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Searching for Forms of Decentralized City Development: Silesian Early Modernist Housing Estates in the Weimar Republic (1919–1929)

Poszukiwanie form zdecentralizowanego rozwoju miast. Wczesnomodernistyczne śląskie osiedla mieszkaniowe Republiki Weimarskiej (1919–1929)

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Introduction

In the early twentieth century, along with many European regions, Silesia witnessed intensive growth in new structural development as part of a new regime of spatial urban planning. This growth was noticeable due to the competitions that were held for plans to expand the urban layouts of areas such as Gross Waldenburg or Gross Breslau, as well as in numerous other Silesian cities. The province has a slightly different architectural heritage than the rest of Germany, and research has revealed that in many areas avant-garde urban solutions began to appear.

Housing estates can be classified as a special type of urban form, and although it was established earlier, at the start of the twentieth century they took on a defined character with specific ways of functioning within a city's structure. The concept of a housing estate emerges in opposition to the idea of discontinuous development of the city spontaneous and often unplanned growth. When urban theories relating to the

structures of settlements developed in the late 1920s, all classified forms had already been tested in practice.

Many planners themselves wrote about the early modernist housing estates in Silesia (e.g., E. May, T. Effenberger). In the 1990s, the Breslau¹ settlements came to the attention of urban settlement historians and historians of architecture.² The revived interest may have been sparked by earlier studies from the time of the Weimar Republic, which were devoted to the settlements in Berlin and Frankfurt am Main as well as by a general progressive fascination for the architecture of the modernist period. Over the course of thirty years, numerous detailed studies were published in articles and encyclopedic publications.³ Analyses of some modernist housing estates of this period appear in monographs on architecture of Lower Silesian cities (e.g., Liegnitz [Eysymontt 1998, p. 388–405]). There are also publications on housing estate complexes in particular cities [Ludwig 2010; Ludwig 2021; Ostrowska-Bies 2021, p. 62–71]. selected aspects of pre-war Modernism (mainly in Breslau [Urbanik 2013a,

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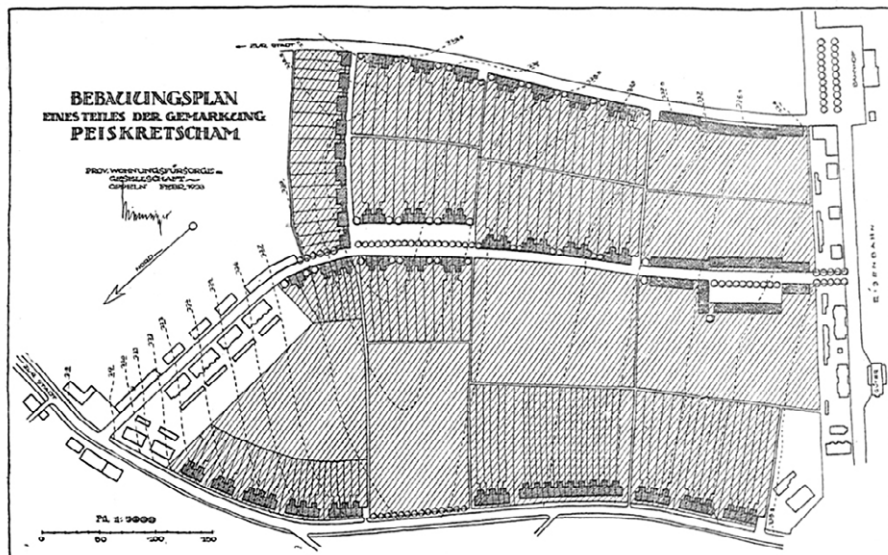


Fig. 1. Streusiedlung Peiskretscham, project, 1923; source: R. Niemeyer, *Besiedlung in Oberschlesien*, "Schlesisches Heim" 1923, No. 8–9, p. 189.
 Ryc. 1. Projekt Streusiedlung Peiskretscham, 1923; źródło: R. Niemeyer, *Besiedlung in Oberschlesien*, „Schlesisches Heim” 1923, nr 8–9, s. 189.

p. 303–313; Urbanik 2013b, p. 376–385; Urbanik 2020, p. 243–255], but also in Upper Silesia [Architektura modernistyczna 2002]) or monographs of architects [Nielsen 1999]. There are however, no general reviews analyzing particular examples from the whole region.

Housing estates in the structure of cities

The growing population of cities and a need for new housing for citizens became burning problems as early as the nineteenth century. Among the new ideas were: polycentric city planning, separation of new buildings by greenery belts, and zoning of urban buildings. Using Berlin's example, eminent architects tried to solve the problems of the development of the metropolitan city. Hermann Jansen, in his award-winning project, proposed to plan the city based on a coherent transport framework with functional zones, including greenery and residential districts. Another attempt to respond to the housing problems of big cities was Howard's idea of a garden city. Max Berg proposed to place residential districts away from the city center. In 1911, Berg proposed another variant for Breslau's satellites [Kononowicz 1997, p. 19; *Der Verband* 1911]. The center was to be surrounded by two rings of housing estates: an inner one, close to the suburbs, and an outer one created by new suburban towns, e.g., Zobten [Berg 1912, p. 497–501]. The former was planned with more intensive development similar to the quarter form, the latter was to have an extensive character with detached houses in gardens. This concept of a satellite city was also devised by Ernst May. He presented it comprehensively in a 1925 competition project for Breslau, and the idea formed the basis of his entire architectural activity in Silesia [May 1920a, 1920b]. A peculiar novelty was the

idea of planning a housing estate combining both an urban layout with rural architectural forms.

In time, inter-war settlements were classified into three types: terraced housing (*Reihenhäuser Siedlung*), flat housing (*Flachbausiedlung*) and the small housing estate, which later became known as the small suburban housing estate (*Vorstadtische Kleinsiedlung*) [Wasmuth *Lexikon* 1932, p. 156, 375–389; 1930, p. 481; Guttler 2002; Stark 1999; Brunnert-Bastian 1985]. The terraced housing estate was built with a height of up to three stories with an attic located in the frontage along the streets, constituting a modification of quarter development. Initially, they were given a strip arrangement, with plans referring to classicistic layouts with sets of roundabouts or more often urban crescents, and finally towards the end of 1920s strictly geometric ruled plans. In flat housing estates, low buildings were erected (up to two stories with an attic, or with higher peripheral buildings from the main streets). For small suburban housing estates, single-family houses with gardens were built even more loosely. Among these, the least intensive development were housing estates with semi-agricultural plots of land as a form of a non-urban settlement (*Stadttransiedlung*) developed during the Great Depression.

Suburban housing estates

Following the First World War, the takeover of power in Germany by the Social Democrats resulted in efforts to improve the working conditions of employees. The housing construction program became an equally important element of the government's social policy. The concept of housing development achieved by creating small residential areas with home gardens, that was promoted in



Fig. 2. *Stadt-parksiedlung* by Waldenburg in the 1920s; source: Muzeum w Wałbrzychu 3074.

Ryc. 2. *Stadt-parksiedlung* koło Waldenburga w latach dwudziestych XX w.; źródło: Muzeum w Wałbrzychu 3074.

Germany by Herman Muthesius [1918], actually falls in line with the ideas developed earlier in Silesia.

In 1919, *Schlesische Heimstätte* [Pauly 1928, p. 1; May 1920a, p. 1, 7; Effenberger 1926b, p. 9] was founded its aim was to build cheap, small houses for workers and minor officials in suburban settlements. First, attempts were made to solve the problems of the most overpopulated agglomerations with terrible housing conditions in Waldenburg and Breslau. Over time, *Schlesische Heimstätte* dominated the market of suburban housing construction. It operated in twenty-two urban districts and cooperated with municipal administrations, local companies and associations. It built agricultural estates, semi-farming estates on the outskirts of towns, and worker housing estates next to mines and industrial plants or railways. Small housing estates were also included in the development of the cities. After losing the plebiscite in Upper Silesia, the company also actively participated in the construction of settlements for displaced persons in the border area. Then *Oberschlesische Heimstätte* took over in 1925 [Niemeyer 1923a, p. 38]. The number of housing estates in Upper Silesia was higher than that in Lower Silesia: in ten years, 54,000 flats were built in the former. The largest number of new housing complexes were built in the region of the Upper Silesian agglomeration in Gleiwitz, Hindenburg, and Beuthen [Müller 1930, p. 113; Gobbin 1930, p. 116–123; Effenberger 1926b, p. 21].

Initially, it was May who, on his own, developed the urban vision of housing estates and architectural forms. The smallest street and chain villages in Juliusburg, Lässig, Dyhernfurth, Jordansmühle, in the area of Breslau—Klettendorf, Hartlieb, Waldenburg—Russendorf and Nieder Salzbrunn, and Landek, Langbielau, Warmbrunn or Bernstadt and the estate for the after-plebiscite resettlers in Laband and Falkenberg

were shaped with a street layout (*Strassensiedlung*) [May 1920c, p. 11–13; *Enteignungssache Dyhernfurth* 1923–1926, 82/172/0/1.24/12754, p. 12–150; *Schlesisches Heimstätte* 1922–25, 82/172/0/1.24/16482, p. 23, 41, 104; “*Schlesisches Heim*” no. 1 1922, p. 2–3 (fig.); May 1922b, p. 12; May 1922c, p. 235–238; Ludwig 2010, p. 357–366; May 1923b, p. 108–109; Kriger 1924, p. 400; “*Schlesisches Heim*” no.1 1924, p. 2]. Slightly larger complexes with multi-family buildings with a similar street layout were built at Sandberg in Salzbrunn, in the expansion of Gottesberg, along newly delineated streets, usually along a gentle arch in Haynau, Nimptsch, Obernick and Trebnitz, or with serpentine roads on a slope, as with two housing estates in Dittersbach by Waldenburg [Ludwig 2010, p. 268–312; May 1921b, p. 8; *Schlesisches Heimstätte* 1922–25, 82/172/0/1.24/16482, p. 69 et al.; May 1921c, p. 349–355; May 1922b, p. 12; May 1923a, p. 82].

Another type was an imitation of the oval village, concentrated around the green square (*Angersiedlung*). The smallest of which only contained a few houses (Schwarzbach by Hirschberg, Stabelwitz and Deutsch Lissa) [May 1920a, p. 8; May 1920c, p.11–13; May 1921a, p. 99–100; *Enteignungssache Deutsch Lissa* 1919–24, 82/172/0/1.16/12753, p. 38, 210]. The square would take on the characteristics of the village of this region—a square with a pond (Mollwitz). This is how some settlements on the outskirts of towns (Frankenstein and Neustadt) and estates for those resettled from the Polish part of Upper Silesia in Mathesdorf and near Cosel [May 1924, p. 406; “*Schlesisches Heim*” 1925, No. 1, no p.; Niemeyer 1923b, p. 188], were laid out. Another interesting example of this type is the housing estate in Cawallen, which was designed with the use of innovative architectural ideas.

The largest housing estates were to be created in the *Streusiedlung* systems: complexes stretching over large



Fig. 3. The Oppeln housing estate, 1920–25; source: K. Maurer, F. Kaminsky, *Oppeln, Deutschlands Städtebau*, Berlin 1926, p. 69. Ryc. 3. Osiedle Oppeln, 1920–25; źródło: K. Maurer, F. Kaminsky, *Oppeln, Deutschlands Städtebau*, Berlin 1926, s. 69.

areas designed for several hundred residents. In most cases, apart from the settlement of agricultural workers in Goldschmieden, these were peripheral settlements of developing urban centers, such as: Stadparksiedlung in Waldenburg, Mitteldorf by Neisse, near Brieg [Ludwig 2010, p. 280–290; May 1921b; *Kleinsiedlung*, 45/1242/0/25.11/10605, 45/1242/0/25.11/10741, 45/1242/0/25.11/10578–97, 45/1242/0/25.11/10720]. This was also the model for the expansion of border towns, which were to include housing estates for displaced persons, such as the Siedlung Gleiwitz Süd and Nord, Peiskretscham and Hindenburg Süd [Niemeyer 1923c, p. 181, 189; Effenberger 1926b, p. 19; “Schlesisches Heim” 1924, No. 10, p. 3]. Similar suburban settlements were also designed by architects commissioned by local building companies, such as Jansen, who designed the housing estates of expanding Namslau, Brieg and Militsch [Jansen 1928, 21475, 21476, 1919, 23497; *Kleinsiedlung* 45/1242/0/25.11/10605, 45/1242/0/25.11/10741; Eysymontt 2017, p. 21] or Theo Effenberger, who designed those of Schmiedeberg and Ohlau [Effenberger 1919, IV/465, 1924, 82/172/0/5.4/IV/813], as well as by local architects, e.g., in Liegnitz: Gross Beckern and Töpferberg [Eysymontt 1998, p. 388–405].

In most cases, the urban planning concept for all types of housing estates was based on using the advantages of the terrain and the original road network. The characteristic picturesque feature was achieved by inserting small urban interiors such as squares and street bends. The systems of the largest complexes were usually shaped as closed, with a centripetal or symmetrical composition, based on the delimitation of the settlement center, in the form of an elongated square with greenery, with an analogy to the layout of oval villages. Of similar importance were squares or widened streets distinguished in the street layout of housing estates (Oltaschin by Breslau, next to the textile factory in Reichenbach, in later settlements in Landeshut,

Pitschen, Bunzlau, the triangular squares in Nimptsch and Neurode) [*Schlesisches Heimstätte* 1922–25, 82/172/0/1.24/16482; May 1922b, p. 12; May 1922a, p. 3; May 1924, p. 409; “Schlesisches Heim” 1924, No. 3, cover; Schroeder 1926, p. 408]. In Stadparksiedlung, the introduction of a square created a hierarchy of space and gave discreteness to the complex. The housing estate streets were laid out along gentle curves. A specific variant of the simplest street urban layout was the use of enclosures attached to the framework of the main street and modelled on English concepts [Unwin 1909, p. 228 et seq.], imitating in a landscape farm buildings (Sandberg, Goldschmieden). The architecture of the buildings was also based on the rural tradition (Schlesische Baude, Niederschlesisches Bauerhaus, Oberschlesisches Fachwerkhäus). Contrary to Muthesius’ recommendations, numerous locations opted for a typification of buildings. The suburban housing estates of the post-First World War period—thanks to the limited height of buildings, the presence of public greenery, and home gardens—were inscribed in the natural landscape, and by a peculiar imitation of the appearance of the Silesian village, they constituted a specific continuation of the cultural landscape of rural areas.

Row housing estates—new type of urban development

Settlements in the inner-city zone were planned differently. Initially, an attempt was made to combine the new ideas implemented in the design of housing estates with the principles of shaping quarter buildings. However, a truly modernist solution for a large residential area was the use of striped compositions, initially modifying the quarter arrangements, then departing from them in favor of rows of free-standing blocks divided by stripes of greenery. Such initially single-family housing projects (Reihenhäuser Siedlung) and later ones—as the developments were intensified and evolved into



Fig. 4. Entzmannstrasse, Neisse, 2012; photo by B. Ludwig.
Ryc. 4. Entzmannstrasse, Nysa, 2012; fot. B. Ludwig.

multi-family houses—were inspired by the English heritage. Among the English city houses described by Muthesius [1904, p. 60], single-family terraced houses were the most characteristic solution. The idea was received enthusiastically, and terraced houses were incorporated into the development of garden housing estates (e.g., Hellerau 1909). They appeared in the expansion of the Ruhr area (the Margarethenhöhe garden housing estate 1910), and then in the form of multi-family housing in Berlin (Tempelhofer Feld and Schöneberg).

Jansen's first project in Lower Silesia in Schweidnitz Siedlung an der Haupt- und Bögendorferstrasse (1919) [Effenberger 1926b, p. 64–65; Kühn 1929, p. 45–46], was one of the architect's design experiences in the development of the concept of a strip housing estate, which was enriched with a form straight from the urban planning of historicism—a crescent plan. This element of urban composition was already used in the design of the garden town (Bruno Taut, Falkenberg 1912), and the terraced housing estates (R. Eberstadt and H. Muthesius, Hermsdorf by Berlin 1918), and was made famous in a latter modernist horseshoe-shaped version (Taut, Britz 1925).

Another complex was commissioned by the municipality in 1920 by Jansen for Waldenburg. The Hartebusch Siedlung, consisting of multi-family and semi-detached houses, retained a more ruled layout [Ludwig 2010, p. 247–264]. It was designed on an exceptionally steep slope, based on a system of parallel streets forming extended quarters and contained a green square in the middle in the form of a long strip. On the main streets of the complex, composition nodes were regularly placed in the form of squares and terraces connected with the largest three-story multi-family houses. In a skillful way, the groups of typical buildings were used, diversified by single objects individually designed or combined into twin arrangements. The layout contributed to the spread of the concept of strip housing estates in Silesia [Landsberg 1926, p. 406–408].

Some of the largest complexes of this kind were created in Oppeln, forming the skeleton of the downtown district. The railway housing estate at Moltkestrasse, the housing estate at Vogtstrasse and the housing estate behind the Brandenburg Gate (Ostvorstadtsiedlung) are among the few completed planned housing development and public utility buildings outside of Breslau [Effenberger 1926b, p. 32; Maurer, Kaminsky 1926, p. 23–24, 64–69; Grossart 1926, p. 97–104]. They shaped the main elements of the composition of these complexes, and the accompanying frontage of the residential buildings were enriched with risalits and decorative gates. The estate in Neustadt in Neisse, with its characteristic building of the so-called Neustädt Gate (1920–22) is equally interesting in terms of its architecture [Neisse 1930, p. 19–35; Meyers 1925, p. 35–45; Effenberger 1926b, p. 37]. The urban planning project took advantage of green areas through the so-called open development of detached and semi-detached houses. Apart from this, two and three-story multi-family houses were planned.

In Tschepin in Breslau, two similar housing estates were built with modern architectural buildings (Westend and Viehweide by Effenberger, 1925–29). The estate was built on the basis of nineteenth century urban quarter planning and picturesque cadastral plans from the early twentieth century, although it was a modern layout based on expressionist and modernist forms (H. Lauterbach and P. and R. Ehrlich) [Effenberger 1927, MA-AB-84F]. Eventually, on an area limited by a curved railway line, a layout was created with large courtyards and green squares located along streets running along gentle arches. The buildings were lowered to three stories and covered with both pitched and flat roofs.

In late 1920s, long frontages of buildings were increasingly rejected in favor of 'blocks' arranged along streets (Reichenbach's Sadebecksiedlung 1925 and Lagenbielauerstrasse 1929; Polizeisiedlung Kriatern in Breslau 1927) [Reichenbach 1935, p. 309–313;

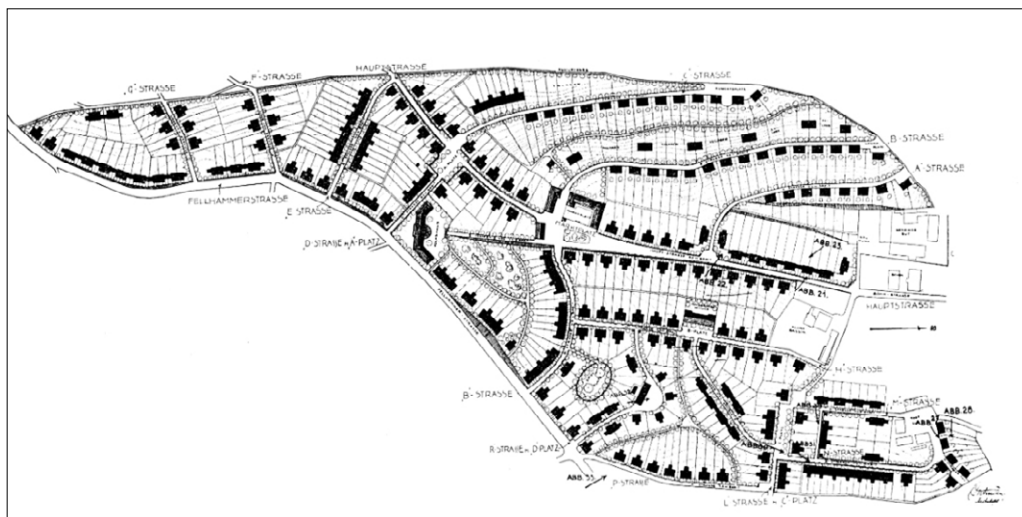


Fig. 5. E. Pietrusky, project for Hermsdorf, 1925; source: T. Effenberger, *Siedlung und Stadtplanung in Schlesien*, vol. 2, Breslau 1926, p. 68. Ryc. 5. E. Pietrusky, project dla Hermsdorfu, 1925; źródło: T. Effenberger, *Siedlung und Stadtplanung in Schlesien*, t. 2, Breslau 1926, s. 68.

Schlesinger 1929, 82/547/0/1/1/331; *Schlesische Heimstätte Provinz* 1940, p. 11]. In the block arrangements the expansion of the suburbs, which started before the twentieth century, and new districts of most large cities, were supplemented with the implementation of the previous regulatory plans through the 1920s (Breslau: Hedwig-, Piasten- and Sternstrasse, Oranienstrasse, Opateln: Friedrichsplatz, Glogau: Güter- and Herrndorferstrasse).

The design of simple architectural forms outside and inside the houses was able to guarantee functionality and cost-effectiveness while maintaining a high aesthetic level. The solution was to introduce, apart from the buildings, typical objects individually designed at the main squares (e.g., in the house in Hartebusch Siedlung with monumental sculptural decoration), at nodes, or at entrance points (e.g., Neustädt Gate in Neisse). In the case of large, prestigious urban areas, it was decided to design many buildings individually. Carefully thought-out facade compositions were used to differentiate the buildings depending on their location. The corners of the quarters (Tschepin) were shaped with exceptional attention. Sculptural decorations were also frequently introduced, most often distinguishing particular entrances (in Waldenburg-Neustad, Eisenbahn Beamten Wohnhauser in Oels, Eichborngarten in Breslau or the housing estate at Jahnstrasse in Hirshberg).

Flachbausiedlung

The solution of the so-called Flachbausiedlung has become a specific combination of the two earlier concepts of shaping housing estates. These were to be suburban settlements with slightly higher development intensity than peripheral housing estates. They benefited both from urban planning arrangements referring to the layout of villages and towns, characteristic of Kliensied-

lungs, and from ideas for transforming typically central urban quarter buildings typical of terraced housing estates.

Shortly after the war, three large settlements were established on the outskirts of Breslau: Pöpelwitz (1919–27), Zimpel (1919–35) and Eichborngarten (1919–26) [Hahm, Klette 1929, p. X–XV, 7–18, 23–26; Heim, Kempter 1920, p. 241–242; “Ostdeutsche Bauzeitung Abbildungen” 1920, p. 83–90; Effenberger 1926a, p. 26–42; Effenberger 1921, MAT-AB-83286]. Zimpel and Eichborngarten were planned as typical flat housing estates with low buildings. The Pöpelwitz housing estate also received slightly higher buildings four- and five-story—of a metropolitan character from the side of the streets closest to the city, creating a curtain for the lower buildings elsewhere. Both Effenberger, who designed the Pöpelwitz estate, and Paul Heim in the Eichborngarten estate, based their urban solutions on the latest trends in urban planning. The initial design concepts for these large residential complexes were still created in the spirit of garden housing estates, but partially transformed into green modernist strip housing estates. These were housing estates with two-story buildings, surrounded by greenery, stretching along the long pedestrian streets leading along the extensive arches. Higher buildings were located on the outskirts from the side of the main communication routes, gradually lowering them in the depths of the layout. There were quite clearly distinguishable complexes, especially in the Pöpelwitz housing estate: from the urban development of Boberplatz, to small houses with their own gardens typical of a small town or a village. Similarly, in the Eichborngarten housing estate, the frontage from the side of Kürassierstrasse had three- and four-story row buildings with high roofs, brick elevations and oriels dividing the whole elevation. The largest of the Breslau housing estates of the inter-war period, Zimpel, was designed by Hermann Wählich and Paul Heim.

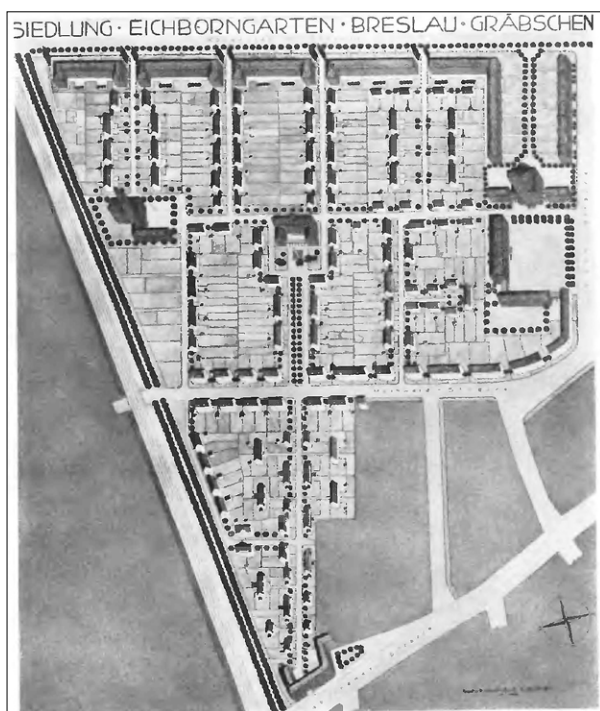


Fig. 6. T. Effenberger, plan of the Pöpelwitz district, Breslau, 1919–27; source: T. Effenberger, *Siedlung und Stadtplanung in Schlesien*, vol. 1, Breslau 1926, p. 26.

Ryc. 6. T. Effenberger, plan dzielnicy Pöpelwitz, Breslau, 1919–27; źródło: T. Effenberger, *Siedlung und Stadtplanung in Schlesien*, t. 1, Breslau 1926, s. 26.

The estate was planned in the shape of a rectangle, ending on the short side with a rounded part. This is an axial layout, where the center is located an elongated green square and the most important representative buildings. Along the greenery run two main streets, forming an urban skeleton. From them, perpendicularly to the roads surrounding the whole complex, there are streets with residential buildings. They form a comb arrangement in the rectangular part and a radial arrangement in the rounded eastern part. The estate has a picturesque character, thanks to the large amount of greenery. Characteristic architectural solutions were also introduced, such as a rhomboidal courtyard with a gate to the estate and a lenticular square surrounded by compact buildings. The development of the entire housing estate is of equal height, two-story with a high roof. However, what stands out is the fact that in formal terms the complexes are not homogeneous, they differ in the forms of buildings, details, and the shape of particular groups of objects.

A similar large flat estate with a picturesque composition was built in the Waldenburg agglomeration in Hermsdorf (1921–37). Ernst Pietrusky [*Schlesischer* 1919, p. 19; *Protokoll* 1920, p. 14; Effenberger 1926b, p. 8, 68, 111] based his concept on a very strict mapping of the terrain of the streets running along irregular contour lines. The estate was planned as a closed system, with a composition based on emphasizing the main axis, connecting the nineteenth century orphanage with a folk house designed at the southern end of



Fig. 7. P. Heim, Plan of the Eichborngarten housing estate, Breslau, 1919–26; source: T. Effenberger, *Siedlung und Stadtplanung in Schlesien*, vol. 1, Breslau 1926, p. 36.

Ryc. 7. P. Heim, plan osiedla Eichborngarten, Breslau, 1919–26; źródło: T. Effenberger, *Siedlung und Stadtplanung in Schlesien*, t. 1, Breslau 1926, s. 36.

the estate on a hill, to which a string of stairs in greenery would lead [Pietrusky 1925, p. 379 et seq.]. The arrangement was diversified by squares of various sizes and shapes, where service facilities were planned: kindergartens, schools, and shops. The architect designed for the estate a series of one-story semi-detached build-



Fig. 8. P. Heim and A. Kempter, bordering development in the Eichborngarten housing estate, Breslau, 2019; photo A. Lisowska. Ryc. 8. P. Heim i A. Kempter, zabudowa sąsiadująca na osiedlu Eichborngarten, Breslau, 2019; fot. A. Lisowska.

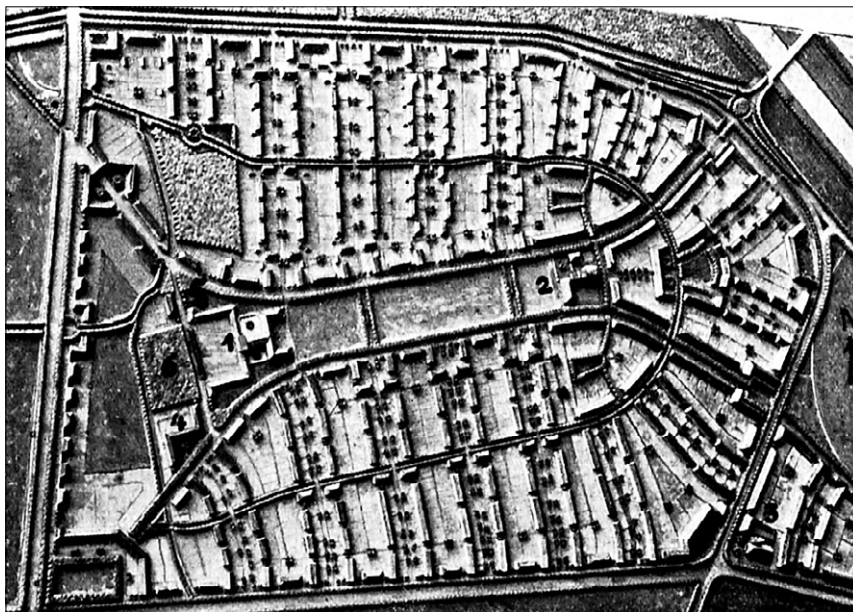


Fig. 9. Siedlung Zimpel, Breslau, 1926, model of the housing estate; source: Heim Paul, *Die öffentlichen Gebäude der Siedlung Zimpel*, „Schlesische Monatshefte“ 1927, No. 6, p. 259.

Ryc. 9. Siedlung Zimpel, Breslau, 1926, model osiedla; source: P. Heim, *Die öffentlichen Gebäude der Siedlung Zimpel*, „Schlesische Monatshefte“ 1927, nr. 6, s. 259.

ings with residential attics, according to three solutions of projections selected for the street drop [Pietrusky et al. 1922–1935, 84/567/0/1.11/545–552].

Flat housing estates from the 1920s were designed using various forms of composition of street arrangements and building sequences. However, the designs were always based on a plan of a closed ensemble surrounded by peripheral higher buildings constituting a curtain, after which the buildings became lower with a less dense spatial plan. The center often consisted of green squares and public utility buildings shaping the heart of the layout. In Zimpel, the main axis of composition runs from the school through the green square to the church. Similarly, in the Pöpelwitz, the center of the housing estate was a green square, where the school

and the church were located. In the Westend estate, the central point was to be the school. A green strip forming the spinal column of the layout was planned for the housing estate in Görlitz. In this way, the idea of creating an independent, autonomously functioning district providing healthy and beautiful living conditions for all social groups was realized. Such solutions were possible thanks to well-thought-out urban concepts, with detailed arrangements of public spaces, the introduction of a large amount of public housing and private greenery, a careful design of monumental and residential architecture, and the implementation of modern and cheap technological solutions.

Conclusion

Housing estates were a response to the recommendations of decentralized urban development theory. One of the theory's main supporters in Germany, May, initially developed his activity in Silesia. Instead of the quarter districts that were described in regulation plans, with strictly defined building lines and unified heights, completely different complexes with less dense developments associated with rural systems were to be created. The first concepts of housing estates in Lower Silesia were connected with the post-Secession landscape trend. May and collaborators clearly emphasized the heritage of rural structure and architecture in the design of the first housing estates built after the First World War. The idea was also to provide each family with a house. A single-family detached house was included in Muthesius' housing requirements, a thought May built on. Yet, this goal quickly proved to



Fig. 10. P. Heim and A. Kempster, *Siedlung Zimpel, Breslau, 1925, 2019*; photo by A. Lisowska.

Ryc. 10. P. Heim i A. Kempster, *Siedlung Zimpel, Breslau, 1925, 2019*; fot. A. Lisowska.

be unfeasible and the search for intermediate solutions, such as the use of semi-detached and terraced buildings, began. Small housing estates could respond to the housing needs of agricultural workers and industrial workers scattered throughout the region, especially miners in the Waldenburg and Neurode districts, and those exceptionally peripheral from new urban factories, e.g., textile factories in Reichenbach. They could be a solution for the development of small towns and villages or for transforming communes. However, the new housing estates did not directly solve the problem of overcrowded cities.

Other solutions were sought to complement urban planning and development on the immediate outskirts of towns. Due to land limitations, it was necessary to think about more intensive development. Although architects were still guided by the idea of building single-family houses, the focus instead became on the terraced houses promoted by Muthesius, modeled on the modern form of bourgeoisie buildings in England. The necessity of densification influenced the choice of multi-family houses. Terraced housing estates were designed from the beginning, even before the normative

requirements in this respect, based on new architectural principles, such as the need to include greenery and ensure adequate sunshine and ventilation. As a result, there was a significant increase in the number of quarters in relation to the nineteenth century and Art Nouveau districts. The urban forms shaped in this way made it possible to directly continue the block-based development of towns.

A Flachbausiedlung was the solution that met the urban and architectural requirements in terms of the principles of urban development and ensuring adequate housing standards. It was a complete proposal of composing new urban districts; a multi-element system, composed of various building structures coherently connected, different from block-based development, but not rural or peripheral in character, received the features of an urban composition, with a shaped center and a multi-level functional and spatial structure, with the possibility of introducing even metropolitan functions. It had many of the qualities of a village: greenery, open space, intimate urban interiors. Therefore, it was a well-thought-out response to Howard's demands.

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¹ For the sake of consistency of the text, the names will be used from the period of formation of the discussed development units.

² Starting from [Kononowicz 1991] and subsequent articles

by: [Urbanik 1995, p. 311–330].

³ E.g., [Atlas architektury 1998; Leksykon architektury 2011; Wrocław. Atlas historyczny miast polskich 2017] with articles of W. Kononowicz and A. Zabłocka-Kos.

Abstract:

The growing population of cities created a burning housing problem in the nineteenth century, and Silesia became a key region for new developments. This article attempts to examine the ways in which housing estates were a response to the recommendations of decentralized urban development theory. Inter-war estates were classified into three types. The suburban housing estates became inscribed into the natural landscape due to the limited height of buildings and the presence of greenery. The inner-city complexes were arranged in strips before changing gradually into free-standing "blocks" divided by green areas with service facilities. The solution of the so-called Flachbausiedlung was a specific combination of the two earlier concepts of shaping housing estates. Despite its urban spatial form, it had similar qualities to a village, being a well-thought response to the demands of the time.

Streszczenie

Rosnąca populacja miast stworzyła palący problem w XIX wieku, a Śląsk stał się kluczowym regionem dla nowej zabudowy. Artykuł podejmuje próbę klasyfikacji osiedli zrealizowanych według teorii zdecentralizowanego rozwoju urbanistycznego. Międzywojenne osiedla zostały sklasyfikowane w trzy typy. Podmiejskie osiedla wpisały się w naturalny krajobraz ze względu na ograniczoną wysokość budynków i obecność zieleni. Osiedla miejskie wpięto w pasy, by następnie stopniowo zmieniać je w wolno stojące „bloki” podzielone przez obszary zielone z obiektami usługowymi. Rozwiązanie tzw. Flachbausiedlung było szczególnym połączeniem dwóch wcześniejszych koncepcji kształtowania osiedli mieszkaniowych. Pomimo swojej urbanistyczno-przestrzennej formy posiadały podobne cechy do wsi, będąc dobrze przemyślaną odpowiedzią na potrzeby swoich czasów.