topics seminar format:

1) first half - lecture based
   ---- break
2) second half - have 1 question for each pair of students - discussion - you lead
Type
Greek **typos** "dent, impression, mark, figure, original form"
from root of typtein "to strike, beat"
Latin **typus** "figure, image, form, kind"
Extended **1713** to **printing blocks** with letters carved on them.

The meaning **"general form or character of some kind, class"**
first in Eng. **1843**, though it had that sense already in Latin and Greek.
• In the postmodern period ‘type’ is reconsidered as the essence of architecture

• It establishes continuity with history and is part of the larger postmodern search for meaning

• It would allow architecture legibility within a culture

• In urban morphology it allows for a legible urbanism - remedy for the ‘object-in-a-field’ modernist city

• 1970s: this was done by recreating the building forms and traditional public spaces
Alan Colquhoun, *Typology and Design Method* (1967)

questions the modernist design methods

‘Recourse to some kind of typological model is necessary’

- This based on the **critique of modernism**:  
  ‘biotechnical determinism’ (scientific approach) is incompatible with intuition/expressionism

- Use of typology as design method would mean **acknowledging the role of precedent** in design

- This is radically different from the Modern Movement, which rejected the theories of imitation

- In ‘Modern Architecture and Historicity’ he asserts that **typology is an instrument of cultural memory and as such a condition of meaning in architecture**

Foundations of typology:
- In the *ideal of nature* (Enlightenment)
- In the *order of industrial production* (modernism)
- In the *city* (postmodernism)

Type is inextricably linked to the *origins of architecture* (Vidler)

- This ‘third’ typology emerges in the 1970s and operates *within the city*
- The previous two sought to give architecture legitimacy *externally* (nature, industry)
- *The third one establishes forms internally, in the physical patterns of the city*

- Returns architectural theory to the problem of *form*
- Aspects: *continuous fabric, clear distinction between private and public, streets, squares*
Adrian Forty, ‘Type’ in *Words and Buildings* (1999)

The two most common typological classifications:

- **By use**
- **By morphology**
  Much of the debate concerned with the correspondence of the two

- **By use**: *religious buildings, secular buildings, theatres, private houses, fortifications* - these were present since the Antiquity

- Typological classifications **by purpose** in use since 18th:
  - **Blondel** compiles a list of 64 ‘genres’
  - **Durand** initiated the **morphological** classification

- *Provided a way of composing forms without reference to use* (also called them ‘genres’)
Jacques Francois Blondel

- *Cours d' Architecture* (1771)
- Lists 64 varieties of building GENRES

- His main purpose was to identify for each the appropriate CHARACTER

- ‘All the different kinds of production which belong to architecture should carry the imprint of the particular intention of each building, each should possess a character which determines the general form and which declares the building for what it is.’

(1749)
• Blondel transfers to architecture the ideas developed originally in the natural sciences

• ‘Physiognomy of architecture’

• Search for original validation
  (the form that allows to read the purpose of the building at first glance)

• Taxonomy
J.N.L. Durand

- Student of Boullee (who was a student of Blondel).
- Teaches architecture at the Ecole Polytechnique from 1794, within the department of applied geometry.

- *Recueil et parallele des eifices en tout genre, anciens et modernes* (Paris, 1801) (Collection and parallel of buildings of every genre, ancient and modern)
• **Egyptian and Greek Temples**
  The typology prevails over history and geography.
• **Round Temples.**
  Different ages and places (ancient Greece and Rome, Italian Renaissance)
  same type of solution
• Maisons-de-ville, Palais de Justice
• **Lessons at the Ecole** (Paris, 1802-05)

• Vol. I: **Morphological classification.** Techniques for the composition of different architectural forms without regard to their use.

• Vol. II: How to adapt these forms to buildings of **different purposes** (genres)

• Fundamental elements reduced to their **geometric form**; use of graph paper
• Combinatory system *in plan and section*.
• *Allows comparative taxonomy*
• Comparative method: *specimens arranged in chronological progression*
• volumes
History of perfectible types

• ‘The story of the increasing ‘geometricization’ of architecture from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century [...] was in fact the history of the liberation of style from structure.’ Vidler

• ‘The grid also allowed for the abstraction and standardization critical for the development (and assimilation) of cast iron construction in architecture. Out of Durand were born the forms of the arcades, exhibition halls, and railway stations of the mid century as well as the public monuments of a hegemonic bourgeoisie.’ Vidler

• ‘When the idea of type was again resurrected, some forty years later, it was in the service of the second Industrial Revolution; the ontology then proposed for it was that of the new nature of mass-production.’ Vidler
I. Protection of the idea of architecture as the imitation of nature

• 1780s: Quatremere de Quincy’s theory of imitation:
  Architecture doesn’t imitate nature literally, but metaphorically
  In order to explain what was imitated, he introduced ‘type’

• ‘The word ‘type’ presents less the image of a thing to copy or imitate completely than the idea of an element which ought itself to serve as a rule for a model.’
Quatremere stressed that ‘type’ is not the primitive hut, tent or cave - those are ‘models’

Type is ‘the kind of combination to which the use of wood is susceptible, once adopted in each country’

This stresses *process*

Abbe Laugier, 1753
• Theory published in 1825 and only then taken up, primarily by Gottfried Semper who was interested in the origins of architecture.

• He was critical of the idealist character of Quatremere’s theory and wanted something less generic and more substantial (practical to architects).

• His project: to trace the prototypical forms of architecture.

• Types to be understood through 4 building processes: Terracing (masonry); roofing (carpentry); the hearth (ceramics); walling (textiles).

• Semper manages to give type a practical application without confusing it with model.
II A means of resistance to mass culture

- The Deutsche Werkbund, 1911: *Typisierung* is the major topic
- Type was seen as a way of *bringing order to the world of mass consumption, fashion, individualism*
- Before 1914 the debate primarily about commodities; after 1920 increasingly about architecture

- **Le Corbusier**, 1925, *Decorative Art of Today*: steel office desks, filing cabinets, travel luggage described as ‘*type-objects*’
'All finally came together in the artifact, idea and building type, in the Unite d'Habitation of Le Corbusier.' Vidler
III To achieve historical continuity

• 1960s - the debate starts in Italy (the ‘third’ typology)
• Two strands: Italian ‘continuita’ and Anglo-American ‘meaning’

• **History, context and type** -
  the 3 main concepts that come out of the debate about continuity, and become *key concepts for the 1970s and ‘80s*

• **Type describes the relationship between buildings and the city** of which they form part

• Individual buildings are shown to be *manifestations of the collective* historical urban developments

• *Spatially, socially and historically, they are always part of urban development*

- **Type** is an *analytical tool* for architecture and urban form
- It provides also a *rational basis for design*
- **Continuity with history**
- **Legibility of urban form**

*For Rossi the type provides a general theory of architecture*
Type serves two purposes:

- It offers a means of thinking about urban architecture independently of the functions to which it is put, thus providing a critique of orthodox modern architecture.

- Certain building forms and street patterns persisted throughout the history of cities, regardless of the various uses to which they were put: they are manifestations of type as an irreducible element in which the historical permanencies of the city were encoded.
• From his notion of type Rossi develops the notion of **analogical architecture** whereby **a whole city might be represented through a single building**

• **Relationships with context determine meaning**

• **Fixed objects (forms) can be subject to changing meaning**

Rossi quotes Walter Benjamin:

*I am unquestionably deformed by relationships with everything that surrounds me*
IV The pursuit of meaning

• By the 1960s: there are complaints that *modernism drained architecture of meaning*

• Vittorio Gregotti, 1966: the ‘semantic’ crisis of architecture related in part to typology - *modernist architecture does not transmit cultural messages* effectively

• The re-evaluation of context is seen as a major aspect of this

• This was picked up in particular in the English-speaking world

• Vidler stresses that ‘types’ were productive of meaning, in particular in creating a ‘comprehensible experience of the city’
21st Century typologies
Typological Formations: Renewable Building
Types and the City
edited by Christopher Lee and Sam Jacoby with text
Lawrence Barry, Christopher Lee, Sam Jacoby and Brett Steele

This collection of student projects from the AA’s Diploma Unit 6 encapsulates a generational shift. After the past decade of deep (and sometimes, it would appear, deeply self-satisfied) explorations into new digital and computational design tools, Typological Formations demarcates a return to the city as the overt site,...

> more

Typological Formations: Renewable Building
Types and the City
edited by Christopher Lee and Sam Jacoby with text
Lawrence Barry, Christopher Lee, Sam Jacoby and Brett Steele

... not just for architecture but for architectural thinking. A quick glance through this book will confirm the obvious: sophisticated parametric tools are all over these projects, but...

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Kelvin Chu’s Perforated Hill
Typological Formations: Renewable Building Types and the City
edited by Christopher Lee and Sam Jacoby with text Lawrence Barth, Christopher Lee, Sam Jacoby and Brett Steele

... they are no longer a topic or focus in and of themselves. Instead, such tools are merely brought to bear on the design agenda: the search for ‘renewable’ building types that are able to negotiate the rapidly changing circumstances of cities in an era of global capitalism. ... 

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Yi Cheng Pan’s Peripheral Typologies

Typological Formations: Renewable Building Types and the City
edited by Christopher Lee and Sam Jacoby with text Lawrence Barth, Christopher Lee, Sam Jacoby and Brett Steele

... Typological Formations is nothing less than a manifesto for a return to projects ... 

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Minseok Kim’s Multiple Public Ground
next week

Sp 2016, Week 4 -
- seminar format
- assignment to be given