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The double Legacy of Weimar. Urban Design and Public Housing 1919–2019
and its Consequences for Teaching Urban Planning

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Not in Weimar, but in Dessau urban design on a larger scale became part of the teaching at Bauhaus. Building new large-scale settlements for the new democratic republic became essential to solve the housing crisis after World War I, and especially Meyer pushed that thought into teaching.¹ In these years world heritage was erected. Just to name a few: the today UNESCO heritage settlements in Berlin, the Weißenhof settlement in Stuttgart and the first Bauhaus settlement in Dessau-Törten. In Frankfurt, Ernst May brought together housing policy, new urban design principles and a holistic approach to living conditions.²

In the 1920s the times have been changing for urbanism. As part of the Weimar Culture³ housing became what we today call »modern«. On the one hand, modern architecture and a new form of settlement building at the fringes of the cities began. On the other hand, the erection of tenant buildings started to be economically based in a different manner. Both fundamentals for modernist housing were laid out in 1919, in Weimar – Bauhaus and the republican constitution. Both ended in 1989 (which I will explain later). It is a double legacy of Weimar.

This chapter will consider the decades between 1919 and 1989 as a period of modernist housing – in terms of urban design and in terms of the production of cities. After 1989 these settlements have been solely a matter of urban renewal (their renewal began mostly in the 1980s). The half-centennial between 1919 and 2019 is marked by the establishment of schools of urban/spatial planning in Germany as a discipline. Its establishment around 1969 will be explained in a chapter of its own like an excursus. Afterwards in the beginning of every following chapter an insight in the further development of schools of planning will be given. My attempt is to show the changing relevance of housing and settlement building within the discipline's history and vice versa.

1 Flierl, Thomas: »In neuem Licht, Architektur und Städtebau in der DDR«, in: Thomas Flierl/Max Welch Guerra/Christoph Bernhardt (Hrsg.), *Städtebau-Debatten in der DDR, verborgene Reformdiskurse*, Berlin: Theater der Zeit 2012; Siebenbrodt, Michael: »Architektur am Bauhaus in Weimar«, in: Ute Ackermann/Ulrike Bestgen (Hrsg.), *Das Bauhaus kommt aus Weimar*, München: Deutscher Kunstverlag 2009.

2 Weber, Jos: »Die wechselseitige Beeinflussung der Frankfurter Ernst-May-Gruppe und der holländischen Architektur-Szene der 20er Jahre und deren Auswirkung auf die kontinuierliche Weiterentwicklung des holländischen Wohnungsbaus«, in: *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen* 33 (1987) 4/5/6; Höpfner, Rosemarie/Fischer, Volker: *Ernst May und das neue Frankfurt 1925–1930*, Berlin: Ernst & Sohn 1986; Klemek, Christopher: *The Transatlantic Collapse of Urban Renewal, Postwar Urbanism from New York to Berlin*, Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press 2011.

3 Winkler, Heinrich August: *Geschichte des Westens*, Band 3; München: C.H. Beck 2009; Major, Máté: *Geschichte der Architektur*, Band 3, Berlin: Henschelverlag 1984.

Innovations for housing after 1919: Modern Times, Fordism and progressive urban policies

The innovation in settlement building was not only its design, contradicting the ›old town‹ like the garden city had already done. The new cities should form a new way of urban living at all: ›light, air and sun‹ was the leitmotiv,⁴ overcoming the slum-like living conditions of the »Mietskasernen« (literally: caserns for rent), the 19th century tenement blocks.⁵ The role of the Bauhaus itself was to inspire, e.g. by the Haus am Horn in Weimar, built 1923.⁶ Innovative mass-housing occurred because of progressive municipal policies, not because of some small, but inspirational school in Weimar respectively Dessau. The new modern urban design was not only design. The non-profit housing sector that shall benefit to the public (»Wohngemeinnützigkeit«) and a progressive tax systems were part of the Weimar Constitution. The speculation of the terrain trusts that built 19th century Berlin⁷ should be ended, because they caused the bad living conditions that became (in)famous e.g. by the drawing oeuvre of the chronicler Heinrich Zille, who not only caricatured, but politically criticized what he saw and draw.⁸ Berlin around 1900 was a pure capitalist city. The new modern city after 1919/20 contrasted it with housing associations and public, especially municipal housing companies. Especially the two former capitals of the German 'Axial Empires' stand for it: Berlin and Vienna. The new model of housing should better integrate the every-day-life requirements into architecture and urban design. Mobility was to be new, too: car-oriented but pedestrian-friendly. And starting with the Frankfurt kitchen,⁹ new settlements should pay respect to the reproductive means of life – something we call today social infrastructure in these quarters.¹⁰ Outside Germany the emigration of the Bauhaus members all over the world following the closure of the school in 1933 spread these ideas all over the world.¹¹ And one should not forget to mention that they actively took part in cultural politics of the Weimar Republic (e.g. Mies van der Rohe being president of the November Group).¹²

4 For Berlin, see: Schwenk, Herbert: *Berliner Stadtentwicklung von A–Z*, Berlin: Luisenstädtischer Bildungsverlag 1998; further: Klemek, *The transatlantic collapse of Urban Renewal*.

5 Hegemann, Werner: *Das steinerne Berlin, Geschichte der größten Mietskasernenstadt der Welt* [1930], Braunschweig: Vieweg 1976.

6 Siebenbrodt: »Architektur am Bauhaus in Weimar«.

7 Bodenschatz, Harald: *Platz frei für das neue Berlin! Geschichte der Stadterneuerung in der »größten Mietskasernenstadt Welt« seit 1871*, Berlin: Transit 1987.

8 Flügge Gerhard (Hrsg.): *Das dicke Zille-Buch*, Berlin: Eulenspiegel-Verlag 1971.

9 Weber: »Die wechselseitige Beeinflussung der Frankfurter Ernst-May-Gruppe«.

10 Krüger, Arvid: *Neue Steuerungsmodelle in der Stadterneuerung und daraus folgende Anforderungen an die Städtebauförderung, die Kommunen und die gemeinnützige Wohnungswirtschaft*, Weimar: PhD Thesis, Bauhaus-Universität Weimar 2019.

11 Klemek: *The transatlantic collapse of Urban Renewal*.

12 Burmeister, Ralf/Köhler, Thomas/Nentwig, Janina (Hrsg.): *Freiheit – Die Kunst der Novembergruppe 1918–1935*, München: Prestel 2018.

Thus, the ideas of the Weimar Culture (see above) also spread. But the time for Bauhaus as a school in Germany was over. There were attempts in Ulm until 1968 to reinvent Bauhaus as a design school; and there is indeed a small link to the emerging discipline of urban planning: The follow-up institution of Ulm after its closing, the Institut für Grundlagen der Planung (institute of fundamental matters of planning) of Horst Rittel at the University of Stuttgart, indeed contributed to planning theory. Ulm students in 1968 moved to that institute to finish what they began in Ulm.

The erection of modern settlements restarted after WWII in East and West, in the height of the Fordist era.¹³ The Schelskyan »levelled middle class society«¹⁴ of post-war West Germany was to live in these large-scale settlements that became larger and higher in the 1960s/70s. The progressive concept of »urbanity by density«¹⁵ was also rooted in the planning of social infrastructure in these areas, for that the reproductive work should not all be done alone by the »suburban housewife«.¹⁶

Less in the west, more common in the east and north of Europe these large-scale settlements became New Towns. With the literary character of Franziska Linkerhand, an architect for such a new town entered the canon of German literature with the novel by Brigitte Reimann,¹⁷ who wrote about the prospects and struggles from the (female) architect's point of view to achieve the societal effort to industrialize the rural East. The *Interbau*, the International Building Exhibition¹⁸ of 1957, erects further world heritage icons of the modern era, the Hansaviertel area. This heritage is complementally completed by East-Berlin's modernist Karl-Marx-Allee from the same

13 Knorr-Siedow, Thomas: »Innovations from below? A new concept for social housing in Germany«, in: Kathleen Scanlon/Christine Whitehead (eds.), *Social housing in Europe. A review of policies and outcomes*, London LSE 2008; Klemek, *The transatlantic collapse of Urban Renewal*.

14 Found in: Braun, Hans: »Helmut Schelskys Konzept der nivellierten Mittelstandsgesellschaft und die Bundesrepublik der 50er Jahre«, in: *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 29 (1989), 199ff.

15 Referring the classification of the term by: Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen (Hrsg.): *Perspektiven grosser Wohnsiedlungen*. Berlin: Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen 2015, 40.

16 Cf. Krüger: *Neue Steuerungsmodelle in der Stadterneuerung*.

17 Reimann, Brigitte: *Franziska Linkerhand*, Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag 1974.

18 International Building Exhibitions are a format of presentation of innovations in architecture, urban design and urban planning in Germany. The historical IBAs of the early 20th century have been the erection of the quarter Mathildenhöhe in Darmstadt 1913 and the Weißenhof quarter in Stuttgart, the latter as a showpiece especially for architects related to Bauhaus and the *Neues Bauen* movement of the 1920s. After World War II the *Interbau* of 1957 presented modernist building in the walled-in town of West-Berlin. The IBAs of the 1980s in Berlin and in the Ruhr Area (Emscher Park Area) in the 1990s were innovations on urban design and urban planning; followed up by IBAs in the Lausitz (Fürst Pückler Land) and Saxony-Anhalt on urban development in de-industrialised regions (that was also the theme for the *IBA Emscher Park*, to transform a post-industrial area). Since the 2010s there are several IBAs in Germany at the same time, often intermunicipal or regional like the *IBA Emscher Park* has been first, sometimes even cross-border, including neighbouring countries. IBAs are meant to give impulses to the field of urban design and planning by focusing on several development projects at the same time in the same place under a certain topic.

time.¹⁹ In the first post-war decades modernism kept unchallenged. Klemek describes the visit of MIT professor John Burchard in West-Germany, who

[...] saw German citizens in 1963 in complete sympathy with both means and ends of urban renewal [like Hansaviertel, A.K.]. He attributed this to a healthy political culture ...: ›Germans have been used for a long time to considerable state control of the land and to serious restrictions on uninhibited private exploitation and development.‹²⁰

That changed after 1968. The second International Building Exhibition, since then abbreviated as *IBA*, of West-Berlin in 1987 (see below) marks a paradigmatic turn, globally embedded into the emergence of an era we usually call post-modernism.²¹ Its innovations: the ›critical reconstruction‹ and then ›cautious renewal‹ will have changed urban planning and design fundamentally.

Excursus: Urban Planning as a discipline

The years after 1968 saw the emergence of urban studies and planning as a discipline of its own in Germany. Starting points were Dortmund, West-Berlin and again Weimar. This was part of a greater international movement: A

[...] converging element was the professionalization and credentialing of experts in disciplines of urbanism: modernist architecture, planning, urban design, and related social science. Rooted, like parallel developments in other fields, in the expansion of postwar universities ..., this undergirded the rising social prestige of technocratic elites [...]. At Ivy League centers of advanced research, cities became a growing focus of disciplinary interest.²²

The first German programs of *Raumplanung* (spatial planning) in Dortmund (1969) and *Stadt- & Regionalplanung* (urban & regional planning) in West-Berlin were established (1972). Independently they embraced the societal changes after 1968. The study programs of Dortmund and West-Berlin were named ‘reform programs’, because they established a new study practice: the study project. It is today’s fundamental teaching method of urban planning programs in Germany. The post-war Hochschule für Architektur und Bauwesen (University for Architecture and Building, *HAB*) in Weimar introduced *Gebietsplanung* (territorial planning) as a division in the same year as Dortmund: 1969 (fig. 1).

Study projects – the core of the newly established planner’s education – integrate different disciplines of the – above all – interdisciplinary field of urban/spatial planning with the help of a case study. Ideally, different chairs (or at least: different lecturers) work together with the students by applying the scientific knowledge as well as the knowledge that derives from a thorough analysis of the existent spatial situation of

19 Flierl, Thomas: »Der Streit über den 2. Bauabschnitt der Karl-Marx-Allee nach 1990 und das Schicksal der DDR-Moderne«, in: Thomas Flierl (Hrsg.): *List und Schicksal der Ost-Moderne – Hermann Henselmann zum 100. Geburtstag*, Berlin: form + zweck 2008.

Schwenk, *Berliner Stadtentwicklung von A-Z*.

20 Klemek: *The transatlantic collapse of Urban Renewal*, 226.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid., 19.

the very case. The combination of theoretical and practical learning and the typical amount of one third of a student's time and credit points give the study project an outstanding role in the life of an urban/spatial planning student. Especially in the 1970s, but still today, some universities offer a self-organized study project, where the students themselves create the case-study and the teaching program for one term. The *HAB* Weimar established its own teaching tradition: the communal internship. The planning theorist Harald Kegler, once a student and student assistant in Weimar, describes it as follows: »Since 1978 urban sociology was established as a chair with empirical urban studies as its core competence [Fred Staufenbiel, A.K.]. There also the Communal Internship was established at the end of the first year. Four weeks, lectures and students together went to one town to analyze different aspects of the societal patterns: Surveys, observations, document evaluations, structural-spatial analyzes, inventories etc. They created a socio-spatial portrait of the town that allowed knowledge about the realities of life there and empowered urban design solutions based on its applicability. The results of the students were presented in public and it surely it was necessary by the lecturers and the local authorities to 'secure' the publicity of the results under the circumstances of the East-German regime. At least, the local officials needed to be open for the student's experiment more open than officials from 'above' in the regime.«²³ Summing up, independent from each other and not directly linked to the Bauhaus way of teaching the new established study programs of urban/spatial planning in both parts of Germany established a tradition that also could have been inspired by one important aspect of old Bauhaus: the applicability of the results of teaching – industrial applicability in the field of design, municipal applicability in the field of the Communal Internship. Today's Institute for European Urbanism (*IfEU*) at the Bauhaus University in Weimar is linked to both traditions. It was founded in 1999, after the section of Territorial Planning was ceased in 1991. The tradition in Weimar has been interrupted, not ended.

From post-war reconstruction to post-modernism

But back to the realities of urban design. For a speedy fast-forward ride through post-war developments a few remarks shall suffice. Siedler mourns the old town,²⁴ Mitscherlich blames the »inhospitality of our cities«;²⁵ houses are squatted to keep them ›alive‹, growth has reached its limits²⁶ and the European Year of Urban Heri-

23 Kegler, Harald: Aufbruch in die »alte Stadt«. Zur Städtebauausbildung an der HAB Weimar Ende der 1970er und Anfang der 1980er Jahre – eine persönliche Momentaufnahme, http://dr-kegler.de/aufbruch_in_die_alte_stadt.html [28 February 2019].

24 Siedler, Wolf-Jobst: *Die gemordete Stadt: Abgesang auf Putte und Straße, Platz und Baum*, Berlin: Herbig 1964.

25 Mitscherlich, Alexander: *Die Unwirtlichkeit unserer Städte. Anstiftung zum Unfrieden*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 1965

26 Meadows, Donella H./Meadows, Dennis/Randers, Jørgen/Behrens, William W.: *The Limits to Growth. A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*, New York: Universe Books, 1972.

Universities with (among others)
Bachelor and Master Programs of
Urban/Spatial Planning



*Introduction of the respective program/institute

Fig. 1

tage brings back the conscience for the historicity of the urban fabric. The peak of post-war settlement building in West-Germany had been in the 1960s.²⁷ The 1950s

27 Overview in: Zupan, Daniela: »Von der Großsiedlung der Spätmoderne zum kompakten nutzungsgemischten Stadtquartier Verlaufsformen eines städtebaulichen Erneuerungsprozesses«, in: *Informationen zur Raumordnung* (2015) 3.

Built housing units in settlements with more than 1000 units and with an autonomous urban design (dates are starting dates) in the western FRG between 1950 and 2015

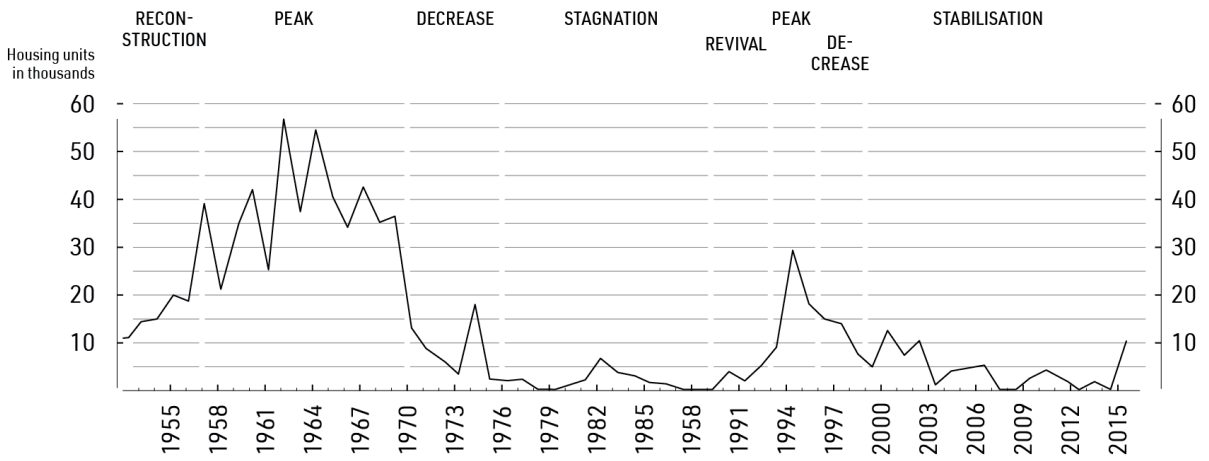


Fig. 2

and 1960s are decades of rebuilding post-war West-Germany as well as decades of growth and the expansion of German cities. Globally the 1950s-1970s mean the height of late modernism and the last height of the Fordist era. Since the late 1960s public settlement building declines; the recession of the 1970s, a shrinking demand and the focus of private investors on suburbanization have been factors to acknowledge in this time.²⁸ The biggest West-German ›Fordist‹ housing company, the union-owned *Neue Heimat* (literally: New Homeland), collapsed in the 1980s. Only after reunification a second peak of new erected housing areas became visible (fig. 2). In 1987 there was another *IBA* in Berlin. The post-modern leitmotivs of the second Berlin *IBA* framed the agenda of urban design.²⁹

In contrast to their colleagues in the Unites States, German social scientists [...] had to await the arrival of the ‘68er-generation on the urban political scene, which took place over the course in the 1970s. [...] An architectural community gradually awakening from dogmatic modernist urbanism played catch-up in response to the popular reaffirmation of the nineteenth-century neighborhood fabric. Postmodern approaches [...] were integrated into a still vital institutional planning apparatus by the mid-1980s.³⁰

28 Ibid.

29 Schlusche, Günter: *Die Internationale Bauausstellung Berlin. Eine Bilanz. Planung und Durchführung 1979–1987 und Einfluss auf die Berliner Stadtentwicklung*. Berlin: Technische Universität Berlin 1997.

30 Klemek: *The transatlantic collapse of Urban Renewal*, 235.

New quarters since the 1990s followed the principle of the block and the corridor street as it has been exercised in the tradition city of the 19th century, open space and private space became clearly divided. They should resemble as integrated parts of the town's morphological structures, old modern settlements were meant to be new towns. These are some aspects, Zupan uses as criteria to substantiate the paradigmatic shift of the urban design of housing that happened between the 1970s and 1990s in West-Germany.³¹ East-Germany followed as far as possible the idea of modernism almost until its end, more about that below. It would lead too far to go into deep to link that general shift with the leitmotifs of the so-called New Section of the *IBA* Berlin, the ›Critical Reconstruction‹ and its international ties.

Not surprisingly, this shift of paradigm also went along with a reinterpretation of the urban qualities of modernist settlement. The report on large-scale settlement of the German Parliament, written just after unification in 1994, gives in its end an outlook on new settlement buildings. New settlements shall be different from the things built until 1989.³² The large-scale settlements before 1989 became an adverse leitmotiv for urban design, based on the establishment of cautious renewal as an urban principle for the upcoming reurbanization and ecologic aspects as an imperative for planners.³³ Thus, it is necessary to look not only into the New Section of the *IBA*, but also its Old Section. This was the very part of the *IBA*, that made the Kreuzberg neighborhood famous as an international icon of reurbanization. It changed the meaning of the term urban renewal in the German language forever. Based on twelve principles renewal became cautious, thus it meant no more to tear down the old to build the new on the same place. It always meant a procedural incrementalism in planning, changing step by step the city scape – always taking social, economic and ecologic aspects into consideration, thus being meant to be sustainable, the 'new' slogan for development from the 1990s. A perspicuous document from that time is the brochure ›step by step‹ by the makers (S.T.E.R.N. 1987),³⁴ hence it has been a subject of urban research.³⁵ Careful renewal of the *IBA* originates in the city of the 19th century, not in the attempt to overcome it as the housing policy of the Weimar Republic seven

31 Zupan: ›Von der Großsiedlung der Spätmoderne zum kompakten Nutzungsgemischten Stadtquartier‹.

32 Deutscher Bundestag: *Großsiedlungsbericht 1994. Unterrichtung durch die Bundesregierung*, Bonn: Deutscher Bundestag 1994 (Drucksache 12/8406).

33 Zupan: ›Von der Großsiedlung der Spätmoderne zum kompakten Nutzungsgemischten Stadtquartier‹.

34 S.T.E.R.N. (Hrsg.): Step by step. Careful urban renewal in Kreuzberg. Berlin: S.T.E.R.N. [Gesellschaft für behutsame Stadterneuerung] 1987.

35 E.g.: Krüger, Arvid: *Erneuerung der Erneuerung. Die Rolle der Stadterneuerung im Kontext von Benachteiligungsphänomenen*, Graue Reihe des Instituts für Stadt- und Regionalplanung der Technischen Universität Berlin, Nr. 10, Berlin: Technische Universität Berlin 2008, further readings from that very time in the anthology of Marcuse, Peter/Staufenbiel, Fred (Hrsg.): *Wohnen und Stadtpolitik im Umbruch, Perspektiven der Stadterneuerung nach 40 Jahren DDR*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag 1990; and by Senatsverwaltung für Bau- und Wohnungswesen (Hrsg.): *Stadterneuerung Berlin*, Berlin 1990; critical vies in the application of these renewals schemes, see: Holm, Andrej: *Die Restrukturierung des Raumes. Stadterneuerung der 90er Jahre in Ostberlin: Interessen und Machtverhältnisse*, Bielefeld: transcript 2006; Bernt, Matthias: *Rübergeklappt. Die ›behutsame Stadterneuerung‹ im Berlin der 90er Jahre*, Berlin: Schelzky & Jeep 2003.

decades before. This planning approach became not only valid for Kreuzberg, but internationally acknowledged for reurbanization of the today-gentrified, hence highly-appreciated neighborhoods of many metropolises all over the world.

1989 as the end of eras

The students in Weimar observed these shifts of paradigms in the 1970s and 1980s. Harald Kegler writes:

The functionalization of urban regeneration to increase the motivation of the working class is part of the ideological ritual of formulation, but the clear emphasis on the importance of a preserved historic center for the urban, even societal future is remarkable. For the students, this became a self-evident matter: conservation before demolition, new construction in the context of existing structures. In addition, the term 'Cautious Urban Renewal' entered the terminology of German planners on both sides of the wall, a term that just started his career at the International Building Exhibition in West Berlin.³⁶

Since then, the term urban renewal (»Stadterneuerung«) in the German language differed from the use of this term elsewhere.

This paradigmatic shift happened simultaneously to the East-German Peaceful Revolution in 1989 and the unification in 1990. It is worth to link the political demands of the East-German people with the demands, citizens articulated towards urban development on a neighborhood level around 1989. It would lead too far here; an overview can be found in Marcuse and Staufenbiel's anthology from 1991.³⁷

The major result of that shift for the built settlements of the modern era, that started in 1919, was, that they became history. The report on large-scale-settlement report of the German Parliament from 1994³⁸ can be read that way: Large-scale settlements are acknowledged as built artefacts, necessary to serve the housing needs, but challenged by other suburban forms, especially detached housing. They lack urban qualities, especially the quickly-built examples from the East-German 1980s. Experiments of cautious renewal in large-scale-settlements – as undergone in the West-German 1980s – shall be extended. Renewal strategies shall integrate social, ecologic and economic aspects as it is done in the 19th century's neighborhoods. Especially the variety between different settlements in different regions of Germany shall be acknowledged.³⁹ Indeed, modern-era settlements became an own branch of urban renewal, later urban funding schemes (see below). Recently the Competence Center on Large-Scale Settlements published a study on that subject⁴⁰ with a very concise typology of that era (fig. 3).

36 Kegler: Aufbruch in die »alte Stadt«.

37 Marcuse/Staufenbiel: *Wohnen und Stadtpolitik im Umbruch*.

38 Deutscher Bundestag: *Großsiedlungsbericht*.

39 Ibid.

40 Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen: *Perspektiven grosser Wohnsiedlungen*.

The final years of the epoch of settlement buildings of the modern era fall together with the success of cautious renewal (marked by the Berlin *IBA* in 1987) and the Peaceful Revolution in the GDR 1989. This year was not only the year when the wall came down. It was also a year where the neoliberal turn in West-Germany led to the ending of the non-profit housing sector benefit to the public (›Wohngemeinnützigkeit‹), introduced back in 1919.⁴¹ It would lead too far in this article to rewrite the circumstances in West-Germany in the 1980s, that paved the way politically for this decision, a 2019 exhibition on the *Neue Heimat* building company gives an insight.⁴² A fundamental economic principle for the erection of large-scale settlements has ended: progressive mass-housing with all its benefits and disadvantages became history in Germany.

Between image and reality: Modern-Era Settlements after 1989

But all this did not play a relevant role in the teaching of the urban and spatial planning programs in the 1980s and 1990s, which have been mentioned above. If so, large-scale settlements became a negative layer for urban design students in the ‘reform programs’ like Dortmund and West-Berlin. Former exemplary large-scale settlements like the Märkisches Viertel in West-Berlin or Chorweiler in Cologne may still give today some architects physical indispositions because of all the bad clichés, that seem to have come true at first glance. In a way, the Märkisches Viertel became a constituent negative foil for the students in West-Berlin:

In 1968 activist architecture students as well as professional and academic sympathizers mounted a provocative exhibition at Berlin’s Technical University, »Diagnosis of Construction in West-Berlin«, documenting with interviews and photographs the lamentable outcomes of urban renewal projects⁴³

– the Märkische Viertel most prominent among them. Among them most likely have been urban planning lecturers of the 1980/90s.

In the early 1990s Western practitioners even thought of the necessity to get rid of the freshly inherited large-scale settlements of the former GDR.⁴⁴ These areas had no advocates after 1990, it was forgotten that these places have been the progressive results of a family-friendly housing policy, no matter if it was Brandt’s housing policy in the West or Honecker’s one in the East.

41 Jenkis, Helmut »Die gemeinnützige Wohnungswirtschaft im Widerstreit der Interessen und Meinungen, eine kommentierte Dokumentation zur Aufhebung des Wohnungsgemeinnützigkeitgesetzes«, in: *Zeitschrift für öffentliche und gemeinwirtschaftliche Unternehmen*, Beiheft 26 (2000), Baden-Baden: Nomos 2002.

42 Ibid.; Lepik, Andres/Strobl, Hilde (Hrsg.): *Die Neue Heimat (1950–1982). Eine sozialdemokratische Utopie und ihre Bauten*, München: Detail 2019.

43 Klemek: *The transatlantic collapse of Urban Renewal*, 226.

44 Fuderholz, Günter: »Wem gehört die Platte?«, in: SenBW (Hrsg.), *Montagebau in Berlin (Ost). Bestandsaufnahme und Bewertung der industriell errichteten Wohngebäude*, Berlin: Senatsverwaltung für Bauen und Wohnen 1992.

The fact that large-scale housing became a problem is due to a systemic contradiction based on planning decisions of the 1960s and 1970s on the one hand and on political decisions of the 1980s on the other hand. [...] It was never intended as housing for the poorest and most needy, because for these the rent in so-called social housing has always been very high. At the time of the Weimar Republic ... this was called »non-profit«. The term »social housing« only became established during National Socialism and represents a confusion of languages.⁴⁵

Large-Scale settlements in East and West were blamed with a bad image. The architecture journalist Wolfgang Kil (also once a student in Weimar) observed on the occasion of a photo exhibition about Germany's second-largest settlement, Leipzig-Grünau: The exhibition organizers

[...] of the Leipzig Contemporary History Forum, apparently familiar only with hearsay by Grünau's realities, named the exhibition, as it could not be more misleading: »Dream and Tristesse«. Although it had missed the spirit of the images shown [from the founding time of Grünau, A.K.], a stubborn stereotype was served. Life in the large housing estates could only be »dull«. To relieve the directorate may be assumed that this vocabulary would have occurred in relation to large-scale settlements of any West German cities. This aversion knows no boundaries. As experience shows, each generation tends to scourge the ideas and deeds of its predecessors; and as a rule, it shoots far beyond the goal, stylizing the old urban model, that has just been praised, into an enemy picture.⁴⁶

The critique on large-scale settlement seemed self-evident – given the context of the rise of post-modernism and the fall of the Eastern regime, which just had built the youngest large-scale settlements of the modern era, among them the well-known eastern outskirts of Berlin. The critique on large-scale settlements fit into the victory of the western world, something that meanwhile got porous.⁴⁷

The current challenges of housing, the renaissance of the 1920s and mid-century culture and design and the simple well-being of existent large-scale settlements may lead to the assumptions that the critiques of these settlements were wrong in the 1980s/1990s. Especially the inconspicuousness of a high amount of large-scale settlements built between 1919 and 1989 needs the conclusion that these urban artefacts are a normal part of our cities.⁴⁸

It seems a little, that these critiques of modern-era urbanism are relevant in their time; but outdated like Hegemann's critique of the 'stony Berlin' before – acknowledging re-urbanization and gentrification of today. The New Towns of the 20th century are still there – and meanwhile they been culturally recoded since the turn of the century.⁴⁹

45 Häußermann, Hartmut/Kapphan, Andreas: *Berlin – Von der geteilten zur gespaltenen Stadt? Sozialräumlicher Wandel seit 1990*, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften 2002, 157f.

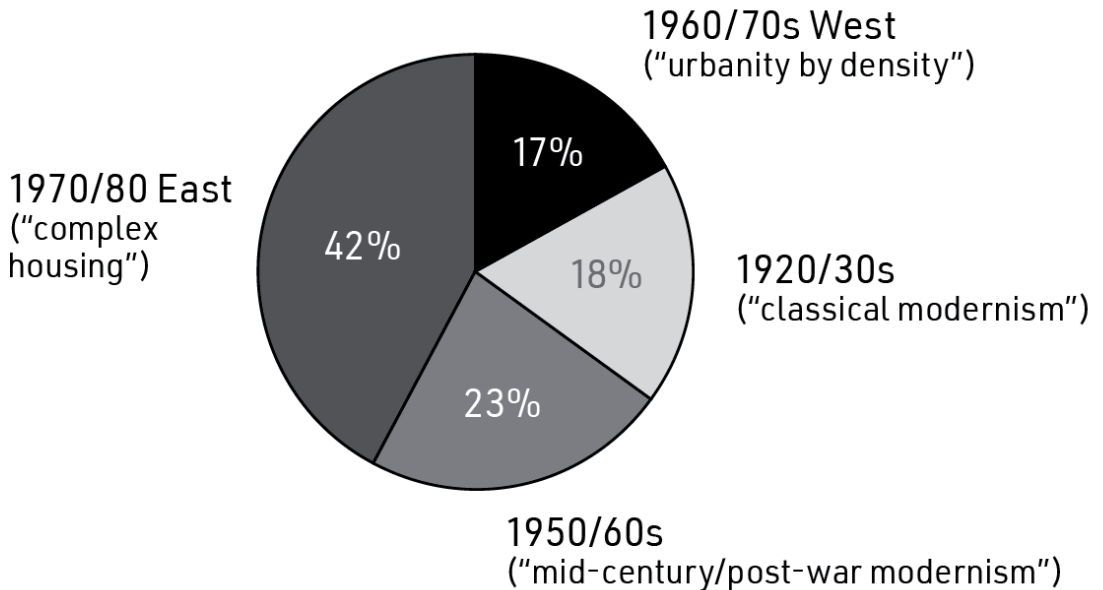
46 Kil, Wolfgang: »Wie steht es um das Bild der großen Wohnsiedlungen in der Öffentlichkeit?«, in: Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen (Hrsg.), *Klimaschutz und Energiewende, Potenzial der grossen Wohnsiedlungen*, Berlin: Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen 2012.

47 Winkler, Heinrich August: *Geschichte des Westens*, Band 4, München: C.H. Beck 2016.

48 Krüger: *Neue Steuerungsmodelle in der Stadterneuerung*, 9.

49 Harnack, Maren: »Wie steht es um das Bild der großen Wohnsiedlungen in der Öffentlichkeit?«, in: Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen (Hrsg.), *Leben in großen Wohnsiedlungen, Soziale Stadt, stabile Nachbarschaften, bezahlbares Wohnen*, Berlin: Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen 2013, 36–47.

Typology of German Large-Scale Settlements 1919-1989



4 Million housing units altogether

Fig. 3

After unification this settlement type became a standard type of urban renewal that regularly followed the cautious paradigm. East-Germany's large-scale settlements from the 1960s-80s had similar needs that have been targeted by the first experiments of cautious renewal of West-German large-scale settlements in the 1980s. These 'new towns' of the GDR were ordinary spatial elements for GDR towns of all sizes. Thus, the sheer amount of that settlement type in the East made it necessary to just have them and keep them. That is, why they became a type of cautious urban renewal. The then new introduced funding schemes – Social City (»Soziale Stadt«) in 1999 and Urban Transformation East (»Stadtumbau Ost«) in 2002 – acknowledged large-scale settlements as a normal aspect of their own settlement typologies for the application of these funding schemes. Especially Stadtumbau Ost has often been

regarded as a special program for these Eastern settlements, although it was always more than just that.⁵⁰

The report on large-scale settlements for the German Bundestag from 1994 revealed that threats and opportunities for these settlements do not differ much between East and West. Here and there were structural damages that could be regarded even as a potential, because its repair might happen in a serial manner, thus generate economies of scale when investing into these areas. That resulted in the chance to reposition these buildings in terms of energetic efficiency. Rather effectual in East-Germany was the fact that the housing companies were often more rooted in these settlements, because their housing stock dominated them as companies. Without much noise they contradicted the planners that want to get rid of 'their' settlements by action. They worked against the picture that after unification these settlements were doomed to become a ghettoized banlieue.⁵¹ By the way, many of these actual planners of that time and place graduated in Weimar.

Cautious Urban Renewal in the 1990s and 2000s: from Kreuzberg (IBA 1987) to Leipzig (EU Leipzig-Charter 2007)

One decade before, Weimar's HAB became known for its experimental approach to the building techniques of the Eastern 'plattenbau', the typical serial building technique in the GDR became famous for. The renaissance of Bauhaus in the GDR had just started, when postmodernism sneaked into the rooms of the dignified van de Velde building in Weimar. At the same time, the conflict with the beginning of postmodernism in the FRG, Western Europe and the USA had already begun. »It was an exciting situation between departure and defense, which intruded the debates in our seminars.«⁵² The idea was to integrate the modern serial building technique into the post-modern urban design. Tourists in Berlin may recognize the Nicolai Quarter around Berlin's oldest church. That quarter has been a showcase display for the use

50 See on Stadtumbau: Bernt, Matthias/Haus, Michael/Robischon, Tobias (Hrsg.): *Stadtumbau komplex, Governance, Planung, Prozess*, Darmstadt: Schader-Stiftung 2010; Breuer, Bernd: »Stadterneuerung in Großwohnsiedlungen in den neuen Bundesländern – Probleme und Erfahrungen«, in: Ronald Kunze, Ursula von Petz, Dirk Schubert, Max Welch Guerra (Hrsg.), *Jahrbuch Stadterneuerung 1999 des Arbeitskreises Stadterneuerung an deutschsprachigen Hochschulen*, Berlin: Technische Universität Berlin 1999; Grossmann, Katrin/Kabisch, Nadja/Kabisch, Sigrun: »Understanding the social development of a post-socialist large housing estate, the case of Leipzig-Grünau in eastern Germany in long-term perspectives«, in: *European Urban and Regional Studies* 24 (2015) 2; Grunze, Nico: »Stadtumbau Ost und die ostdeutschen Großsiedlungen. bunte Vielfalt statt graues Plattenbau-einerlei«, in: Uwe Altröck/Ronald Kunze/Ursula von Petz/Dirk Schubert (Hrsg.), *Jahrbuch Stadterneuerung 2012 des Arbeitskreises Stadterneuerung an deutschsprachigen Hochschulen*, Berlin: Technische Universität Berlin 2012; Haller, Christoph: »Leerstand im Plattenbau. Eine Herausforderung für den Stadtumbauprozess in den neuen Ländern«, in: Uwe Altröck/Ronald Kunze/Ursula von Petz/Dirk Schubert (Hrsg.), *Jahrbuch Stadterneuerung 2002 des Arbeitskreises Stadterneuerung an deutschsprachigen Hochschulen*, Berlin: Technische Universität 2002; and on Soziale Stadt: Walther, Uwe-Jens (Hg.) Walther, Uwe-Jens (Hrsg.): *Soziale Stadt – Zwischenbilanzen, ein Programm auf dem Weg zur Sozialen Stadt?* Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften 2002.

51 Overview in: Krüger: *Neue Steuerungsmodelle in der Stadterneuerung*.

52 Keglner: *Aufbruch in die »alte Stadt«*.

of 'plattenbau' techniques for a post-modern urban design,⁵³ that as a GDR-urbanism did not carry the name post-modern – but fits into its international leitmotifs. Other examples have been researched⁵⁴ recently in the Bauhaus-University referring to the old towns of Halle and Erfurt, where 'plattenbau' techniques has been used for infill projects in the historical parts of these towns. The results of these works show, how planners in the late GDR of the 1980s started to play with modernist »plattenbau techniques" to create no other large-scale settlements, but their own urban design variation of the internationally emerging post-modern urbanism.

Today, large-scale settlements are as well a product of cautious urban renewal as a product from the era of urban modernism of the 20th century (for Germany: 1919–1989). By this, they are in terms of research and teaching as well a matter of the Bauhaus from the 1920s, as of the more recent faculties of urban and spatial planning like Dortmund or (West-)Berlin, where cautious urban renewal has always been accompanied by teaching, research and student activities post-1968. And they are as well a matter of the teaching and research traditions of the HAB Weimar and these »hidden reformatory discourses,«⁵⁵ that took place in the 1970s and 1980s at the original site of the Bauhaus.

Just a few remarks, what cautious renewal of large-scale settlements meant since the 1980s/1990s:⁵⁶ They became trailblazers of energetic renewal on a neighborhood scale. Some kind of »demographic remodel kits« were applied to keep an aging tenantry in their apartments. Not every time following an industrial norm, a bunch of small, but serially applicable measures transformed the original family-oriented modern-era apartments into elderly-friendly ones (especially in bathrooms, kitchens and on balconies). Together with an often-well-developed health infrastructure including medical centers (often in buildings erected already for that purpose), pharmacies, few grocery shops and discounters/supermarkets in foot distance and green spaces and local parks nearby, these large-scale settlements became attractive for an ageing society. And still they are still attractive for families, because of an often above-average child care and school infrastructure in relation to its own city-region. Especially the non-necessity of a car to get the children to their school and/or daytime activities is an attractive contrast to the too-often true cliché of a mother's everyday life in suburbia. The experiences of three decades of cautious urban renewal of large-scale settlements could recently be used to write a manifesto for new settlements⁵⁷ in

53 Stahn, Günter: *Das Nikolaiviertel*, Berlin: Verl. für Bauwesen 1991.

54 Angermann, Kirsten/Hilse, Tabea: *Altstadtplatten. »Komplexe Rekonstruktion« in den Innenstädten von Erfurt und Halle*, Weimar: Bauhaus-Universitätsverlag Weimar 2013.

55 Flierl: »In neuem Licht«.

56 Krüger: *Neue Steuerungsmodelle in der Stadterneuerung*.

57 Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen (Hrsg.): *Prinzipien für den Bau neuer Wohnsiedlungen. Lernen von Beispielen für den aktuellen Siedlungsbau im Rückblick 1920–2016*, Berlin: Kompetenzzentrum Großsiedlungen 2017.

2017, learning from the principles of the erection and of the renewal of these type of housing.

From today's point of view, it seems awkward that around the turn of the millennium large-scale settlements seemed to be just history. 1999's celebration of Weimar as European Cultural Capital included little aspects from the 1920s. Just one decade before, 1989, the non-profit housing sector benefit to the public (›Wohngemeinnützigkeit‹) was abandoned in West-Germany, as mentioned above. Eventually the year 1989 ended ›Weimar‹ in a double sense in terms of housing. It ended the socio-economic goals on housing, and it ended the modern era, because the final representatives of that era are the just-then-built last settlements of the GDR. Just to mention this: in the GDR, housing has been a solely public matter and the housing question was pointed out as crucial for the socio-economic well-being of the Eastern state. The developments in West-Germany contradicted this after its neoliberal turn in the early 1980s. This stands also in contrast to Austria, where housing since 1919 uninterrupted should be a benefit to the public and the way of planning and building new settlements e.g. in Vienna has undergone a step-by-step progress from the iconic Karl-Marx-Yards from the 1920s to the Seestadt Aspern today.

Cautious Renewal was not anymore just an experiment for some special alternative milieus just behind the Berlin Wall in Kreuzberg. The 1990s *IBA Emscher Park* in the Ruhr Area⁵⁸ developed its ideas further and created the paradigm of an Incrementalism with Perspectives. The urban face of deindustrialization and the transformation of 'rust belt'-like could be found in the Ruhr Area in the West of Germany – with a bunch of former coal and steel cities and 5 Million inhabitants. The *IBA* not only consisted of the re-naturalization of the Emscher River, upgrading quarters for the service economy (as in the Duisburg inner harbor) and the landscape design for former mining areas, now urban recreation areas. They also cared for the different stocks of settlements and neighborhoods of the Ruhr cities. Followed just before and after 2000 by IBAs in the Lausitz area and Saxony-Anhalt, both in East-Germany, economic and population shrinkage became a working field for planners. Shrinkage was a very rapid process after unification; most deindustrialization happens within decades, in the former GDR often within years or even months.⁵⁹

Thus, practitioners, researchers and educators all over Germany – Weimar among others – needed to re-interpret the cautious renewal as a transformatory program for the existent stock for cities and (small-)towns, that at least partly lost elements of their economic meaning. Other programs like urban heritage (1991), Social City (1999) and this transformatory program named *Stadtumbau* (2002) – both already

58 Reicher, Christa/Uttke, Angela (Hrsg.): *Internationale Bauausstellung Emscher Park. Impulse*, Essen: Klartext 2011; Ganser, Karl/Siebel, Walter/Sieverts, Thomas: »Die Planungsstrategie der IBA Emscher Park«, in: *Raumplanung* (1993) 61, 112–118.

59 Kil, Wolfgang: »Freies Feld von Bitterfeld bis Böhlen...‹ – wo die Menschen davonlaufen, verlieren selbst Grund und Boden alle Heiligkeit«, in: *Berliner Debatte Initial* 13 (2002) 2.

mentioned above – became steps towards a National Urban Development policy that found its completion – at least for the time being – in the 2007's Leipzig Charta. This document describes the European urban policy towards cohesion and the German renewal programs were according to their leitmotivs embedded into the EU funding schemes, programmatically named URBAN I (1994–2000) and URBAN II (2000–2007).⁶⁰ »So, despite an initial aversion to politicized advocacy planning, and a reaction against [in German language so-called demolitional, A.K.] urban renewal that came a decade later than in the United States, Germans in cities like Berlin became the true heirs of New Left urbanism.«⁶¹

Housing and Urban Planning in our times

But all this was – and is – non-growth-oriented development of the existent urban stock. Just recently new settlements for growing cities came back on the urban agenda in Germany. And the old settlements from the modern era have been rediscovered for two aspects. First, as existing stock they make up a reserve portfolio of affordable housing in times of increasing rents. Second, serial building techniques enable price caps for new housing. Both aspects are embedded into the overall »new housing question«⁶², which has been recently reestablished as a research group on housing based in a planning school – situated in Weimar at Bauhaus University.

Housing research – which is a focus of the Institute of European Urbanism in Weimar – is the crucial link from today into urban design in the old Bauhaus and the social policy traditions of the Weimar Republic. Erecting settlements in the modern era was neither only an urban design mode by old Bauhaus and others nor just a social measure by the new democratic republic. It was both, and the incorporation of both thoughts makes it understandable why there has been an era of new large-scale housing under so different circumstances as Brandt's Western Federal Republic of Germany (in the 1960/70s) and Honecker's Eastern GDR (in the 1970/80s). They both rooted (as biographically both politicians) in the social policies of the Weimar republic and the battle for a right of housing as promised by the republican constitution of Weimar (Art. 155 WeimVerf). Settlement building as in Dessau-Törten – and

60 Overviews on the development of urban renewal funding can be found in: Altröck, Uwe: »Von der Stadterneuerung zur Bestandspflege. Wandlung oder Ablösung eines Aufgabenfeldes?«, in: Uwe Altröck/Ronald Kunze/Ursula von Petz/Dirk Schubert (Hrsg.), *Jahrbuch Stadterneuerung 2002 des Arbeitskreises Stadterneuerung an deutschsprachigen Hochschulen*, Berlin: Technische Universität Berlin 2002, 17–38; Bernt, Matthias: »Die Herausforderer der Behutsamen Stadterneuerung«, in: Uwe Altröck/Ronald Kunze/Gisela Schmitt/Dirk Schubert (Hrsg.), *Jahrbuch Stadterneuerung 2013 des Arbeitskreises Stadterneuerung an deutschsprachigen Hochschulen*, Berlin: Technische Universität Berlin 2013, 53–88; Krüger: *Erneuerung der Erneuerung*; especially on »Soziale Stadt«: DIFU (Hrsg.): *Die soziale Stadt, eine erste Bilanz des Bund-Länder-Programms Stadtteile mit besonderem Entwicklungsbedarf – die soziale Stadt*, Berlin: Deutsches Institut für Urbanistik (DIFU) 2002; especially on »Stadtumbau Ost«: BMVBW (Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bauen und Wohnungswesen) (Hrsg.): *Auswertung des Bundeswettbewerbs Stadtumbau Ost – Für lebenswerte Städte und attraktives Wohnen* (with contributions by: Anja Röding, Ulrich Pfeiffer, Marta Doehler-Bezadi and Bertram Schiffers), Bonn/Berlin: Bundesministerium für Verkehr, Bauen und Wohnungswesen 2003.

61 Klemek: *The transatlantic collapse of Urban Renewal*, 237.

62 Schönig, Barbara: »Die neue Wohnungsfrage«, in: *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik* (2013) 2.

the many others like in Frankfurt and Berlin – became possible because of a redistributive taxation that enabled the state to push these projects. The state must afford serial building to create affordable housing. And one general leitmotiv of old Bauhaus was indeed the possibility of an industrial application of the very design idea. Urban design was no exception. Insofar it is consistent to put settlement design (from old Bauhaus) and territorial planning (from old HAB Weimar) as traditions into the current Weimar Housing Research.

Today's teaching of Urbanism at the Bauhaus university (the author has gladly been part of for six years) can be traced in the several traditions of teaching urban planning since the introduction of urban design into old Bauhaus (in Dessau). There are traces back to the 1920s, back to the post-1968 years, when planning has been established in these era of societal reforms (including the teaching method of a study project), back to the 1980s of the HAB Weimar and its special reaction on the new postmodernism 'behind' the wall in the west and as well to the last decades of planning in unified Germany and Europe – referring to the 2007 Leipzig charta. Especially the bachelor program of urbanism in Weimar is rooted in the schemes of the project study work as mentioned above – coming from the traditions rooted in the reform programs of Dortmund and West-Berlin after 1968 as well in the local HAB traditions of the communal practice. Thus, it is no surprise that large-scale settlements stood and stand on the agendas of today's Bauhaus University.

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