Type—Prototype—Archetype

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Call for
Abstracts

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Typology as a Process of Type Formation

Issue 38 *Type–Prototype–Archetype*: *Typology as a Process of Type Formation* is devoted to typology in the field of architecture and thereby to one of the most complex issues connecting theory, design, and practice. Now more than ever, the development of new residential and civil partnership models, the changing forms of communication, and the differentiation between the worlds of work and production following the introduction of Web 2.0 require the creation of new types in design, architecture, and urban development.

The debates have long since moved beyond the point at which typology was stigmatized as an outgrown and thus old-fashioned and reactionary standpoint in the early 21st century with *mass customization* (Carpo, Lynn, Hovestadt). Despite all prophecies, the opposite has occurred. This all-pervasive medialization of everyday life has led to the further differentiation of individual needs and, as a result, to a process of type formation that is still nowhere near completion.

Typology should be understood as the science of building types and their specific arrangements, uses, and forms, as well as the process of type formation. Typology is a deeply modern issue whose beginnings, contrary to general belief, lie not in the Age of Reason and Enlightenment, but instead can be traced back far beyond the 18th century. The fact that typology first emerged in the Renaissance with the development of an urban morphology (*palazzo, Zentralbau,* villa) and a type grid is primarily obscured by the focus on industrialization and mass society, on Werkbund (Muthesius, van de Velde, Behrens) and Bauhaus (Gropius, Meyer). This means that typology is just as much a project of Renaissance humanism as it is a project of the "type-making machine" (Gropius).

In 1926, Gropius was still using the "necessities of life"—which he described as "the same for the majority of people"—as a justification for the preoccupation with typology. On the basis of anthropology, he believed that type formation held a potential for social emancipation that had its medium in the standardized and unitized production of machines. However,

in today's digitally and media-configured society, the aspect of the collective appears to take a back seat to the individualization of the concepts and processes of life.

The entire historical depth and theoretical breadth of the subject is manifested between two poles: a humanistic-anthropological approach and a technical-functionalistic approach. In the context of "type, prototype and archetype", Issue 38 examines typology as a process of type formation, thereby exploring the ideas that serve as rules for the models. It seeks to free typology from the hardened image of cataloged, formulaic knowledge and functionalist compartmentalization with the aim of casting a critical eye on the clichés and stereotypes that have been established in the debates surrounding postmodernism and the *digital turn*.

Particularly in light of today's re-conceptualization of typology, manifold questions arise as to the material-functional, linguistic-sociological, and ethical-aesthetic foundations. What are the parameters and mechanisms of type formation in general? Which can be found in the age of the analog machine, and how are these changing in today's digital and pluralistically conceptualized information society?

The curators of Issue 38 are calling for papers that examine the topic of "type, prototype, and archetype" from various perspectives (see appendix) in the hope that the publication will help provide a comprehensive overview of the historical and current processes of type formation and how its concept, manifestation, and social function have changed over time.

Appendix

The interpretation of typology as a dynamic process of type formation leads us to a series of investigation fields and terms that are of central importance for shedding light on the issue.

Definition of terms How can the terms *type, prototype*, and *archetype*, along with associated methods, such as *variation, adaptation*, and *transformation*, be defined in the field of architecture? This question arises from the fact that, where no two houses are alike, architecture has always followed the paradigm of mass customization. In this case, how do type and prototype differ in the field of architecture? What does this mean for the notion of modernity in architecture as opposed to machine production?

Material and construction On the other hand, the standardization and unitization of structural components have likewise always been a part of architecture, even before the advent of mass customization. With the megaron house, the peristyle temple, or the basilica—all of which are building types that date back to antiquity—typology is one of the oldest techniques of architecture. This also has a material-aesthetic and structural-design side, where the standardized brick, roof tile, or column and the reuse of form elements were the prerequisites for type formation. How do material and construction contribute to typology in the field of architecture? If, according to Kant, the term *architectonic* can be understood as the "art of the system", then isn't typology simply one of the basic requirements of architecture?

Time, history, identity Types are not created through invention, but are instead the results of developments that occur over extended periods of time. They reflect concrete models of representation, social order, and economic organization. In cases where typology comes under the influence of specific historico-cultural constellations, it is closely connected with issues of cultural identity. Type formation is identity formation—as can be seen with the Black Forest house *(Schwarzwaldhaus)*, the thatched East Frisian fisherman's cottage *(Fischerkate)*, the traditional Burgenland farmhouse with a square courtyard *(Vierkanthof)*, and the Venetian *palazzo*. Cultural identity occurs on the basis of types, and types give cultures stability. These characteristics of types are shared by ornaments, decorative shapes, and murals. What is the relationship between ornament and type? Can a connection be drawn between the phasing out of classical ornaments in modern times and the simultaneous acceleration of type formation in the context of machine production, objectivity, and constructivism?

Language and rhetoric Beyond their functional, design, and material aspects, types constitute the basic elements of a language of architecture. Aldo Rossi and Oswald Mathias Ungers brought these concepts back into consciousness in the 1960s. Like the tropes and figures of speech in rhetoric, types are stylistic devices of the language of architecture. Types tell us something about the time, purposes, customs, and culture in general. Types express architecture in layman's terms. With types, architecture leaves the realm of the elite and enters the mainstream. How does architecture speak through topology? How is meaning created through types? How does this relate to the techniques of drawing and imaging and, in turn, to ornaments?

City and power "Architecture or revolution," proclaimed Le Corbusier in connection with his "houses in serial construction", his house model *Citrohan* and his "seaside villa built from type elements". Le Corbusier spoke of types as "choice products". Type formation in the fields of architecture and urban development was one of the recurring topics of discussion at the International Congresses of Modern Architecture (CIAMs). As shown by the discussions at the CIAM congresses, type formation can be used not only as an instrument for the pluralization of society but also as a means for its control. In the latter sense, typology is aimed at socialization in a top-down process. Thus, to what extent is typology also a means of power, political power, and the control of the masses? What roles do architects, lawmakers, and local governments play in this context?

Morphological variation, architecture, and poetics Typologies also contribute to the moods and atmospheres of places, like the morphological variation of Venetian *palazzos* shape the mood of Venice or that of the Upper Franconian sandstone facades creates distinctive atmospheres. A poetic potential far beyond organization and function is reflected in the varying repetition, in the transformation, combination, and recombination of standardized elements like windows and doors, supports and columns, stairs and ramps. Should we not interpret Alberti's call for *varietà in unitá*, or variety in unity, as an early attempt to not only define topology but moreover

determine its sensual-poetic potential? What are the means for achieving this? What is being said? Is anything at all being said? What is typology's contribution to architecture, to a modern-day architecture? What are the methods and contents?

Hybrid and typology A characteristic logic concerning the use of types grows out of the changing requirements and the resulting ongoing repurposing and migration of types. This shows that types in no way define everything. On the contrary, they only create the necessary space for adaptation and change. Today, this applies primarily to the possibility for the adaptive reuse and renovation of existing buildings. Therefore, shouldn't new buildings be designed precisely for hybrid uses in order to allow for the programmatic adaptation of their use over the longest possible period of time? The question is, whether the hybrid, as incubator of the city of the 21st century (Holl), has since become its own type. Or is it simply an umbrella term for typological hybrid forms that are still in the process of differentiation?

Other topics include the primitive hut as archetype and the question of *typological analysis and design methods*, as well as the role of *Bauhütten-bücher* (lodge books) and *Baumusterbücher* (model books) in the development of authoritative types. In the context of modern times, questions arise regarding *algorithmic-parametric design methods* and thought processes as "internalized patterns" (Panofsky, Bourdieu) in the sense of an "interplay between previously assimilated basic patterns". Typology remains one of the complex issues in the field of architecture, where practical and conceptual, theoretical and philosophical aspects are intertwined in a number of ways.