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CURATING THE MAINSTREAM: THE CASE OF THE GERMAN COMPETITION JOURNAL *WETTBEWERBE AKTUELL*

TORSTEN SCHMIEDEKNECHT

Abstract

Launched in June 1971, the monthly German journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* documents competition results from all over the country with a wide distribution. Every month the results of six competitions are documented and published in detail; the prize-winning entries of ten other competitions being shown in outline. *Wettbewerbe Aktuell's* format, its reference system and division of projects into functional building types, together with diagrammatic drawings, presents the design of competition architecture as a logical operation. The layout of the competition title pages and the overall «fact sheet» aesthetic suggest a desire to categorise architecture generated by competitions.

This paper is looking at what is perceived to be a reciprocal relationship between the German evaluation system and the journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* and assesses its influence by considering the role which the catalogue style, and particular publication format, plays in the development of publicly funded German architecture.

The paper in particular examines the results of primary school competitions published in the journal between 1983 and 2001, with a focus on the use by architects of established types (and sub types). The findings establish that four predominant types reoccur in the competitions studied and therefore support the hypothesis of the journal's impact on the way that architects approach the design of schemes to be entered into architectural competitions.

Key words:
Mainstream architecture, Collec-
tion, Wettbewerbe Aktuell, Type

Context: *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*

In 1971, Thomas Hoffmann-Kuhnt, then a student and working as an architectural assistant in an office frequently participating in design competitions, had an idea that subsequently transformed the dissemination of information about competitions throughout the country. He founded the journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* to publish results and drawings of prize winning schemes from architecture competitions all over Germany, chronicling details such as the type of competition, the building type, the names of the jurors, the prize money and prize winners.¹

For the decades following WWII, a vast amount of town halls, kindergartens, schools, hospitals etc. had been commissioned via, mostly anonymous, architecture competitions, meaning that between the nineteen sixties and nineteen nineties Germany probably had the most thriving architectural competition scene in Europe, if not in the world. It is in this context, where open and anonymous design competitions had for decades provided young practices with a chance to compete with and to challenge the architectural establishment and where architects with no previous building experience of their own could get commissions for buildings worth millions of Deutsch Marks / Euros, that the relevance of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* may be acknowledged.

When *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* was first published, another journal publishing competition results, titled *architektur + wettbewerbe (architecture + competitions)* had already been on the market in Germany since 1939 (initially called *Architektur Wettbewerb*). One of the key differences between *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* and *architektur + wettbewerbe* is that *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* publishes recent competition results and thus has its emphasis on the term *Aktuell* (up-to-date). *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* is mainly concerned with the publication of drawings and model photographs and typically publishes different types of competitions in the same issue, for example a primary school, a hospital and a large urban design competition would be published together. *architektur + wettbewerbe*, which ceased to be published in December 2008, on the contrary, consisted of themed issues, sampling the best schemes for a particular type of competition over a number of years. For instance, there could be an issue about hospitals followed by one about schools and kindergartens and so on. *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, until very recently, used to publish mainly competitions from Germany, while *architektur + wettbewerbe* traditionally had a more international approach. Since the material in *architektur + wettbewerbe* was of a somewhat more retrospective nature, the journal also frequently published finished buildings. Since 1989 there is also a section at the end of every issue of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* called *wettbewerbe weiterverfolgt* (competitions followed), showing built projects that had resulted from competitions. The difference between this section and the buildings shown in the rival publication *architektur + wett-*

- 1 Since July 1971, *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* has published the detailed results of more than 2500 architecture competitions. The journal has its own reference system ordered by (functional) building type, enabling the reader to establish their own library by filing the competitions according to the publisher's reference codes. The detailed documentation of a competition usually consists of two parts. Part one gives an abbreviated version of the design brief and the jury's recommendation, listing prize winners, judges, prize money, dates etc. Part two consists of the publication of drawings and model photographs of the awarded projects, plus the jury's statements on each project photographs of award winning projects, together with the jury's statements on each project.

bewerbe, is that *architektur + wettbewerb* had a strong editorial input and selected / published only material deemed to be above average. In *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, particularly in the early stages of the section *wettbewerb* weiterverfolgt, one would frequently find buildings that might not have been published in other national architecture publications such as *Bauwelt* or *Baumeister*, which exercise strong editorial control over the contents they publish. Another key difference between the two competition journals is that *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* typically publishes all the schemes awarded prizes or commendations from a competition. *architektur + wettbewerb* limited the selection of schemes shown from competitions and often only showed the scheme awarded first prize.

In an article for issue No.93 of *architektur + wettbewerb*, the architect Helge Bofinger (1978) lamented the lack of artistic and intellectual endeavour in the architecture produced through design competitions in Germany. In the first paragraph of his essay he quotes Frank Lloyd Wright as saying that the «net result of a competition was the average of the average of the average» (Ibid. p. 1.) before going on to argue that buildings like Wright's Guggenheim or Larkin would have been inconceivable as successful competition entries. Bofinger argues that it is no surprise that participants in open design competitions fall victim to what he calls the «psychology of competitions»; competitors entering design competition proposals that embody a rather calculating and result-orientated mentality. He goes on to reason that one of the key components of the German competition system was the use and repetition of, albeit programme specific, standard (functional) types and solutions. This, Bofinger claimed, lead to a situation where architects, including the so-called avant-garde, cosmetically reworked and dressed up standard solutions as surrogates for a lack of personal design perspective and ambitions - mainly because what appears to count in competitions are measurable results and a successful outcome. Bofinger argues that competitions no longer represent a progressive field of discourse but rather are a true reflection of normative practice. He observes that surrogate radical architectures had become a decorative part of the competition landscape. The variety of formal solutions on offer increased dramatically during the ten years before 1978 and seemingly every provincial office was now familiar with and capable of using the 45-degree angle «Berlin School Type» or the «Stirling glass fold». Bofinger concludes that consequently it was only the talented middle ground that succeeded with competitions; architects had surrendered their authority to determine clear and formally radical solutions, achieved through the application of rigorous thinking, in favour of an architecture based on (false) consensus, be it dressed up in romantic-sentimental or hypermodern costumes. Bofinger's claim can thus be understood as seeing the competition as a conservative institution rather than as an experimental arena, which could potentially challenge routine practices or support the development of innovative design solutions. How far, however, is Bofinger's criticism sustainable?

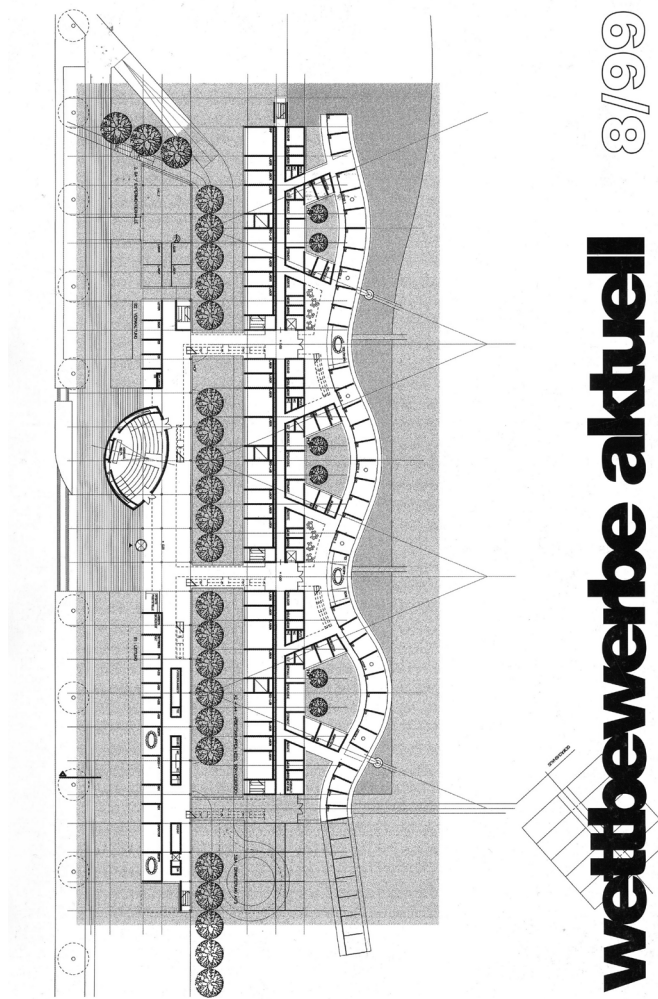


Figure 1. Cover *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*
8/99

Representation, Curating, Classification

As a true representation of contemporary competition proceedings in Germany of the time, the emphasis in the published material in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* lies on the use of the standard drawing convention employing black and white plans, sections and elevations, plus model photographs. Since the mid nineteen-nineties, it is worth noting, colour presentations, due also to changes in the standard submission requirements for competitions, have become more and more frequent. However, for a standard primary school scheme the typical scale of reproduction in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* is between 1:750 and 1:1000. Competition models are usually at a scale of 1:200 or 1:500 and are reproduced at about 1/6 of an A4 page in the journal. What the journal's format does enable the reader to do, based on the submission criteria for competitions, is the direct comparison between schemes at a glance.

This paper is concerned with two collections: the competition system in Germany, which could also be described as an un-curated collection of ideas and design proposals and, secondly, the collection that is the journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, which, as I will argue, is a collection that

is curated largely by default. In this context, the relevant definition of a curator is that of a custodian or keeper of a collection. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011). In the light of Helge Bofinger's remarks what is of interest is the relationship between the two collections: the institution of the architectural competition and the «collection in progress» *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*.

The premise from which I approach *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* is to consider the journal as an arbitrary collection curated largely by «accident». The editor can only make a choice from the limited competition results available for publication at any one point in time. My hypothesis is, that the institution of the architectural competition and the journal, have over the years established a reciprocal relationship in publishing the results of an institutionalised procurement system. Given that *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* is very likely to be used as a primary source by architects participating in competitions, it is assumed that the journal perpetuates the methodology behind the material it publishes, and provides the motivation to investigate journal's impact on competition practice.

3/2 Gemeinschaftsgrundschule Hückeswagen-Wiehagen

4/92 – 38 **wettbewerbe aktuell**

1. Preis: Kahlen + Partner,
Aachen

Preisgerichtsbeurteilung:
Der Verfasser schlägt einen Gebäudetyp vor, der aufgrund seiner Eigenart gute Ansätze bietet zur Bildung unverwechselbarer Identität und zur Identitätsbildung des umgebenden Bereiches bzw. des Ortes beitragen kann. Dabei ist die Einfügung in die Topographie mit dem von der Blumenstraße aus heruntergezogenen Eingangshof überzeugend und gibt sehr gute Möglichkeiten für eine der Topographie gerechte Entwicklung der Außenanlage. Leider sind diese in den Unterlagen in keiner Weise formuliert. Die vorgeschlagenen Erweiterungen bringen ein neues formales Element, daß auf die zentrale Achse richtig bezogen erscheint. Eingangs- und Pausenhof sind über Eingänge, neuer Pausenhalle und Ausgang zum Pausenhof sehr gut miteinander verbunden und liegen in allen Teilen an der richtigen Stelle.
Die innere Gebäudestruktur entspricht der Klarheit der Grundform und ist auch in der Ausformung der einzelnen Bauelemente überzeugend. Trotz der einseitigen Anordnung der Klassen an einem alle verbindenden Erschließungsgang wirkt dies durch die Kreissegmentform und die Unterbrechung der Raumbereiche der Eingangshalle nicht zu lang oder eintönig. Die Einheit von Forum und Eingangshalle in Verbindung mit der Zweigeschossigkeit lassen gute Nutzungsmöglichkeiten erwarten.
Der Anschluß des 4. Zuges an den Hauptbaukörper ist in der vorgeschlagenen Form nicht zu akzeptieren. Die Lage der Hausmeisterwohnung ist in Hinsicht auf die später zu errichtende Sporthalle sehr kritisch zu sehen.
Die konstruktive Grundstruktur des Gebäudes ist einfach, das Bauvolumen ist günstig. Unterhaltungs- und Bewirtschaftungskosten dürfen in einem normalen Rahmen liegen.

Lageplan M. 1:3.000
Grundrisse, Ansichten, Schnitt M. 1:1.000

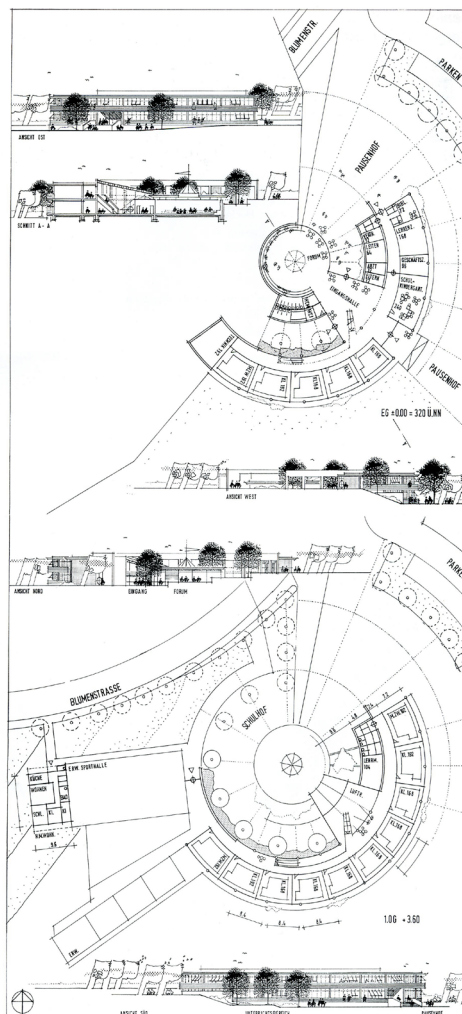
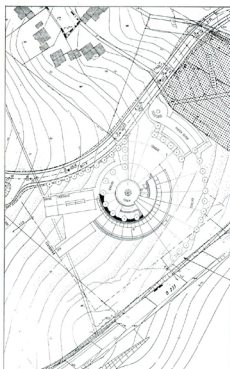


Figure 2. Typical page layout of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*.

Wettbewerbe Aktuell 4/92, Primary School Hueckeswagen-Wiehagen, 1st prize, Architects Kahlen & Partner.

Research Problem and Questions

The paper attempts to explore the relatively prescribed nature of work that largely constituted regional and local competition architecture in West Germany during the 1970s and 80s as published in the journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*.²

Wettbewerbe Aktuell provides the material, like no other journal or forum, not only for a national discourse around publicly funded building projects but also for a discourse around a vast number of un-built contemporary architectural schemes. Given its readership it could be said that no members club or other kind of architectural organization could achieve this level of communication between architects about their work. The journal, with an estimated readership of 30,000 architects (actual circulation 13,500) at the turn of the millennium, through the publication of award winning design proposals, plays an active role in the production and exchange of professional knowledge, and it is thus important to understand the dynamics in this relationship. The presentation of these award-winning architectures suggests a value judgement of what is and what is not «good practice» or «appropriate design». Hence the journal's importance regarding the use of precedent (and subsequently «type»).

Perhaps one of the things that *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* actually does is to inform architects of the shades of activity in-between superstardom and invisibility. In other countries without a journal like *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* this middle ground of design activity might be less visible, or if, then in journals with a less heavy emphasis on design.³

The journal characteristically organises the classification of architecture competitions into particular categories. The paper assesses the influence of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* by considering what role the journal, through its catalogue style and particular manner of disseminating and reproducing drawings; plays in the development of specific building types promoted in publicly funded German architecture.

Through its classification system, the journal raises issues concerning the repetition of certain standard solutions to specific design briefs. Its publishing format, the title page for each competition, its reference system and the division of projects into, functional, building types, combined with diagrammatic drawings of the projects themselves, promotes the design of competition architecture as a logical operation. The graphics of the title pages and *Wettbewerbe Aktuell's* characteristic «fact sheet» aesthetic suggests a need to categorise architects, their architectures and, drawing styles in a particular idiom. As an extensive data-bank of design solutions in 14 categories, subdivided into 104 sections *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* might be thought to encourage the cutting and pasting of borrowed solutions. The journal and its contents address

2 My research on the journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* considers the time from its first publication in 1971 until 2001. For the part of the project discussed in this paper the original time frame chosen was 1983 until 2001, thus providing me with periods pre and post reunification. At the time of the research I also had difficulties locating the complete volumes from 1981 and 1982. No primary school competitions were published in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* 1983.

3 In this context the section «Wettbewerbe weiterverfolgt» in which the publishers show completed buildings resulting from won competitions becomes of particular interest for it shows buildings that are not always representing the kind of architecture that would find its way into mainstream journals.

the «curate» (by accident) and «classify» (by default) of a particular form of architecture procured through the design competition.

The «institution» of architectural competitions in West Germany, at the time regulated by relatively strict principles and guidelines (compared to those, for instance, in Scandinavia) can be assumed to have had two main effects on publicly funded architecture, namely the prevention of *very bad* architecture and the prevention (in most cases) of *very good* architecture for publicly funded buildings such as libraries, schools and town halls.⁴

In this kind of competition culture, it is argued here, contestants developed strategies and submitted schemes which relied increasingly on the use of established building types – not so much «functional types», in the sense of «a school», «a town hall» etc. – but more in the sense of «type form» albeit in a somewhat distorted way. Thus the use of well-established and recognisable formal patterns, like «linear», «centric», «court-yard», became more or less common practice in small competitions, which were well documented in the pages of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*.⁵

At the onset of this project I had a general interest in architectural competitions, which stemmed from my own experience as an architectural assistant and subsequently as a practising architect in Germany. Studying the entries in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* was, during this time, very much part of my everyday practice. Recalling the time spent studying ‘precedents’ as a practicing architect, I realised that this kind of competition practice was unique to Germany and characteristically of the journal *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, which made it possible for architects to place their contributions to competitions within a broader, and yet also «confined» context. Hence the focus of my attention became the study and use of precedents by competition designers and how the journal might, or might not, contribute to this practice.

The aim of the research is therefore to investigate ways in which the publication *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* contributes to the culture of architecture in Germany by disseminating ideas and information in a characteristic manner, and in turn affects the continuing production of the built environment; and to which degree the «collection in progress» is used as a source by architects, how it is reinforced by the outcome of new competitions and what the consequences are for competition practice? Does the journal institutionalise what Bofinger terms a lack of intellectual endeavour in German competition architecture? In this context my paper specifically investigates primary school competitions in Germany, published in the journal (category 3.2 in the reference system) between 1983 and 2001.

4 Until 1996, the competition system allowed public clients to restrict eligible participants for architectural competitions. This was usually done by limiting the geographical area in which architects needed to be registered in order to enter specific contests. Consequently it was possible to organise open competitions, without ending up with an unmanageable number of entries for, say, a small kindergarten competition in a village in Bavaria. Normally the boundaries of eligibility were drawn - depending on the size of the competition - along town, city or federal state lines, thus leading to contests in which the same architects would compete with each other again and again, their anonymity guaranteed by clear submission and presentation rules.

5 The architecture that resulted did not necessarily set out to be safe and unspectacular, but by being part of the German competition system, it more or less defaulted to being so. This is not a description of any notion of taste or style, but simply the idea of an architecture aimed at serving the many rather than the few, and resulting from the implementation of post war social democratic ideology and due process. Looking back, it was a period in which stylistic excess was not part of the architectural equation, and the concept of the *starchitect* had yet to be born. The image driven architecture of today – whether produced by those aiming for immediate effect or conversely claiming self-consciously to pursue an architecture of the *ordinary* or the *everyday* – is very different to that manifested in these competitions. The resulting buildings: town halls and kindergartens, primary schools and libraries across what was then West Germany, were an integral part of architecture production in the 1970s and 1980s, and appear now in retrospect to be rather refreshing in their lack of conspicuousness.

In following up Helge Bofinger's (1978) observations I am consequently interested in the particular occurrence of the use of typology in the competition schemes published in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*. To what degree is, intentionally or not, type as a design tool promoted by the journal and what inferences might one draw for competition practice.

The study of precedent and «the question of type» in architectural design are (with its many different connotations) closely linked. Consequently it became fundamentally important to examine theories on «type» as a key concept in architecture and to see how it might (perhaps coincidentally) be manifested within the landscape of German architectural competitions. Type is used as a theoretical tool, both for analysing design in competitions and to understand my empirical findings.

Methodology

The journal publication of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* was used as the primary resource archive and its singularity provides an original and previously untapped source of particular «value» to the research carried out. Secondary sources consulted included literature on architectural competitions in Germany, frameworks and legislations, and material collected on the history and theory of «type» as it has been understood in architectural culture.

After initial surveys of the documentary material available (quantitative research), a structure was developed to establish the leading research criteria. Part of the earlier research established a set of data collections from the journal, which subsequently enabled a structured access to statistical information (also concerning specific competitions, particular architects and on the wider development of the journal). The research focus shifted from quantitative to qualitative research.

For this particular paper primary schools were chosen as the «functional» type to be investigated. In order to analyse the 23 primary school competitions published in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* between October 1985 and May 2001 the drawings, and in accordance with the journal's emphasis, the floor plans and layouts in particular, were considered as source material. Since the journal is published nationally I have avoided regional distinctions. In total 168 schemes, all awarded prizes or mentions, were published of 1827 submitted entries to 23 competitions.

To generate a comparable sample I chose to analyse seven 3-form entry competitions as this provided the largest number of schemes of a similar size, 54 in total. This selection limited the period examined to that between 1992 and 2000, placing them all in the post Cold War era and following the publication of Helge Bofinger's (1978) article.

Typology

Francescato asks «can the idea of «type» suggest which characteristics are unique to architectural knowledge as opposed to knowledge in other domains of human experience?» (Francescato, p.253) He differentiates in his text between two applications of the transformation of existing types in the process of architectural design. On the one hand he talks about the idea of «a simple adaptation of an existing type» and on the other that of a «more or less radical elaboration» (Ibid, p.260).

...architectural objects begin their lives in the mind of the architect as choices among types. Types are the vehicle of architectural knowledge because they embody the unity of form, function, and meaning transmitted by history and transformed through it by the dialectical encounter between architecture and society. Once made, the initial choice can be questioned, and later be discarded, but as long as the choice remains in effect it governs and informs the entire process. (Francescato, p.260)

The concept of «type» is investigated here as a key concept of competition practice in Germany.⁶ Two different historical interpretations of «type», one through the work of Antoine-Chrysostome Quatremère de Quincy (1788-1825) and the other via that of Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand (1802-05), are considered and followed through within the C20th German context.

Firstly, «type» as a category is seen as a non-functional entity open to transformation. This perspective is founded on Quatremère's thinking, and has been subsequently examined (and extended) variously in C20th architectural theory by Vidler (1996; 1998), Argan (1996), Bandini (1984; 1992), Colquhoun (1981), Oechslin (1986), Purves (1982), Robinson (1994) and Francescato (1994).

Secondly, there is Durand's empirical conception of architectural «type», which, in the German C20th context is historically present via Ernst Neufert's (1936) broadly functionalist pragmatism allied to post war reconstruction; subsequently becoming the basis of what is generally seen within this research as fundamental to the operative and institutionalised basis of the competition system.⁷

One of the more lucid essays on the different application of typology, «Typological theories in architectural design» was published in 1992 by Micha Bandini (1992) in the volume *Companion to contemporary architectural thought*, which was edited by Farmer and Louw. Here Bandini clearly elaborates on the two standard interpretations of «type» normally available. On the one hand there is the idea of «type» as an ideal, which has no fixed visual or formal appearance as such but is open to interpretation and more importantly, transformation. Secondly Bandini

6 Local competitions in which participants routinely submit standard solutions.

7 This dual conception is perhaps too conveniently polarised, and its efficacy is questioned in relation to its applicability here, where there is a degree of overlap between the two lines of thought.

refers to the idea of «type» as a «tool for the composition of schematic objects which might become real architecture, if the needs of social and economic circumstances require their particular conformation». (Bandini, p.387) The former interpretation is derived from Quatremère de Quincy (1788-1825) according to whom «type», was an «*a priori* which can be further transformed by the designer to fit his imagination and the requirements of the brief». (Bandini, p.387) The latter refers directly to J.N. L. Durand (1802-05) who stipulated that types in architecture were, similar to objects or phenomena in natural sciences, classifiable, «composed from primary architectural elements which, combined with the laws of ... geometry, can produce a model to be copied.» (Bandini, p.387) Bandini explains that, while Quatremère and Durand are conventionally seen as opposite sides of the typological spectrum, there is also a significant overlap, namely that the former's ideal was also providing «through an inspiring mental construct, a workable indicator for practising architects» and the latter's preference for the model had been arrived at «...through analysing the tradition of the formation of certain types...». (Bandini, p.387) In her view this in turn generated C20 interpretations of 'type' from Muthesius' standardisation to Le Corbusier (and his application of small units within a bigger whole in the Unité) to Ernst May's pursuit of the *Existenz Minimum*. Bandini points out, that all of these positions chose to «keep open the ambiguity between «type» and «model» because of the workability of the latter and the formal authority of the former». (Bandini, p.389)

Analytical Precedent

In their study *Precedents in Architecture – Analytic Diagrams, Formative Ideas, and Partis*, Roger H. Clark and Michael Pause (2005) pursue, the «search,... for theory that transcends the moment and reveals an architectural idea.» (Clark and Pause, 2005, p.xi)

As a method of building analysis, *Precedents in Architecture* served as a useful example for the study presented here, as the authors deliberately excluded material that is not necessarily available and accessible when studying a building via the means of drawings.

While architecture embodies many realms, we concentrate on built form. Without apology, we make no attempt to discuss the social, political, economic, or technical aspects of architecture. The domain of design ideas lies within the formal and spatial realm of architecture, and thus it is this arena that is explored in this book.

(Clark and Pause, 2005, p.v)

As such, the material collected in the volume is comparable to the projects in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, as the predominant focus is on the architecture in form of drawings adhering to standard conventions. Political, historical or social aspects play no part in either case. It is also

worth pointing out here that, as a collection of drawings of buildings *Precedents in Architecture* has some similarities with Neufert's *Architects' Data*, first published in 1936 in German and still heavily in use as a reference book for professional architects in Germany (and around the world). But while Clark and Pause do not refer to «functional types», Neufert's book does exactly that.

The method of analysis performed on «type» here has been arrived at by a combination of the views elaborated by Clark and Pause, and Francescato, but is also making reference to the ambiguous nature of the relationship between «type» and «model» pointed out by Bandini. This was then translated into the context of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, via a direct comparison of the drawings (and model photographs) published in the journal. Like Clark and Pause, it is concerned with what is there, with the projects on paper and the formal patterns they consist of. Thus, the research investigates the persistence of certain patterns within the work published in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*. And, in line with Francescato, I am making the argument that the competition schemes published in *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, are mainly a result of a choice of types, patterns or solutions from a limited palette of available options.⁸

Primary Schools

Helge Bofinger points out the repetition of established solutions and a lack of intellectual endeavour in German competition architecture. His contention may be tested in analyses of the development (or not) of the design of primary schools procured through design competition. However, there can be no empirical answer to the validity of his claims.

Examining the types employed in the seven school competitions it became evident that one organisational principle was used almost exclusively, the single-loaded corridor type in which one corridor or circulation space typically accessed between three and five classrooms. This cluster principle was then used to form the four predominant forms of organisation or types occurring in the competitions: 1) linear double-loaded corridor type (14 entries); 2) courtyard type (13 entries); 3) angular single-loaded corridor type (11 entries); 4) linear single-loaded corridor type (10 entries). In addition there were solutions using the angular double-loaded corridor type (4 entries) and the «street» type with perpendicularly protruding «fingers» (3 entries). Evidently 48 out of 54 schemes are more or less evenly distributed over four types. However, if one looks at the distribution of 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes the picture differs because the linear double-loaded corridor type stands out with 6 entries from a possible 21, closely followed in popularity by the courtyard type with 5 entries. The courtyard type is also the one awarded the most first prizes (three out of a possible seven).

8 This limited choice, however, is by no means treated as a limit of architectural quality.

The number of types employed in the school competitions published is limited; what remains to be seen is whether they were just repeated, as Bofinger infers or if they were subject to transformation and thus typological development.

Repetition: Model or Transformation

Examining type in the context of the primary schools published in *Wettbewerb Aktuell*, two definitions must be considered: firstly, the functional building type, that is the organisational principles of a primary school; and secondly, type employed in the classification of schemes according to the organisation of form and space, devoid of functional requirements. The first definition is interesting in that it highlights an intriguing relationship, established through publication in *Wettbewerb Aktuell*, between the school as an institution and the separate institution of the competition as a procurement process. It is evident that there is a mutual relationship between the two as the competition does not seem to challenge the institutional nature of the school and vice versa. This relationship seemingly explains the limited number of formal types evident in the projects that are the subject of this research.

Is competition design in Germany in the way published in *Wettbewerb Aktuell* characterised along Helge Bofinger's lines as no longer a progressive discourse, or if there is repetition evident, may this be substantiated in the transformation of types rather than purely pragmatic and goal-orientated competition practice; how might the collection *Wettbewerb Aktuell* contribute to or validate this. My analysis examines the two dominant types: the linear double-loaded corridor type and the courtyard type.

Linear Double-Loaded Corridor Type

The linear double-loaded corridor type also occurred in six out of the seven competitions analysed and was used in 14 schemes. Nine entries were awarded one of the first five prizes and five schemes using this type were awarded mentions or commendations. Three schemes from differ-

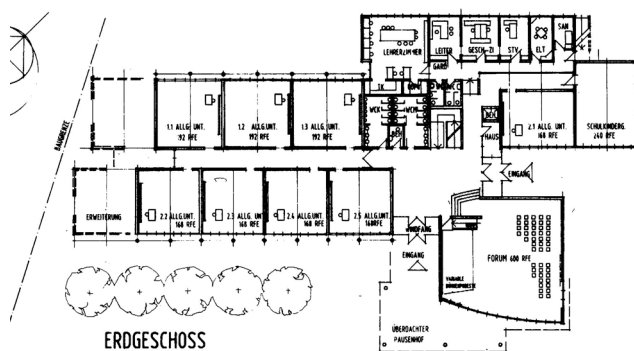


Figure 3a. Linear double loaded corridor, *Wettbewerb Aktuell* 4/92, Primary School Hueckeswagen-Wiehaugen, 2nd prize, Architect Helmut H. Guré.

ent competitions were awarded first, second and third prizes respectively from issues 4/92 (2nd prize, Hueckeswagen), 3/93 (1st prize Muenster-Gievenbeck) and 5/95 (3rd prize Muehlacker). The first prize scheme in Muenster is a two-storey hybrid in which the main corridor accessing the classroom clusters comes off a forum / atrium which incorporates the entrance and the access to the sports hall. In the second placed scheme in Hueckeswagen the corridor is similarly accessed from one entry point, but here the forum is attached to this space as a separate element. In the third prize scheme in Muehlacker the corridor is accessed centrally and goes off to the right and the left hand sides to access the classrooms.

Courtyard Type

The courtyard type occurred in six out of the seven competitions analysed and was used in 13 schemes in total. In seven cases it was awarded one of the first four prizes and another six schemes using the courtyard type were awarded mentions or commendations. In three out of seven competitions the first prize was a courtyard solution, published in the following issues: 6/1996 (Muenster), 8/1999 (Munich) and 10/2000 (Munich). In the Muenster competition there were two courtyard schemes in total awarded, in the 1999 Munich competition there were four and in the 2000 Munich contest six schemes were based on the courtyard type.

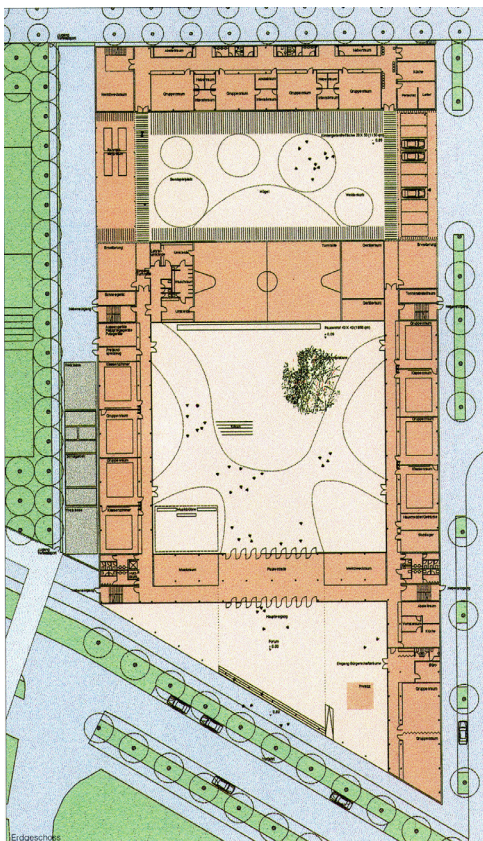


Figure 3b. Courtyard type, *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* 10/2000, Primary School Munich-Sendling.
1st prize, Architect Dr. Rudolf Hierl

The different treatments of a basic type, is evident in the three schemes winning first prizes and which were based on the courtyard type. In the two-storey Muenster scheme the courtyard (square) was surrounded by a series of classroom clusters, an interior play space and two single loaded corridors; the open courtyard was to be used as an open-air play space. In the 1999 Munich scheme (three-stories) the triangular courtyard was a covered atrium, surrounded by two wings of classrooms and other teaching spaces with kitchen and utility spaces in the third wing. The 2000 Munich contest awarded a scheme based on two courtyards (two-stories), which were separated by the central sports hall.

Conclusion

The collection *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* classifies competitions into functional categories. Within the category considered, primary schools, I have identified the use of four predominant types, two examined in detail. While it can be argued that the journal does perpetuate the use of certain basic types it is difficult to be certain whether *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* itself contributes to an intellectual debate concerning the development of type as a conscious design strategy. The boundaries between purely pragmatic, commercial competition practice and theoretical positions in architecture are not clearly defined in the journal. Helge Bofinger's suspicions that in competitions architects designers relied on the repetition and copying of established solutions in a way that was detrimental to the development of architecture, were inconclusive in the material examined.

Despite the fact that there were variations in the nature of the circulation spaces and their direct relationship to the individual classrooms all four main types were composed of either one or more single loaded corridor units. It can be assumed that the idea of the standard 50 to 60 sqm classroom and its relationship to the corridor / circulation space has remained unchallenged. Hence its repetition within the schemes of the four types identified can be seen as a constant. This implies that educational questioning of organisational possibilities was not an aspect in any of these competition schemes.

Wettbewerbe Aktuell seems to support, through its classification system and publication format, a model of design that views the entering of competitions as a logical operation based on progressive refinement, where success can be achieved with recourse to established rules. On the other hand, the use of type and transformation is inherent in the manner in which the work is presented. The courtyard solutions studied, for example, demonstrate an entirely different treatment of the type in all three cases. The fact that there was no evidence of any challenge to the established spatial principles in primary schools, is a reflection of the competition briefs set rather than of design practice.

Ironically, and to a certain degree in line with Helge Bofinger's demands for more 'progressive' designs, recent changes in the competition system - particularly the rising number of restricted and invited competitions - seem to have increasingly promoted signature buildings designed as a one-off spectacle, since the turn of the millennium. Well documented in the more recent issues of *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, this reflects a change in the nature of the publication. Whether this is a positive departure from the use and transformation of existing types in mainstream architecture, is open for discussion.

Earlier on reference was made to three approaches towards «type» and its analysis by Clark and Pause, by Purves and by Francescato. Furthermore I quoted Bandini and her positioning of Quatremère and Durand with regards to the open ambiguity of «type» in C20 architecture. WA explicitly occupies the position between «functional types» from Durand to Neufert on the one hand, and «formal types» from Quatremère via Mies van de Rohe on the other. The material studied clearly indicates that repetition of «formal types» – whether as sub-types or as whole buildings – plays an important role German competition practice in the time frame studied. Functional aspects, it seems, were considered, but perhaps not in a manner that could be considered as being dominant over or overriding formal «type» solutions.

The ambiguity between «functional» and «formal types» within the German competition system goes beyond the nature of the architectural work itself. The argument here is, that the tenets of functionalism did indeed underpin the institutionalisation of the competition system and its mechanics. It is perhaps pertinent here, to briefly look at how the German architect and sociologist Werner Durth observed particularly Ernst Neufert's role, his position towards standardisation and its impact on post-war reconstruction. Durth makes reference to Neufert's Bauentwurfslehre and how it was perceived at its publication in 1938, particularly by the German journal *Bauwelt*.⁹

Using Neufert's arguments, Bauwelt counteracts fears of a «restriction of individual freedom in design»: «But who is afraid of types (hence the word!), the regular letters in these very lines? Do we not prefer to read that which is printed or typed on a type-writer (thus types) over that which is written by hand (apart from love letters)» From the typical plan to standardised furniture, the «triumph of similar form» is being demonstrated: «When moving house, furniture that fits into a grid system makes much better use of the removal lorry; hence we only need smaller lorries.»
(Durth, p.186)

Neufert's preoccupation with «type» in the sense of standardisation and categorisation is evident from the Bauentwurfslehre. In the Ger-

9 *Mit den Argumenten Neuferts tritt auch die Bauwelt der Furcht vor einer «Einschränkung der individuellen Gestaltungsfreiheit» entgegen: «Aber hat jemand Furcht vor den Typen (daher das Wort!), den durchaus gleichmäßigen Buchstaben dieser Zeilen? Lesen wir nicht Gedrucktes oder mit der Schreibmaschine geschriebenes lieber (also Typen) also Handschriftliches (ausser etwa in Liebesbriefen)?». Vom Typengrundriß bis zu den genormten Möbeln wird der «Triumph der Gleichform» vorgeführt: «Die Rastergrößen der Möbel nutzen beim Umzug den Möbelwagen viel besser aus; also werden kleinere Wagen als bisher gebraucht.»*
Transl. T Schmiedeknecht.

man context, it is therefore perhaps also not surprising that the editor of a journal like *Wettbewerbe Aktuell* should choose an approach to the layout and organisation of the publication akin to Neufert's book. The result, as we have seen, is the employment of architectural or «formal types» by successful competition architects, within a system, which has its origins in a functionalist mode of thinking.

My initial hypothesis, when I began this study, was that there was a reciprocal relationship between the journal and architectural competitions within an institutionalised procurement system. The findings support this assumption, as it was possible to establish four predominantly reoccurring types in the primary school competitions published in the journal and subsequently analysed. It is important to note, however, that the findings refer mainly to a time in which the European Services Directive had not fully impacted on the competition system in Germany. The present situation, particularly the decline in the number of open competitions and the perceived rise in demand for signature buildings, is likely to raise a different set of questions, which, however, were not subject of this paper.

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Biographical information

Dr Torsten Schmiedeknecht
Director of Studies BA
School of Architecture
University of Liverpool
T ++44 (0)151 794 2595
E-mail: torstens@liverpool.ac.uk
www.liv.ac.uk/lisa

Torsten Schmiedeknecht is a senior lecturer at the School of Architecture, University of Liverpool, where he is currently course director of the BA in Architecture.

He is a registered architect in Germany and the UK. Recent publications as editor include *Fame and Architecture* (with Julia Chance, Wiley, 2001), *An Architect's Guide to Fame* (with Paul Davies, Architectural Press 2005), *Rationalist Traces* (with Andrew Peckham and Charles Rattray, Wiley 2007). He is currently working on an anthology titled *Rationalist Reader* with Andrew Peckham (Routledge, 2013).