

Reception of modern movement architecture of second half of the XX century in local context comparative analysis method on examples of housing estates in Izmir, Turkey and the Upper Silesia Agglomeration, Poland



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The main thesis of this study is to reveal that the reception of the Modern Movement known as “International Style” in local contexts results in differences in the form of apartment buildings and their urban layouts, among others.

Introduction – the Subject and Aim of the Study

The subject of the study is Modern architecture of the second half of the XX century, using the example of housing estates, multi-story houses, and their urban layouts. They can be considered a spectacular representation of the transformation process from traditional to modern architecture. Modernism referred to as the “International Style” created numerous variations depending on local conditions. The main thesis of this study is to reveal that the reception of the Modern Movement known commonly as the “International Style” in local contexts leads to differences in the form of apartment buildings and their urban layouts. The article aims to make visible the current problem and to give an overview of the research method and the research areas that will be developed in the subsequent stages of the study. This article consists of three main parts: the theoretical background with a general outline of the

topic, the definition of the research areas in the historical process, and the explanation of the proposed method. This method, which focuses on the analysis and comparison of housing architecture in the second half of the XX century, aims to bring a new perspective to architectural history research in a more systematic and learnable way. It will contribute to the examination of housing estates and their urban layouts as a cultural heritage that contains unlimited information on the scale of architecture and urban, not just a housing typology.

Theoretical Background of the Study

The Concept of Modern Movement Housing Estates and its Development in the World

The Modern Movement differs from earlier forms of social order in its global influence, dynamism and profound rejection of tradition and habits [1]. Dissemination of the Modern Movement has strong ties with CIAM (Congres Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne, 1928–1959) which focuses on all fields of architecture. The meaning of modern was promoted with MoMA exhibitions of “Modern Architecture” and the book “International Style: Architecture Since 1922”. From the 1920s, the modernist concept of urbanism included radical innovations in housing and urban forms. These can be seen as tendencies that lead to the emergence of different building forms from those of the past. At the CIAM 2 held in Frankfurt in 1929 and CIAM 3 held in Brussels in 1930, the issue of “Existenzminimum” (minimum dwelling) was raised, and

Walter Gropius supported alternative high-rise blocks, citing the problems of old housing models. This concept, which the CIAM group defines as the basic planning unit of a building for larger structures, is shown as one of the most significant concepts for CIAM [2–3]. As a result of the first worldwide comparative discussion on housing, the decisions taken at CIAM have been widely applied to housing estate projects around the world. This urban form with large block housing estates was formulated by Le Corbusier in the Athens Charter issued in 1943 result of CIAM 4 in 1933. This charter became the ideological basis of housing estates, emphasizing the need to improve living conditions in cities [4]. On a global scale, the general features of the housing of the period can be listed as follows: high-rise family houses dominated by large green areas. These structures have an important function, especially for low and middle-income families. The modernist representatives of the period – Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, Max Taut- produced new estates with large blocks, wide-open spaces between blocks, and designs with separated functions [5].

Modern Movement Housing Estates in Europe after World War II

After World War II, most European countries experienced a housing shortage due to the demolition of houses during the war and the slow pace of housing supply during that time. Countries tended to produce more affordable housing during this period, often in the form of social or public rental housing. Housing estates, whose origins relate to the development of Modernism, took place in the urban

settlement of almost all European countries after the Second World War [4]. Despite the cultural and socio-political differences in the post-war period, housing estates, whose production accelerated in the late 1950s, led to the radicalization of the “Modern Movement”. “Hansaviertel” which was presented at the international architecture exhibition held in West Berlin in 1957, in reaction to the social realism of East Berlin, introduced living in modern high-rise residential volumes located in large green spaces as a new exemplary lifestyle in an international and modern cityscape [6]. Before the war, while traces of individuality were seen in modern architecture, an international style developed in Europe after the war, and experiments in various parallel approaches began to be seen [7]. The desire to solve the housing problem quickly and the possibility to build standardized fast housing affected the production of housing estates on both sides of the Iron Curtain by considering urban planning strategies in parallel with CIAM doctrines. This situation led to the spread of housing estates throughout Europe, especially in the 1960s and 1970s. This created a distinction between the initiatives of the early post-war period and the standardized examples of the 1960s–1970s and similarities between countries were observed in the housing estates that dominated at that time [3].

Turkey (Izmir) and Poland (Upper Silesia Agglomeration) as Research Areas

To analyze the architectural heritage of the housing estates in two different areas with the comparative research method, it is very important to follow the clues that lie in the background of these areas in the historical process. The housing estates built in European cities after the Second World War, are also common housing typology in the selected areas and constitute an important form of the urban settlement area.

Before World War II – In Poland (Upper Silesia) some Silesian cities – Gliwice, Bytom, Zabrze, etc. – belonged to German territories and there was a homogeneous and intense development of the distinctive architectural structure of the housing estates built under certain political, social, and economic conditions in the 1920s–1930s, while the other part of Upper Silesia – Silesian Voivodeship with Katowice as a capital city – became a part of the Polish Republic revived after the First World War [8]. On the other hand, in Turkey (Izmir) the period 1920–1946 is defined as a radical modernization period on a local scale. After the establishment of Turkish Republic in 1923 the modernization process, at the scale of housing and settlement for the new state, was housing estates, cooperatives, public housing adopted from the West [9]. In the 1930s, “cooperative housing

associations”, “housing estates” and “rental houses” began to be produced and supported by the state to meet the housing needs of workers and civil servants forming the lower-middle-income group [10].

After World War II – when the state borders had been moved – the Upper Silesia region became part of the Polish People’s Republic. The shape of residential architecture clearly reflected new political trends, economic developments, and social relations. While artistic trends in architecture continued in the first post-war years, socialist realism was far from functionalism and the „national in form and socialist in content” slogan was adopted from 1950 to 1956. During the 1957–1960 political thaw period, architects turned to buildings designed in a modern form. From the second half of the 1960s, the dominance of concrete block sites began [11]. In short, in the 1945–1960 period, housing estates were in the form of blocks of flats or rental houses built using traditional construction methods. In the 1961–1989 period, residential construction was done using industrial methods. In 1989, the Polish government approved a strict housing policy in urban planning standards [12]. In Turkey (Izmir) the period 1945–1980 is defined as a period of populist modernization with the influence of universal modernization and industrialization, and when the increasing population became insufficient for the housing need, transformations occurred in housing and settlement patterns. There has been an increase in housing estate projects and housing cooperatives in Izmir with the laws enacted during this period and the support of the state. The 1965 Flat Property Law legalized individual ownership of the units within an apartment block and encouraged the construction of apartments in residential areas of large cities until 1980 [10].

The current housing estate situation in both selected areas (Izmir and the Upper Silesia Agglomeration) is quite diverse and has been mainly influenced by both the political and economic transformations that have occurred throughout the process and redefined social needs. In the housing estates in both areas, modern aesthetics, simple forms, and functionality were at the forefront, and they acted as a tool for improving living conditions (fig. 1.).

A Proposed Comparative Method for the Research

The proposed method is based on the following steps to be able to develop an evaluation and comparison guide proposal for selected samples:

Research Example Selection – The study deals with the examples of modern movement housing estates and their urban layouts from the Upper Silesia Agglomeration, Poland and Izmir, Turkey that were built in the second half of the XX century (the period 1945–1990)

as architectural heritage. The selected time range was identified to include important periods for both Poland and Turkey’s housing architecture – the periods of rapid development and modernization. The areas indicated for comparative research are selected from industrial and high-density regions of two different countries. Moreover, it can be said that the scale and size of the agglomeration and function of the areas also show similarities in the initial assumptions. On the other hand, there are differences in the historical, political, and cultural backgrounds of the two areas. The background and development of the Modern Movement are shaped by these differences in local conditions. While retaining the preliminary assumptions, the crucial differences allow us for further in-depth research and comparative analysis.

According to this method, selected housing estates from two regions, reflecting both international architectural languages and local modernism, will be examined at urban and architectural scales. The analysis of urban and architectural scales is significant to compare the local dynamics that play a role in modernism and reveal the relationships – similarities and differences – between local interpretations.

Urban Scales Analyses – This includes the features that form the urban fabric and affects the silhouette of the city (urban layout, location in the city, residential patterns, the density of estates, transportation systems such as roads, pedestrian roads, etc., character and natural features of the surrounding area, topography, landscape features, the relationship between estates and green spaces, etc.)

Architectural Scales Analyses – Architectural approach reflects the period by shape, form, scale and proportion of buildings, plan layouts, articulation of façades, details, materials, innovations, and technological developments, etc.).

Intangible Values Assessment – Considering the housing architecture in the formation of Modern architecture, we can say that housing estates and their urban layouts reveal different – and vital – roles+ in shaping modern consciousness. After analyzing the housing estates and their urban settlements in the selected areas, this stage includes social aspects of final valorization through architectural and urban features’ deductions. These housing estates, which document the past of the societies they belong to and, at the same time ensure their continuity, characterize the cities with their local context, lifestyle, aesthetic approach, and social, cultural, historical features. Thus, they shape the identity of the urban space. To ensure the continuity of these housing typologies and integrate it with today’s conditions, it is necessary to consider, examine and maintain all subjective and objective values holistically.





Fig. 1. İzmir and Upper Silesia Agglomeration housing estates examples between the period of 1945–1989: (a) Milenium Estate, Katowice (photo: Iwona Wander), (b) Rozdzińskiego Estate, Katowice (photo: Iwona Wander), (c) Bostanlı Emlak Bankası Estate, İzmir (photo: Gizem Guler-Nakip), (d) Egekent-1 Estate, İzmir (photo: Gizem Guler-Nakip)

Although the selected areas may differ in terms of their historical/political/social/cultural/economic background, construction year, scale, or climatic condition, these distinguishing features will be revealed through architectural and urban analyses and will be supported by intangible values assessment. This method will allow the identification of some important values.

- (1) The analysis and comparison of the selected examples will reveal the importance of these structures in the city and will raise awareness of the urban context.
- (2) The selected housing estates in Izmir and the Upper Silesia Agglomeration will become more visible and accessible through the proposed method, and this will contribute to the continuity of the city and the history of architecture.
- (3) This method will extend the information on the subject and will enable written and visual documentation of houses and the data is permanently brought to the literature.

The following were selected as examples for pilot studies aimed at the verification of the research method: from the Upper Silesia Agglomeration: Millennium Estate and Rozdzińskiego Estate, Katowice; from Izmir: Bostanlı Emlak Bankası Estate and Egekent-1 Estate.

Concluding Remarks

The comparative research of the examples in different cities built with a modern understanding will enable the interpretation of the heritage as a palimpsest of influences, historical and political conditions, architectural and urban planning, and social policy and design culture. The outline of the method presented in the paper is an introduction to a comparative approach to XX century housing architecture that will be developed in further research. It also contributes to the rethinking of the architectural heritage. With the application of this proposed method, the modernism period of the universal and local architectural history can be read comparatively through housing architecture, which includes information about the society, region, period, lifestyle, social/cultural/political/economic values, and architectural approaches. All comparative inferences about housing estates and their urban layouts will present traces of local modernism and strengthen the discussions in the international context. The result is enriching the knowledge of the architectural heritage of XX century modernism by evaluating housing architecture in the context of cultural heritage. While proving the potential and complexity of modernist housing estates, it is inevitable that similarities and differences will emerge in urban forms connected to the local and radical Modern. The proposed comparative method

will evaluate the housing architecture in terms of analyzing cultural heritage and will enable it to be systematized for further studies. It is thought that this proposed method can be examined by adapting it to different area/city comparisons, different typologies, and different time periods.

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DOI: 10.5604/01.3001.0015.9580

PRAWIDŁOWY SPOSÓB CYTOWANIA

Żmudzińska-Nowak Magdalena, Güler Nakip Gizem, 2022, Reception of Modern Movement Architecture of the second half of the XX century in local contexts. Comparative analysis method on examples of housing estates in Izmir, Turkey and the Upper Silesia Agglomeration, Poland, „Builder” 9 (302). DOI: 10.5604/01.3001.0015.9580

Abstract: Housing architecture – multi-storey houses, housing estates, and their urban layouts – of the second half of the XX century is a spectacular representation of the transformation process from traditional to modern architecture. Modernism, referred to as the “International Style”, created numerous variations depending on local conditions. The main thesis of this study is to reveal that the reception of the Modern Movement known as “International Style” in local contexts results in differences in the form of apartment buildings and their urban layouts, among others. We study this phenomenon by examining and comparing examples of housing estates. The effects of global Modernism in the local context will be compared with selected exam-

ples from Izmir, Turkey and the Upper Silesia Agglomeration, Poland in the second half of the XX century. Analyzing how two different regions adopted modernism under different conditions, their differences and similarities, are an important point of the research problem. The main goal of this article is to present the scientific problem of the study and the methodological approach for further in-depth studies on selected examples. It is advocated that the comparative research method to be applied to local modernism is a convenient approach for understanding the transformation of housing and settlement patterns.

Keywords: architectural heritage, Modern Movement architecture, housing estates, comparative analysis

Streszczenie: RECEPCJA MODERNIZMU W ARCHITEKTURZE DRUGIEJ POŁOWY XX WIEKU W LOKALNYCH KONTEKSTACH. METODA ANALIZY PORÓWNAWCZEJ NA PRZYKŁADZIE ZABUDOWY MIESZKANIOWEJ W IZMIRZE I AGLOMERACJI GÓRNOŚLĄSKIEJ. Architektura mieszkaniowa drugiej połowy XX wieku i jej rozwój stanowi spektakularną ilustrację procesu transformacji od architektury tradycyjnej do nowoczesnej. Modernizm, zwany „stylem międzynarodowym”, stworzył wiele odmian w zależności od lokalnych uwarunkowań. Główną tezę badawczą niniejszego

opracowania jest wykazanie, że recepcja i adaptacja Modernizmu zwanego „stylem międzynarodowym” w kontekstach lokalnych skutkuje różnicami m.in. w formie budynków mieszkalnych i ich układach urbanistycznych. Proces zostanie zbadany poprzez porównanie wybranych przykładów osiedli z drugiej połowy XX wieku, z terenu Izmiru w Turcji oraz z Aglomeracji Górnośląskiej w aspekcie zgodności z wytycznymi modernizmu oraz lokalnych różnic. Głównym celem artykułu jest przedstawienie problemu oraz zarysu metody analizy porównawczej, która będzie rozwijana w toku dalszych pogłębiających badań na wybranych przykładach.

Słowa kluczowe: dziedzictwo architektury, architektura modernistyczna, osiedla mieszkaniowe, analiza porównawcza

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