

STUDIES OF TYPOLOGY AND CLASSIFICATION IN JAPAN AND AMERICA: CURRENT STUDIES AND RESEARCH APPLICATIONS

Mary Louise Grossman *

Study of comprehensive open space typology historically receives research interest in the field of architecture and now, more recently in landscape architecture. An holistic typology was found that identified forms related to historical and philosophically- based theory; forms which are irreducible in essence and meaningful with respect to human experience of nature in the built environment. Several studies of classification for singular types were found based on objective, measurable criteria. Both American and Japanese examples of classification featured similar structural characteristics and insignificant variations in content and origin. Further study is recommended.

keywords: typology, classification, archetype

1. INTRODUCTION

This paper features a brief review of an holistic applied typology and a description of several applied classifications of type of American and Japanese origin. Relevance to future research in this area is outlined in the conclusion.

Typology in Webster's dictionary is defined as "the general form, structure, plan, style, etc. characterizing or distinguishing the members of a class or group." In other points this definition is similar but may vary in terms of the subject of classification or time "representing or symbolizing another especially

another to come"¹.

Classification is the "systematic division into groups based on common factors"². Those groups may be constituted of variations of simple types or similarly of more complex models, depending on the intent of a particular study application. More specifically, they may be considered groups of types if they cannot be further reduced in essence. Archetype is "the original pattern, or model from which all other things of the same kind are made"³. This definition closely resembles that employed in designed studies of typology.

* Master of Landscape
Architecture, Canada, Associate
Member of the Canadian Society of
Landscape Architects.

1 Websters, 1960, p.1576. # 2 & #3.

2 *ibid.*, p.270.

3 *ibid.*, p.1172.

2. TYPOLOGY

Rossi, a practicing architect and widely read author on the subject of city, defines typology as "something that is permanent and complex, a logical principle that is prior to form and that constitutes it"⁴. He suggests that "model" may be accurately repeated while "type" may not, as it is essential in form and idea⁵. As noted earlier, this definition serves also as archetype; its relation to the primal nature of a thing or being.

According to Condon, a landscape architect and educator, type's are "morphological" essences which often "defy geometric definition"⁶. The measurement of type is not possible as objective facts cannot serve to accurately define abstract features. As theory basis, Condon accepts both conceptual and empirical knowledge related to human experience; more specifically in the human-nature interaction of the phenomenological position⁷ (Figure 1).. Both researchers consider typology free of context.

To construct a typology, Condon chooses a method which is loosely

termed "radically empirical"⁸, similar to hermeneutic study of all information's relative to a subject. Objectives of this study were: to provide a tool for design; establish supporting theory; to develop a preliminary list of types; to incorporate and evaluate aspects of experience and phenomenological theory in the construction of the typology⁹ (Figure 2).

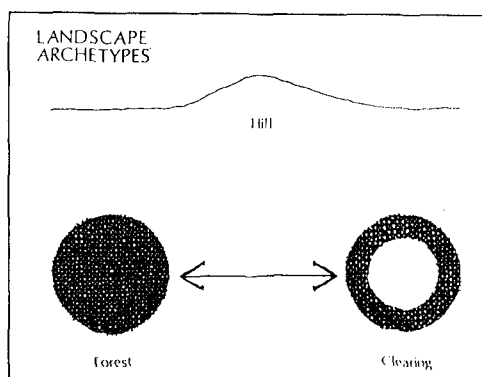


Figure 1 Typology
Dialectic of Forest-Clearing

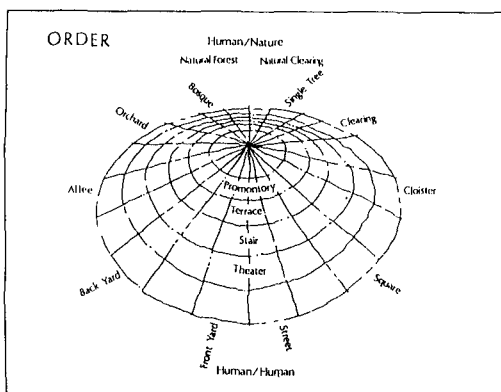


Figure 2 Typology
Preliminary Types

⁴ Rossi, 1991, p.40.

⁵ He distinguishes between model and type in agreement with early writings of French philosopher, Quatremere de Quincy 1832, in Rossi 1991.

⁶ Condon, 1988, p.8.

⁷ Also cited in terms of support for the authors construction of typology are the writings of Heidegger (1971, Poetry, Language and Thought), specifically the dialectics of forest and clearing derived from our "mythical associations with modern land forms", in Condon 1988.

⁸ ibid.

⁹ Condon, 1988, p.6.

Rossi and Condon are concerned with defining typology in architecture and landscape architecture respectively. Both support hermeneutic and experiential / phenomenological approaches. Condon applies this theory giving explicit philosophical support, i.e., dialectical - phenomenology, in construction of a "designed landscape space typology". Rossi's theoretical and often thoughtful writings have contributed to Condons general approach, though more indirectly in efforts to apply this theory.

3. CLASSIFICATION

In this section, classifications of type are featured according to aspects of their structure, scope and content, and origin. Structure is the organizing framework, whether systematic or not, that influence the determination of groups. Scope is the extent and variety which the classification encompasses, including scale and locations considered. Content includes the subject of classification and origin relates to the studies author, date and location.

3.1 Structure

Classifications were sought in consulted work of public documents, academic papers and journals, books, and tourist writings. Though it is unfavorable to assign these to systematic categories, it is useful to ask what purpose has the classification to serve in its making? In this light, three categories were found: applied theory - practice/planning; applied theory -

academic; and public education or public relations.

Each classification may also be described in terms of an emphasis upon form, function, or meaning, or some combination of these. These three categories facilitate an understanding, yet it is again illusory to systematize or separate form from function from meaning. For our purposes, emphasis is indicated by the nature of criteria used to assign groups.

A classification of open spaces prepared by the City of Toronto in 1990 used criteria of *form*, adjacency and scale to define groups. Similarly, a legal planning document prepared by the Japanese Ministry of Construction (1991), outlines *formal* aspects of scale and location to determine a classification of public open spaces.

In an adapted "typology" of open spaces in Vancouver (1992), levels of maintenance associated with *formal* aspects of space are considered. *Form* of paths and position relative to adjacent roadways are considered by the Ottawa National Capital Commission (1990) in determining four classes of pathways.

Shinohara has prepared a classification of ten street categories related to streets scale, *form* of adjacent land-use and *function* of use intensity in Ginza area of Tokyo (1990). In 1991, Kostof reviews several classifications of public squares which are determined relevant to the *formal* geometry of their enclosure. Hester edits essays on individual use of gardens

examining meaningful and experiential aspects. (1990).

3.2 Scope and Content

Of those classifications noted, the Toronto and Vancouver Open Space studies feature diverse or complex types of space. These are arranged according to aspects of their location, scale, and enclosure, and intensity of use, respectively. All studies are urban examples (Table 1). Shinohara was singular in attempting to employ both aspects of form and function in the construction of his street classification.

Table 1	Scope and Content	
Location	Subject	Scale
Toronto	O.S. ¹⁰	U, R ¹¹
Japan	parks	U, R, N
Vancouver	parks	U, M
Ottawa	pathways	U, M
Tokyo	streets	U, D
Kostof	squares	U, I
Hester	gardens	U, R, N
Kyoto	gardens	U, M

3.3 Origin

All studies were completed on or after 1990 as either public documents, educational research or public information documents. These were authored by architects, landscape architects, educators, historians and planners. In general, it is important to acknowledge that these general findings support the view of design professions as highly multidisciplinary.

¹⁰ O.S. (open space)
¹¹ U (urban); R (regional); N (national); M (municipal); I (international); D (district).

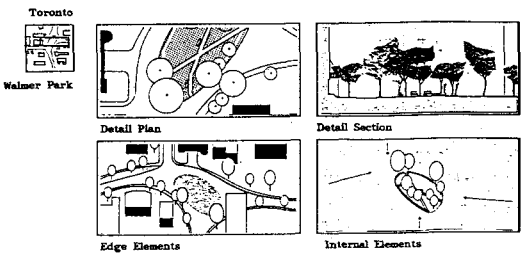


Figure 3: Classification (Toronto Open Space)

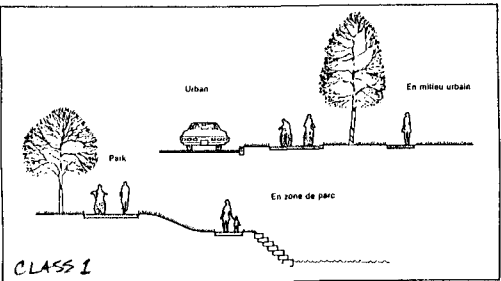


Figure 4: Classification (Ottawa Recreational Pathways)

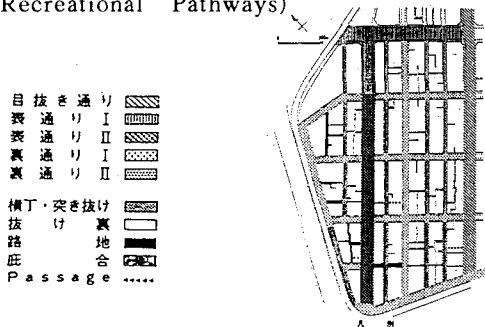


Figure 5: Classification (Ginza Streets)

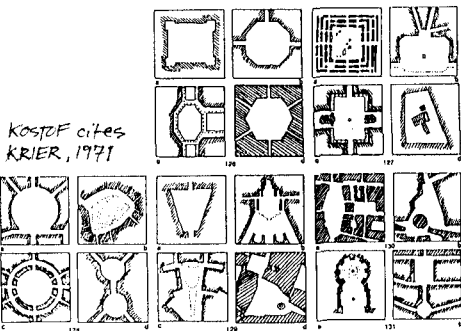


Figure 6: Classification (Urban Squares)

4. DISCUSSION

Typology is often used interchangeably with the term classification yet the two are fundamentally different in their definition and application, depending largely upon the context of their use. In design, the former may require more abstract theoretical support; the latter employs objective, measurable criteria relevant to some overlapping consideration of form, function, and meaning. These studies begin with the presumption of defined type or type from which groups may be generated. That is, they do not concern themselves with the importance of articulating the nature of presumptions made.

Studies of American and Japanese origin share in structural characteristics though only one example exclusively related to meaning was found in America. One applicable holistic typology was found also in America.

More often in the American case, classifications were found to be public documents of the collaborative efforts of the designers and planners and citizens concerned. Both the American and Japanese examples are not finite; more may be found.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Through this brief review, rather few papers may be found in both Japan and North America on the subject of holistic typology. Classifications of type are found in practical forums or public documents for use by practitioners of design,

planning, and public education. Japan and North America share generally in this assessment. Typology relies upon abstract theoretical support relative to descriptions of essence; not amenable to objective categorizations as in studies of classification.

It is agreed that there be future study of typology in both western and non-western contexts. Typologies based on Japanese theoretical and/or philosophical premises must be pursued.

The intent of studies of classification and typology is largely to facilitate planning and design activity related to public space. While classification assists studies of feasibility and long range planning, typology affords a more detailed assessment of change in the content of space over time. Understanding fundamental typological elements of one kind or class of space may provide criteria enabling comparative studies of space across cultures.

Until now, this kind of study has not been pursued. More important is the advocacy of introducing and incorporating urban open space typology in the study and practice of landscape architecture.

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