ is a brand” (Marcus, 2008). Hans Beltings tells us how, “nowadays star architects are continually ‘on tour’: for competitions, juries, teaching posts, master-classes, interviews, conferences and lectures, interspersed with the odd construction meeting. Just like pop stars, these architects have all developed a clear and considered media strategy” (Beltings, 1998, p. 26).

Large international architectural practices have also created unified working methods. “Much contemporary practice in urban design, including planning, landscape architecture and architecture, is cross-cultural in character. These disciplines work across national boundaries regularly - creating and adapting environments in locations and cultures where they have little direct experience, not only with professionals in their own fields but from other disciplines. Not only is such work carried out in unfamiliar surroundings, it is also carried out in the compressed time frames that now characterize the global work place” (Bull, 2007, p. 187). The amount of travel required by star architects and the principals of global firms - members of Sklair’s Transnational Capitalist Class - makes it virtually impossible for them to provide anything more than a superficial relationship between the site and the complexities of community identity. Rem Koolhaas
boasts that, “in the past week I’ve been swimming in Lagos, in Milan, in Switzerland, in Rotterdam, in London, in L.A., and in Las Vegas” (Sigler, 2000), and Norman Foster says to a journalist on the telephone, “I’m at my apartment in St Moritz in between trips. I’ve just come from Madrid; it will be Milan tomorrow, Beijing on Thursday and Friday and then St Petersburg. I thrive on all this travel: I love it” (Spring, 2007, p. 46).

Cities, as they are transformed for the global economy, will unavoidably be an expression of these forces and influences within the architectural profession as a part of the Transnational Capitalist Class. New buildings will be symbols of global ambitions and an expression of the identity of a Transnational Capital Class and will have very little to do with the identity of resident communities. This creates a built environment with exactly the homogeneity that, for so many, represents the worst aspects of globalisation. Professor Guido Martinotti identified the trend in 1994 (Martinotti, 1994), “Globalisation trends tend to homogenise cities the world over” Roger Lewis, in the Washington Post, reports a common experience for travellers that “strolling through malls at Canary Wharf in London’s Docklands, at Potsdamer Platz in Berlin and at Manege Square in Moscow is fundamentally the same. The global culture of design is supported by architects who study what other architects are creating, no matter where” (Lewis, 2002). Hans Ibelings sums it up, “cities and agglomerations around the world have undergone comparable developments and assumed similar shapes. Wherever one looks there seem to be high-rise downtowns, low-rise suburbs, urban peripheries with motorway cultures and business parks and so on. And everywhere the accompanying architecture has assumed a certain expressionless” (Ibelings, 1998, p. 67).

Architects have themselves observed homogeneity in international modernism for some time. In 1955 the American architect, Pietro Belluschi, noticed that “throughout the Eastern countries we visited, architecture is a superficial imitation of the more obvious Western forms...And this is happening not only in Baghdad or in Agra or in Karachi but in Italy in France, and even in Finland” (Belluschi, 1955). Notwithstanding such observations, an almost religious belief in the universal appropriateness of the latest materials and technology for the modern world made any deviancy difficult and subject to severe peer-group criticism. The unexpected rise of architectural post-modernism in the late 1970s and the 80s (that is post-modernism as an ironic historicising style rather than a philosophy) did, however, create a crisis for fundamentalist modernism. Stylistic post-modernism promoted the idea that a new building could not only relate in some way to the historic particularity of the place but also be popular. The doubt and uncertainty this would create amongst modernists had already been summed up in a paper from 1965 by Paul Ricoeur, “Universal Civilization and National Cultures”, where he posed the question: “There is the paradox: how to become modern and to return to sources; how to revive an old, dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization” (Barr, 1995, p. 47) Inspired by this paper, the paradox was answered by Kenneth Frampton in a short paper, “Towards a Critical Regionalism, Six Points for Architecture of Renaissance” published in a book entitled The Anti-Aesthetic, Essays on Post-Modern Culture in 1983. Frampton set up a theoretical architectural typology that he called “Critical Regionalism” that defended modernism and attacked post modernism, “There remains a solid and liberating heritage lying within the complex culture that we generally subsume under the term the Modern Movement. It is nothing short of reactionary folly to abandon the liberative, critical, and poetic traditions of this century on the ground of a retainer fashion” (Frampton, 1983) At the same time, it offered “a critical basis from which to evolve a contemporary architecture of resistance - that is, a culture of dissent free from fashionable stylistic conventions, an architecture of place rather than space, and a way of building sensitive to the vicissitudes of time and climate” (Frampton, 1983) While he had little by way of example, except the work of Alvar Aalto, he also made it clear that this would not conform to any popular identity of architecture with place by insisting that this new “Regionalism should not be sentimentally identified with the vernacular” (Frampton, 1987, p. 378).

Architectural post-modernism collapsed with the recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s but Frampton’s theory survived and is still widely quoted today as the key to reconciling modernism and the problem of localism and local identity. As a concept, however, Critical Regionalism is so ill-defined that it can be applied to almost any building that uses a local material or adapts its form to a site or climate. Frampton gave, as an example, the organisation of a plan to adapt to local contours as “the idiosyncrasies of place find their expression without falling into sentimentality” (Frampton, 1983) All these measures are
quite normal in current design practice and so Critical Regionalism is more of a statement of intent than anything that will today have a significant and identifiable impact on form or appearance.

With the benefit of this theoretical foundation, architects - even star architects - can now safely give voice to concern about identity and homogeneity. Alejandro Zaera Polo of Foreign Office Architects says, "Our biggest problem today is identity. With globalisation, it is difficult to identify exactly who we are and where we fit in space" (Pratt Institute, 2007). Ken Yeang of Llewellyn Davis Yeang finds identity precisely in accordance with the principles of Critical Regionalism in as much as "every site is different and by responding to the locality we create a natural identity", Benedetta Tagliabue described working with her husband Enric Miralles on the "identity of the structure of Edinburgh" when preparing the designs of the Scottish Parliament. Lee Polisano, at the time Global President of the International practice Kohn Pederson Fox, said, "there is a large danger of repetitiveness and sameness taking place in our cities" and also declared his adherence to Critical Regionalism. The late Stephan Benisch declared that "one of the biggest errors of International architecture is that we thought we could build the same thing everywhere".

As it is now impossible to avoid the conclusion that cities around the world are becoming ever more identical, leading architects are becoming more concerned with the related issues of identity and differentiation. They have devised strategies to deal with the problem without abandoning their fundamental belief in universal modernity. A certain amount of the evidence for this will come from two international conferences held in Barcelona in October 2008, the World Architecture Conference and the Royal Institute of British Architects' conference specifically on identity. Unreferenced quotations above and following are taken from verbatim notes at these conferences.

There seem to be two current techniques for giving modernist architecture an identity that relates a building to its locality: the spirit of place or site-specific design; and symbolic identity or the architect's personal discovery of local symbolism. The two techniques can be used independently or in combination but the process behind each of them is distinct.

Site-specific design refers specifically to Critical Regionalism. Ken Yeang of Llewellyn Davis Yeang calls this "systemic identity". The British Architect, Alison Brooks, described this succinctly as an abstract reaction to "found conditions". This principle allows Lee Polisano to claim that a tall office building, of a similar height and identical materials in the Middle East and London, has a regional identity by responding to the specificities of the site, its orientation and the limitations created by adjacent sites. He says, "Local forces become local manifestations of local circumstances".

Choosing a symbolic identity is the choice of a symbolic aspect of a design that seems to be in some way relevant to the location. This was described by the Berlin conceptual architect, Jurgen Mayer, as finding "certain elements that are local that we could interpret and make into something architecturally new". It is this process that lay behind the imagery Enric Miralles and his partner Benedetta Tagliabue chose for the Scottish Parliament. Using boats as a symbol of Scottish identity is unexpected but was, as Tagliabue said, because as architects "you have to get the best of what you perceive". Alejandro Zaera Polo of Foreign Office Architects similarly describes the choice of abstracted lacework imagery for the John Lewis Store in Nottingham, England, as an attempt to "synthesise identity".

The choice of symbolism is usually personal. Alison Brooks believes that she must "bring her own personal obsessions" to her designs. Jurgen Mayer says that, while there always a client and city, "the architect has to make the proposal" Ken Yeang tells us that "the only way you can get through the complexity of design is to be intuitive" Alejandro Polo, saying that "we territorialise ourselves, try to become locals in each place," still resorts to "the sublime, a physically exciting form to project the things around to a higher level" (Pratt Institute, 2007). In none of these responses is there any reference to attempt to analyse or discover the way the relevant community or communities saw the identity of their place. On the contrary, Sheila O'Donnell of the Irish firm, O'Donnell and Tuomey, tells us that "we find that people want the details [of their town] but we want to look at the way people did things in the past - the landscape, the climate".
Identity and Identification

This symbolism can move from the private to the public. In the search for visual identity architects often use analogy or metaphor. On the Scottish Parliament, Miralles made his boat analogy public but the origins of the hammer-shaped devices that decorate the building (an abstracted profile of a painting in the Scottish National Gallery) only came out later. Zaha Hadid has used various metaphors for her buildings: her Regium building in Reggio Calabria alludes to a wave with reference to the coastal location; the MAXXI in Rome is interweaving streams and the art gallery in Caligiari is inspired by coral reefs (Pearman, 2008). These metaphors can, however, become part of the architect's engagement with the client. The crown on top of the Bund Centre in Shanghai, by John Portman Associates, is intended to be the British royal crown, the logo of the developer, Golden Bund Real Estate. In fact more Chinese interpret it a lotus flower (Xue & Li, 2008: 324). Jean Nouvel's National Museum in Qatar is in the form of a geological formation, the desert rose, following discussion with the museum authorities. (Personal interview) The explicit imagery of the Beijing Birds Nest stadium was a collaboration with the Chinese artist Ai Weiwei and the architects Herzog and de Meuron.

All the metaphors or analogies are abstracted or naturalistic. They are rarely direct allusions to past buildings. There seems to be a common anxiety, as expressed by Kenneth Frampton, that local identity might bring about designs with literal historical references to other buildings. Indeed, an explicit assertion of newness and originality is a consistent concern. Sheila O'Donnell prefaced her remarks about what people want (above) with the statement that “we want to relate to the context but not look like buildings of the past” Alejandro Polo states that “Every building we do is not like what is already there but the technologies and possibilities of today make a new identity” Ken Yang maintains that the “critical” in Critical Regionalism expresses the necessity of “avoiding pastiche” and that you must “reinterpret in a modern way”? Alison Brooks believes that “the authentic is genuine and original and if you do this anywhere in the world you will give identity” Jurgen Mayer tells us that “forward-looking innovation should be the driving force for identity in the future” The Finnish architect, Juhanu Pallasmaa, while proposing “an architecture that arises from the acknowledgement of its historical, cultural, societal and mental soil,” is careful to preface this with a statement that he does “not support architectural nostalgia or conservatism” (Pallasmaa, 2009, p. 17).

This declaration of originality can be seen as a symbol of the communal identity of the architectural profession, asserting membership of the third culture of universal modernity. On occasions, a disconnection from a cultural past can be promoted to allow universal modernity to become a culturally non-specific receptacle for the identity of those who have been in some way determinatised. “Avant-garde design schemes - like built heritage in the past - may provide all culturally different social groups and individuals with a ‘spatial membership’” (Gospodini, 2002, p. 29-30). It is also asserted, with some credibility that, “Residents of neighbourhoods near prominent landmarks ... are more likely to have stronger emotional bonds to where they live” (Gleym, 2000, p. 481). There is, however, little evidence in general that iconic and globally homogeneous buildings do more than alienate people from the familiar places that make up their community and personal identity. On the contrary, “Symbols of the ‘past’, mythically infused with timelessness, ... attain particular effectiveness during periods of intensive social change when communities have to drop their heaviest cultural anchors in order to resist the currents of transformation” (Cohen, 1985, p. 102). These assertions of newness and originality are, in reality, little more than a hope that universal modernity - an identity symbol of a transnational third culture - will have some justification in world where identity is a major social and political issue.

The evidence suggests that a global architectural third culture has failed to use the skills and imagination at its command to provide ordinary citizens with any protection from the current threat that globalisation poses to their identity. The problem is well known, “the mobility of people and the communication of information seem destined to develop without limits, it appears that in whatever cultural context, there is even more demand for material reference points that provide continuity with past times. This suggests that the question of retaining local identity in a globalising world is central to the design of local space and place. It seems, however, to be a question that is beyond answering effectively within the practical and symbolic value systems that usually apply in the production of contemporary urban projects” (Parin, 2007, p. 15-16). Borja and Castells make it clear that the breakdown of local identities is a significant social
problem, "In a world in which communication is becoming globalised, it is essential to maintain distinct cultural identities in order to stimulate the sense of belonging in a day-to-day manner to a specific society. As against the hegemony of universalist values, the defence and construction of distinctive identities on a historical and territorial basis is a basic element of the meaning of society for individuals" (Borja & Castells, 1997, p. 3-4).

The architectural profession, on the other hand, operate with an exclusive rather than an inclusive set of values. "Modern architects have always regarded it as more important that their work should be in keeping with the age than in harmony with the surroundings" (Ibelings, 1998, p. 45). The American architect, Peter Eisenman sees architecture "as an expression of itself, of its own values and internal experience" (Eisenman, 1984). The British architect Piers Gough believes that, "great art and architecture of the world has always been produced against the norm and that forwarding the art of architecture is the point of having architects," adding that, "Architecture is a public art but it's far too important to be left to the public" (Gough, 2010). The leader of the British architecture establishment, Lord Rogers (Richard Rogers), maintains that "architecture ... has to be judged by those who are qualified to judge it" (Hurst, 2010). The Czech architect, Eva Jiricna, feels that "it's in the nature of people to be conservative," and that, "architects have to fight that" (Berman, 2010). While the identity of the architectural profession is defined quite specifically by an exclusion of the public there is little hope that modern architecture will engage with communities to reinforce or enhance the built identity markers of those communities. On the contrary, by cultivating an interest only in the identity markers of a Transnational Capitalist Class they are more likely to add to the crisis of identity created by the major social changes brought about by globalisation.

CONCLUSION

With the fragmentation of society set in motion by the forces of globalisation, individual and community identity have become more complex and vulnerable and, at times, politically volatile. As almost everyone has a place that they can call home, place identity has the opportunity to become a stabilising influence. Place identity, as with all identity, relies on shared symbolic markers. To be shared, these symbols will have their own history. Any attempt to deny or remove these symbols will be a challenge to the identity of those who use them as identity markers.

One of the most visible changes to places directly attributable to globalisation is the homogenisation of cities which seek to identify themselves as global destinations for transnational corporations and capital. This entails a visually aggressive transformation of the image to make them identifiable through the projection of a north-Atlantic aesthetic modernity. These and other changes that accompany the expansion of global cities have had a significant impact on the symbolic image of the place and so the built identity-markers of the population.

Part of the fragmentation of global identities is the creation of 'third cultures' which share identity markers transnationally. One 'third culture' is the Transnational Capitalist Class. The upper and most influential levels of the architectural profession are members of this class and define themselves, in common with the rest of their profession, with a belief in universal modernity. The Transnational Capitalist Class is primarily responsible for the transformation of cities around the world to conform to a modern global model. Working with a uniformity of purpose, the architectural profession has developed strategies for ensuring that individual member's work will be clearly identifiable one from another as brands. The identity of these new buildings is primarily concerned with the symbolic representation of an architectural 'third culture' and the promotion of places on an international stage. It is often claimed that the identifiable nature of the projects adds to the identity of the place for its occupants. In some cases this may be so. However, the uniform theoretical outlook of the architectural profession and its specific denial of the traditions that usually constitute the essential elements of the identity of place for its inhabitants make such an outcome, when it does occur, accidental more than calculated. While there may be some identifiable character as an outcome of the work of major figures in architecture, this will be for the benefit of the professional peer group and other transnational operators, not the identity of the citizens of the place.
While the architectural profession continue to ignore and often deride the largely traditional identity markers of the resident communities where they build, they will contribute to the crisis of identity that is characteristic of this globalising historical period. It would be wrong to blame architecture, which is only a reflection of the powerful forces that drive social and political change, for the crisis of modern society. As major contributors to the physical changes that contribute to the current crises of identity, however, architects should take some share of responsibility – particularly when their explicit objectives drive them in that direction. Architects have singularly failed to use the powerful visual symbols at their command to counteract the destructive forces of globalisation on the identity of individuals and communities. A major ideological shift would be required to remedy this failure. Such a shift does exist in a small minority of the profession and, to a larger extent, in urban design but there is little sign of any significant change in the long-entrenched position of the majority. Much as architecture is driven by social, political and economic change, the most likely remedy will lie in a wider realisation of the damaging effects of recent changes in the built environment. It may take an organised demand from the general population for the protection and enhancement of the identity of the places they call home to force the Transnational Capitalist Class to transform architectural practice.

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