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2003 International Architectural Education Forum
Regionalism under the Trends of Globalization

2003建筑教育国际论坛
全球化背景下的地区主义

东南大学建筑学院
School of Architecture, Southeast University

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Preface

Today we are living in an age of globalization and sustainable development. In this age, new technology and way of production has accelerated the economic growth that in turn also has given rise to people's concern and re-understanding of the regional culture, under the influence of the increasing globalization. Architecture is the joint effort of technology, way of production and regional culture; the creation of architectural space depends on the establishment of a far-sighted educational thought as well as an initiative, efficient educational system in architecture. Therefore, today's architectural education means the quality of spatial environment for the future of mankind.

In view of people's unprecedented concern on global architectural education, on 10th December, 2003, Nanjing International Forum on Architectural Education was held at Southeast University, Nanjing, People's Republic of China, aiming at finding the consensus on the present international education development of architecture and revealing the trend in the future architectural education. The 3-day forum was jointly sponsored by National Supervision Board for Architectural Education (NSBAE); School of Architecture, Southeast University (SEU-ARCH); the International Union of Architects (UIA) and UNESCO. The forum also organized special activities such as Thomas Herzog's Architecture & Technology Global Exhibition, Exhibition of Domestic Architectural Departments and Schools, the 2nd Jinyi Cup Chinese University Students' Architectural Work Exhibition and Awarding Ceremony.

As the one of the most important international conferences of its kind ever held in China in recent years, this forum received nearly 300 scholars, architects, planners and students, both from home and abroad. Representatives are from not only universities and institutions of architecture design on Mainland China, but also Hong Kong Chinese University and overseas universities such as National Singapore University and Seoul City University of South Korea. Among the distinguished guests are Mr Vassilis Sgoutas, former chair, UIA; Mr Richard Engelhardt, advisor, Cultural Affairs in Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO; Mrs Louise Cox, education director and vice president, UIA region IV; Professor Cary A. Hack, dean, School of Design, University of Pennsylvania; USA (PennDesign); Professor Thomas Herzog, Department of Architecture, Technische Universität, München, Germany; Professor Herbert Kramel, former dean, Department of Architecture, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Switzerland (ETH); Professor Yukio Nishimura, Department of Urban Engineering, Tokyo University, Japan; Professor Bill Hillier, chairman, Bartlett School of Graduate Studies, University College London, UK; Professor Volker Hartkopf, Department of Architecture, Carnegie Mellon University, USA.

With the theme "Architectural Education: Regionalism under the Trends of Globalization", this forum focused on the areas of architectural education such as the summarization and exhibition of the research results in various countries, the discussion on the trend in the new era, and the exchange of views on how to utilize the local culture, economy and resources. The participants benefited from this fruitful exchange of views particularly on issues such as the establishment of educational system with special characteristics, the interaction between architectural education and architecture creation, and how to cultivate excellent architectural talents with high proficiency,

broad academic vision and flexible social adaptability. In the sub-venues, the discussion was extended to topics such as the thought, theory and method in the education of contemporary architecture and planning, the results of architectural education reform, and the opportunities and challenges for regional architectural education under the trend of globalization and urbanization.

Thanks to the tireless work of my colleagues Professor Dong Wei, Ms Wang Xiangjun, Wu Jinxiu and other members of the Forum Organizing Committee, the cooperation of the authors and the support from Southeast University Press, the *conference Proceedings* will be published soon, which means that more readers can share with us the exchange results of this forum. We believe that the ideas, practices and analysis concerning architectural education in this book will undoubtedly provide people with an enlightening reference to better understand today's world architectural education, especially the current Chinese architectural education and its development.

Wang Jianguo, Professor and Dean of SEU-ARCH

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Architectural Education in the International Context

瓦萨里斯 · 斯格塔思　Vassilis Sgoutas

UIA Past President

Greetings to all on behalf of the International Union of Architects. The fact that are present, here in this hall, representatives of government, presidents and office-bearers of architectural organisations, professors and eminent architects, testifies not only to the importance of the subject being discussed but also to the importance of Nanjing and China as a centre of reflexion on matters pertaining to architectural education.

That is why, when I was informed of this Forum, I decided that it was important that the UIA give its full backing to it. But the fact that this is no ordinary gathering means that there are "great expectations" from this Forum. This in turn places a heavy burden on all of us.

The UIA, with more than 100 member countries representing over 1.2 million architects, is dedicated to encourage and highlight quality architectural education throughout the world.

Architecture in an unequal world

It is true that we live in an unequal world. It is also true that architecture is being practised internationally on a field that is not level, a field where the "competitors" do not have equal means at their disposal—neither comparable education nor comparable technology.

The task to make education and the practice of architecture more equitable is not easy. The UIA, with whatever means at its disposal, tries to redress this imbalance, strongly believing that in this way it is promoting the quality of architecture and the real interests of all architects and students, wherever they may be. It is a Herculean task which must necessarily start with education.

But what is architecture in today's world?

Architecture is not a commodity, as some would like it to be. Or, as former Technical Chamber of Greece President Kostas Liaskas very aptly said, architects, like all labour, are an "intelligent commodity", a commodity that thinks and thus has an opinion. As such, its behaviour may not always be predict-able. Systems such as the market economy always prefer predictable situations.

The practice of architecture, but also architectural education, are undergoing fundamental changes. Globalisation is affecting our profession at both the international and the national levels.

If we want to be pragmatic, we need to take into account the present-day facts of life.

What are these "facts of life"?

— The words "consumer protection" seem to have become the new Bible. This is often interpreted as meaning "get the most with the least", therefore competition on fee scales and competition on ease of obtaining a degree in architecture.

— That the world is in a flux and that we are at the moment shaping our future. Because the future does not happen, we make it.

— That we have two worlds within which our profession operates, the real and the imaginary world. The imaginary world is the world of theory, of laws and regulations and of codes of ethics. The real world is the world of day to day architectural practice against big odds and in a sometimes vicious market economy with whatever little help from what is enforceable of the laws and with whatever crumbs are left of ethical considerations, where ethics is only that somebody else should not tread on your toes and not vice versa.

— That the forces of commerce are often stronger than the laws, especially in the developing countries. And often again, it is not laws that change market practices but market practices that eventually shape new laws.

It is unthinkable that we ever condone that the market shapes architectural education and that knowledge becomes subservient to commercial profit.

It is in this difficult context that we have to fight for our ideals. The truth is that architects work in a microcosm of world

happenings—political, economic and social. Architecture cannot be practised or taught in a political, economic or social vacuum.

We need to rethink the way we practise architecture, we need to rethink the way we are taught architecture. We need to continuously regenerate both our profession and our learning institutions. Only in this way can we progress.

Globalisation and the UIA

The UIA position on globalization is clear. Globalization of both professional practice and education cannot and should not be reversed, but we need to do our utmost to lead it in the direction that we think is correct for our profession and for the public interest, and also fair to all the countries—developed and less developed. One-way globalization makes no sense.

On professional practice, the UIA has, as we all know, made a significant impact. The UIA Professional Practice Accord, unanimously approved by all of our member sections is a huge step forward. It establishes, inter alia, norms that would go a long way towards a more equitable globalised practice.

The Accord is an advisory document that is the result of the co-operative endeavour of the international community of architects, coordinated by our member sections of the U. S. and China. It objectively establishes standards and practices that will best serve community interests, define what is considered best practice for the profession, and express the standards to which our profession aspires. It is now up to all of our member sections to have it ratified by their respective governments and to use it for the establishment of bilateral and multilateral agreements.

Validation

Architectural education is the cornerstone of our efforts to buttress the profession.

The UNESCO-UIA Charter for architectural education, approved by our 1996 Barcelona Congress, established a clear definition of scope and, more particularly, of what role the UIA can have in matters related to education.

On May 16, 2000, an Agreement was signed between UNESCO and the UIA to create the UNESCO-UIA Validation Committee for Architectural Education. I am convinced that this Agreement represents a major milestone for the UIA, and I consider it a very special moment for me to have been its signatory on behalf of the UIA.

Our mission is to bring uniformity to the validation of architectural degrees and also to set standards for architectural education. As was spelt out at the outset, "we need to approach architectural education with the flexibility and dynamism dictated by social transformation and technological changes". The preamble then goes on to stress that the technological boundaries of education must be widened towards "an architecture open to the contribution of the social sciences". And later still in this Agreement, come in the human sciences as well.

The objective is clear. There is need to educate architects for the new role they have to fulfil. This must necessarily also include management and knowledge of finance.

We have set ourselves a daunting task which will mean much for the UIA. And we have started well.

The Committee, partly UNESCO-nominated and partly UIA-nominated, has been drawn from across the world. The initial document was approved by the 2002 Berlin General Assembly. It sets out principles and also a basic modus operant framework.

The document provides for five regional committees. This was deemed a sine qua non for attaining the goals set out. The relative freedom with which these committees are intended to operate will, we believe, act as a means to incorporate the specific characteristics of each region, each country and each university. It would be disastrous to have a rigid system that cannot accommodate regional diversity or the "personality" and track record of each and every university. The rationale of the system is based on uniform standards but not identical curricula or identical detailed rules.

The validation document on hand is, under no circumstances, to remain a static document. It must evolve. For this to be meaningful, the decision-making structures must be brought on board, i. e. governmental agencies or accreditation agencies, depending on the country.

Our work might not have been so problem-free, were it not for the fact that we made it clear that we do not operate antagonistically to existing validation systems but in partnership with them. We have had the support of, for example, the Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA) and have had an initial exchange of intent with the RIBA. I made a point to open discussions with the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA). I also expressly went to La Habana in Cuba to attend meetings with officials of ACSA and EAAE (European Association for Architectural Education).

The parallel poles

It is obvious that the "UNESCO-UIA Validation System for Architectural Education" is the necessary parallel pole to our Professional Practice Accord. Education and Professional Practice are inextricably linked. With a firmly entrenched Accord

and a firmly entrenched Validation System, both truly international as only the UIA can do it, we can be masters of our own destiny and can work towards the global level playing field that we aspire to.

Education and professional practice are interlinked. Hence the importance of practical experience during the academic studies period and also the significance of collaboration between educators and practising architects to ensure a healthy relationship between curricula and job opportunities. Also to ease the assimilation by practicing architects of new theoretical knowledge.

The right to practise

The link between education and the right to practise is an area of concern in a great number of countries. Many strongly advocate that architectural education should be a prerequisite for the right to practise while others would agree with the flexibility offered by the UIA Accord giving the opportunity, under certain conditions, to other less qualified persons as well.

This "flexibility" could easily become an area of confusion if it were interpreted as being the "back door" to enter the profession i. e. that there is an alternative way of becoming a practising architect. We know that this is not so, and that such cases are exceptional and strictly controlled by the relevant regulatory bodies. This will need to be stressed whenever feasible.

What will also need to be highlighted is the way in which examinations, or other ways of accessing the right to practise, ought to be carried out. Clearly such examinations can, under no circumstances, be repeats of the university examinations, they cannot be "evaluators" of the standards of architectural education in a university, as this would fall within the remit of a validation system. They are, thus, generally more orientated, not towards the way architecture is learnt but towards the way architecture is practised.

The answer seems to lie in a "two-tier" system which is, to my knowledge, already in force in some jurisdictions. Individuals with the requisite architectural education sit only the second exam while the others also sit the first exam where they are assessed on subjects that traditionally form part of architectural education.

Adopting such a position would achieve the following two objectives:

1. Make it quite clear that individuals without a 5-year architectural education have something additional to prove and that they are, so to speak, special cases that will need to go through a testing supplementary examination procedure. In this way education will remain the cornerstone for the right to practise.

2. Go some way towards addressing the issue of "culture". This is a very sensitive issue by virtue of the fact that, in contrast to health, safety and welfare, it is intangible, and hence so much more difficult to evaluate. It is my belief that a 5-year architectural course does go a long way towards giving a solid base to cultural sensitivities. It remains to be seen how to address this issue when it comes to assessing individuals who have not had a formal education.

The title "architect", as opposed to the right to practise, must remain, under all circumstances, non-regionable. As, has been clearly stated in the UIA Accord, one of the prerequisites for the use of the title is to be academically qualified.

Other disciplines

Architecture is a collaborative art. In the interdisciplinary teams that necessarily plan and direct projects and programmes, architects should have the lead role, they should be the first among equals, the primi inter pares.

What is the role of us architects in multidisciplinary projects? I strongly believe that it is in the best interests of society that we architects don the mantle of leadership. We are, after all, by our education, best equipped to be the coordinators or, let us not be shy in our use of words, we are best equipped to be the leaders of the team and thus to ensure the continuum of culture and the creation of the future we prefer.

Becoming leaders and coordinators of multidisciplinary teams cannot just happen by itself. Our education must groom us for this, because neither self-appointment or appointment by a client will make us the true leaders of the team. To be this, we must deliver. And in order to deliver, we have to have the knowledge. Hence the significance of the knowledge we acquire at our universities.

Scope of studies

It is important to secure as big a scope for the practice of architecture as possible. There is no point in having an equitable apportioning of the total global pie if that pie is continually shrinking. We must try to increase this total pie. We should aim for new outlets for our profession, for example the participation of architects in the design of public works such as bridges. For this to become reality, the process of change has to start with our teaching institutions.

In many universities, the training of future architects does not expand into fields outside the conventional architectural subjects. Architects are, however, needed in many fields of

competences.

I strongly believe that architectural education should cover as wide a spectrum of associated fields as possible. A healthy profession needs to have many specialities within it.

This has to be done in a forward-looking positive spirit but also defensively. I will illustrate this latter point with a real case. Approximately two years ago a letter came to the UIA from the Swedish Association of Architects informing us that an umbrella organisation had been formed in Sweden entitled "Sveriges Arkitekter". This umbrella organisation includes the Swedish associations of architects, of landscape architects, of interior architects and of spatial planners.

If this can be a pointer for our schools of architecture, should they not encompass the varied special fields that already exist and which are continually on the increase, given the tremendous diversification of our professional skills? Or should all these special fields become independent schools? It is, I believe, in our interests to opt for the former, the inclusive approach.

It is interesting to note that one of the aims of the UIA, and I am quoting from its statutes which were written as early as 1948, is "to develop progressive ideas in the fields of architecture and town-planning as well as their practical application for the welfare of the community".

Level of studies

The long-term objective of architectural education must be the betterment of the quality of life in the built environment. What do we mean by quality of life in the built environment? We mean architecture, we mean urban planning, we mean sustainability, but we also mean orienting studies towards intangible goals such as social equity and conviviality.

Intangibility is also our enrichment through education. It is the one thing that can never be taken away from us.

We are fortunate to be architects and to be able to design. Students must have ingrained in them that design matters. That it matters from an aesthetic, an environmental and a social point of view. And that it makes economic sense.

Curricula must also aim at increasing the range of capabilities of architects and in this way widen the professional scope of architecture thus countering the diminishing professional outlets.

We have let control of the building site slip from our hands. This has in turn led to a vicious circle. As we have, sometimes voluntarily, relinquished control of construction, because our mission was focused on loftier planes such as pure aesthetics, we no longer needed the technical expertise in our everyday professional lives. We consequently demanded less building construction knowledge from our universities and so they did not think it necessary to offer in their course more than the "architectural market" required. And so the vicious circle was complete.

Gone are the days when the architect was the master builder, the person who totally dominated a project through a combination of design and construction skills, and whose authority was indelibly stamped on the building. Compare for a moment the two Paris Opera houses, the old one is known by its architect-Palais Garnier, the new one is not Opera Carlos Ott, it is Opera Bastille.

The answer can only come from a change in architectural education. I want to be quite explicit here. Not a change in orientation i.e. less emphasis on design. That would be a suicidal mistake. It has to be both design and construction, even if this entails more demanding studies. The world is competitive. Our formative years at the schools of architecture have to give us the ammunition to do our job properly, thoroughly and completely.

On the question of length of studies, the UIA is clear. We have adopted the 5-year study duration plus two years minimum until being allowed to practise, one of which could be in the middle of the course.

A deep understanding of materials is obviously a sine qua non for students in architecture. In former days this often meant that students spent time at carpentry or other workshops. Today this is much more difficult to achieve because of the huge range of materials and systems of construction available in the market.

What must, however, be done is to equip students, to the maximum possible extent, in order to allow them to have a deep understanding of what architecture can do for the preservation of our natural resources. Information technology has become the indispensable tool to allow students to reach the full potential of their capabilities in this as well as in all the other subjects forming part of their curricula.

Schools of architecture have not, in my opinion, been sufficiently involved in the problems of the disabled. There are, of course, many exceptions. It is crucially important that the designers and policymakers of the future become aware, during their formative years, of the need for an accessible built environment.

Finally, architectural education will never be complete without study trips. The delicate line where local parameters interface with global parameters will be so much more revealing when the horizons of students are broadened with tours and

exchange programmes. Student exchange programmes have been tried experimentally by the UIA and there is every likelihood that this project will expand.

A level playing field

Equal opportunities to access architectural education must be the sought after target. Internationally comparable education and technical know how are a sine qua non for equal opportunities. It is only when we will have achieved a level playing field for education, that we will see disappear in our profession what has been termed "defensive protectionism" or, in other words, artificial barriers such as language, residency etc.

The UIA is dedicated to achieving this level playing field. It will take time but every step forward counts and will help alleviate the unfairness where, to paraphrase George Orwell, "Every student is equal but some are more equal than others".

We pin our hopes to a large extent, on the UNESCO / UIA Validation System for Architectural Education that I referred to earlier. It is a difficult task, but we are determined, with the help of all our member institutes, to advance towards the desired goal. It will be a different world for our profession when architecture will be taught to the same standards throughout the world.

A level playing field does not only mean equal opportunities for students. It also means universities with equivalent levels of teaching and equivalent means at their disposal. We know that globalisation and liberalisation of education have made possible the creation of schools of architecture of questionable standards, resulting in unfair "competition" and total confusion in the educational "market".

Yet the advent of globalisation can be made to have positive results. What might otherwise become an ugly educational "free for all" and a shrinking role for the universities of high standard, can, and I feel optimistic that it will, enrich the teaching of architecture with global and regional values.

In order to help achieve this, the UIA, with its international mandate, imperatively needs to operate together with UNESCO, with national and regional institutes and of course with leaders of schools of architecture, such as have come together here.

We must also ensure that subjects entrenched in the curricula of some countries, but not in others, be included in the scope of schools of architecture, thus enlarging the spread of their remit. We must at the same time buttress our schools of architecture against any erosion of teaching programmes towards other faculties.

Research and technology

We know that creativity alone cannot produce the aimed for results in architecture.

Results, that is quality architecture, can only be achieved if we master our architectural ABC which includes technology and building construction. And that takes us back to Vitruvius' three key words—strength, commodity, delight. Strength meaning construction, commodity meaning function and delight meaning pleasure or aesthetics. While it is obvious that technology is the basis of construction, we now know that in our present age, technological knowledge is absolutely indispensible in order to satisfactorily answer the requirements of function and also in order to produce the forms and designs necessary to implement our aesthetic vision.

In older days, learning technology meant learning a few techniques like stone or brick building, wooden windows, tiled or slate roofs etc. Now because of the speed with which technology is developing, the key issue is not so much to learn specific construction methods but to have the ability to "think structure", to "think technology". Some have it innate, Gaudi for example. Gaudi is a good example because his understanding of technology, unlike the engineers Nervi and Maillart who also produced aesthetically outstanding results, went beyond structure. It encompassed all the components of a building.

We know that technological development is at the basis of most radical changes in design approaches and architectural expression. The vaulted arch created an aesthetic revolution, so did concrete, so did glass, so is starting to do information technology.

But do we architects have the technological knowledge necessary for us to practise our profession in a way that we can implement our design capabilities to their full potential?

I am afraid that we are increasingly witnessing the existence of a technologically literate architectural elite and, at the same time an architectural underclass that is struggling to survive on limited knowledge. This situation clearly leads to huge firms and the sidelining of small practices.

At the international level, the situation is even more tragic. The technological disparity between developed and developing countries is huge. That is obvious. But it is also increasing, which is alarming. We need technology transfer, but we also need technology exchange because every region of the world, every culture can teach us something.

So what can the answer be?

It can only be a different approach to architectural educa-

tion, hence this Forum has such potential.

It is the remit of the schools of architecture, which produce the architects of the future, to educate students in such a holistic way that design and technology become one inseparable entity.

In former days design had always kept pace with techno logy. Today we have to redefine this relationship.

In architecture, a process of constant experimentation is necessary. Research is the basis for evolution, in all professions, in architecture too. Research is not limited to materials and methods of construction. It must also encompass the exploration of new theories of design. Research will thus become a tool for the advancement of our profession.

But who should do this research?

Clearly there is a role here for the schools of architecture especially in design-related fields. Teachers in particular, but also students, can play their part here, and in this way make for universities that will be breeding grounds for innovative ideas.

Research must be regarded as an inherent activity of architectural teaching. This statement has now been deleted from a UIA document after objections by some Region IV countries. Why?

It has been commonly accepted that the collaboration between industry and practising architects can lead to new ideas and new products. Take something for example, the 2.00 m × 2.00 m. lens (eye) on the facade of Jean Nouvel's Institute of the Arab World in Paris designed in consultation with St. Gobain, or the well-known lighting fixture with asymmetric pyramids for Fiat's Lingoto project which resulted from the working together of Renzo Piano with the Guzzini company.

But, should not these collaborative efforts also involve schools of architecture? Universities contribute to research in so many other fields, medicine for example. Why not in architecture also?

So the schools of architecture have a very definite mission in the "production of knowledge" and more specifically in the production of knowledge related to architecture, to urban and spatial planning, to the building industry and to all the environmental parameters that are so fundamental for any responsible project.

Continuing education

It is generally accepted that education never stops. In order to be up to date with technology, sustainability and other developments, architects need a lifelong pursuit of knowledge.

Initially this could be in the form of post-graduate studies.

But this does not answer to the notion of "lifelong education".

Lifelong or continuing education needs structuring. That is why the UIA solidly backs CPD i.e. continued professional development.

CPD programmes would focus, as the title suggests, on improving and enriching the professional capabilities of architects on such topics as urban planning, legislation, construction management as well as social and community considerations. It is deemed that this reeducation will better the final architectural product and also be to the benefit both architects and public.

Two questions arise. Who monitors CPD and how is this done?

Continued professional development clearly falls within the remit of the professional organisations of architects. They should have the primary role in guiding this system to the desired goals. But universities, also, are entitled to come into the picture. It remains to be seen what would be the input of academia.

Many ideas have been put forward as to procedures. A "points systems" where architects would receive credits for attending courses or lectures is one of them. Sitting exams is another. What is, in my opinion, certain is that attending and/or successfully completing courses will eventually be a prerequisite for continuing to have the right to practise. It has also been suggested in some jurisdictions that it would also be a prerequisite for membership of professional associations.

Sundry observations

Allow me now to refer to some points that are, in my opinion, of considerable importance.
— The brain drain
  It is obvious that only internationally comparable education can counter this. It is incredible how much "expatriate" architectural talent there is. It would be so much more equitable if these same architects operated internationally but from home ground. The architectural brain drain would, in extremis, be acceptable if it were in both directions, but this is rarely the case.
— The use of the word "glocal"
  Cacophonous as it may be, it does, nonetheless, reflect a real need, i.e. to combine global knowledge with local knowledge, to evaluate local architectural practices with regard to the global status quo and also to adapt global practices to local realities.
— Teaching staff to be in practice as well
  As many as possible of the teaching staff should also be in-

volved in practical architectural work. This experience can only be enriching for the students.

— University facilities

The infrastructure of architectural schools can have a strong bearing on the quality of teaching. Infrastructure includes the design of campus buildings. The UIA has a Work Programme entitled "Educational and Cultural Spaces". Its scope includes highlighting quality design in educational facilities.

— Student participation in university affairs

This will enable students to come closer to the decision-making level of their universities, thus making for smoother interaction with administration and staff. I can see great benefit all round if this attitude were adopted. Some universities have already done it.

— Open universities

Gone are the days when the number of students related solely to "production" needs. The right to education is unassailable. This can well mean that for some students architecture will never be their profession. While this could be a burden for subsidised universities, the pluses outweigh the minuses.

— Contacts with graduates and practising architects

The feedback and exchange that will result from contacts between graduates and students but also between graduates and staff will add a pragmatic dimension to studies. It should be encouraged. So should contacts with practising architects

Regional organisations

The work of the UIA and the work of the regional architectural associations is complementary. Hence it is important to establish close ties. It is in this spirit that cooperation with ARCASIA on educational matters needs to be pursued. Our profession cannot afford the luxury of two organisations working independently on the same subject.

As the mission of the UIA is international, it needs the input of regional specificities. These are primarily given by the Region IV UNESCO-UIA Validation Committee but there can be no doubt that ARCASIA, given its region know how can contribute substantially.

Academic portability

Architectural education has an international dimension. Once this precept is accepted, one begins to look for modalities for its implementation.

What is certain is that the potential for exchange at the academic level and for the free movement of students, is tremendous. The mobility of teaching staff and students is obviously a key factor, but so is information technology. Distance is no longer a barrier.

At a recent conference of the presidents of French universities (CPU), it was even suggested that the international mobility of students should be foreseen in the curricula. It is a way, we believe, to bring students closer and thus make the world smaller.

The UIA believes in the portability of academic qualifications, not only after graduation but also for the intermediate years. International reciprocity must be strengthened. In order to achieve this in a meaningful way, it is necessary to encourage the mutual recognition of educational programmes and academic qualifications. Also to establish credit transfer systems. It is evident that the UNESCO-UIA Validation System for Architectural Education can have a major impact on all this.

The benefits will be many. Not least a deeper understanding of other cultures. A very tangible result will also be brought back by students to their home countries of new skills, additional technological knowledge and different ways of approaching design. The emphasis is not so much on better education but on different education. It is exactly these "differences" that enrich us.

Elevating standards of universities and at the same time facilitating student exchange will, in the long run, diminish the flight to universities in foreign countries of students with greater potential and greater financial capabilities. Let us face it. Home country education is indispensable, at any rate as a springboard. Can a student who has spent all his formative years in another country attain the necessary sensitivity towards local aesthetic and cultural values?

Finally a sad note. I am referring to the exploitation of students, so often witnessed in the architectural offices of developed countries. The UIA has made some first steps towards changing this totally unacceptable state of affairs.

Student competitions

There can be no way to underestimate the value of architectural competitions for students, and how stimulating it would be to incorporate architectural competitions—the national, regional or international—into the teaching agendas.

The UIA has led by example, by organising a number of international architectural competitions specifically for students.

Every three years there is a major competition associated with our world congresses. In congresses we have been holding international student competitions such as "Convivial

Spaces", "Architecture and Poverty", "Architecture and Water" and now "Celebrating Cities".

What is particularly meaningful about these competitions is the fact that they are organised in parallel with identical competitions for qualified architects and, even more importantly, that they are broken up into regional entities i. e. one competition for each of our five regions—Western Europe, Eastern Europe and the Middle East, North and South America, Asia and Africa. Thus these competitions are, at one and the same time, both regional and international. We think that this is a good way to promote regional talent while preserving the international character of the competitions through a dual system of awarding prizes at the regional levels but also giving a number of global (grand) prizes.

It has been quite remarkable to witness the response of students and the quality of the entries.

Let me only mention that in the "Architecture and Water" competition there were 650 entries from over 60 countries of the world.

Interestingly, there was in many cases a positive response to these competitions from the teaching staff of the faculties of architecture. In some instances the UIA received group entries while in others the subject of the competition was included in the curriculum. This took the form of having a class competition and then selecting the best proposals for submission to the UIA, all expenses paid by the school of architecture.

The "Architecture and Water" competition was also a lesson for us at the UIA. Whereas the competition briefly referred to projects related to any type of water (sea, lake or river), a great number of the entrants focused on the environmental aspects of water i. e. water as a resource and what this means for architecture.

Architectural education is of public interest

That education is of public interest cannot be questioned. But is there anything particular about architectural education that makes it warrant special consideration with respect to public interest?

It is customarily accepted, as I have stated earlier, that of public interest are health, safety and also welfare. All of these are to a large extent tangible, therefore measurable. They are factors that could be deemed as not being adversely affected by competitiveness in the procurement of services.

But what about culture? Culture, and with it heritage, is inherent in architecture, but unlike the parameters of health, safety and welfare, it is intangible, therefore not measurable.

That is why education of the public becomes so crucial.

Culture is, of course, of public interest. We know, after all, that civilisations have survived through their culture, even when the countries concerned have lost their political and economic independence.

But architectural education is also of public interest. Because it is, arguably, the most important medium for highlighting cultural heritage.

We say "no" to the globalization of culture. Our built environment needs the presence of our several cultures and regional specifities. We will, otherwise, witness an increasing lack of identity and humanity in our cities. And we are fully conscious what this lack of identity and humanity entails. It entails a further diminishing of the quality of our lives.

The fact that culture is to a large extent intangible makes it all the more imperative that it be left in good hands. This is where education comes in.

It is not an easy task. We know that we cannot preserve all of the cultural heritage in our built environment. We need to continually find the balance between preservation and development. Cultural identity is not static. What we today cherish as cultural heritage was often deemed revolutionary when it was created. So we have to make way for the future without destroying the past.

We also know that, important as the preservation of our architectural heritage is, it cannot atone for lack of creativity. Schools of architecture have the onus of initiating students into the creative process that will find the delicate balance between development and preservation, in other words to reinterpret culture through contemporary architecture.

Education is undoubtedly our most far-reaching long-term project. It aims, not only to educate architects and future architects, but also to keep on elevating the architectural awareness of public opinion.

Concerning future architects, the UIA has embarked on a programme entitled "Architecture and Children". The idea is, that children start learning about architecture from as young an age as possible—like with art or music. But that is not all. We strongly believe that the major objective of this programme is to make all future adults appreciative of architecture. Only in this way can we hope to have, one day, a truly educated public opinion.

Another way to educate public opinion is to give increased visibility to the work being done at the schools of architecture and to the contribution to society of universities.

Public policies must promote education more, and support very particularly the academic institutions that have reached a