AN INTERVIEW WITH AMOS RAPPOPORT
ON VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

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QUESTION
It has been almost ten years since the publication of your House Form and Culture which has been highly influential in architectural theory. Along with the works of Christopher Alexander, Paul Oliver, Lloyd Kahn, your work on vernacular architecture has become more or less a school of thought. Since the publication of House Form and Culture, why has there been such a silence on the subject?

ANSWER
Firstly, I would say that there was not a complete silence. I did a number of things after that. The chapter on the Navajo and Pueblo really dealt with vernacular architecture, so did the thing I did on Australian aborigines. At various times and places I have always referred to, or used examples from, traditional cultures but basically, as the field of man-environment studies began to emerge, I thought that it became rather more interesting, or rather, more important to begin to deal with some other issues and to develop a theoretical and conceptual approach to the study of man-environment interaction. Thus, one began to see vernacular more as a specific aspect, or case, of a more general question. It seemed more important to develop this general question, the general approach, than to deal with the specific aspects of it. So, just to reiterate while I think that I always referred to vernacular in all my work, the main thrust became more a matter of developing some new conceptual apparatus.
QUESTION
How did your recent work on man-environment studies affect or even change your thoughts on the vernacular, if there has been any change?

ANSWER
Well, in a number of ways. Firstly, one became more interested in vernacular design rather than in vernacular architecture as one developed a notion of house settlement systems, of behaviour setting systems, of the fact that people moved through environment organised in space and time. It became obvious that one had really to look at vernacular urban design, vernacular landscape design; one had to look at a whole environmental system, not just at architecture because people do not live in buildings but they live in systems of settings. So, we cannot understand one without looking at the other.

Another thing that changed is that vernacular became more and more important, I think, as a point of entry into understanding man-environment interaction generally rather than a thing in itself. Because, as one begins to look at the development of architecture and settlements—I recently did a couple of chapters on the cultural origins of architecture and cultural origins of settlements—what becomes very interesting is the very great age of both. Buildings seem to go back two or three million years. The antiquity of building and other human achievements seem to be pushed back all the time. Very complex settlements also seem to go back a very long time. It becomes more and more important—and this has always been central in my work on man-environment theory as well—that any theories or any concepts must apply to a very large sample both historically in time, and in space cross-culturally. Therefore, vernacular becomes a point of entry into the system. Also, it is easier to see some of the processes and some of the mechanisms in simpler and more manageable systems than in very much more complex systems. One begins at a particular point and one works back and then sometimes one tests concepts which were developed in man-environment studies generally, to see if they apply also to vernacular situations. But one also becomes slightly less certain about what vernacular actually is. Maybe later on we can talk about that. Because, I think this approach possibly leads to a redefinition of vernacular and of what are the environments contrasting with it. Finally, in coming back and looking at vernacular design, one can begin to ask much more sophisticated questions and maybe use more sophisticated techniques that one did in 1967 or 1968 when both the study of vernacular and, certainly, of man-environment interaction was much less developed and when I, personally, knew a lot less that I think, or I hope, I do now.

QUESTION
Our next question will be on the definition of the vernacular. Especially referring to your set of definitions in House Form and Culture, after being
involved in man-environment studies, is it possible that you can develop on the expanded definition of the vernacular and, also, the conceptual and the theoretical framework of the vernacular?

**ANSWER**

It is certainly a very large topic. I will have to be very brief, simplify a number of things and leave out a lot. But basically one can look at the vernacular either as a product or as a process. In *House Form and Culture* I looked at it mainly as a process of how it is designed. I proposed a model which had to do with the use of an accepted model with variations: the model was unquestioned. Therefore it led to certain consequences. Now, I think, one should look at vernacular both as a product and a process. The other problem that one finds is that, increasingly, it seems really rather unclear what is vernacular and what it contrasts with. In other words, using ideal types becomes a problem. Also, in all these cases where modern popular design fits in is a problem—I mentioned this briefly in *House Form and Culture* and people have dealt with it since then—no one however has really adequately fitted things such as roadside strips, drive-in movies and suburban houses into this kind of system. If you want to look both at product and process—and I have recently done that in a paper called "Learning from Vernacular" where I tried to redefine it—it seems more useful rather than giving a tight definition and working with ideal types, to use what is called technically a "polythetic definition"; using, in other words, a number of variables so that the definition is not a tight one but a "statistical" one. If a particular environment meets "x" percent of the criteria then it is what we call vernacular. If it does not, it is something else. Without elaborating this here at the moment, one can then say that the result is a continuum of environments some of which we call vernacular, some of which we call something else. But the definition becomes much less critical. Also, if one accepts the notion which I mentioned before, that one wants to use vernacular as a point of entry into the understanding of man-environment interaction, then you can avoid the whole question of definition because all you say is that in studying environments you want to look at all the environments that people have in fact produced. Almost inevitably most of them have then become vernacular environments or popular environments or anything else. So that not only can you redefine it, I think, in a more useful way—this notion of polythetic definition comes from biology and it has been used in archaeology quite a lot, recently—but you can also avoid the whole issue of definitions by just saying "we will just look at all the kinds of environments no matter what they are called". Then it becomes much less critical what we call vernacular and what we call something else. I think in a way it certainly does change the whole approach because it becomes much less of a little ideal thing sitting there all by itself which contrasts with everything else.
QUESTION
Under any circumstances, can we say that vernacular architecture or anything as such is what is opposing the institutionalised one?

ANSWER
That becomes a problem again because one finds that in many cases the same models or schemata are used in both "high-style" or "polite architecture" or whatever you wish to call it and also in so-called "vernacular". For example, someone I know did some work on Roumanian houses and churches and he shows that in fact both the house and the church are based on the same model; just that one is a bit more elaborated than the other. There has always been both a move-up from vernacular to high-style, and a trickle down from high-style to vernacular. It is really very difficult to separate them. This is, in fact, one good reason for changing the approach; because it is not only difficult to define vernacular itself but even to say in what way it contrasts with other things. I really think that possibly we should give up this whole notion of ideal types which many fields started with and have moved into more subtle kinds of distinctions based on what are essentially polythetic approaches. This may prove very productive in this field as well. If you look at the definition in House Form and Culture of a particular model with variations, you could say the same thing for the office buildings. Most office buildings are based on a model-a core and office spaces around-with variations. You put different curtain walls around it, different proportions, different heights. A suburban house is also a model with variations. So, it becomes a necessary but not sufficient condition to define it. That is why, I think, you need many additional variables to "describe" rather than "define". That is the major distinction. I am not so much worried anymore about "defining" rather I am interested in "describing" characteristics of given environments. Then we can say "here is an environment with this set of characteristics; here is one with that set of characteristics", we can call them what we will but basically they form a continuum and this seems much more important than to contrast ideal types. And, this also gets rid of the problem of popular design like squatter settlements, users adaptations of housing projects and the like. All these things become a part of a single continuum. You do not have to worry so much about where it all fits in. You describe it in terms of a set of descriptive variables.

QUESTION
In your mainly "culture-bound" definition of the vernacular you seem either to pass by or not give much importance to the socio-political or economic conditions of a particular society. Is this on purpose, or can you really separate cultural from the socio-political or economic conditions?

ANSWER
I really had-not thought very much about it. I neglect it. I am just not interested in it, and it seems to me
that one can enter the system at any point. Obviously, the culture and its expression is related to certain social and political conditions and certainly the built forms that result from the culture are greatly constrained by economic, political and societal variables. It seems to me that the more significant starting point is, in fact, the culture although culture, like environment, needs to be broken down into smaller pieces. This idea of schemata and of structuring principles becomes really a much more useful point of entry in that the relationships to style, to behaviour, to ongoing day-to-day activities can be conceptually separated from the larger context in which they occur. In other words, one could look at what actually is happening without necessarily being concerned of how it came to be that way: you can start at a given moment in time and try to understand the system without going through all the preceding or antecedent variables. It is the distinction between an anthropologist who tries to understand how human culture originated and myself who, given a particular culture is interested in what kind of environments result from it.

**QUESTION**

How would you define the state of art in the vernacular architecture at the moment, especially in terms of its teaching value and implementations drawn from vernacular in contemporary design: In other words, what are its effects on the praxis of architecture?

**ANSWER**

These are really two separate questions. The state of art seems to be fairly confused at the moment. We get a whole range of approaches starting with just classification systems where people try to classify window shapes, roof forms, and the like. This has been done for quite some time and it is still being done. Then one finds more analytical approaches where people try to describe and analyse the forms, then one finds people who try to deal with the transformation of forms, using structuralist transformational approaches. At the other extreme are those who are in a minority, who begin to try and relate forms to behaviours. In other words, the hardware to the software, to the people in them; how they use them, how they think, what they do, where things happen, and so on. This whole spectrum is occurring at the moment, but with what I regard as the more important aspects being the least developed. The state of the art, to my mind, is still not satisfactory because the relationship of built environments to what happens in them, the way they come about from the cultural point of view, is still very lacking.

The other question of how it influences teaching or even practice is a topic that is particularly relevant. In other words, "learning from vernacular"... Here again, there are four possible points of view; all have occurred in time and in different places, and probably still coexist. You can either ignore vernacular which
certainly was the case for a long time, or you can acknowledge its existence but then reject it because it is seen as not having any valuable lessons. One can also copy it directly which, unfortunately, is the most common approach. In other words, people just copy the forms without understanding what they mean or why they are good. So you get some really ridiculous situations both in developed and developing countries. Finally, there is the approach that I am advocating: we analyse vernacular through the concepts and models which we have developed in studying man-environment interaction more generally, derive lessons from that and apply the lessons to design. This is a very different approach which seems to be the least developed at the moment. In fact, I know very few people who are really doing it. The most common at the moment is still the first and the third: people who either ignore vernacular completely or those who get very romantic about it and copy superficial forms without really understanding what is happening and why it is good. Taking the fourth approach, the lessons could be applied in different contexts and in different situations.

**QUESTION**

Outside the superficial issue of just copying from the vernacular, can you dwell upon the process of the vernacular and its teaching value on today's design? More than just forms and shapes, obviously, there is a certain quality and certain characteristics of vernacular which definitely arise from its process. Can you dwell upon this issue a little bit, please?

**ANSWER**

I agree with you that the product depends on the process and, in fact, I think it still depends on the definition that I used in House Form and Culture. If you have an accepted model which everyone takes for granted and you merely have variations on it, then one of the results in terms of product is that the environment communicates very clearly because the model is shared by everyone. The results are environments and settings that have very high degrees of relevance to people who, therefore, use them in very appropriate ways. Thus, there is a good fit between the life-style and the environment. It also leads to the perceptual complexity of vernacular environments which is what most of the designers like. If we have a model with little variations, then the model is very quickly understood. The variations produce the complexity, the noticeable difference and, therefore, you get this rather superb richness, opulence of vernacular environments which most designers try to copy in formal terms. But that does not work. With the exception of some Third World situations and maybe using some notions about open-ended design and personalisations, these kinds of things, in terms of process, are very difficult to learn from, except maybe analytically as ways of analysing environments. It seems to me more useful, for learning purposes, to analyse conceptually the forms—how they contain behaviour, how they structure behaviour, how they communicate, what their complexity is, how they relate to
landscapes— and to derive principles which can then be possibly applied via other processes to design. It seems to me very unlikely, with the exception of a few very specific situations, that we can still use the same processes that were used in traditional environments, certainly in more complex societies, in large cities and so on. It is critical to understand the processes and to see how the process led to particular product-results.

The lessons go beyond merely the process, they lead to an attempt at trying to understand why vernacular environments work well. Then, I think, one could apply the lessons. In the first instance, the major application will in fact be in the Third World developing countries. Firstly, because there are still viable vernaculars there. Secondly, one can see the whole sequence from the traditional vernacular to modified vernacular, to squatter settlements. There we can see the process actually in place, of how people change, the dynamics of change, what is being given up, what is being retained, what seem to be the important things. It becomes much easier to apply the lessons very quickly than it would be say, in other countries where at the moment, one is almost doomed to apply formal lessons rather than the more profound ones. Once again, as in studying vernacular, there is a more logical place of entry with the application at that point, and then working one's way back to more complex situations, not that the Third World situations are not complex, but in terms of learning from vernacular they are really still simpler because the thing is still there. Whereas in Britain, in Australia, in Canada or in the United States, where there are vernaculars of course, they are no longer being produced in the same sense that they are in many other places in the world. My own feeling is that the models to be developed for learning from vernacular will be mainly based on analyses of Third World situations.

**QUESTION**
Actually, your recent remarks covered this question but may we ask you to elaborate on the future of this line of thought in architectural theory? What are the areas of research, what are the things to be done in the area?

**ANSWER**
The future I do not know because if people reject this approach it will have no future. The few times that I have tried to get people to use it, it has not worked. Or this may be an educational process. In the long run obviously the future is what we are concerned with. The kind of analysis which I briefly described above, begins with a given situation in a vernacular context, or in a developing context and you look at the changes. You can observe the process, the sequence of changes from the most traditional to the most changed, going in one direction. You can begin to project scenarios of likely future developments which reduce the range of possible futures. Therefore, you have narrowed the range of alternatives that you really consider for the next twenty or thirty years because you are dealing with a much
narrower segment of development. You can also study the impact of new ideas. In other words, start from the other end and look at what is happening in the elite sector, and how trickle-down processes are occurring, which elements seem to be adopted most quickly by self-built projects, and by the ideal things that people are thinking about. One can also begin to look at the impact of media which is so critical: what do television programmes show, what do newspapers show, what do magazine pictures and films indicate, so that you can almost begin to forecast which elements will get incorporated first. By doing this kind of analysis in a number of different domains and in different directions, one can begin to define an area whereby one can begin to say certain areas are much more likely to happen than others.

There is another lesson which one can draw from analysing vernacular in this way. Consider urbanisation, for example. We find that in certain cultures there are ready-made social and spatial units which lend themselves to be applied very easily. For example, the Kampong in Indonesia, the Barangay of the Philippines, the Friq in North Africa are all sorts of socio-spatial units which you can easily see as the constituent elements in a city to varying degrees. The Kampong being the easiest, the Friq being the most difficult. But if you then go to a culture like Botswana, where there are no cities, no urban tradition at all but a very scattered pattern of isolated homesteads, it seems quite likely that urbanisation is going to be much more difficult; many more difficult processes of change will have to take place. If you then go to the next step, into nomadic cultures, this is going to be even more difficult. Thus, you can even begin to predict the difficulty of urbanisation, you can even begin to foresee at which points these problems will arise and take measures in advance to lessen or moderate these problems. Note that the model, comes from man-environment studies in the most general sense. If you have difficulties, for example, stress which results from a big gap between one state and another state, one of the ways of reducing this stress is to modulate the rate of change. So you can begin to think of designing environments which reduce certain aspects of the rate of change while allowing others to continue. For example, one might talk about providing supportive environments at the community and dwelling level where people continue certain social structures, family structures, food habits, religion, ritual and so on, whereas work patterns, or the modernisation of economy, can proceed. In fact, there is some evidence which one can find in literature that by providing a highly supportive traditional home environment, modernisation in other sectors can occur much more rapidly, much more rapidly than if you change everything all at once, because then you can get into a culture breakdown; everything breaks down and nothing works. Thus, I think one can begin to apply whole set of supportive environments to modulate, moderate and articulate the
rate of change. All these lessons begin to add up into a powerful tool for analysing all sorts of very interesting questions.

QUESTION
Talking about rapid urbanisation and the problems that it raises in most of the highly concentrated, large cities, you have mentioned that the lessons to be learned from the vernacular can be very useful especially in the Third World countries. Now, none of the activities, including the architectural, is devoid of the mode of production. Under these circumstances, especially in view of the present mode of production in capitalist or socialist, industrialised or unindustrialised, developed or underdeveloped countries, and with the given mode of production therein, what type of future do you see within the framework of the process that the vernacular architecture came about?

ANSWER
I do not know. As I say, I still think that the aspects of the process have less applicability except in developing countries where there is still the self-help process whereby people still do a lot of their own building, their own construction, their own shaping of environments. But I really cannot see very much future for it at the moment except for the very small groups in the population in so-called developed countries. At the moment it seems that the more important lessons really have to do with the structuring of the environment and in terms of forms such as Kampong or Barangay, because in a lot of the activities of particular aid agencies, internationally, the concept of people building their own houses; core houses, sites and services, etc., is pretty well accepted and applied. But the larger, organisational structures are still imposed; the road layout, service layout and so on. And it seems very often that these layouts at the larger scale of the community or the neighbourhood or whatever you want to call it, in fact, inhibit certain developments of the dwellings so that even though in terms of process or production people can shape their own houses, they really cannot because the larger layout blocks certain developments. It is implicit in a particular road layout that everyone can have a little house, but you cannot shape a compound for fifty or a hundred people which may be desired in Ghana or in Kampong in Indonesia. It seems to me that the major immediate applications at the moment seem to be in understanding the spatial organisation and the systems of settings at this next higher scale of the community; what is a relevant social group, what are the spatial equivalents, how should the non-domestic settings be related and shaped so that the other elements can then be introduced? In terms of longer-range research, yes, I would think that one would want very carefully to analyse the processes that are used in traditional vernacular which produce certain results and to see what their equivalent might be in a highly developed situation. As an off-hand example, since I have not thought of that much,
it may be that the processes both of production and of building construction, of who does it, when they do it and so on, have much more limited relevance than the understanding of some of the other variables. But this may just be a blindspot on my part.

QUESTION
We would like to ask whether you have any conclusive remarks for the people working in Turkey—more or less your Turkish colleagues? Would there be anything you would like to add to what has been said so far in terms of vernacular and its teaching value and vernacular in its immediate application in the institutionalised architecture, if we can make such a separation, or any other comments that you may have?

ANSWER
One of the things that I really did not get around to saying is this: one of the lessons of the vernacular is that it is highly culture-specific. In traditional situations each little area, each valley, each district, each province, and, very often, each town has certain uniquenesses to make it different than the next one. This has both implications for communication and for use, but also for the product because the more variations of this kind there are the more complexity, obviously, because instead of going through a uniform environment you go through many transitions. It seems to me that one of the more important lessons is that one needs to look at the teachings of vernacular in a very highly culture-specific context. In other words, Turkey probably is too large a context to use as an example; maybe even Eastern Turkey or Southern Turkey. One really needs to look at local variations and see to what extent they are really still relevant and significant. Many of the decisions being taken on a very highly uniform base, not only for reasons of ignorance but also for reasons of policy, are the result of the fear among the policy decision-makers to deal with variations, not because it is difficult but because they are afraid of being accused of, say, being prejudiced. They think that "different" means "worse", therefore they will not give group A something different than group B. It is much easier to say that everyone is going to get the same thing, and this then proves that we are treating everyone equally. One of the lessons to realise is that the differences are not a bad thing but a good thing and need to be capitalised on. One needs to be very, very specific so that the analyses one does in one region are not necessarily the ones one does in another. It is a matter of becoming very sensitive to the variations and to what they mean. This becomes extremely relevant to all design, not just Third World design or vernacular design, because this process of increasing entropy is occurring everywhere. It is just as bad in the United States as anywhere else, or in Australia; the specific qualities of places, in terms of climate and materials, life-style, habits, activity systems, food and everything else, are just being destroyed. That may be one of the rather universal lessons which may flow from
the so-called less developed countries to the more
developed. In other words, there are still differences
preserved but they are rapidly disappearing. In
archaeology there is a concept of "rescue archaeology";
maybe we need a concept of "rescue vernacular design" to
preserve some of these things that still exist before it
is too late. I feel very strongly that there are lessons
of this kind which have relevance for what you call
institutionalised architecture because they relate to
design in general. Why is it that in traditional
environments areas are different yet not chaotic? They
vary in very systematic ways. You are aware of transitions
from one to the other. But each one in itself has this
consistency and uniformity. This is one of the big
lessons that we can learn. Because in design we have been
trying to achieve it for many years and have really not
succeeded. Another lesson is that vernacular seems to
have the ability of being added to, subtracted from, or
changed without losing its identity. It has what one must
call a very stable equilibrium. Whereas "high style
design", to go back to ideal type nomenclature, is very
unstable. You change one little thing in a classical
building and the whole thing looks like nonsense whereas
vernacular environments are completely, endlessly
flexible without losing their basic character. This is
another very important lesson when we talk about open-
ended design, flexibility and personalisation. How do you
create the kind of frameworks which allow for all these
things to happen without becoming just a mess or chaotic?
Again, there are lessons one could apply to climate, to
technology, to any number of questions which would lead
to a whole set of very general applications, not
specifically Third World, not specifically dealing with
urbanization, but dealing with basic issues of
architectural or design theory. So, in that sense, yes,
there is a great future for this approach if people will
use it.

QUESTION
Another important issue is the preservation of the
vernacular heritage as physical entities. Can you
elaborate upon that? Your points are very likely to be of
great interest especially for the Turkish academia.

ANSWER
I really cannot comment because I do not know the
situation; I have not been to Turkey for a long time. The
whole problem of how you preserve these things or, maybe
more importantly, how you preserve them without turning
them into a museum like Williamsburg (which, incidentally,
certainly may have its place). People do rescue
archaeology, maybe we need to rescue samples from all the
vernaculars for future references. But I really cannot
answer, or even address the actual problem, because I do
not know the situation. I do not think anyone can be very
successful either, because one of the interesting things
is that very often it is the academicians or foreigners who
are interested in preservation whereas the local people
themselves seem to be very anxious to get rid of "all
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that stuff". You can find quotations in literature from people in Morocco and other countries saying "yes, we realise how beautiful it is but we do not want any of it". Hassan Fathy's experiment is a beautiful example where he tried to do all the right things yet people rejected it because they did not want mud brick, they did want modern houses with big windows and all the rest of it. It becomes a very critical issue of who is going to be using those things. It may well be that if one wants to preserve these areas, one must needs to accept that they are going to be used not by the people themselves who live there but maybe by the elites. Maybe it is the university professors who will live in those places while the people who have lived there now will move away. But I really do not know the answer to that.

QUESTION

We have one final question. Most of the problems, or at least some of the problems in institutionalised architecture or contemporary architecture is attributed to the deterministic approaches by the architects or even those who consult the architects. Within these terms, can you elaborate upon if there were any deterministic way of approaches in the vernacular, or does its success lie in a non-deterministic approach due to its being a basic response to the nature and to the needs of the people by the user or through a very strong contact with whoever was building it? In the institutionalised architecture there is at least the professional who is interpreting the needs of the user.

ANSWER

I do not understand the use of determinism in this situation, but let us forget this for the moment and look at this last point. Firstly, in many vernacular situations there were specialists involved also. Even in the so-called primitive or preliterate cultures one finds that specialists existed and they were very highly thought of. I recently discovered that in traditional New Guinea, in the Sepik River area there were these big men's houses being built and the people who painted the decorations owned these designs. If someone used your design they had to pay a fee, which is just like our copyright. The same thing applied to ritual music and dances. There were specialists even then. The difference was that the users and the specialists a) had closer contact, b) specialists were not full-time specialists and mainly, c) that the specialists, if there were any, and the users shared the same basic patterns, models, culture and lifestyle. Therefore they understood exactly what was involved. In that sense, it seems to me that one of the answers is that through the application of man-environment studies it is possible for experts and professionals, even for outsiders, to analyse the situation in such a way that they provide the kind of organisational frameworks which the people themselves would want to have. I would even go further. Although I know many people disagree with me, I believe that the outside person can see some of these things more clearly.
because the insiders take things so much for granted that they cannot articulate them. They really do not know what is going on. It sometimes takes the trained outside observer to really see what is important and what is significant. Therefore, I have some hesitancy about some of these anti-professional, anti-specialist attitudes which seem quite common. Obviously, there is a vast fund of knowledge and learning from traditional situations which one needs to use. This applies not only to design but also to medicine. Increasingly, people realise that folk-medicine is important. It applies to psychiatry, to agriculture, to animal husbandry, to all sorts of places where experts tended to come in and apply a priori standards and techniques. Now they come and try to find how and why the things work. There is a very well-known example from Turkey where agricultural experts came in and tried to remove all the rocks from fields because rocks were obviously a bad thing. Then they discovered that rocks were important because dew condensed on them and produced the only water the fields in fact had. So when you removed the rocks, fields went dry and the crops failed. If people do something for a long time, they often have very good reasons for it but this does not mean that you let the people continue doing them. Because it may well be that if you want to use tractors you cannot have the rocks. But once you have understood the principle, then a specialist or an expert can say "if that is the principle behind these rocks, what other ways are there for achieving the same objective?" Knowing the range of alternatives they can, possibly, suggest ways which are better, not just from that point of view but which introduce other benefits as well. Thus it becomes a very complex interplay of learning from the people themselves and applying some of the knowledge, methods and concepts of outside or inside experts, I do not really care where they come from. The problem with many designers is that they have a priori, rather rigid, determinist theories which are based on nothing but their own guesswork. They would come in with, for instance, La Ville Radieuse, they would build it anywhere in the world, and it did not work anywhere in the world; it did not make a difference where you built it, it was pretty bad anyway because it was based on a complete neglect of how people live and how they use space, what privacy is, what a house means and so on. Of course determinism is one of those words which can be interpreted in many different ways, some of which are very important. But this is not the place to start on that.
ÖZET

AMOS RAPOPORT İLE YÖRE MİMARLIĞI ÜZERİNE BİR SÖYLEŞİ

Amos Rapoport ile House Form and Culture (Konut Biçimi ve Kültür) adlı yapıtının yayımlanmışından on yıl sonra yapılan söyleşide yazarın yöre mimarlığı görüşünde genel olarak şu aşamalar saptandi.

Yazar, model-ürün (süreç-sonuç) ilişkisinin bütünlüğünü savunmakla birlikte, House Form and Culture yapıtındaki modelci yaklaşımdan ayrılarak ürune ağırlık vermektedir. Vernacular (yöre değerlerini taşıyan, yansıtan, yöre kültürünün parçası olan) kavramında önemli bir aşama vurgulayarak, yöre mimarlığını bir üst düzeyde, çevreselde görmekte; artık vernacular architecture (yöre mimarlığı) üzerine değil, vernacular design (dikkat edilirse vernacular artıkt "yöre" sözcüğünü zorlamakta ve bu çok önemli kavramın Türkçe'de enine boyuna ve kültür-zaman boyutunda ilgilenip eğitiminize kazandırılmasına gerekli vardır, yalnız bu konu, burada, bu özetin boyutlarının çok çok dışındadır) üzerine ağırlık verilmeli görüşünü savunmaktadır.

Yazar, polylethic (tam) dediği "çevre" düzeyindeki çeşitlilik ve değişkenlerin değişen toplamlarının, bir den çok açıklamaya, bir bakıma istatistik uzanımlı, vernacular kavramı üzerinde durmakta, tekilci, romantik, gerekirci, kopyacı tanımların üzerine çıkma çalışmaktadır.

Rapoport şu çelişkiye vurgulamaktadır: Belirli bir mimarsa görüşün bulduğu yöre değerlerini taşıyan algılamalar ile yöre değerleri taşıyan ortamların içinde bulundukları halde artık onları yaşamak istemeyen ve sürekli değişim içinde bulunan kiteler arasındaki çelişki.