



Don't Shoot the Messenger SVP: A Brief Essay on the Theory of Typology

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The evolution of architecture has been recurrently dependent, either consciously, or subconsciously, on inherited knowledge. However, not within a scheme of literal replicas, but yes through a symbiosis between copy and invention on abstract core characteristics. The present essay intends to shine some light on Type and Typology's role on the awareness of such process, by developing a brief journey through their juvenile and tumultuous existence as a theoretical problem. Besides that, this essay also explores two collateral reasonings. Firstly, that Typology, although being only a tool, has been taken as the 'scapegoat' of the architectonic ideologies that took profit of it. And secondly, that Types, in architecture, should not be solely associated with the structure of forms, but to the larger realm of Concepts.

KEYWORDS

Type, Model, Typology, Neo-Classicism, Neo-Rationalism

PALABRAS CLAVE

Tipo, modelo, tipología, Neoclasicismo, Neo-racionalismo

"The first messenger that gave notice of Lucullus's coming was so far from pleasing Tigranes that he had his head cut off for his pains; and no man daring to bring further information, without any intelligence at all, Tigranes sat while war was already blazing around him, giving ear only to those who flattered him [...]".

Just like Tigranes' messenger had his head cut off for the unpleasant news he brought, so has Typology been taken as the scapegoat for the ideologies that took profit of it. Although it is only a tool, its short life, as a theoretical problem, has been warped in the quest

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Fig. 01

Andy Warhol, "Triple Elvis [Ferus Type]", 1963. Source: <https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5846064>.

for architecture's essence. Typology has been, by turns, the bearer of all solutions and the cause of all evils. Furthermore, besides the never-ending battle over architecture's essence, its definition has been neither simple nor consensual. Until the present day, the discussion continues: which are the limits of Typology and, moreover, which is the 'true' definition of Type in architecture.

Coming back to a more consensual ground, we can start by stating that Typology is the science that study Types. The word Type has its etymological root in the Greek word *týpos*², which comes from the verb 'to beat'³. In Ancient Greece, Type was associated with 'mark', 'impression', 'mould', 'figure', 'outline'⁴. All words that suggest the multiple replicas of an image through a base mould. Just like the minting of a coin or the impression left by a stamp. It is with this etymological legacy that we later see appear the printing press, by the hands of Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1400-1468), where Type was the word that identified the pieces of wood or metal used for printing the letters⁵.

Nowadays, the concept of Type has disconnected itself from the one of Model, and is no longer interpreted as a mimetic repetition of the same image. It has been taken rather as the set of unchangeable characteristics shared by a specific group of objects or individuals, even though they aren't completely similar. As an example, we can take the work of the artists and photographers Bernd (1932-2007) and Hilla Becher (1934-2015). Throughout their career they travelled all over Europe and North America in the quest for the remnants of a long-lost industrial era. Water towers, silos and furnaces are among the many objects that captured their attention. With their systematic photographic approach, they revealed that, even though with differences between each other, each one of the objects of these typological series shared the same unchangeable set of characteristics. This is how Type is simplistically interpreted.

However, when we dig deeper for a theoretical reasoning of Type and Typology, in architecture, we stumble upon a recent, fragile, complex and sometimes, even paradoxical, understanding, coming back as far as the 18th century. Nonetheless, it doesn't mean that Typology, as the study of Types, wasn't used earlier in architecture. It just means that the ones who used it had no conscience they were actually doing so. Let's us not forget of the Gothic collective know-how, which produced so many similar structurally based churches, or even Andrea Palladio's (1508-1580) *I quattro libri dell'architettura* (1570), which defined a typology for the Renaissance villas⁶.

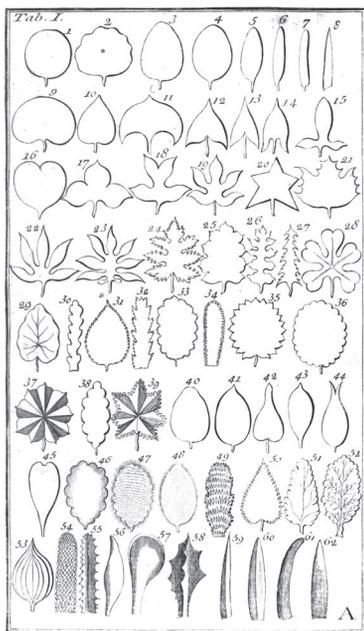
Marc-Antoine Laugier (1713-1769), better known as the *abbé* Laugier, was the one who opened the 'pandora box' that would unleash the first discussion over the theoretical grounds of Typology and its consequent association with the quest for architecture's essence. It all started in 1753 with the publishing of a small, and seemingly harmless, book titled *Essai sur l'architecture*. The Denis Diderot (1713-1784) and Jean le Rond d'Alembert's (1717-1783) *Encyclopédie* (1751-1772) was just starting to be published⁷, we were four decades from the storming of the Bastille⁸ and the spirit of the Enlightenment, as well as its rational approach, flourished throughout France. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, and specially Reason, were *au point du jour*. In architecture, the spirit was no different and one major question troubled the 'rationalist' mind: why should we consider the Classical heritage as the rightful bearer of architecture's essence?



Fig. 02
Marc-Antoine Laugier, the 'primitive hut'.
Frontispiece by Charles-Dominique-
Joseph Eisen. Source: LAUGIER, Marc-
Antoine, *Essai sur l'Architecture*, 2nd ed.,
Paris, 1755 [1753], frontispiece.

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A rational justification was needed. The *abbé* Laugier promptly set himself to provide it. By proposing the theory of the 'primitive hut' he killed two birds with one stone (fig. 02). First, he gave an origin to architecture, and after, he justified the legitimacy of Classical architecture with that same new-found origin⁹. According to Laugier, in the quest for a shelter that satisfied his needs, man creatively recombined some natural elements in order to build the first ever known house, the Prototype¹⁰ of all architecture. With branches and leaves, he ended up by building a house



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which impressively resembled the Greek temple. The vertical branches were the ancestors of the columns, the horizontal, of the entablature, and the oblique, forming the roof's triangle, of the pediment. There it was. Architecture had its origin in Nature, and it was from this same origin that the Classical repertoire descended. Although Laugier never used the word Type, he inaugurated the ideology that would take profit of Typology over the next one hundred years.

Having fixed the first ideology that took profit of Typology, let us now know the roots of its theoretical discussion. According to Anthony Vidler (1941), the emergence of a conscient and systematised use of Type, in the French Neo-Classical architecture, is directly related with the evolution of the Natural Sciences¹¹. We can state with some security that the study of Types, in this period, is divided into two major moments, correlated with the two moments of different developments in the Natural Sciences: the taxonomic and the anatomic¹².

Perhaps due to the increasing number of new species discovered overseas, but undoubtedly due to the rationalist quest of the Enlightenment, there was a general will to disconnect the Natural Sciences from the mythological and magic veil of humanism and give it a pragmatic degree of credibility¹³. For preeminent thinkers of that time, like Carl von Linné (1707-1778) or Georges-Louis Leclerc (1707-1788, Comte de Buffon), the natural world needed to become intelligible to men. That demanded the organisation and systematization of all the information perceptible to the naked eye. By other words, the taxonomic classification of every natural element by the visible differences and similarities of its parts. Plants, and animals alike, were classified by their decomposable exterior physiognomy: leaves, flowers, fruits, stems and roots were all classified and organised in systematised tables of intelligible natural groups¹⁴ (fig. 03).

This same will to classify what was visible to the naked eye did not escape architecture. At that time, taking Jacques François Blondel's (1705-1774) *Cours d'Architecture* (1771) as one of the most paradigmatic examples, the exterior appearance of buildings should have a distinctive 'character' that would allow the passer-by to immediately identify the use, and/or users, it housed¹⁵. Prisons should have a rustic appearance¹⁶, suggesting their 'barbaric' and 'terrifying' inhabitants, while the townhouses of the great nobleman should be beautifully decorated¹⁷, offering the noble rank of its owner. By other words, that the physiognomy of a building should 'communicate' its content and that the language employed should be similar for the same uses and users. About the interior organization, nothing was said. Only the exterior appearance mattered. In this regard, although without the 'communicative' side, one must mention the 1758 Pombaline plan for Lisbon's downtown, directed by Eugénio dos Santos (1711-1760). As masterfully understood by Álvaro Siza Vieira (1933), when he latter had to intervene in it (1989-2015; reconstruction of the Chiado area), the interior organization had little importance in the architectural conception of its buildings. Whereas the outer appearance—its facades—was carefully established by eximious typological rules.

Apart from this quite dubious and dogmatic 'treatise' on the practice of architecture, there is, however, an architectural investigation that managed to maintain itself unstained in this discussion: Julien-David Le Roy's (1724-1803) *Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce* (1758). He used Typology in a quite advisable balance between the

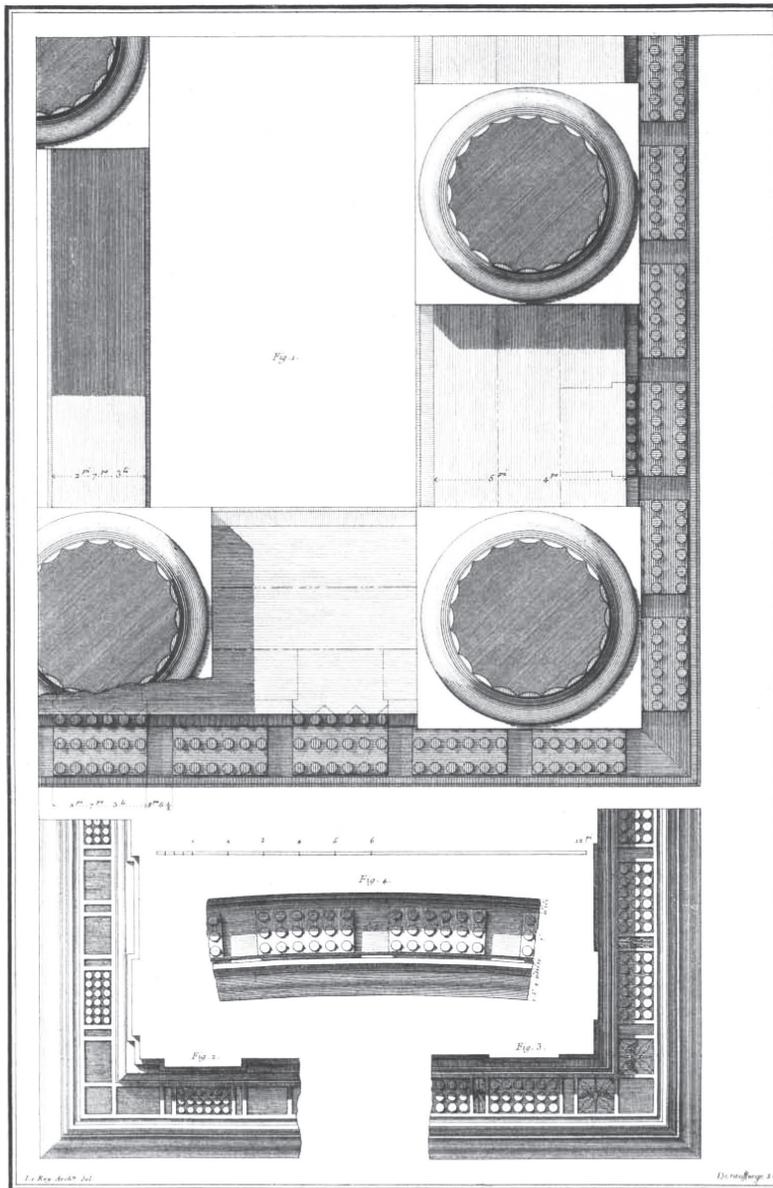


Fig. 03
Carl von Linné, table of the different kinds of leaves. Source: VON LINNÉ, Carl, *Philosophie botanique*, trans. François-Alexandre Quesné, Paris, 1788, p. 474.

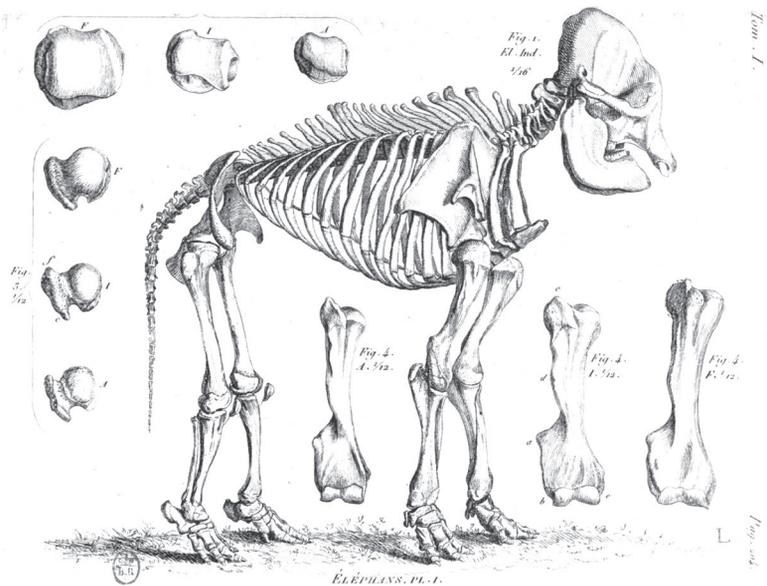
Fig. 04
Julien-David Le Roy, variations between soffits of the Doric order. Drawing by Jean-François de Neufforge. Source: LE ROY, Julien-David, *The Ruins of the Most Beautiful Monuments of Greece [Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce]*, Getty Publications, Los Angeles, 2004 [1758; 2d ed. 1770], p. 329.

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historic narrative and architectural description and the drawings¹⁸. In his work, the drawings are just there to enlighten the reader about what is being explained in the text. They do not appear indiscriminately. Instead of presenting a general survey of all the ruins, Le Roy only makes plates with 'zoom ins' (fig. 04) of the differences and similarities he wishes to stress in the text. In the study of architecture, content and image must go hand to hand.

Although neither Blondel nor Le Roy ever spoke of Types, but yes of 'genres' (in direct connection with the Natural Sciences), they nevertheless underlined deep typological concerns. We would need to wait for the beginning of the 19th century for Typology's first official appearance in architecture: Antoine Quatremère de Quincy's (1755-1849) definition of 'Type' (1825) for the *Encyclopédie méthodique* in architecture (1788-1825).

Fig. 05
Georges Cuvier, skeleton of an elephant.
Source: CUVIER, Georges, *Recherches
sur les ossements fossiles*, vol. 1, 5 vols.,
Paris, 1821, plate I.



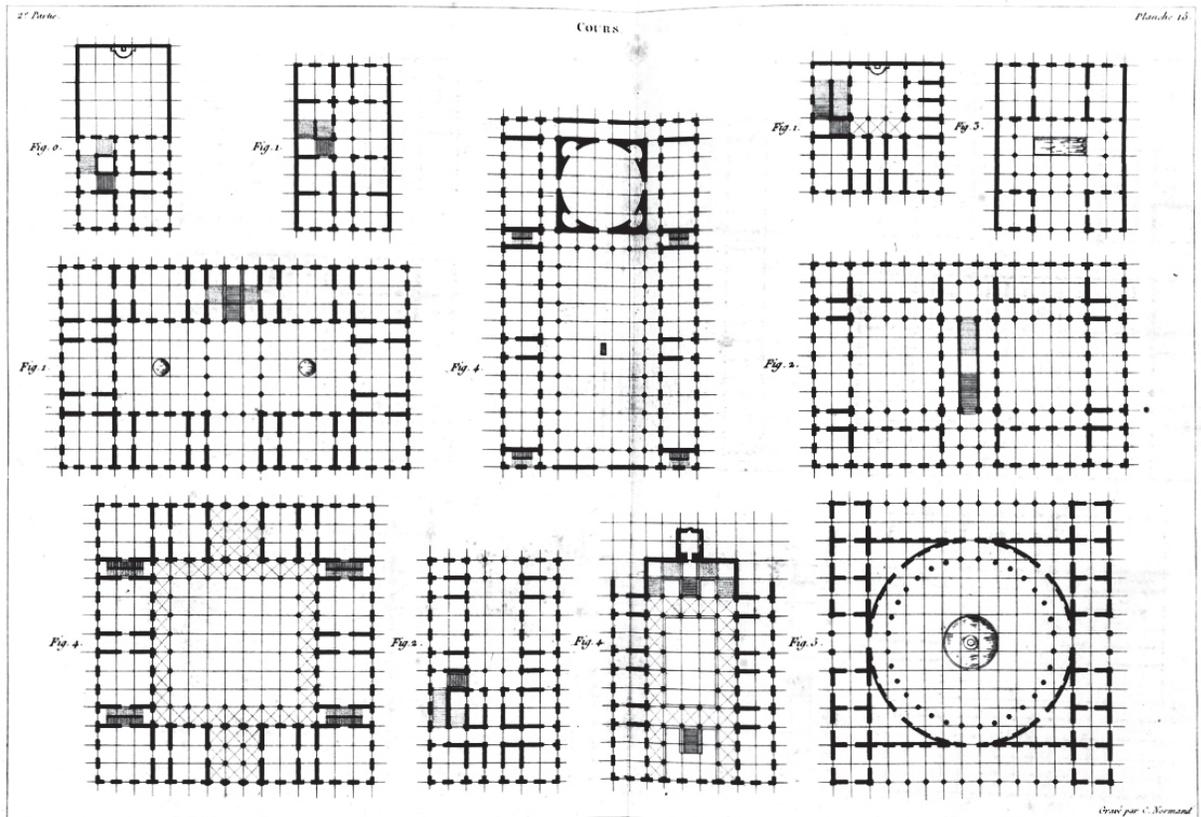
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Under the spell of Laugier's 'primitive hut', Quatremère de Quincy presented the first definition of Type in architecture, establishing, perhaps, its most uncontested understanding to the date:

"The word Type presents less the image of something to be copied or completely imitated, than the idea of an element that rules the Model [...]. The Model, understood in its practical employment in art, is an object that is replicated exactly how it is. Contrarily, the Type is an object from which one can create works that aren't similar between each other. Everything is precise and given in the Model, everything is kind of vague in the Type"¹⁹.

Type was officially declared different from Model. Its existence was now forged in the abstract realm. It was this 'vague' unchangeable nucleus of characteristics in the origin of things. Let us not forget that, even though there are chairs of the most varied forms, they all have the same root. For Quatremère de Quincy, in architecture, this was no different. For the architect to know the 'reasons' of his art, all he needed was to search for its origin and primitive cause.

By the same time that this definition appeared, it occurred a major change in the Natural Sciences, that would have its implication in architecture's Typology. Unsatisfied with the limitations of the established classificatory system, thinkers like Georges Cuvier (1769-1832), set themselves to the task of creating a new methodology, capable of better grasp the natural world²⁰. More than just knowing the visible parts of an animal, scientists wanted to know why they worked the way they do. They needed to know the inner structure that generated life. By that moment, animals started to be studied from the inside out, through their anatomy. Skeletons and organs were now under attentive scrutiny (fig. 05). More than its cataloguing by parts, it was needed to be known how the relationships between them geared major functional systems, as the respiratory or the digestive ones²¹. In sum, how life was sustained.



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Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand (1760-1834) is considered to be the one who most influenced the development of an 'anatomic' Typology in architecture, although he also never used the word Type, but yes 'genre'. Above all, Durand was a pragmatist. And as the enthusiastic pragmatist who had the difficult task of teaching architecture, in little time, to the engineering students at the École Polytechnique, he gladly set himself to find an expeditious solution. The result of this quest is mirrored in the book *Précis des leçons d'architecture données à l'École polytechnique* (1802, 1805). It shifted the discourse of the practice of architecture from the exterior appearance to the inner structure. For Durand, what was important was the correlated composition of the different parts of a building and not its outlook. Therefore, he decided to teach his students which are the different parts of a building, and how they relate with each other, by the following order: first, the elements of a building (walls, openings, foundations, floors, vaults, etc.); secondly, the combination of the elements of a building into the parts of a building (porticoes, porches, halls, stairs, rooms, courtyards, basements, etc.) (fig. 06); thirdly, the combination (composition) of the parts of a building into a single building; and lastly, the employment of these compositional 'rules' to the most varied types of buildings (houses, theatres, schools, hospitals, etc.)²².

In Arithmetic, once one knew the numbers (1, 2, 3, ...) and the operations between them (+, -, =, ...), any problem could be solved. For Durand, the same happened in architecture: once one knew the

Fig. 06
Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, composition of courtyards. Source: DURAND, Jean-Nicolas-Louis, *Précis des leçons d'architecture données à l'École polytechnique*, vol. 1, 2 vols., Paris, 1802, plate 15.

parts and the rules for its composition, any building could be designed, even the ones for which there were no programmatic ancestors²³. In other words, architecture had become a part of mathematics.

As much ingenious or expedite this solution was, it brought a collateral consequence. In Durand's eyes, architecture should answer, first and foremost, to convenience and economy²⁴. He did not believe that architecture's 'true' beauty arose from the Classical orders or other decorative elements, but yes from the convenient and economic resolution of a given program (be it a house or a hospital)²⁵. This meant that the uncontested Classical orders weren't, after all, that sacred. The theory of the 'primitive hut' was just a desperate scam to perpetuate its life. The orders were as good as a piece of clothes that one dresses in the end. With the deposition of the Classical architecture's authority, the doors were wide open to the 19th century's proliferation of styles²⁶. Neo-Romanic, Neo-Gothic and Neo-Byzantine were among the many styles that stormed in as a pleasant, yet superficial, architectural shells. Architecture had lost its conviction.

After one century of perfecting, Durand's 'arithmetic' had drove architecture into a dead end. In one hand, there was no great conviction over the styles being used. In the other, his set of compositional rules had left little space for imagination. The revivalisms had exhausted every historical folly available and the composition types had become models for literal imitation.

As Moneo stated the Modern Movement vanguards, which deeply opposed the *Beaux-Arts* historical stagnation, Typology was to be blamed²⁷. History should be erased, and all past typologies refused. Architecture needed a clean slate, adapted to the newborn man of the Machine Age. However, although the theoretical discussion on Typology was almost inexistent in this period (for obvious ideological reasons), that did not mean that it stopped being used. Architects just did not realise, or wanted to realised, they were doing so.

In one side, we had the case of architects like Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, 1887-1965). By the development of the '*maison Dom-ino*,' the '*plan libre*,' or even the 'five points of architecture,' the Swiss master created the new types that his peers would gladly disseminate around the world²⁸. The difference here was that they did not refer to one monolithic building type, but yes to 'decomposed' types that could be rearranged and recombined between each other²⁹. Yet, in the other side, there was the not so happy experience of standardization and mass production. In the extreme pole of Le Corbusier's decomposable freedom, there was the constraint of the prototype which becomes the model infinitely repeated.

Only well into the second half of the 20th century would we re-see a major theoretical discussion on Typology in architecture. However, this time, it would be in Italian soil, and not French. The art historian Giulio Carlo Argan (1909-1992) would be in the forefront³⁰ of this renewed interest with the continuous publishing and updating of his essay on Typology, as far back as 1959³¹. In his text, he would not only revise and upgrade Quatremère de Quincy's definition of Type, as well as demystify the arose pre-conception of Typology as a stagnant tool for the creative process of both art and architecture.

Firstly, following Quatremère de Quincy's nebulous understanding of Type as something of the abstract realm, Argan sets himself

to precisely identify the exact parameters of this existence. He inaugurates the understanding of Type as “the interior structure of a form [...] which contains the possibility of infinite formal variations”³². The shared characteristics between a given group of objects are no longer floating elements, as in Quatremère de Quincy’s definition, but yes interconnected elements that make part of a common formal structure. Needless is to say that this common formal structure is, for Argan, the *raison d’être* of any type. Furthermore, Argan is maybe the first one to recognize types as manmade conventions, and not as uncontested universal truths. For him, “the type is accepted as a premise, this is, as the result of a cultural inquiry”, that can be subdivided into other more specific subclasses, until we reach the singular object³³.

Secondly, Argan sets himself to explain the important role of Typology in the creative process of both art and architecture. In his eyes, since Type is an abstract conception, it cannot be taken as the base for a direct morphological imitation³⁴. If Type cannot be imitated, then, we cannot pre-assume that it leads to any formal stagnation. This leaves the door opened for a renewed valorisation of Typology. For Argan, more than ‘formulae’ that are re-used, like a ‘recipe’, without questioning, in art and architecture, types are the ‘ground zero’ of the creative process³⁵. They are meant to ignite the inventive process through a confront between past and present. In the art historian’s words, “the inventive aspect being merely that of dealing with the demands of the actual historical situation by criticizing and overcoming past solutions deposited and synthesized schematically in the Type”³⁶.

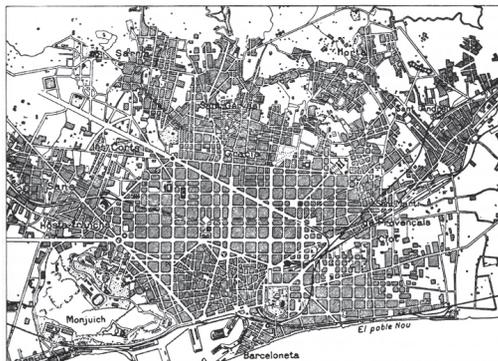
We were unable to find out if Argan’s thoughts were in the origin of the future Neo-Rationalist predilection for Typology. However, we are certain that it underlines the beginning of a generalised theoretical re-discussion on Typology in the grounds of a new architectonic ideology.

In a moment when the Modern Movement was already well established, specially through the tremendous reconstruction effort that followed WWII, many started to wonder at it with a certain dismay³⁷. The *tabula rasa* attitude, adjoined with the planning of cities by hermetic zones, had resulted in some urban settlements far from pleasing: the strict zoning, along with the endless repetition of the same building models, brought monotony; and the long undefined spaces in-between buildings, along with the appraisal of the motorway, demoted the street from its primordial role in public life.

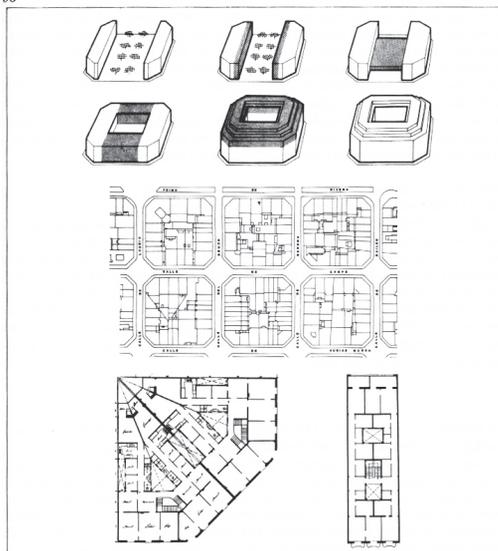
Italian Neo-Rationalists as Carlo Aymonino (1926-2010) or Aldo Rossi (1931-97) were among the first architects who sensed these flaws, proposing a detour in the Modern Movement’s path³⁸. In their point of view, the traditional city was the amassment of a collective knowledge resulting from a continuous perfecting by endless generations³⁹. Therefore, it had countless urban qualities that should be taken as ‘role models’ for the present times. The contemporary city should be in *continuittá* (continuity) with the traditional one. Nonetheless, that did not mean that the idea was to start taking the example of the traditional city’s functional zoning. Far from the contrary. Having in mind that the Neo-Rationalists did not believe that the urban matrix had a functional permanence, that would be nonsensical⁴⁰. However, what they did believe in was that the built forms, and their relationship with the void (i.e., public space), were capable of perpetuation through time⁴¹. This is where the new ideology that would take profit of Typology laid its grounds.

Fig. 07

Aldo Rossi, analysis of the 1859 Plan Cerdá for Barcelona, Spain. Source: ROSSI, Aldo, *The Architecture of the City* [*L'architettura della città*], trans. Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman, The MIT Press, Cambridge Mass/London, 1984 [1966], p. 151.



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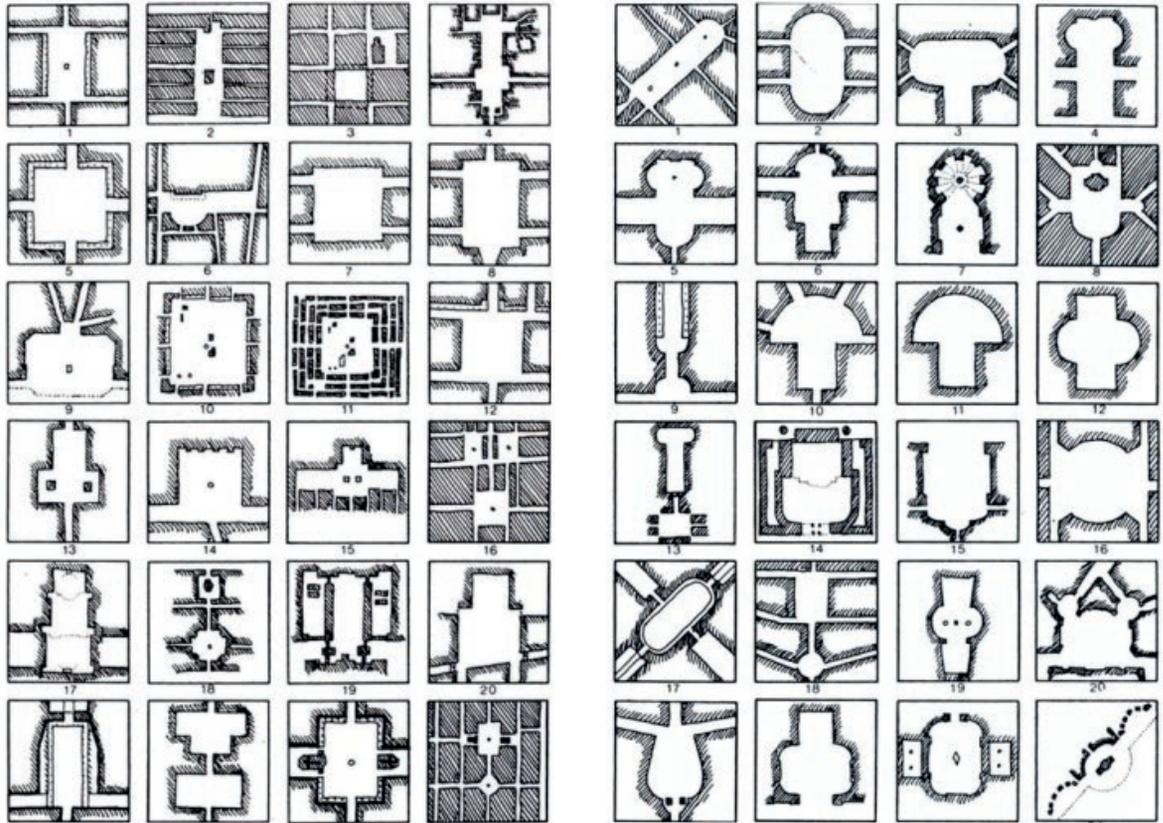
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93 Plan of Barcelona.
94 Blocks in the zone of Barcelona that was to be enlarged under the plan of Idelfonso Cerdá, 1859. Above: The progressive increase in density of a typical block. Middle: Several blocks as shown in a 1969 registry map. Below, left: Plan of a corner building, Calle Lavria no. 80, Juli M. Fossas i Martínez, 1907; right: Casa Lamadrid, Calle Gerona no. 113, Lluís Domènech i Montaner, 1902.

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A major question then posed itself: if the design of the contemporary city resides in the forms of the traditional one, how can we better grasp the latter?

The root to this answer lies in the classes of *Caratteri distributivi degli edifici*⁴² given between 1963-1965 by Carlo Aymonino, Aldo Rossi and Costantino Dardi (1936-91) at the *Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia*⁴³. During these classes, the three architects developed a methodology for the study of the traditional city—the search of its ‘meaning’—based on the correlated analysis of “urban morphology” and “building typology”⁴⁴. The first one respecting the study of the forms of the city in correlation with its contextual factors, and the second one respecting the study of the building types, seen as the basic unit of the urban matrix. A binomial relation capable of analysing the urban landscape in all its scales: building, street, neighbourhood, and finally, city⁴⁵ (fig. 07). Furthermore, in what concerned the building typology, the Neo-Rationalist methodology brought new developments. The correct study of a building type shouldn’t focus itself only in form and use. More than that, in order for an architect better grasp the ‘meaning’ of a city and take



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it as an operative tool in the creative process of architecture, it should also focus on historical, economic, social and political factors⁴⁶. The study of Type was no longer closed within a formal structure, it also comprised the external factors that influenced it.

In line with Argan's vision of Typology as an operative tool for the creative process of architecture, and not as just a simple investigation methodology, both Aymonino and Rossi took this newfound knowledge about the traditional city for the development of their designs. Many would be the architects who would later follow similar approaches, not only in Italy, as Giorgio Grassi (1935) or Vittorio Gregotti (1927-2020), but also in other European countries, as Oswald Mathias Ungers (1926-2007; Germany) or the Krier brothers (Rob Krier, 1938; Léon Krier, 1946; Luxemburg)⁴⁷ (fig. 08). Nonetheless, after almost twenty years of developments, the Italian Neo-Rationalist approach started to be questioned. Like what we had already seen in the French Neo-Classicism, its critics promptly put the blame on Typology. According to them, Typology had driven architecture into a stagnant point of endless and uncontested repetition of known traditional types⁴⁸.

Unfortunately, water was coming in from all sides. By one hand, within the Neo-Rationalists, there was, if not a certain disbelief, at least a cry for an ideological and methodological revision⁴⁹. By the other hand, the *Strada Novissima* from the 1980 Venice Biennale of Architecture — where its curator, Paolo Portoghesi (1931), announced the “end of the

Fig. 08
Rob Krier, morphological series
of urban spaces. Source: <https://arquitecturacontrapelo.es/2016/06/29/omphalos/>

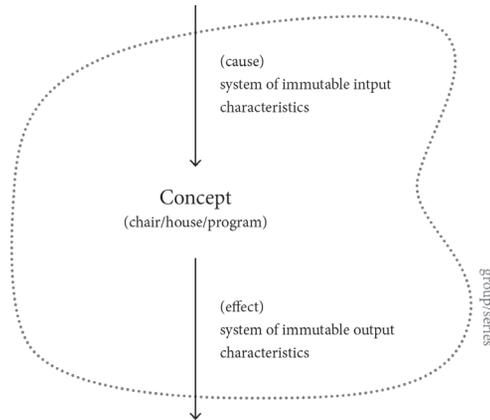


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prohibition”—expressed the end of a collective ideology⁵⁰ (fig. 09). Not only Typology and the traditional city were no longer in the centre of a common ideologic discussion, but also there was no more a collective idea of architecture. Almost each architect of the *strada* had his own individualistic ‘agenda’, that in many cases was far from taking into consideration a reflexion on types. In sum, it all signalled, as later identified by Jacques Lucan, a “time of confusion”⁵¹.

It is of our opinion that this “time of confusion” has not ended, and maybe it will never end. In the past one hundred years not only has the population grew exponentially, but also the number of people with a high education. Maybe these factors can explain why it is so difficult to join such an immensity of people under the same ideology

Type
Abstract convention, established by men, which condensates the essential characteristics of a Concept shared by a given group/series.



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and methodology. Furthermore, in what respects Typology and its connection to architecture, it is impossible for us to say that it has, since then, been taken by other architectonic ideologies. However, what we can say is that it hasn't stopped being taken as an operative tool for both the investigation and creative process of architecture. In what respects the latter, let us not forget of Giorgio Grassi's projects⁵² or even the 1988 theoretical revision of Typology⁵³ by Carlos Martí Arís. In recent years it is of signalling Christ & Gantenbein's (Emanuel Christ, 1970; Christoph Gantenbein, 1971) studies on the building types of several worldwide cities, which have been taken as a source of inspiration for their current architectural practice⁵⁴.

In what concerns us, after having attentively analysed Typology's tumultuous footsteps towards the present times, we were not able to 'shake out' the need to put forward a revised definition of Type. The evidence revealed by the comparison of the different moments of this historical journey was too pressing to be dismissed. For this reason, we advance here, provisionally, four points for the theoretical understanding of Type, both for investigation and practice (fig. 10):

- 1) Types belong to the abstract realm. In line with Quatremère de Quincy, we recognize types as abstract ideas which can rule the Model, but never be its synonym.
- 2) Types are manmade conventions. In line with Argan, we recognize that types are not uncontested universal truths, but yes, an abstract convention defined by men. They are just a tool to assist in the intelligibility of a group of similar phenomena.
- 3) Types refer to Concepts. Since we can organize, by type, not only physical manifestations, as a chair or a house, but also abstract ones, as the architectonic program of the same house, we do not consider that types only refer to formal structures (as Argan or Martí Arís do). Rather than that, we see types as the manifestation of a given Concept, and not of objects. As seen in the example of the house, the same 'object' can be typologically analysed considering different concepts (be they related with concrete forms or abstract conceptions). Types are identified, therefore, as the group of correlated characteristics that are present in all the phenomena that share a same Concept.

Fig. 09
Paolo Portoghesi (curator), *Strada Novissima* at the Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy, 1980. Source: <https://www.artribune.com/progettazione/architettura/2019/01/mostra-strada-novissima-paolo-portoghesi-maxxi-roma/>

Fig. 10
Definition of Type. Source: Authors.

4) Types are identified by both the 'input' and 'output' systems of immutable characteristics associated to the root Concept. In our opinion, types are identified not only by the 'output' characteristics of a shared Concept—the perceptible 'effects'—but also by its 'input' characteristics—the perceptible 'causes'. Taking as an example Rossi hazy interpretation, building types are also identified by historic, social, economic, political and emotional factors, which all refer to 'causes' and not 'effects'.

Many will promptly oppose this understanding. Specially, since Type is here removed from its dogmatic existence—in architecture—as the structure of a form and transposed to the varied realm of concepts. Nonetheless, one must not forget, especially since it has been so well demonstrated by our recent technological existence, that 'there is more than meets the eye'. Replicas, copies, reproductions, imitations... are all myths if seen in the light of their literal role in the evolution of architecture (and so is, for the matter, the insipid vacuum). However, if seen in the light of the conscious—or subconscious—manipulation of Types as abstract entities, the same cannot be said. Because, if the variation of a Type solidifies existing cultures, its mutation opens the way to new worlds. RA

Notes

01. PLUTARCH, *Plutarch's Lives*, trans. John Dryden, vol. 3, 5 vols., Little Brown and Co., Boston, 1906, p. 259.

02. QUATREMÈRE DE QUINCY, Antoine, "Type", in *Encyclopédie méthodique. Architecture*, vol. 3, 3 vols., Paris, 1825, p. 543.

03. VIDLER, Anthony, "The Idea of Type: The Transformation of the Academic Ideal, 1750-1830", in HAYS, K. Michael (ed.), *Oppositions Reader: Selected Readings from a Journal for Ideas and Criticism in Architecture, 1973-1984*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York, 1998 [1977], p. 443.

04. *Idem*.

05. *Idem*.

06. With certainty, we can reach as far as the Classical Antiquity to find a systematic approach to Typology: in Ancient Greece, with building types as the temple or the theatre; and in the Roman Empire, as confirmed by Vitruvius, with the vast proliferation of other new building types, as the amphitheatre, the thermae or the basilicas. For a further understanding of Palladio's villas see: TOSTÕES, Ana, and SILVA, Jaime, "Rescuing the Machine à Habiter: The Palladian Villa in the second life of Lacaton & Vassal's Transformed Grands-Ensembles", *RA. Revista de Arquitectura*, 2020, n° 22, pp. 170-187, <https://doi.org/10.15581/014.22.170-187>

07. Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie* was published between 1751 and 1772. Due to its role in the gathering of a great number of writers for the creation of a general and organized corpus of knowledge, it is considered as one of the most emblematic publications of the Enlightenment.

08. The Bastille, a prison located in the centre of Paris, was stormed in 1789 due to its role as a symbol of the monarchy's tyranny and oppressive power. The storming of the Bastille was among the first events of the French Revolution (1789-1799).

09. LAUGIER, Marc-Antoine, *Essai sur l'Architecture*, Paris, 1753, pp. 10-15.

10. In the present essay, the term Prototype is understood as the first addressed example, either physically or abstractly,

in the origin of a new Type. By the other words, it is the specimen 'number one' that first tests the essential characteristics of a given Type, acting as a working model to the phenomenon to follow it.

11. VIDLER, A., "The Idea of Type", *cit.*, pp. 445-50.

12. *Idem*.

13. FOUCAULT, Michel, *Les mots et les choses: Une archéologie des sciences humaines*, Gallimard, Paris, 1999 [1966], p. 68.

14. *Idem*, pp. 137-175.

15. BLONDEL, Jacques-François, *Cours d'Architecture*, vol. 2, 6 vols., Paris, 1771, p. 229.

16. *Idem*, pp. 454-458.

17. *Idem*, pp. 236-438.

18. See LE ROY, Julien-David, *The Ruins of the Most Beautiful Monuments of Greece [Les ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce]*, Getty Publications, Los Angeles, 2004 [1758; 2d ed. 1770].

19. Translated by the authors from the original French text: "Le mot Type présente moins l'image d'une chose à copier ou à imiter complètement, que l'idée d'un élément qui doit lui-même servir de règle au Modelé [...]. Le Modelé, entendu dans l'exécution pratique de l'art, est un objet qu'on doit répéter tel qu'il est. Le Type est, au contraire, un objet d'après lequel chacun peut concevoir des ouvrages qui ne se ressembleraient pas entre eux. Tout est précis et donné dans le Modelé, tout est plus ou moins vague dans le Type". - QUATREMÈRE DE QUINCY, A., "Type", *cit.*, p. 544.

20. FOUCAULT, M., *Les mots et les choses*, *cit.*, p. 276.

21. "[...] he [Cuvier] submits the disposition of the organ to the function's sovereignty [...]. These functions are few: respiration, digestion, circulation, locomotion..." (translated by the authors). *Idem*.

22. DURAND, Jean-Nicolas-Louis, *Précis des leçons d'architecture données à l'École polytechnique*, vol. 1, 2 vols, Paris, 1802, pp. ii-iv.

23. *Idem*, p. 4.

24. *Idem*, p. 16.

25. *Idem*, p. 13.

26. In his 1978 article "On Typology", Rafael Moneo (1937) defends that Durand was one of the responsible for the 19th century outburst of the 'Styles'. MONEO, Rafael, "On Typology", *Oppositions*, 1978, no. 13, p. 32.

27. *Idem*, pp. 32-35.

28. In his 1985 article "Type and Tradition of the Modern", Bruno Reichlin (1941) argues that Le Corbusier had an important role in the development of Typology as an operative tool in the practice of architecture. He considers that the 'maison Dom-ino', and its correlated 'plan libre', define a Typology that "presupposes and puts into effect the reciprocal autonomy of the 'functions' or 'modes of existence' of the architectural work". This is, an autonomy between "the structural component, the spatial component and the distributive organization". REICHLIN, Bruno, "Type and Tradition of the Modern", *Casabella*, 1985, no. 509-510, pp. 32-39.

29. Carlos Martí Arís would later develop Reichlin's understanding of the Modern Movement's Typology in his 1988 PhD thesis, later published under the title *Las variaciones de la identidad: Ensayo sobre el tipo en arquitectura* (1993). According to Martí Arís, while the Neo-Classical architecture saw building types as unified and monolithic systems, the Modern Movement architecture saw them as decomposable systems, tensioned by "divergent vectors, not necessarily submitted to one single formal strategy". (translated by the authors) in MARTÍ ARÍS, Carlos, *Las variaciones de la identidad: Ensayo sobre el tipo en arquitectura*, Demarcación de Barcelona del Colegio de Arquitectos de Cataluña/Ediciones del Serbal, Barcelona, 1993 [1988], pp. 144-151.

30. In this respect, it must also be mentioned the crucial role of Ernesto Nathan Rogers (1909-69). Although he was not one of most active authors in the re-discussion on Typology, he was, nevertheless, the great educator who put forward figures that would later have a preeminent role in this quest, as Aldo Rossi or Vittorio Gregotti.

31. To our knowledge, the first text published by Argan on Typology was the "Tipologia, simbologia, allegorismo delle forme architettoniche", in the first issue of the *Bolletino CISA*, from 1959. In 1962 it appeared a slightly enlarged version of this text titled "Sul concetto di tipologia architettonica", in the book *Festschrift für Hans Sedlmayr* (edited by Karl Oettinger and Mohammed Rassem), later translated by Joseph Rykwert for the no. 12 of *Architectural Design* (1963) under the name "On the Typology of Architecture". The basis of the 1962 text would be significantly enlarged, in 1966, for an entry on Typology for the *Enciclopedia Universale dell'Arte* (1958-1967). This later version would be translated, in 1983, for the no. 71 of *Summarios* under the name "Tipologia".

32. ARGAN, Giulio Carlo, "On the Typology of Architecture", trans. Joseph Rykwert, *Architectural Design*, 1963 [1962], no. 12, pp. 564-565.

33. ARGAN, Giulio Carlo, "Tipologia", *Summarios*, 1983 [1966], no. 71, p. 5.

34. ARGAN, G., "On the Typology of Architecture", *cit.*

35. *Idem.*

36. *Idem.*

37. EISENMAN, Peter, "Editor's Introduction", in ROSSI, Aldo, *The Architecture of the City*, The MIT Press, Cambridge Mass/London, 1984, p. 3.

38. We speak here of "detour" in a sense of reevaluation, not of complete rejection.

39. See ROSSI, Aldo, *The Architecture of the City* [*L'architettura della città*], trans. Diane Ghirardo and Joan Ockman, The MIT Press, Cambridge Mass/London, 1984 [1966]. and AYMONINO, Carlo, *O Significado das Cidades* [*Il significato delle città*], trans. Ana Rabaça, Presença, Lisbon, 1984 [1975].

40. ROSSI, A., *The Architecture of the City*, *cit.*, pp. 46-48.

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-61.

42. The following sections of Rossi's book *Para una arquitectura de tendencia. Escritos: 1956-1972* [*Scritti scelti*

sull'architettura e la città: 1956-1972] (1977 [1975]) are translations of parts of publications of the classes of *Caratteri distributivi degli edifici* given at the *Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia*: "Consideraciones sobre la morfología urbana y la tipología constructiva" (from the classe's book: VV. AA., *Aspetti e problemi della tipologia edilizia*, CLUVA, Venice, 1964); "Los problemas tipológicos y la residencia" (from the classe's book: VV. AA., *Aspetti e problemi della tipologia edilizia*, CLUVA, Venice, 1964); "Tipologia, manualística y arquitectura" (from the classe's book: *Rapporti tra morfologia urbana e tipologia edilizia*, CLUVA, Venice, 1966). Furthermore, Aymonino also states that his book, *Il significato delle città*, from 1975, is the result of both his teaching at the University of Venice and private practice.

43. UNGERS, Oswald Mathias, et al., "Ten Opinions on the Type", *Casabella*, 1985, no. 509-510, p. 97.

44. ROSSI, Aldo, "Consideraciones sobre la morfología urbana y la tipología constructiva", in *Para una arquitectura de tendencia. Escritos: 1956-1972* [*Scritti scelti sull'architettura e la città: 1956-1972*] Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, 1977 [1975], p. 127.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 129-132.

47. FRAMPTON, Kenneth, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, 4th ed., Thames & Hudson, London, 2010, pp. 294-297.

48. See UNGERS, O., et al., "Ten Opinions on the Type", *cit.*

49. *Idem.*

50. LUCAN, Jacques, *Composition, non-composition: Architecture et théories, XIXe-XXe siècles*, Presses Polytechniques et Universitaires Romandes, Lausanne, 2009, pp. 519-521.

51. *Ibid.*, p. 521.

52. Giorgio Grassi has not only expressed his typological inclinations in project, but also in writing. The relation between his practical and theoretical work has been judiciously studied by José Miguel Rodrigues, who has also recently translated

to Portuguese three of Grassi's books: GRASSI, Giorgio, *Leon Battista Alberti e a Arquitectura Romana* [*Leon Battista Alberti e l'architettura romana* (Leon Battista Alberti and the Roman Architecture)], trans. José Miguel Rodrigues, Afrontamento/Fundação Marques da Silva, Oporto, 2015; GRASSI, Giorgio, *Escritos Escolhidos, 1965-2015* [enlarged edition of *Scritti scelti 1565-1999* (Selected Writings, 1965-2015)], trans. José Miguel Rodrigues, Afrontamento/Fundação Marques da Silva, Oporto, 2018; and GRASSI, Giorgio, *Uma Vida de Arquitecto* [*Una Vita Da Architetto* (A Life of Architect)], trans. José Miguel Rodrigues, Afrontamento/Fundação Marques da Silva, Oporto, 2021.

53. The already mentioned Martí Arís's PhD thesis, from 1988, tries to deepen the theoretical grounds of Typology explaining how the Type is present in the foundations of architecture's epistemology. See MARTÍ ARÍS, C., *Las variaciones de la identidad*, *cit.*

54. See CHRIST, Emanuel, EASTON, Victoria, and GANTENBEIN, Christoph (eds.), *Typology - Hong Kong, Rome, New York, Buenos Aires*, Park Books, Zurich, 2012.; and CHRIST, Emanuel, et al. (eds.), *Typology - Paris, Delhi, São Paulo, Athens*, Park Books, Zurich, 2015.

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