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## From the President

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Marshall McLuhan was right when he wrote, "The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village."

When McLuhan made the now famous statement in *The Medium is the Message* in 1967, I was a student at the University of Hong Kong. I was not introduced to his writings until I went to the Graduate Library School at Chicago three years later. McLuhan was more a prophet than a chronicler of his times. There was no Internet then, nor "personal" computer. A global village was a concept, not a reality. Now, communication is instantaneous. We have CNN and other 24-hour international news channels. Moreover, we have the Internet.

As I write this column, I am in the midst of preparing to go to Hong Kong to become the Head of the Fung Ping Shan Library of my Alma Mater. I have sought the advice of the members of our Executive Committee and active former Chairs of CEAL whether I should resign from the Presidency. Almost unanimously they thought that I could conduct my official business in Hong Kong virtually as if I were in Chicago. Obviously our Secretary will have to take on some added responsibilities. I will attend our annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

Being physically in East Asia will allow me to advance CEAL's interests in that region. I hope to learn more about how libraries handle non-Roman data (i.e., Chinese, Japanese and Korean) in their integrated library systems. More importantly, I will promote closer relationship between CEAL and library associations and libraries in East Asia.

I will end this column by changing one character of a poem by the early Tang poet Wang Po (650-675):

"Hai-wai ts'un chih-chi,  
T'ien-yai jo pi-lin."

(Our friendship will sustain beyond the sea,  
We remain neighbors at the end of the sky.)

\* It was "hai-nei" in the original poem, meaning China. The sea was and is the Pacific Ocean.

Tai-loi Ma  
President, CEAL