The relationship between symbolic images and recognition types of local assets - based on city parks within Busan Metropolitan City

Seungkoo Jo and Heeyoung Park
Department of Architecture, Tongmyong University, Busan, Korea

ABSTRACT
This study is to derive the type of recognition in relation to the symbolic image of local assets distributed in the city. The study aims to systematise local assets and integrate the dispersed areas in Busan to use as valuable data. The study makes decision making related to the recognition process of regional development, and understands the result as the relation between symbolic image and the local assets' image. For this research, the scope of the study focuses on city parks within Busan Metropolitan City, and the research time scope was divided into two diachronic frames according to the time of the park constructed. The contents of the survey are to utilise the recognition type of urban parks distributed in the region as data.

1. Introduction
An image is a series of recognition processes of an object itself and an output of a conversion process in which past events are shaped into a panorama that is converted into a memory, at the same time. In this respect, images that could be generated in an urban space are not the recognition process of a specific object but are reproduced as symbolic images when they are combined into one with non-physical elements in the city and sense of presence. In addition, the keyword of this study, local assets refer to representative assets of the district.

The relationship between a symbol and a local asset contains heterogeneous aspects of "abstractness" and "specific asset." In terms of the local asset recognition of an observer, the symbol could be a cause creating a concrete image when relating the two with regional identity. As stated in the title of this study, this can reveal that the local assets, in relation to the symbol, are formed in which relationship and how they are recognised.

Relationship between images of the empirical side and the regional identity can be found in the discussion of Hannah Arendt. She argued that a community could exist in various, significant perspectives and public parks of a city, in particular, were related to spatial and public interest concepts. In comparison, the regionality is a dialectical syntagma that can represent the region, or present the region's identity abstractly or concretely. The main purposes of this study are to understand the interaction of human activities and "a city park" in the physical, spatial subject in the urban space, and to reveal that the symbolic image recognised through the interaction can serve as a keyword when recognising the local asset.

2. Symbolic images reproduced in the urban space
From the symbolic angle, a text always contains a symbol, and the symbol is a practical fruit of a man (Fornäs 1995). In particular, the text refers to a sort of "symbol" generated from a communication process of human subjects living in the context of specific history. Meaning of the symbol is very extensive though it is formed through direct or indirect experiences of the observer on the object. According to Suttles (1984), historically shaped meanings, such as arguments or symbols, originating in the urban space have deposited features, and that indicates that the entire city has a particular image. His argument over the city from semiotics standpoint implies that the elements representing the city are converted into one sign, the image, then recognised by the observer.

Interpretation of the urban space by the observer may be established through objective indexes but it could generate diverse symbols through integration of subjective recognitions of an individual. Anderson (1991) argued that the urban space had similarities to a view; the space was an imaginary environment including discussions, symbols and metaphors (see Figure 1). Similar to this, R. Barthes (1986) said that the meaning hidden in the city's image was psychological not social because the image of the city is the discussion of infinite metaphors. According to his argument, the image generated in the urban space is related to the individual's subjectivity rather than to the objectivity, and that is accepted as the symbolic element representing the urban space. Hence, the symbol is the process for recognising the object, and the image is imprinted in the observer's mind.
Therefore, the recognition process in the image formation process of the observer on the target switches the image to and leaves the memory to the observer. The symbol in the urban space can be interpreted as the syntagma with premises of history and memory not as a simple sign.

3. Drawing recognition types on the central parks

3.1 Meaning and classification of the local assets

The local assets are commodities that are inherent in the region or that are with direct economic values. They are classified largely into non-physical assets and physical assets according to whether they have substances or not. The former refers to the assets which are not visually recognised by the observer and exemplary elements are culture, tradition and memory. Such elements could be read as the “abstract images” by the observer because they are not cognised as specific objects.

The latter refers to the assets that the observer can sense and recognise. The object here indicates a building with a certain shape, and the space refers to the site consisting of the non-physical assets. Unlike the above non-physical assets, it contains “concreteness” and the concreteness has a characteristic of bringing diverse sensibilities including sight of the observer. When examining a recognisable asset from the relationship of the city and architecture, this is analysed from a diachronic angle not from a synchronic angle; in other words, it has a characteristic combining time and history and that is what this study emphasises.

Considering that creation of signs is based on experiences, it is regarded that the perceivable assets are related to the symbols and they are named “physical assets” in this study.

The physical assets in the relationship with the urban space addressed in this study are divided into a place asset, which can represent the spatial structure of the region, and a structure asset, which includes particular facilities. The physical assets are closely related with architecture urban space. That is because the physical assets have specific shapes and spaces rather than approaching abstractly to the observers as mentioned above.

3.2 Drawing recognition types of central parks

3.2.1 Survey targets and overview by generation group

Survey on the target area was conducted for two weeks from 14th to 28th of April, 2016, and total of 600 copies were used for the survey. Collection rate was about 92% with 551 out of the 600 copies, and the analysis frame in this study converted response results of the collected 551 into 100%.

As a result of analysing the respondents, the survey respondents were divided into two groups; those living in Busan (“A” hereafter) and those living in other areas (“B” hereafter). The reason of the separation was due to the hypothesis of “it is highly likely that the symbolic images over the central parks in Busan could vary by where one lives”, and overview of the survey targets are shown in Table 1.

3.2.2 Overview of survey target sites and analysis method

In relation to the place assets, the parks were selected for the main target sites representing the places of the region in this study because they were considered to have significance as places which helped to recognise past memories. The construction times of the parks were divided into before – after 2000, and Type Numbers (“TN” hereafter) were analysed for each.

The analysis method was to consider the overall target sites for 100% and record result values of each site. Remaining numerical values after excluding the highest value and the lowest value from the total value, 100, were divided by n and the Average Value (“AV” hereafter) was calculated (100 – (the highest TN + the lowest TN)/n).

3.2.3 Recognition types for the place assets

Overview of the target sites constructed before 2000 is as follows. (Table 2)

By categorising the parks on the basis of position; coast and inland Busan, 36% of those established before 2000, including the MWP (Millak Waterfront Park), the Igidae Park, the Taejongdae Park and the Amnam Park, are located by the sea while 64% of the parks established before 2000 are located inland.

Table 1. Outline of research member.

|  | Ratio/Person% |  | Ratio/Person% |
|---|---|---|---|
| 20’s | 196/35.6% | 20’s | 146/26.5% |
| 30’s | 51/9.3% | 30’s | 20/3.6% |
| 40’s | 64/11.6% | 40’s | 14/2.6% |
| 50’s | 48/8.7% | 50’s | 4/0.7% |
| 60’s | 7/1.2% | 60’s | 1/0.2% |
| Total | 336/66.4% | Total | 185/33.6% |

Figure 1. The Central Park of New York.
In addition, six parks except the CGP (Children’s Grand Park) are to commemorate historic events and memories of Korea, such as the period of Japanese colonial rule and the Korean War, and accounted for 54.5% of the overall target sites. Especially, most of the parks, except the SHP (Suyeong Historic Park), were constructed in modern times, therefore it was possible to discover the characteristics of Busan’s central parks constructed before 2000. Numeric values from the survey are summarised in the following.

The UNMCK (UN Memorial Cemetery in Korea) has monumental meaning under the name of the UN cemetery, though its characteristics have been changed recently to a place where various cultural facilities and green space coexist. The survey results of A showed high frequencies in order of the MWP (14.4%), the UNMCK (13.5%) and the Yongdusan Park (12.6%) (see Table 4).

The characteristic seen in A was that a high level of the recognition type on places, where topographical characteristics and historicity of Busan are integrated, was witnessed. The characteristic in the above survey showed that the upper and lower numbers, excluding the highest and lowest, were generally even but slightly different unlike the place assets.

A salient point is the MWP. As shown in the recognition types by generation group (see Table 5), it is considered that the high figure of the MWP in the 20s displays that the image of the recognition type, in which the environmental characteristic of the area; close by one of the Busan’s symbols, Gwangalli, and everyday experiences are combined, is being formed. (see Figure 2)

Such statement could be verified with the fact that the numerical values of the generation groups ascend from the 20s to 60s.

In case of A, Table 5 shows a gradual decrease in the values of the type as the generations get older, whereas the figures of the target sites ranked in the middle are evenly distributed regardless of the generation. This implies that certain places are preferred ad there are slight differences in the recognition types of inland, coastal and historic places by each generation group.

In the case of B, the recognition type regarding specific places of symbolic parks representing the region shows

### Table 2. Place assets in Busan Metropolitan City.

| Division                  | City Parks (Before 2000’s)                                                                 |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Place                     | Amnam Park, Busan Democracy Park (BDP), Children’s Grand Park (CGP), Igidae Park, Geumgang Park, Millak Waterfront Park (MWP), Suyeong Historic Park (SHP), Taetongdae Park, United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea (UNMCK), Yongdusan Park |

### Table 3. Result of place assets before 2000.

| A Place Assets            | Result | B Place Assets | Result |
|---------------------------|--------|----------------|--------|
| 1 MWP                     | 14.4%  | 1 Taetongdae Park | 29.5%  |
| 2 UNMCK                   | 13.5%  | 2 Don’t know    | 26.0%  |
| 3 Yongdusan Park          | 12.6%  | 3 Yongdusan Park | 22.0%  |
| 4 CGP                     | 12.1%  | 4 UNMCK        | 6.2%   |
| 5 Taetongdae Park         | 10.2%  | 5 Igidae Park  | 5.9%   |
| 6 Amnam Park              | 10.1%  | 6 CGP           | 5.2%   |
| 7 Geumgang Park           | 8.6%   | 7 MWP           | 5.2%   |
| 8 Igidae Park             | 6.8%   | 8 BDP           | 3.1%   |
| 9 Jungang Park            | 5.1%   | 9 Jungang Park  | 2.1%   |
| 10 SHP                    | 4.4%   | 10 Geumgang Park | -     |
| 11 BDP                    | 2.2%   | 11 Amnam Park   | -     |
| 12 Don’t know             | -      | 12 SHP          | -     |
| Average Value(AverageValue(AV)) | 5.70% |                 |        |

### Table 4. Result of place assets image before 2000.

| A Place Assets Image | B Place Assets Image |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1                    | 1                    |
| 2                    | Don’t know           |
| 3                    |                      |

### Table 5. Generation group result of A by place assets before 2000.

| A Place Assets | 20’s | 30’s | 40’s | 50’s | 60’s |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 MWP          | 25.0 | 13.1 | 7.2  | 4.6  | 4.9  |
| 2 UNMCK        | 16.3 | 12.3 | 12.4 | 13.1 | 12.2 |
| 3 Yongdusan Park | 16.6 | 13.9 | 7.7  | 7.8  | 19.6 |
| 4 CGP          | 10.2 | 10.7 | 12.9 | 16.4 | 14.7 |
| 5 Taetongdae Park | 6.4  | 11.9 | 11.9 | 12.4 | 12.2 |
| 6 Amnam Park   | 9.6  | 9.5  | 11.9 | 11.2 | 4.9  |
| 7 Geumgang Park | 3.5  | 10.3 | 13.4 | 9.8  | 4.9  |
| 8 Igidae Park  | 4.8  | 8.3  | 7.2  | 8.5  | 9.8  |
| 9 Jungang Park | 3.2  | 5.2  | 5.8  | 8.5  | 4.9  |
| 10 SHP         | 2.9  | 3.8  | 7.2  | 5.2  | 4.9  |
| 11 BDP         | 1.5  | 1.0  | 2.4  | 2.5  | 7.0  |
| 12 Don’t know  | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |

Figure 2. This is the Gwangalli & MWP.
high values. This is clearly displayed with the figures of no. 1 ~ 3 and the figures of no.4 and the rest. It is important that one-quarter of the total responded “Don’t know (26.0%)” and this means that only 75% of the total survey targets recognise the parks in Busan (see Table 6).

The survey by generation group of B shows that the results of the 20s are similar to the contents in Table 3, and it appears that it is applied similarly to the 30s. On the other hand, in the 40s, the recognition type is formed across the target sites except the highest and the lowest, which is similar to the results of the previous historic assets.

Characteristics of the parks constructed after 2000 display differences from those established before 2000. From the topographic perspective, the APECNP (APEC Naru Park) and the TAP (Tongil-Asiad Park) are located on the coast and the rest of the parks, 82% of the total, are located inland.

This displays that the parks constructed before 2000 are based on the historicity and symbols, whereas those constructed after 2000 are on the basis of everyday life and located in areas which are closely related to particular livelihoods.

Related contents are described with A. As displayed with the upper ranks from no. 1 to no. 6, the overall figures are not significantly different. As shown in Table 7, the BCP (20.8%), the SSHP (16.0%) and the OCCP (12.3%) and others were constructed after 2010 and have regional characteristics; in other words, they are the parks which utilise the topography, history, etc.

It is considered that these parks recorded low numbers compared to previously mentioned parks due to the characteristics of the places as well as issues including accessibility, and relevant contents are also seen in the survey by generation group (Table 8).

B displays slightly different aspects compared to previously described parks before 2000. In regard to the Taejongdae Park, its survey figure was high; however, nearly half of the respondents, 49.3%, answered “Don’t know” after 2000. Next came the UNSP (11.5%), BCP (10.6%) and SSHP (10.2%).

Similar to A, no recognition type figures of B were seen for the GCP and the CSP and those ranked in the bottom. The monumentality and symbols of certain places or spaces are considered to be the base for the recognition type formation in B rather than the regionality in A (see Table 9).

That is, it appears to be that the two draw similar results but the distribution chart indicates that the meanings of regionality and monumentality are expressed from each different angle. In particular, the distribution results of the recognition type by generation group support the above assertion (Table 10).

In the case of the survey by generation group B, a much higher number of respondents in their 20s, 70% answered “Don’t know.” Numeric values of the 20s over the target sites excluding the highest and the lowest are very low. In contrast to the 20s, the 30s and 40s show evenly distributed values over the target sites (see Table 11).

Table 6. Generation group result of B by place assets before 2000.

| Place Assets | 20's | 30's | 40's | 50's | 60's |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| BCP          | 29.7 | 22.9 | 17.0 | 9.8  | -    |
| Don’t know   | 26.3 | 17.3 | 11.4 | -    | -    |
| Yongdusan Park | 23.1 | 22.9 | 25.8 | -    | -    |
| UNMCK        | 3.3  | 14.3 | 11.4 | -    | -    |
| Igidae Park  | 6.6  | 5.2  | -    | -    | -    |
| CSSP         | 4.2  | 8.8  | 11.4 | -    | -    |
| MWP          | 4.2  | 8.8  | 11.4 | -    | -    |
| BDP          | 2.4  | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| Jungang Park | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| Geumgang Park| -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| Amnam Park   | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| TAP          | 4.2  | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| TAP          | 4.2  | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| Gangseo Stadium | 3.2 | 7    | -    | -    | -    |
| MEP          | 2.1  | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| APECNP       | 14.2 | 4    | -    | -    | -    |
| SSHP         | 16.0 | 3    | -    | -    | -    |
| EEP          | 13.2 | 5    | -    | -    | -    |
| OCCP         | 12.3 | 6    | -    | -    | -    |
| GCP          | 12.3 | 6    | -    | -    | -    |
| MEP          | 2.1  | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| TAP          | 1.6  | 9    | -    | -    | -    |
| Gangseo Stadium | 1.3 | 3    | -    | -    | -    |
| MEP          | 2.6  | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| TAP          | 2.6  | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| Average Value(AV) | 6.4%| 4.12%|          |          |          |

Table 7. Place assets in Busan Metropolitan City.

| Place Assets | APEC Naru Park(APECNP), Busan Citizens Park(BCP), Cheonmasan Sculpture Park(CSP), Euisukdo Ecological Park(EEP), Gangseo Stadium, Gudeok Culture Park(GCP), Macdo Ecological Park(MEP), Oncheon-Cheon Citizens Park(OCCP), Song Sang-Hyeon Plaza(SSHP), Tongil-Asiad Park(TAP), UN Sculpture Park(UNSP) |

Table 8. Result of place assets after 2000.

| Place Assets | Result | B | Place Assets | Result |
|--------------|--------|---|--------------|--------|
| BCP          | 20.8%  | 1 | Don’t know   | 49.3%  |
| UNSP         | 16.8%  | 2 | UNSP         | 11.5%  |
| SSHP         | 16.0%  | 3 | BCP          | 10.6%  |
| APECNP       | 14.2%  | 4 | SSHP         | 10.2%  |
| EEP          | 13.2%  | 5 | APECNP       | 7.7%   |
| OCCP         | 12.3%  | 6 | EEP          | 3.8%   |
| GCP          | 12.3%  | 7 | OCCP         | 3.0%   |
| MEP          | 2.1%   | 8 | MEP          | 2.6%   |
| TAP          | 1.6%   | 9 | Gangseo Stadium | 1.3% |
| GCP          | -      | 10| GCP          | -      |
| CSP          | -      | 11| CSP          | -      |
| Don’t know   | -      | 12| TAP          | -      |
| Average Value(AV) | 6.47%| 4.12%|          |          |
Table 10. Generation group result of A by place assets after 2000.

| Place Assets | 20's | 30's | 40's | 50's | 60's |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| BCP          | 19.6 | 16.2 | 21.2 | 22.7 | 18.2 |
| UNSP         | 18.2 | 14.3 | 11.9 | 16.0 | 18.2 |
| SSHP         | 11.0 | 12.4 | 13.5 | 16.0 | 13.6 |
| APECNP       | 18.9 | 13.3 | 11.2 | 9.4  | 18.2 |
| EEP          | 12.0 | 11.9 | 16.1 | 17.9 | 13.6 |
| OCCP         | 16.7 | 14.8 | 10.1 | 8.5  | 9.1  |
| Gangseo Stadium | 2.5 | 9.8  | 7.9  | -    | -    |
| MEP          | 1.1  | 1.9  | 3.5  | -    | -    |
| TAP          | -    | 1.5  | 2.7  | 3.8  | -    |
| GCP          | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| CSP          | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| TAP          | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| Don't know   | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |

Table 11. Generation group result of B by place assets after 2000.

| Place Assets | 20's | 30's | 40's | 50's | 60's |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Don’t know   | 70.0 | 18.1 | -    | -    | -    |
| UNSP         | 10.9 | 18.3 | 25.8 | -    | -    |
| BCP          | 4.4  | 15.2 | 22.9 | -    | -    |
| SSHP         | 5.8  | 12.0 | 19.8 | -    | -    |
| APECNP       | 3.8  | 15.2 | 5.7  | -    | -    |
| EEP          | 2.6  | 12.0 | 2.9  | -    | -    |
| OCCP         | 1.3  | 3.1  | 8.6  | -    | -    |
| MEP          | 0.6  | 3.1  | 11.4 | -    | -    |
| Gangseo Stadium | 0.6 | 3.1  | 2.9  | -    | -    |
| GCP          | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| CSP          | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |
| TAP          | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |

Table 12. Recognition type result of place assets (before 2000).

| Place Assets | A 6.95 MWP, UNMCK, Yongdusan Park, CGP, Taejongdae Park, Amnam Park, Geumgang Park | 63.6 |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| B 5.70 Taejongdae Park, Yongdusan Park, UNMCK, Igidae Park | 36.4 |

Table 13. Recognition type result of place assets (after 2000).

| Place Assets | A 6.47 BCP, UNSP, SSHP, APECNP, EEP, OCCP | 54.5 |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------|------|
| B 4.12 UNSP, BCP, SSHP, APECNP | 36.4 |

4. Analysis and conclusion on the recognition types

For the central parks constructed before 2000, in case of A, seven (7) out of total 11 are recognized as local assets on the basis of AV of the place assets (6.95%) and when converting it into TN, 63.6% surpasses the AV (see Table 3). What could be derived here is that A has evenly formed the recognition types with the AV over the parks established based on history and memory. Moreover, on the basis of the AV, the sum of TNs ranked in the top is 81.5%, therefore the symbolic image of local assets on the central parks is close to 100% (see Table 7). In conclusion, the relationship between the urban space and images that is emphasised in this study comes to the recognition type formation is not smooth. This is close to twice the value of before 2000, 26.0%. For the rest of the items, 36.4%, four (4) TNs out of 11, exceeded the AV (5.70%). But, the sum of the TNs surpassing the AV is 40% which is lower than 49% of “Don’t know.”

This study aims to determine whether the recognition type for the local assets can serve as the local assets through the correlation with symbols or not. This study is to verify the hypothesis of whether a symbolic image drawn from experiences on the urban space can form a recognition type image of an observer over a local asset in the district and whether it can affect it or not. A summary of the results from the survey based on the hypothesis are as follows:

According to the results showed in both before and after 2000, the symbolic images based on daily experiences and historicity interacted in A and these elements built the symbolic images of the area in the integrated relation. In contrast, it is regarded that the recognition type of B is formed with “abstract images” of the region and place rather experiences. It is considered that A forms the symbolic image of integrated structure by combining everyday life and historicity, whereas B forms the symbolic image of the region and place based on the abstractness.

In other words, the symbolic image only forms individual images of places rather than the integrated structure, thus the interaction with the symbolic images when it comes to the recognition type formation is not smooth.

In conclusion, the relationship between the urban space and images that is emphasised in this study should be considered significantly when planning public spaces in urban space such as parks. Especially, the process specifically presenting a non-physical asset which symbolises the city does not simply assign the sense of place for a space but also affects the urban space as a local asset. In addition to that, it could serve as an element that enables to experience the image of the local asset in the relationship with the architecture.
Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

This work was supported by National Research Foundation of Korea [2014 R1A12059821].

Notes on contributors

Seungkoo Jo is a professor of Architecture at Tongmyong University, Busan Korea. His major research focus toward the contemporary architecture theory, as well as urban design theory.

Heeyoung Park is an adjunct Professor of Inje University, Gimhae, Korea.

References

Anderson, B. 1991. Imagined Communities. London: Verso.
Barthes, R. 1986. “Semiology and the Urban.” In The City and the Sign, edited by M. Gottidiener and A. Lagopolous. New York: Columbia University Press.
Fornäs, J. 1995. Culture Theory & Late Modernity, 149. London: Sage Publication.