

LIVING PATTERNS:

In a warm climate, people have a very different relationship to builtform. One needs but minimal protection, such as a *chhatri* (an overhead canopy), during the day. In the early morning and at night, the best place to be is outdoors, under the open sky.

Thus, in Asia, the symbol of enlightenment has never been the school building, but rather the guru sitting under a banyan tree; and the monumental temples of south India are experienced not just as gopurams and shrines, but as a movement through the great open-to-sky spaces that lie between them. This movement—which is unknown in a cold climate—has always been a decisive factor in the spatial and functional organisation in Indian architecture (from Fatehpur-Sikri to Madurai).

ENERGY:

In a Third World country like India, we simply can't afford to squander the kind of energy required to construct—and aircondition—a glass tower in a tropical climate. And this, of course, is an advantage; for it means that the building must itself, through its very form, create the “controls” which the user needs. Such a response necessitates much more than just sun angles and louvers; it must involve the section, the plan, the shape, in short: the very heart of the building.

To cross a desert and enter a house around a courtyard is a pleasure beyond mere photogenic image-making; it is the quality of light, and the ambiance of moving air, that forms the essence of our experience. Architecture as a mechanism for dealing with the elements (truly, a machine for living!); this is the great challenge—and opportunity—of our Third World.

URBANIZATION:

The rural migrants pour into our cities. They are looking not merely for houses, but for jobs, education, opportunity. Is the architect, with his highly specialised skills, of any relevance to them? This will remain the central issue of our profession for the next decades. To find how, where, and when he can be useful is the only way the architect can stretch the boundaries of his vision beyond the succession of middle and upper income commissions that encapsulate the profession in Asia.

THE NATURE OF CHANGE:

We live in countries of great cultural heritage. Countries which wear their past as easily as a woman drapes her sari. But in understanding and using this past, let us never forget the actual living conditions of many of the peoples of Asia, and their desperate struggle to shape a better future. Only a decadent architecture looks obsessively backward ("I have seen the past, and it works"). At its most vital, architecture is an agent of change. To invent tomorrow; that is its finest function.

