

LEGITIMIZATION OF THE REGIONALIST IDEA IN ARCHITECTURE THROUGH MUMFORD'S EARLY WRITINGS

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This paper aims to point out direct or indirect influence of Mumford's critical ideas formulated as early as 1920s, on the contemporary idea of Regionalism in architecture. Being a cultural critic, Mumford's translation of the geographical and political notion of Regionalism into architecture is interesting, because, although his intellectual position represents the socio-political and intellectual spirit of his age, there are similarities between the mental habits of that period and of the present in the interpretation of certain stylistic attitudes in architecture. In this paper, the emphasis will be given to Mumford's interpretation of the 'local', 'regional', 'universal', and 'modern' aspects of architectural problems where he often conflates particular architectural forms (images) with certain 'ideas' (such as national, regional, universal) in order to justify some architectural approaches. This conflation, actually, has been an evidence of formalist tendencies that have persisted in various modern and post-modern architectural attitudes (1).

Although it is difficult to claim that there is always a direct relationship between architectural critical writings and the practice of architecture, historical development of particular ideas have shown that the impacts of critical texts that are addressed to architects in practice can be misleading. Such texts can work for the benefit of architects, only if the ideas and opinions suggested in them do not distort the perception of architecture by reducing it to fixed schemas or verbal categories. The latter always carry the risk of misleading architects with irrelevant solutions which may obscure the understanding of the nature of architecture in a wider perspective.

1. Conflation or misconception of 'images' with 'ideas' as a tendency in formalist attitudes in architecture (particularly in the writings of Regionalism advocates) has been discussed in the Ph.D. thesis by Erkiç M. (1993) entitled 'On Reading Architecture: Some Criteria for Evaluating the Theory of Regionalism'. The thesis attempts to analyse a variety of concepts embraced by the broad notion of Regionalism and further to explore related items such as 'Regionality' and 'Universality' in works of architecture, not with a view to justify the theory of Regionalism, but rather to demystify and evaluate critically their meanings and significance in architecture at a fundamental level that transcends usual discussions of them.

1 (continued) It is claimed in the thesis that, despite its sophistry, the problem of Regionalism is epistemological since it relates to some misunderstandings that obscure fundamental issues in reading and understanding of cultural works, i.e. architecture, where 'ideas' (universal) and 'images' (regional), or the 'purpose' and 'means' of architecture are confused due to formalist thinking and a restrictive perception of culture.

It is claimed also that the problem occurs when particular, regional images of architecture are mistaken for ideas themselves. In such a situation, the purpose and content of architecture are dominated by the limited content (of immediate expression of form) of particular regional images; this leads inevitably to 'formalism'. Regionalism is that prescribed idea by which the content of architecture is obscured and bounded with its idealised meaning in a formalist sense. It can then be argued that formalism -confusion of ideas and images- results from ambiguity in the understanding of nature and the relationship between human ideas (modified by moral-practical knowing of life) and particular manifestations of these ideas in the realisation of culture, art or architecture.

2. We can find various architectural critical texts where buildings are classified with certain labels according to their expressions. For example, Charles Jencks (1977-1990) describes Modernism in architecture as dead and categorizes recent architecture under different names; such as Post-Modernism, Late-Modernism or New-Modernism. Frampton (1982) also classifies recent architectural approaches as Rationalism, Structuralism or Regionalism. Historicism, Vernacularism, New-Classicism, Post-Modern Classicism are other examples which are used in the architectural texts to identify different architectural attitudes. By doing so, the authors of these texts not only classify buildings but the architects of these buildings by labeling them for example as Rationalist or Regionalist.

Mumford's critical role is significant in the world-wide dissemination of the idea of Regionalism which was originally formulated in Europe. Mumford was widely influenced by Patrick Geddes, a European city planner, architect and geographer, and re-formulated Geddes's ideas on Regionalism in his cultural and architectural critiques. Mumford's early definition of Regionalism was illustrated in one of his papers, *The Relations of Nationalism and Culture* published in 1922. He gradually developed his idea of Regionalism in another paper, *The Theory and Practice of Regionalism*, which was published in 1928, and in his famous book *Technics and Civilisation* (1934). His idea of Regionalism as opposed to Universalism, especially in architecture, took its shape in his two papers published in 1941, *The Regionalism of Richardson* and *The Basis of Universalism*, where he compared two American architects, Richardson and Jefferson. As we will see, Mumford formulated his theory in two phases where he aimed to support the idea of Regionalism with some forms or images that he saw relevant to Regionalism. As the first step, Mumford elaborated a criticism of 'Modernism' both in the political and social arenas and in the field of architecture. In the second phase, justification of his theory of Regionalism was given its stance in a definition of Nationalism which was associated with the cultural heritage of communities. Throughout his writings on Regionalism Mumford developed his critical view gradually. He shifted his argument from a more 'romantic revivalist' tendency to a more 'national culturalist' one. Yet, his argument does not go beyond the level of appearances while compromising between old and new, or traditional and modern, or universal and regional values in architecture. Mumford's achievement in defining the ultimate aim of Regionalism seems, since then, to have remained as a reference for many discussions of what theory to underly Regionalism.

Before going on to analyze Mumford's ideas and his justification of Regionalism in architecture, it will be helpful to provide a perspective of the current tendencies of thinking on the idea of Regionalism in architecture.

REGIONALISM IN ARCHITECTURE

A common tendency among architectural texts or architectural critical writings of the 70's and 80's has been to argue about the negative consequences of the recent modern architecture, as being due mainly to a lack of respect for the past or for the integrity of local tradition. The complex relationship between past and present, or old and new, and the relationship between modern and traditional, or universal and regional, has often been defined as an *area of conflict* in these texts which attempt to clarify and to solve the problems of architecture in modern times. In advocating the restoration of continuity between past and present, many writers of 70s and 80s categorize a variety of attitudes using different labels such as Post-Modernism, Neo-Rationalism, Neo-Classicism, Historicism or Regionalism (2).

Among these tendencies, the issue of Regionalism in architecture, with a capital 'R', as distinct from what we may call *regional* architecture, was first introduced to the field of architecture imported from the political and social sciences at the beginning of this century. Although the source of many ideas and conceptions advocated in Regionalism today goes back to 19th century Romanticism, Positivism and even to the Neo-Platonism of Antiquity, as a modern idea Regionalism has become a concrete concept through the criticism of Modernism that developed since the forties and reached its peak in the sixties (Erkilic, 1993). It consequently emerged as a theory in architecture in the last two decades. In a call for New Regionalism (Center, 1987) and Neo-Regionalism (Center, 1990),

3. Center: The Journal for Architecture in America devoted its volume 3 to this subject and entitled the issue as Center: New Regionalism, (3) Rizzoli, 1987.

4. Amongst the most important advocates of Regionalism since the early eighties are Abel (1982, 1986, 1997), Attoe (1987), Buchanan (1983, 1984), Boddy (1983, 1990), Curtis (1982, 1987, 1989), Doshi (1985, 1986), Dostoglu (1990), Fida (1985), Frampton (1982, 1983a-b, 1985, 1986a-b, 1987a-b, 1988, 1992), Jain (1985), Nyberg and Seif (1990), Özkan (1985), Pallasmaa (1988), Dietsch (1991), Rapoport (1990), Doshi (1985, 1986), Speck (1987), Stern (1987), Taylor (1986), and Tzonis (1981), all of whom contributed to the world-wide dissemination of this theory.

the definition and strategies of this theory have been further elaborated (3). The advocacy of Regionalism has been dominated by anthropological, culturalist and phenomenological view-points in addition to the earlier emphasis on local geographical climatic premises. Foremost amongst its advocates since the early eighties are: Frampton who has developed his theory of *Critical Regionalism* through several definitive articles, Curtis who lent it distinction in his book *Modern Architecture* and defined *Authentic Regionalism*, and Rapoport who proposed Regionalism as 'a method of control' for achieving regionally sensitive environment (4).

Appearing in a variety of forms, such as *Authentic, Ideal, Sensitive, Interpretive, Healthy, Mythical, Restorative, Resistive, and Modernist or Critical Regionalist*, in both developed and developing countries, the Regionalist doctrine is based on the *idea of return* to cultural essence, to origin, to self, to nature, etc. wherein, as generally suggested, local cultural values can be used as a source of reference in a self-conscious way. In the literature of Regionalism it has been associated with several other concepts, such as Functionalism (when referring to Wright's architecture), Organicism (when referring to Alvar Aalto's architecture), Nationalism (in the Turkish context and in the context of most of the developing countries), Romanticism (associated with revivalism), and Neo-Rationalism (when it is described as a self-conscious rational style).

The varieties of labels and identities associated with the idea of Regionalism show that Regionalist tendency in architecture does not so much differ from the formalist tendencies that have long been influential in the history of architecture. In this tendency confusion or conflation of abstract 'ideas' with concrete 'images' of architecture (an epistemological problem) is mostly due to the skin deep critical attitudes in the understanding and interpretations of ideas like 'regional', 'universal', 'modern' and 'traditional', 'local', etc. Because of inadequate critical conceptual foundations, architectural form has often been perceived as a vehicle to legitimize particular ideas, world views and assumptions.

CRITIQUE OF REGIONALISM

The critique of the idea of Regionalism in architecture is rather rare. It may be because of the way various theories (critical theory, phenomenological view-point, cultural anthropological theories) have been applied to Regionalism by its advocates during the justification of this idea. We can find only few comments concerning the criticism of Regionalism and its ambiguities scattered through some texts. Venturi (1987) posited the lack of clarity of the term Regionalism.

I have a little trouble with Regionalism – the term, the idea – because it tends to become a simplistic idea and implies that all buildings should be explicitly regional and that, necessarily, Regionalism is appropriate... When I think of such matters, I say you should not start out with some rule that the building should be regional, but... (Venturi, 1987, 78).

Trover (1983) during his interview with Frampton noted that,

Regionalism is just another thing that architects reinvented for themselves. It's not something that's ever really gone away and it's unavoidable' (Trover, 1983, 52).

Another critic, Schaik (1986) directed his criticism to the popular theory of Regionalism in his article entitled *Against Regionalism* (5).

5. For Schaik Regionalism is a slogan that encompasses attitudes of great danger to architectural thought here and now. It is difficult to control the development of Regionalism. It may easily turn to political Regionalism as it had happened in the case of Albert Speer and his patron.

6. According to Colquhoun (1989, 208), 'The materials of culture are similar in all cases, but each country tends to interpret these materials in a slightly different way. It is precisely because the ingredients of contemporary architecture are so similar all over the 'developed' world that the slight differences of interpretation to which they are subjected in different countries are so interesting. Needless to say, the kind of Regionalism I refer to has nothing to do with the old regions of culture attributed to ethnic characteristics, climate, language, and so on'.

I am deeply suspicious of the recently reintroduced parlour game *Regionalism*; a game in which on ill-defined grounds some buildings are considered *Regional* while others are described as *International*. Here it seems that *regional* and *relevant* are terms that go together while *international* is an unaccompanied expletive (Schaik, 1986, 19).

Alan Colquhoun (1989, 1993, 1996) is the only critic who tries to analyze critically the developing process of Regionalism. In his early article entitled *Regionalism and Technology* which was published in his book *Modernity and the Classical Tradition* (1989) he pointed out the repetitive nature of discourse on Regionalism and its impasse. His alternative view point is to shift the context of Regionalism from its vernacular historicist utopia to the locality of the technological availability in different regions. Colquhoun describes another 'phenomenon which might equally be called *Regionalism* that has nothing to do with any vernacular utopia or any critique of industrialism' (1989, 207). His definition of Regionalism is not closely related to the cultures of different regions but rather to the actual political economic situations of different countries (1989, 207-208). Colquhoun is quite clear in pointing out that nature of the practice of architecture must be seen as a matter of interpretation. He goes further and defines a political Regionalism exempt from traditional culture, referring to concrete political realities of existing situations in different countries (6).

Colquhoun's Regionalism is based on a political interpretation of the Modern world in which the nation-state is a reality (1989, 208). Colquhoun's realistic political and ironical criticism of today's seemingly culture-based theory of Regionalism is interesting in the sense that it postulates a pathological situation in architecture. Implicitly, he directs a criticism at the way culture is perceived in other discussions of Regionalism; however, his discussions remain at the level of merely acknowledging the problems of Regionalism without analyzing the reasons behind the problems. For example, Colquhoun does not deepen his inquiry in order to find out the fundamental reasons why culturally based Regionalism has persisted for so long as a mental habit or disposition; he points out the fact that the root of Regionalist attitudes goes back to the Romantic Period. From this point of view, Colquhoun's critical model remains limited in the sense of Habermas' critical position, because he does not go beyond the intellectual dispositions which underlie the mental habits that created Regionalism (Erkiliç, 1993).

In his article entitled *Kritik am Regionalismus*, Alan Colquhoun (1993) suggests that 'we probably should stop using the term Regionalism and begin to look for a different way to conceptualize the problems this term was meant to describe'. Before concluding his argument with this claim, Colquhoun evaluates critically the development of the idea of Regionalism and its historical sources. For him the underlying premises of Regionalism (though difficult to clarify) can be evaluated in connection with the ideologies of the *Avant-Garde* of the twentieth century which must be considered as an outcome of the nineteenth century Romanticism. Throughout his writing, Colquhoun shows how the expression of opposition between modern ideas and their romantic criticisms has become a central issue in social theories and architecture since the Romanticism of the eighteenth century. There is an indication in Colquhoun's writing that Vico's (as well as Herder's) philosophy of human culture (his distinction of natural science and arts) has resulted in the development of romantic, nationalist and revivalist attitudes in European countries (7).

7. Colquhoun limits his discussion mainly to the historical context and does not question the intellectual dispositions that characterize the Regionalists' perception of architecture in a deeper sense. However, he points out the impossibility of achieving an authentic architecture through Regionalism, since it aims to achieve the essence or origin by means of imitation. For him this is an hopeless venture, because after removing the outer imitation layers one only finds a deeper layer of imitation.

Colquhoun, in his most recent article entitled 'Critique of Regionalism' (1996) revised his earlier article and tried to evaluate the historical development of the idea of Regionalism in five categories. These are:

- Regionalism, Romanticism, Historicism,
- Regionalism and Eclecticism,
- Regionalism and Nationalism,
- Regionalism and the 1920s *Avant-Gardes*
- Regionalism and Late Capitalism.

His evaluation is an historical analysis of the social and political contexts of different cultures rather than a critique of the idea of Regionalism. Colquhoun associated the idea of Regionalism with the above tendencies which have developed in relation to the changing social, cultural, political, and economical world views in their respective historical contexts. Colquhoun pointed out in these tendencies the persistence of the intellectual habit of using local customs in the new presentations. For him, local customs are continuously 're-territorialized' in 'the spirit of the epoque' and this statement is exemplified by Mumford's critical position.

LEWIS MUMFORD: FORMULATION OF THE THEORY OF REGIONALISM

As he pointed out many times in his writings, Mumford was influenced by Geddes' evolutionist ideas and his view of Regionalism as well as his methods for regional surveys. Mumford, in his paper *The Theory and the Practice of Regionalism*, supported the evolutionist culturalist ideas of Geddes and his criticism of rapid industrialization in the cities and the devaluation of natural resources and social life (Mumford, 1928, 18-29). Like many other critics of Modernism, for him, also, the source of modern destruction were the scientific developments which took place during the Renaissance. For him, since that time, people's minds turned away from the essential relations of geography and history and broke the established ties of tradition and place (Mumford, 1928, 133). While criticizing the social and cultural changes of the eighteenth century and the neglect of local and traditional character of life, Mumford claimed that

the living issue of customs and traditions, the vernacular architecture, the folk-way and folk-tales, the vulgar languages and dialects which were spoken outside of Paris or London -all these things were looked upon by the intelligent eighteenth century gentlemen as a mass of follies and barbarisms (1928, 134).

Mumford's writing on Regionalism confirms his theory. For him, the earlier regional awareness started during the mid-nineteenth century when the destruction of the earth's resources was criticized widely in literary writings. The first reaction to the destruction of the earth for Mumford was *Economic Regionalism* which meant not only protecting the resources of earth but encouraging the balanced development of industries within a region, in relation to agriculture, and to the immediate market (1928, 22). He persistently claimed that by *Economic Regionalism* he did not mean a self-sufficiency of the local regional economic system. Instead, he emphasized a balance between local communities and the whole state and called attention to the need for renewal of local communities' needs and agriculture (1928, 25).

CULTURAL REGIONALISM AND NATIONALISM

Mumford agreed that Regionalism took its earlier inspiration from the nineteenth century Romantic Revivalism as well as from the idea of Nationalism which also contributed to the formulation of the theory of Regionalism (1928, 134). In his

paper, *The Relations of Nationalism and Culture*, Mumford attempted to define two different versions of Nationalism; Nationalism as a fact (scientific) and Nationalism as a belief (mythical) (1922, 315). In order to clarify these two different meanings of Nationalism he identified Regionalism as referring to the cultural heritage of communities. For him, in a modern sense, Nationalism and the national unity was based mainly on political unity that reflects the power of the state and defines its boundaries. On the contrary, in his second form of Nationalism he defined *culturism* as being the unity of cultural heritage of different communities within nations. He soon called this as *Cultural Regionalism* or *Culturism* (1922, 316-318).

Mumford supported the idea of *Cultural Regionalism*, or *Culturism* or *Regionalism* as a reaction to the (modern) national state, not in the sense that different regional cultures needed to be expressed as new national states, but in the sense that Regionalism, for him, emphasised the corporate unity and the independence of the local community focused in its local capitals, as opposed to the unity which was supposed to exist within the frequently imaginary boundaries of the State (1922, 317). In fact, Mumford was aware of the sensitivity of the subject and he wanted to propose a model that was well suited politically and economically for both the function of the modern state and the communities in it, because he was aware of the fact that most European countries and USA were composed of many communal cultural groups within their geographical boundaries. With this definition Mumford, like Geddes, attempted to enrich the meaning of Regionalism by introducing to it a cultural as well as political dimension and thus initiating a new field of conceptions, ideas and images to support his theory.

To articulate his argument, Mumford pointed out different local cultural characteristics of regions as the *images proper* of the idea of Regionalism. According to him 'instead of uniformity, there is diversity; instead of a single aim there are multitude of aims; instead of rigid order there is a flexible adjustment' in Regionalism. He believed that in *Culturism* or *Cultural Regionalism*, or *Regionalism*, 'there would be a rich local life; and each region, each community, would contribute in decent measure to the spiritual heritage of humanity at large' (1922, 318).

REACTION TO MODERNISM AND THE PROBLEM OF SENTIMENTAL REGIONALISM

Mumford in his paper also attempted to clarify the historical development of the idea of Regionalism referring, first of all, sympathetically to the romantics' reaction to modernization, mechanization and universalization. He claimed that Regionalism was an attempt to create a new mould for life as a whole, in continuity with what had continuously existed in Europe (Mumford, 1928, 135). In order to support the idea of Regionalism, Mumford gave a definite date of birth for the idea of Regionalism at which, he thought, it was initiated by the romantic literary critics.

....the regional movement -that concerned with the rehabilitation of historic regions- began at a definite point in time, namely, 1854, at the first meeting of the *Felibrigistes*, who gathered together for the purpose of restoring the language and the independent cultural life of Province. The Provincial language had been destroyed by the Albigenian crusades; Province had been, so to say, a province conquered by the Church through the use of the secular arm, and although an attempt had been made by the Seven Poets at Toulouse in 1324 to revive the language, the movement had not succeeded, and the speech

of Ronsard and Racine had conquered Province. In their consciousness of the part played by language as a means of establishing and helping to *built up their identity with their region* a group of literary men, Felix Gras, Roumanille, Aubanel, and greatest of all perhaps, Frederic Mistral, *started to institute the regionalist movement*. This movement has gone through a similar set of stages in every region where it has taken place, in Denmark, in Ireland, in Catalonia, in Scotland, in Palestine (1928, 135; author's italics).

Mumford, by giving an exact historical reference for the birth of Regionalism showed that it was the romantic revivalist tendency associated with the establishment of national or cultural *identities of specific regions* that inspired the idea of Regionalism. Further, referring to M. Jourdanne, Mumford explained the evolution and institutionalization of Regionalism in three cycles, and stated that,

first a poetic cycle: this is the recovery of the language and literature of the folk, and the attempt to use it as a vehicle of expression, on the basis of traditional forms; the second is the cycle of prose, in which the interest in the language leads to an interest in the totality of a community's life and history, and so brings the movement on to the contemporary stage; and finally, there is the cycle of action, in which regionalism forms for itself a fresh objective, political, economic, civic, on the basis of its growing integration. In the final stage this historic type of regionalism comes together with that part of the movement which arises out of an appreciation of the geographic resources and peculiarities of a region: the region considered as a social heritage in time meets the region considered as a body in space: the cultural and the economic aims interfuse (1928, 135).

This summarizes the life cycle of Regionalism and shows how the geographical term *region* was given a multitude of responsibilities in order to cure the social, cultural, moral and emotional, as well as economic and political problems of the period. Such a far reaching idea had to be strengthened in all respects. Mumford attempted to identify weaknesses of Regionalism before overcoming them. He wrote:

The besetting weakness of regionalism lies in the fact that it is in part a blind reaction against outward circumstances and disruptions, an attempt to find refuge within an old shell against the turbulent invasions of the outside world, armed with its new engines: in short, an aversion from what is, rather than an impulse toward what may be. For the merely sentimental regionalist, the past was an absolute. His impulse was to fix some definite moment in the past, and to keep on living it over and over again, holding the *original* regional costumes, which were in fact merely the fashion of a certain century, maintaining the regional forms of architecture, which were merely the most convenient and comely constructions at a certain moment of cultural and technical development; and he sought, more or less, to keep these *original* customs and habits and interests fixed forever in the same mould: a neurotic retreat. In that sense regionalism, it seems plain, was anti-historical and anti-organic: for it denied the *fact of change* (author's italics) and the possibility that anything of value could come out of it (1934, 292-293).

In the above statement, Mumford shows he is well aware of the weakest aspects of Regionalism, especially in his description of the sentimental Regionalism. He believed that this negative aspect of Regionalism could be transcended. He believed also that change could be incorporated in Regionalism and for him it was in the embracing of change that authentic Regionalism could be found.



Figure 1. Pavillion VII, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, 1817, Architect: Thomas Jefferson (Whiffen, 1969, 30).

Figure 2. Lunenburg County Courthouse, Virginia, 1824-27, Architect: Thomas Jefferson (Whiffen, 1969, 32).



Figure 3. Capitol, Richmond, Va., 1785-92, Architect: Thomas Jefferson (Andrews, 1964, 64).

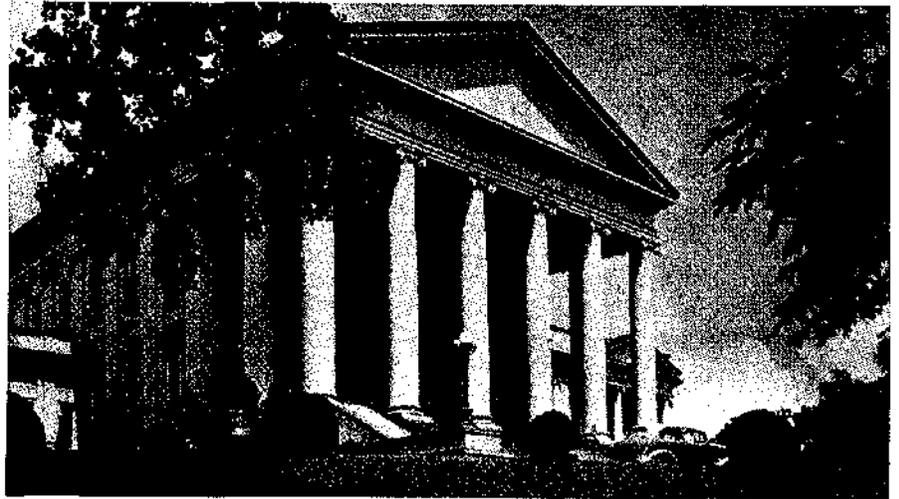
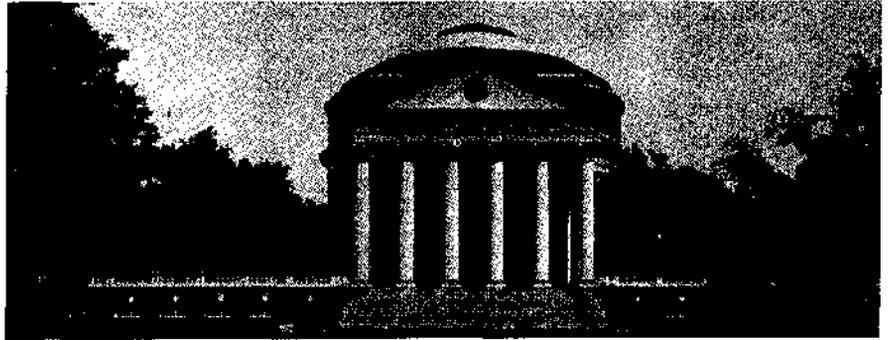


Figure 4. Monticello, Charlottesville, Va., 1770-1809, Architect: Thomas Jefferson (Andrews, 1964, 65).



Figure 5. Rotunda, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Va., 1822-26, Architect: Thomas Jefferson (Andrews, 1964, 65).



METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEM

Now the question is to find a suitable *method* in order to achieve a true or authentic Regionalism. How could one be traditional and modern at the same time? This must be the reason why Mumford shifted his argument to the problem area of methodology in Regionalism and claimed that the problem of Regionalism is related to the appropriate tactics to achieve it (Mumford, 1934, 293). He considered the problem of Regionalism mainly methodological rather than ideological. Since that time it has become the main aim of Regionalist advocates to develop methodologies which legitimize the idea by reinforcing it from various view-points either theoretically or pragmatically. Mumford (1928, 140) believed that there was a great need to support the philosophy of Regionalism in order to justify it in an ideal, practical, cultural and technical sense. He also wanted to establish a common orientation everywhere and he deeply believed that Regionalism could offer a cure for many current ills. He stated that,

Focused in the region, sharpened for the more definite enhancement of life, every activity, cultural or practical, menial or liberal, becomes necessary and significant; divorced from this context, and dedicated to archaic or abstract schemas of salvation and happiness, even the finest activities seem futile and meaningless; they are lost and swallowed up in a vast indefiniteness (1928, 140).

At this stage, Regionalism itself becomes a goal, an object, action, theory or philosophy which satisfies the problematic conditions.

REGIONALISM IN ARCHITECTURE: UNIVERSALISM VS REGIONALISM

Mumford's view-point concerning the opposition between Regionalism and Universalism was very well exemplified in his critical architectural writing where he appreciated Richardson's architecture as being an authentic example of Regionalism and criticised Jefferson as being an exponent of universal forms (Figures 1-5). In Mumford's view Jefferson's personality and his works were totally wrong, because for Mumford,

Jefferson was the incarnation of the Age of Reason. He had the rationalist's love of *clarity and measure*; his mind was at home in law, politics, invention, in matters where it was thought well to keep the emotions out of the picture, as far as possible, lest they distort practical judgement. *Order and measure* had for him a definite aesthetic appeal: these qualities, which seem so *distasteful* to the romantic mind, because they are based on *abstract rules and formal relationships*, undoubtedly made him feel warm appreciative glow (Mumford, 1952, 118-119; author's italics).

Figure 6. Crane Memorial Library, Quincy Mass. 1883, Architect: H.H. Richardson (Andrews, 1964, 162).

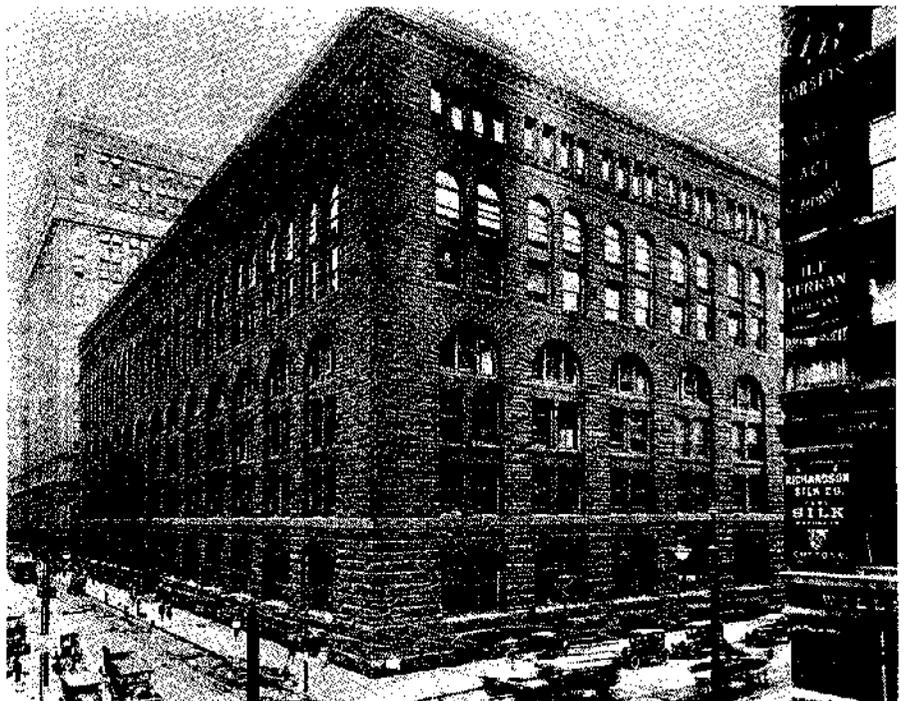
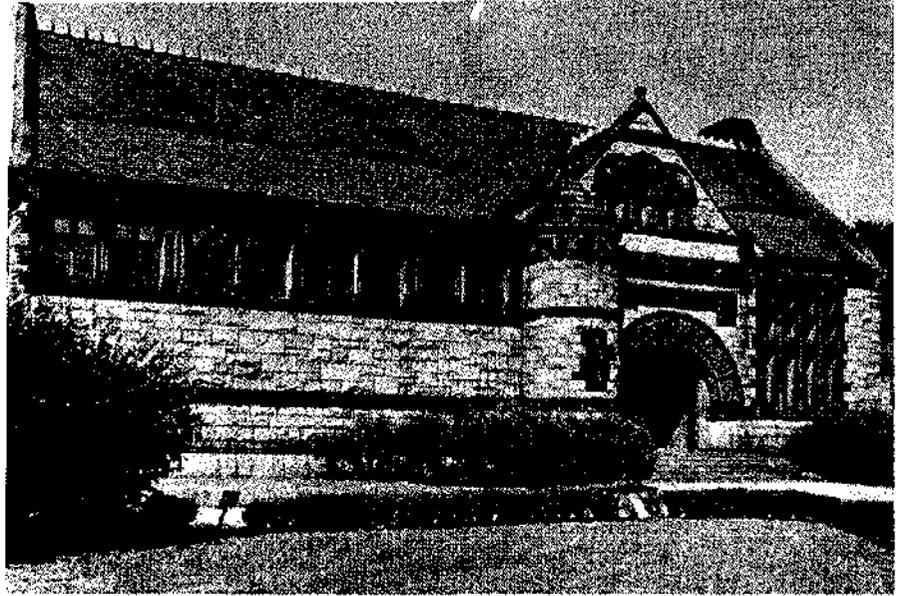


Figure 7. Marshall Field Wholesale Store, Chicago, 1885-87, Architect: H.H. Richardson (Andrews, 1964, 165).

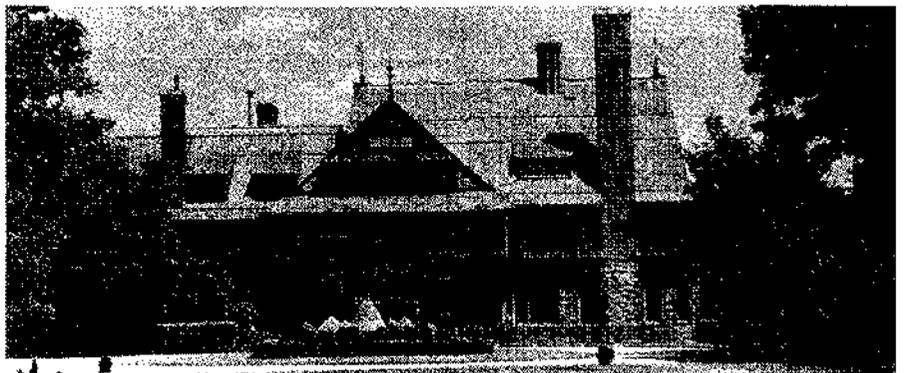


Figure 8. Residence of W. Watts Sherman, Newport, R.I. 1874-76, Architect: H.H. Richardson (Andrews, 1964, 166).

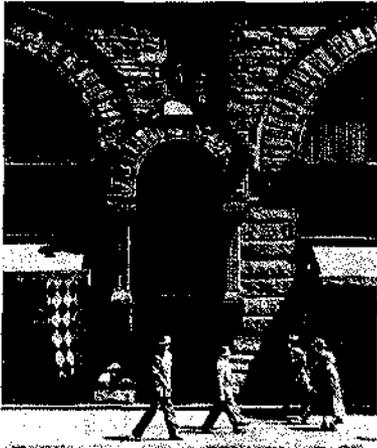


Figure 9. Cheney Building, Hartford, Connecticut, 1875-76, Architect: H.H. Richardson (Whiffen, 1969, 134).

On the contrary, Mumford considered Richardson and his architecture to be sensitive and full of feeling (that is why it is Regionalist). In order to express his feeling about Richardson and his works Mumford claimed that,

If Jefferson was the man of reason, Richardson was the man of feeling and emotion: a man whose eyes revalued in colour, whose fingertips delighted in textures, whose architectural forms were in a way the extension of his own bodily structure (Mumford, 1952, 119).

While comparing the buildings of these architects, Mumford attempted to underline certain images (forms) that he believed reflected the idea of Regionalism. Again Mumford defined the differences between Regionalism and Universalism as expressions of tastes. He criticised Jefferson's architecture as having the universal classical architectural features. According to Mumford there was a unity between the essential formal characteristics of classical architecture and the new type of forms and mechanical methods (1952, 120). On the other hand, he claimed that Richardson, while relying on traditions of romantic movement, incorporated both classical architecture and modern technological function (Mumford, 1952, 120-121). He described the aesthetic qualities of Richardson's architecture (Figures 6-9) and appreciated how he invented new forms out of the old ones (that suited the definition). Mumford stated that,

It was Richardson who first made full use of local quarries of New England- Milford granite, brown sandstone, Longmeadow stone, employing both the colour and the texture of local stones in a way that gave them a new architectural value. It was Richardson, again, who took the traditional white cottage or farmhouse of New England, with its clapboard or shingled sides and its shingled roof, and who transformed this early type of house into the wide-windowed cottage, with its ample porch and open rambling rooms that embodied a new feeling for both the landscape in which it was placed and the requirements of domesticity (1952, 127).

Mumford was not explicit in his words when he defined the *rational ordered forms*. He did not explain very clearly how forms can be accepted as rational or romantic because of their visual three dimensional features. From his words we can assume that by *rational ordered forms* he possibly meant the built forms where geometrical or regular orders were applied in plans or facades. For example, in his descriptions he associated the idea of Rational as well as Universal with clarity, measure, abstract rules and formal order. As opposed to these *rational* rules and order Mumford recalled romantic attitudes in design and pointed out that irregular forms of landscape reflected the idea of romanticism as well as Regionalism. He claimed that,

In reacting against rational, ordered forms, the romantics sometimes almost discarded form completely; in landscape gardening, for example, not merely did the leading theorists attempt to simulate wild nature, but they preferred irregular shapes to regular ones, even when they appeared in trees: dead branches, twisted stems, tangled foliage were emblems of protest, not only against artificiality, but against art itself (1952, 121).

Mumford, in his highly subjective and formalist attitude, conflated the images with ideas (*i.e.* defining the idea of rational as measured order, and regional as irregular form) (Erkılıç, 1993). In fact, this is one of the most critical issues in art where symbolic status is concerned. Mumford's reference to nature and its organic forms recalls the intellectual dispositions of Laugier or Pugin, or Ruskin (Empiricism and Neo-Platonism)(Erkılıç, 1993). Once again the works of nature and culture are falsely assimilated to one another due to conceptual confusion. The success of Regionalism for Mumford depends on the marriage of old and new, which he thought could be achieved with the articulation of images of buildings.

As indicated earlier, Mumford in his study was critical about some paradoxical situations in the works of the romantics. He disagreed with those architects who attempted to copy the old (e.g., Gothic forms in their architecture). He put this clearly in the following words,

people who attempt to restore the outward form of tradition really deny both the validity of tradition and the integrity of the society in which they live (1952, 121).

However, while offering a new perspective for re-interpretation of old historical values, he did not go beyond a discussion which was focused mainly on formal features of buildings. For him, to go beyond these forms (old and historical) meant to give response to new functions and purposes or new shapes. Richardson, in this sense, for Mumford was an exceptional architect who was able to understand the *romantic formulae* through his *experience* and his *intuitive understanding* (1952, 123). For him, the essential aspect of the romantic formulae was the intuitive feeling which cannot be transferred into an architectural form by imitation of historic ornament or style: it must be felt and lived by the architect. By saying so Mumford described the source of Regionalism, as well as good architecture and art, as inspiration, feeling and emotion. Unlike Aristotelian definition of architecture and of moral-practical reason in the making of architecture, here, architecture is interpreted as a matter pertaining to the senses rather than to awareness and understanding (Erkiliç, 1993).

Mumford's definition of Regionalism took its latest form when he discovered some modern aspects in Richardson's buildings. He appreciated Richardson's railroad station and library building for a small town as providing a response to modern functions and purposes. He claimed that,

It was in an entirely new kind of structure, the small town library and the suburban railroad station that his art first came to its perfection. Working through such forms, Richardson step by step threw off the old tags and the old ornaments, analysed boldly the new functions to be performed by these buildings, and translated them into stone, brick and wooden forms that had both an inner logic and an outward shape of their own (1952, 124).

In Richardson's buildings the historic quarrel between the Utilitarian and the Romantic was for the first time resolved: for if Richardson was the first romantic architect to embrace, by creating fresh forms, the railroad station and the office building and all the other rising phenomena of the Industrial Age, he was also one of the first of those who served the machine to see that industrialism must be transformed by human purpose and by human feeling if it is adequately to save modern man. Beauty, Richardson demonstrated, was not something that could be added to a purely practical structure, as a cook might use an icing to decorate cake, or even to conceal the defects of a burnt cake: but it was rather something that must be worked into the whole architectural form from its very inspection, and it must therefore rest on a warm, intimate knowledge of the function of the building. Handsome is as handsome does is the motto of this kind of design (1952, 126-127).

The dream of Regionalism had come true. Now Regionalism was serving the ideals of both Romanticism and Modernism. The regionalist buildings were now Regional as well as Universal. But hadn't that dream belonged to all modernists for years? Wasn't that argued by many other advocates of Modernism until today? Interestingly enough, towards the end of his paper Mumford discovered something Universal in Richardson's architecture. Universality for him came from the logical methodologies that Richardson used in his works. In order to justify this universality Mumford continued,

Richardson was much more than a regional architect. No less than Jefferson himself, Richardson was searching for a *universal form*: he was attempting to create a consistent and logical way of treating any architectural problem that came his way (1952, 128; author's italics).

For Mumford Richardson's work is Universal as well as fully matured, also because, 'he approached steadily to Rational and Universal forms: even in his most Regionalist architecture, he established principles of design that were of far wider application' (1952, 129). Finally Richardson in Mumford's eye,

began as a romantic architect; but he was far more than that; he became regional architect; but he was more than that; and in the end, he was an able utilitarian and rational architect; but *precisely because he had never lost his romanticism and his regionalism*, he was also far more than *that*. It was indeed by his robust combination of all these elements that Richardson achieved a unity and completeness that few architects in the nineteenth century possessed (1952, 130).

Mumford has gradually developed his understanding about the Regional and Universal aspects in architecture throughout his writings. Yet his concern with the notions of Regional and Universal does not go beyond the level of images or appearances due to his formalist thinking which had its sources in the ideologies of Romanticism.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF REGIONALISM WITHIN THE MODERN MOVEMENT

There is no doubt that social, cultural, as well as political ideas in the early 20th century have had a wide impact on the development of modern theories in architecture. Although the critical ideas of Mumford (as a city planner and a cultural critic) had influenced social scientific studies largely; his influence in the development of architectural ideas remained implicit. Mumford's critical reading and interpretation of buildings as well as his classification of some attitudes in architecture represent the intellectual position or the world view prevailing in his period.

In fact, the significance of the influence of Mumford's ideas on architecture comes from his peculiar methodology justifying particular ideas with concrete images of buildings. Although this attitude of 'conflation of abstract ideas with concrete images' has its root in the earlier centuries, it has been an important approach in the criticism of architecture within the development of modernism and afterwards. The expression of Universalist vs Regionalist attitudes in architecture (as a cult of the expression of romanticism vs scienticism) is only an example of the above conflation that goes behind some formalist attitudes in architecture. The evaluation of the idea of regionalism within and after modern movement here, will give an insight about how Mumford's ideas on Regionalism and how the above tendencies in architecture are interpreted in the tradition of architectural ideas.

The expression of opposition between, for example, romanticism and scientism or culture and civilisation, or modern and traditional were also carried on through the *Avant Garde* theories of early twenties and the Modern Movement. While Muthesius was advocating the adoption of mass production, Henry Van de Velde and later Johannes Itten were criticising modern ideas invoking Ruskin's romantic, mystical ideas (Frampton, 1985, 96, 129). Revaluation of the vernacular and historical architecture even developed as a virtue of Modernism in the architecture of modern pioneers. Le Corbusier's reference to vernacular architecture of Mediterranean countries and his justification of the similarities between the principles of Modernism and the simplicity of vernacular forms was

an example of this attitude. A formal introduction to the term Regionalism is articulated by Giedion in *Space Time and Architecture*.

The idea of Regionalism had gained impetus during 1940's and 1950's at the same time as the application of the principles of Modern architecture became a dominating force in architecture. It was generally agreed among the architectural critics that the local cultural building traditions of peripheral countries, such as those of the Third World and developing countries, were destroyed by the introduction of the new forms of Modern Movement, which were the product of the Western civilisation. This critical evaluation was widely supported also by the advocates of Modernism. Giedion, in *Architecture You and Me* (1958), explained his opinion about Regionalism which had, for him, as 'its motivating force a respect for individuality and a desire to satisfy the emotional and material needs of each area' (1958, 145). He called for a sensitivity to the local architectural values in the 'technically less developed countries' and advised a 'hybrid development -across and between Western and Eastern civilisations' (1958, 141). Although not original, he named his 'method of approach' as *New Regionalism* and for him this approach satisfied both cosmic and terrestrial conditions (1958, 149). Giedion did not deepen his formula, yet the essential ideals that he gave to the idea of Regionalism still survive in the very recent arguments about *New Regionalism*. Giedion's methodical approach reflected the prevailing intellectual disposition which was dominated by positivism in his time whereupon architecture was perceived as a problem solving activity.

In 1964, an exhibition entitled *Architecture Without Architects* organized by Bernard Rudofsky at the Museum of Modern Art called attention to the indigenous forms. Rudofsky's concern about vernacular architecture was not original, yet his exhibition and the accompanying book helped to clarify its goal in the minds of architects who were searching for sources of reference for their new architecture as alternative to Modern architecture. Rudofsky's appreciation of vernacular architecture was aesthetic, romantic, empirical and essentially mystical while praising the poetical beauties of these forms.

The British architectural journal, *The Architectural Review*, played a leading role in the formulation and development of the theory of Regionalism. During the 1950's the editorial staff of this journal, particularly Nicolaus Pevsner, published articles which were calling for a new sensitivity to local traditional and national characteristics in architecture. New terms and titles, such as, *The New Humanism*, *New Brutalism*, *The Functional Tradition*, *New English Humanism*, were invented and supported in the articles in order to enforce a movement or a leading school. For example, Pevsner (1954, 227-229) in his article *Picturesque* published in 1954, recalled the previous Picturesque Movement and insisted that the principles of the Picturesque were relevant to the Modern Movement and contemporary planning problems (while associating the principles of the Picturesque with the principles of functionalism in the Modern Movement). Moreover, he gave lectures on *The Englishness of English Art* based on the strong relations that he saw between the British culture and the Picturesque, emphasizing the native vernacular qualities of the built environment.

The Architectural Review continued this intellectual thrust in the following years and published various regionalist studies from all over the world. Within the last two decades the journal played a leading role in advocating and encouraging the theory of Regionalism in the issues entitled: *Regionalism Search for Identity* (May 1983), *Regional Identity* (October 1984), *Anatomy of Regionalism* (November 1986) and *Regionalism in the Developed World* (May 1988).

The other architectural journal which contributed to the dissemination of the Regionalism is The MIMAR which was a publication of The Aga Khan Awards. In the articles published in this journal and with the awarded projects, Regionalism has been presented in the actual forms of buildings where an understanding of the combining the Modern with the traditional building forms of the Muslim world is to be found.

MİMARLIKTA 'REJYONALİZM' KAVRAMININ MUMFORD'UN 1920'LERDEKİ ELEŞTİREL YORUMLARI İLE MEŞRULAŞTIRILMASI

ÖZET

'Rejyonelizm' kavramının bugünkü tanımının oluşmasında şehir plancısı ve kültür eleştirmeni Levis Mumford'un 1920'lerde yaptığı eleştirel yorumların önemli katkıları vardır. Bu yorumların, Mumford'un yaşadığı dönemin kültürel ve entellektüel birikimini yansıtmaya rağmen, bu konuda günümüzde yapılan mimarlık tartışmalarındaki yaklaşımlarla kavramsal anlamda benzerlik taşıması ilginçtir. Bu benzerlik, son dönem 'Rejyonelizm' tartışmalarında üzerinde durulan ve vurgulanan bir konu olmasına karşılık, mimarlık eleştirisinin tarihsel sürecinde kavramsal bakış açılarının değişimlerinin (ya da değişmezlerinin) değerlendirilmesi açısından önem taşır. Örneğin Mumford'un 'yerel', 'evrensel', 'modern', 'gelenek' gibi soyut kavramları tanımlama biçimi ve bu kavramları mimarlığın somut ürünleri üzerinde yorumlaması (soyut fikirlerin somut imgelerle çakıştırılması) modern öncesi ve sonrası dönemlerde sıkça rastladığımız biçimci tutumlar ile örtüşür. Mimarlık eleştirisi yazımı ile mimari ürünler arasında doğrudan bağlantı ya da etkileşim olduğunu söylemek zor olsa da, mimari söylemlerinin mimarlık problemlerine bakış açılarını yönlendirmede (doğru ya da yanlış) oynadığı rol yadsınamaz.

Mumford 'Rejyonelizm' kavramını Avrupalı kent plancısı ve coğrafyacı Patrick Geddes'in 'evrimleşmeci ve çevreci' yaklaşımlarından etkilenecek geliştirmiş ve daha sonra bu kavramı 'Milliyetçilik ve Kültür', 'Rejyonelizmin Teorisi ve Pratiği', 'Teknik ve Uygarlık' başlıklı makalelerinde incelemiştir. Mumford'un 'Rejyonelizm' kavramını mimari anlamda değerlendirdiği çalışması 'Richardson'un Rejyonelizmi ve Evrenselciliğin Temeli' başlıklı makalesidir. Bu çalışmalarda Mumford, birbirinden farklı olduğunu vurguladığı iki mimari yaklaşımı ve ilgili mimarları karşılaştırırken 'Rejyonelizm'in olumlu yönlerini dile getirerek savunur. Mumford'un 1920-1940 yılları arasındaki yapıtlarında 'Rejyonelizm' kavramına yaklaşımı ve onu meşrulaştırmadaki tutumu değişkenlik gösterir. Örneğin, önceleri 'Rejyonelizm' kavramını 'milliyetçilik' kavramı ile özdeş tutarken daha sonra bu kavramı 'romantik yeniden canlandırma' ve 'yerel kültür' (Kültürel Rejyonelizm) kavramları ile birlikte tartıştığını görürüz.

Burada vurgulanması gereken Mumford'un 'reyonel' ve 'evrensel' olarak tanımladığı binaları yorumlarken kullandığı yöntemdir. Bu yöntemde 'soyut fikirler' (reyonel ve evrensel) üçüncü boyutta görsel, imgesel düzeyde tanımlanır ve isimlendirilir. Örneğin, Jefferson'un binalarında kullandığı klasik stildeki kolonlar Mumford'a göre o binayı 'modern' ve 'evrensel', ayrıca Jefferson'u da 'evrenselci' kılarken, Richardson'un kullandığı taş cephe kaplamaları ya da tonoz pencereler binayı 'yerel', 'reyonel' ve 'geleneksel' kılar. Bu değerlendirme yöntemi, aslında bugün de izlerine rastladığımız birçok biçimci yaklaşımlardan çok farklı değildir.

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Bugünkü 'Mimarlıkta Rejyonalizm' tartışmalarında öne sürülen yöntem ve yaklaşımların mimarlık tarihi sürecinde gelişen bazı tutumların bir uzantısı olduğunu ve bu kavramın temelindeki bakış açısının tarihsel anlamda kökünün 'romantik' döneme ve hatta neo-platonculuğa kadar uzandığını görebiliriz. 'Eski ile yeni', 'modern ile geleneksel' arasındaki (sözde) var olan 'dilema'nın sosyal, politika ve sanat alanlarındaki çözüm arayışları mimarlıkta da çeşitli akımların oluşmasına neden olmuştur. Modern mimarlığın tüm dünyada yaygınlaşmasına tepkisel olarak gelişen tutumlar 1960'larda geleneksel mimarinin öne çıkartılmasına ve modern ile geleneksel arasındaki problemin vurgulanmasına neden olmuştur. 1980'lerde yeniden ivme kazanan ve eski ve yeni mimarlık arasında dialoğun farklı kavramsal bağlarla oluşturma çabaları 'Rejyonalizm' tartışmalarında yeniden odaklanmıştır. 'Rejyonalizm', mimarlık eleştirmenleri tarafından farklı sıfatlarla (örneğin: sağlıklı, iyileştirici, dirençli, eleştirel, vs.) tanımlanırken, kavramın coğrafi ve bölgesel özelliğinin yanısıra kültürel niteliği vurgulanmaya çalışılmıştır. Bu yaklaşımlar içinde Frampton'un geliştirdiği 'Eleştirel Rejyonalizm' kuramı en güçlü olanıdır ve Frampton kuramını bir yandan 'eleştiri kuram'ına diğer yandan kültürel bağlamda 'hermenetik' bakış açısına dayandırarak 'Rejyonalizm'i güçlü bir temele oturtmaya çalışır.

'Rejyonalizm' ve özellikle 'Eleştirel Rejyonalizm' yaklaşımlarını eleştirerek değerlendiren çalışmalar az olmakla beraber, bu değerlendirmeler, 'modern' ve 'geleneksel' mimarlık arasında (sözde) var olan problemlere çözüm önerilerinin temelinde yatan ideolojik ve kuramsal problemleri vurgulamaları açısından önemlidir. Örneğin, Alan Calquhoun'un 1989, 1993, 1996 yıllarında tartışmaya getirdiği mimarlık problemlerinin ekonomik, politik ve teknik boyutları, ayrıca tarihsel süreç içinde 'Rejyonalizm' gibi bir kavramın gelişimi ve arkasındaki nedenlerin irdelenmesi önemli bir katkıdır.

Calquhoun'un önemini vurguladığı fakat tartışmasına girmedığı bir diğer konu ise mimarlıktaki 'Rejyonalizm' yaklaşımlarının düşünsel temellerinin irdelenmesidir. Böyle bir değerlendirme ise genel anlamda mimarlık problemlerine kavramsal ve fikirsel düzeyde bakış açılarının dünya düşünce tarihi sürecinde ve fikirlerin oluşum nedenleri ile birlikte sorgulayarak değerlendirilmesi ile mümkün olur. Örneğin soyut 'fikir' ve 'kavram'ların somut 'imge'lerle karıştırılması (veya aynılaştırılması) ve benzer şekilde 'Rejyonel' gibi soyut bir kavramın 'Rejyonalizm' gibi bir tutuma ve imgeye dönüştürülmesi, ya da 'modernite' kavramının 'modernizm' kavramı ile karıştırılması hep aynı bakış açılarının göstergesi olarak mimarlık tarihi sürecinde karşımıza çıkar. Bu yüzden mimarlıkta 'Rejyonalizm' düşüncesi yukarıda bahsedilen ve mimarlık problemlerine bakış açılarının eleştirel anlamda değerlendirilmesi öncelikle gerekir (Erkiliç, 1994).

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