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POSTWAR MODERN MASS HOUSING IN
EUROPE: ANATOMY OF A DECLINE?

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KAUNO TECHNOLOGIJOS UNIVERSITETAS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	7
LIST OF TABLES	8
INTRODUCTION	9
1. THE CONSTRUCTION OF POSTWAR MODERN MASS HOUSING IN EUROPE	21
1.1. The city and the experience of modernity: Modernism in architecture and urban planning	21
1.1.1. Defeating the ‘urban nightmare’: Modernism as a solution to crisis in architecture and planning.....	25
1.1.2. Decentralised planning and spatial coordination.....	26
1.1.3. The concept of residential units and its interpretations	29
1.1.4. The ‘style of the time’: Standardisation and industrialised construction	31
1.1.5. Modern urban planning: Between construction and social progress	34
1.2. Postwar European urbanisation: Historical analysis.....	36
1.3. Between architecture and social policy: The glorious decades of modern mass housing in Europe.....	40
2. ‘AFTERLIFE’ AND HERITAGE OF POSTWAR MODERN MASS HOUSING	46
2.1. The intellectual deconstruction of the modern urbanism.....	46
2.2. What went wrong? The decline of the postwar modern mass housing	48
2.3. The impact of transnational trends on postwar modern mass housing: Political transition, reorganisation of labour and migration	51
2.4. The practical and narrative consequences of decline	54
2.4.1. Residualisation and filtering.....	54
2.4.2. Neighbourhood reputation and stigma.....	57
2.5. Selective and dynamic: The role of memory and heritage in the interpretation of the past.....	60
2.6. Postwar modern mass housing and dissonant heritage: Analysis of the relation.....	64
3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF VÄLLINGBY, LAZDYNAI AND SAN POLO.....	69
3.1. Vällingby	71
3.1.1. Investigating the context: Historical analysis of postwar modern mass housing in Sweden.....	72
3.1.2. Physical and architectural analysis of Vällingby.....	76
3.1.3. Discursive construction and celebration of Vällingby.....	84
3.1.4. The heritage of Vällingby: A case of ‘obsolete transmission’	86
3.2. Lazdynai	88
3.2.1. Investigating the context: Historical analysis of postwar modern mass housing in Soviet Lithuania.....	88
3.2.2. Physical and architectural analysis of Lazdynai	93

3.2.3. Discursive construction and celebration of Lazdynai.....	97
3.2.4. The heritage of Lazdynai: Between recognition and dissonance.....	98
3.3. San Polo.....	101
3.3.1. Investigating the context: Historical analysis of postwar modern housing in Italy.....	101
3.3.2. Physical and architectural analysis of San Polo.....	104
3.3.3. Discursive construction and celebration of San Polo	111
3.3.4. The heritage of San Polo: Between dissonance and stigmatisation	112
CONCLUSIONS	117
SUMMARY	123
REFERENCES	138
IMAGES.....	156
CURRICULUM VITAE.....	159
CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS	160
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	161

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 1. The Clarence Perry project of neighbourhood unit.....	28
Fig. 2. Diagram representing the New Unity of Settlement (Source: Gutnov et al., 1968).....	29
Fig. 3. Siedlung Westhausen in Frankfurt, Germany	34
Fig. 4. The Cimabue tower in the neighbourhood of San Polo in Brescia, Italy (photo by the author)	42
Fig. 5. The Lasnamäe district in Tallinn, Estonia (photo by Kaupo Kalda).....	45
Fig. 6. The demolition of Pruitt-Igoe (© St. Louis Post-Dispatch)	49
Fig. 7. The Tintoretto tower in San Polo, Brescia (photo by the author)	56
Fig. 8. San Polo, Brescia (photo by the author).....	56
Fig. 9. La Corneuve, France	60
Fig. 10. Aerial view of <i>Vällingby Centrum</i> (photo by Oscar Bladh CC: License: BY)	71
Fig. 11. <i>Vällingby</i> , construction of residential area (photo by Herman Ronninger. Svenska Dagbladet CC: License: BY).....	76
Fig. 12. <i>Vällingby Centrum</i> , opening day (photo by Gunnar Lantz. Svenska Dagbladet. CC: License: BY).....	77
Fig. 13. The area of <i>Vällingby</i> from the satellite	78
Fig. 14. View of the <i>Vällingby Centrum</i> (photo by Oscar Bladh CC: License: BY) ..	79
Fig. 15. <i>Vällingby</i> town centre layout plan (<i>Vällingby</i> , Stockholm, SE), (John Reps Collection)	79
Fig. 16–17–18. 11-storey tower blocks near the <i>Vällingby Centrum</i> (photo by the author)	80
Fig. 19–20. Three storey multi-family housing (photo by the author)	81
Fig. 21. 3-storey stepped house in <i>Vällingby</i> (photo by the author)	82
Fig. 22–23. The <i>Vällingby Centrum</i> (photo by the author)	83
Fig. 24. <i>Vällingby</i> : integration of architecture and natural topography of the site ..	84
Fig. 25. The General Plan for Stockholm.....	85
Fig. 26. Frame from the documentary “Modern Life in Sweden” (BBC Archive)..	86
Fig. 27. Lazdynai in 1976 (photo by Marius Baranauskas)	88
Fig. 28. The area of Lazdynai represented on a postcard	91
Fig. 29. The area of Lazdynai from the satellite.....	94
Fig. 30. Lazdynai in 1973 (photo by Marius Barauskas)	95
Fig. 31–32–33. Lazdynai (photos by the author)	96
Fig. 34. The cover of the special issue <i>Architecture Sovietique</i> (Soviet Architecture), published by <i>L’Architecture d’Aujourd’hui</i> (Architecture of Today) in December 1969–January 1970.....	97
Fig. 35. Lazdynai on the Cover of <i>Neue Wohngebiete Sozialistischer Länder</i> in 1976	98
Fig. 36. View of the area of Lazdynai from the Vilnius TV Tower (photo by the author)	100

Fig. 37. Details of the 3D model of San Polo (photo by Università degli Studi di Parma, Laboratorio di Urbanistica, Paesaggio e Territorio).....	101
Fig. 38. The area of San Polo from the satellite (photo by Università degli Studi di Parma, Laboratorio di Urbanistica, Paesaggio e Territorio).....	105
Fig. 39. The area of San Polo (photo by SAB Studio Architetti Benevolo).....	105
Fig. 40. The plan of the residential unit (photo by Università degli Studi di Parma, Laboratorio di Urbanistica, Paesaggio e Territorio).....	106
Fig. 41. Single-family housing in San Polo (photo by the author).....	106
Fig. 42–43. The spine-house (photo by the author).....	107
Fig. 44. The Tiziano tower (photo by the author).....	108
Fig. 45. The Raffaello tower (photo by the author).....	108
Fig. 46. The Michelangelo tower (photo by the author).....	109
Fig. 47. The Tintoretto tower before the demolition (photo by the author).....	109
Fig. 48. The Cimabue tower (photo by the author).....	110
Fig. 49. The Margherita d’Este shopping centre (photo by the author).....	111
Fig. 50. Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica (photo by the author).....	112
Fig. 51–52. Badly kept public space under the Cimabue tower (photo by the author).....	115

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Visual representation of the concept of urban landscape.....	10
Table 2. Comparative representations of the planned residential units, according to the countries where the cases of study are set.....	31
Table 3. The main causes of postwar urbanisation in Europe, visual representation.....	40
Table 4. Visual representation of the model introduced by Prak and Priemus (1986).....	50
Table 5. The consequences of the decline of postwar modern mass housing estates.....	54
Table 6. Visual representation of the concept of memory.....	62
Table 7. The factors of dissonance that affect the heritage of postwar modern mass housing.....	68
Table 8. The geographical and chronological approach of comparative analysis ...	70
Table 9. The criteria of comparative analysis.....	71
Table 10. The factors of heritage dissonance active in Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo.....	116

INTRODUCTION

The historic urban landscape was defined by UNESCO (2011) as an urban area that resulted from a historical layering of values and attributes. The definition provided by UNESCO evidenced two crucial features of the urban landscape: (i) it is shaped and interpreted according to specific values; (ii) such values must be contextualised in time and place. Therefore, the UNESCO recommendation drew a line connecting the physical features of the landscape with the ideological framework that inspires its production and interpretation.

A text that undoubtedly provided the base and, to some extent, anticipated the debate is *The Architecture of the City*, written by Aldo Rossi and published in 1966. According to Rossi, the city realises itself by following a specific set of ideas. Therefore, the cityscape is both a result of material labour and values that inspire its realisation and transformation. Leonardo Benevolo (1967) argued that even the apparently most purely technical urban planning is not politically neutral, and the mutual relation between urban design and socio-economic conditions as well as the overall ideological structures characterised the history of the modern European urbanisation (Belli, 2020a). Juan Pablo Bonta (1979) provided another important element to the debate, particularly on the issue of the relationship between architecture and meaning. The author comparatively presented the physical reality of architecture and its cultural conceptions. The physical reality of architecture is made of the physical structure of buildings and their inhabitants. The study of physical reality is committed to defining what architecture 'is', its form and its attributes. The cultural conceptions of architecture are related to the cultural processes and are aimed at understanding what the physical reality of the architecture 'means'. Therefore, Bonta stressed that the cultural conceptions of architecture give priority to the values embedded in the built environment, their ideological connotation and their historical meaning.

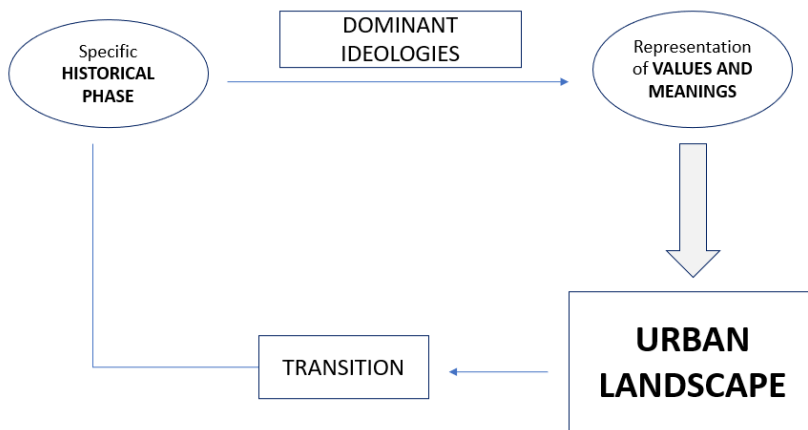
More recently, Cosgrove and Jackson (1987) stressed the relevance of dominant ideologies in giving meaning and values to the material phenomena. According to Jackson, the ideologies cannot be exclusively related to the field of beliefs and ideas, but constitute a "severely practical domain where ideas and beliefs have definite material consequences" (1989, p. 50). Humphrey pointed out that "ideology is found not only in texts and speeches [but] it is a political practice that is also manifest in constructing material objects" (2005, p. 39). Czepczyński (2008) defined landscape as metaphoric and claimed that, similarly to the language, it operates as a system of representation. Mitchell (1994) claimed that landscape is a medium of exchange between the self and the other, and this exchange is mediated by the culture. Within this framework, Rowntree and Conkey (1980) had pointed out that such a process of exchange can effectively take place where the messages and the audience belong to the same socio-cultural system. Cosgrove (2008) defined landscape as a way through which Europeans represented their world and their social relationships to themselves and others. Therefore, the history of landscape is a part of the wider history of economy and society.

Nevertheless, the urban landscape is not only a representation of power through signs and symbols; it is a representation of how hierarchies of values and ways of thinking evolve in history, as well. Therefore, it is necessary to present the urban landscape as a palimpsest, a complex and dynamic entity, which is re-written and re-interpreted whenever historical and ideological transformation takes place. When the transition to a different system is related to the processes of regime change in the context of authoritarian or former authoritarian societies, the effects are visible and sometimes drastic. Nevertheless, such processes take place in democratic societies as well, sometimes in a more nuanced way, without the sharp and clear shift from the old to the new regime. What is common to any process of transition is that what has been produced in the previous era becomes an object of the past.

The association with the past opens the relevant question of heritage. The concept of heritage must be carefully defined and differentiated from the simple legacy of the past. In fact, it would be incomplete to define heritage as a collection of physical artefacts inherited from a previous historical period. As the theoretical debate of the last two decades demonstrated (among the others: Smith, 2006; Tunbridge, 2008; Hawke, 2010; Kisić, 2017), heritage is a product of the present, consciously elaborated to respond to the contingent needs and demands. The designation of heritage is based on what societies decide to remember and celebrate and what they want to remove from the collective memory. Thus, the value of heritage objects is directly proportional to the meaning that such objects have for the societies.

The dissertation is committed to applying the aforementioned theoretical framework to the analysis of postwar modern mass housing.

Table 1. Visual representation of the concept of urban landscape



Aim of the dissertation

The aim of the research is to study the physical and discursive construction and the post-transition(s) heritage of the mass housing era in Europe (1950–1980s) through the comparative analysis of three cases of study.

Objects of the research

The objects of the comparative analysis are the neighbourhoods of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo.

Vällingby came into existence in 1954 in north-western Stockholm, in Sweden. Vällingby was one of the first realisations of the ABC town model (*infra*), and it may be considered as one of the first modern neighbourhoods in Europe. Throughout the postwar years, the neighbourhood played a pivotal role in future developments, and its influence went far beyond the national borders.

Lazdynai was built in the north-western outskirts of Vilnius, the capital of the republic of Lithuania, between 1967 and 1973. After the construction, the district was considered the jewel of postwar Soviet urbanisation in the Baltic republics, and in 1974, it received the Lenin Prize for All-Union architectural design, the most important Soviet award. The planning and building of Lazdynai was characterised by the tension between the attempt to find a local way to modern mass housing and the rigid Soviet institutional and ideological framework.

The neighbourhood of San Polo was built between the second half of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s in the south-eastern area of Brescia, the second city of Lombardy, in Italy. Designed by Leonardo Benevolo, San Polo is undoubtedly one of the most striking cases of postwar modern urban planning in Italy. The presentation of the cases of study reveals a specific geographic and chronological perspective of the research.

The selected neighbourhoods, located in Sweden, Lithuania and Italy, belong to three regions of Europe that, especially in the postwar decades, were characterised by different political regimes and socio-economic conditions. Sweden, governed by the social-democratic party, attempted to establish a social contract between the state and citizens and implement a ‘third way’ of modernization and social progress, beyond the capitalist-socialist dichotomy. Lithuania was under the Soviet occupation that lasted until the demise of the Soviet Union itself and forcefully shaped its paths of economic, industrial and urban development. Italy, after the postwar physical and political reconstruction and the Marshall Plan, entered a phase of integration with the Western European states. This geographical heterogeneity reveals the commitment of the dissertation to present postwar modern mass housing as a pan-European phenomenon, whose development took place beyond the typical east-west polarisation. Furthermore, focusing on three neighbourhoods, built in different moments of the mass housing era, the work attempts to follow a *long durée* approach with the aim of providing the most complete picture of the phenomenon. Such a chronological approach is clear if the selected cases of study are considered. Vällingby was planned and built in the 1950s; therefore, its construction anticipated the development of postwar modernism on a large scale. Lazdynai was inaugurated

in 1973, and it may be chronologically located in the middle of the golden age of Soviet mass housing. In the end, the construction of San Polo took place between the end of the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s, making the neighbourhood one of the last relevant examples of postwar modern urbanisation in the western Europe.

Structure of the dissertation

The dissertation is structured in three chapters.

The first chapter of the work may be associated with the idea of construction of postwar modern mass housing. To begin with, the chapter is committed to performing an analysis of the principles of modernism in architecture and urban planning. Instead of being schematically presented, the main authors and the most relevant texts in the field are comparatively analysed according to some key-points. First, modernism is presented as a solution to the situation of urban and architectural crisis. Afterwards, the analysis focuses on the issues of spatial coordination, physical planning of the residential districts, standardisation and industrialised construction. Moreover, modernism is presented as an ideology that is characterised by socially progressive values; within this framework, the architects and planners were given a new role and shared a commitment to improve the existence of human beings through rational construction. Furthermore, the first chapter of the dissertation is aimed at performing a historical analysis of political, economic, demographic and social factors that fostered the postwar urbanisation and created a fertile ground for the massive application of modernist principles to housing. In the end, the chapter focuses on the golden age of modern mass housing in Europe with the goal of understanding to what extent the connection between modern planning, political goals and historical conditions shaped the urban landscape.

The second chapter of the dissertation is aimed at investigating the ‘afterlife’ of postwar modern mass housing. The chapter may be associated with the idea of ‘intellectual’ or ‘discursive’ deconstruction. After providing an overview of the arguments that are used to criticise architectural modernism, the text focuses on the analysis of the decline of postwar modern mass housing. Then, the work concentrates on the specific effects of political transition on the phenomenon as well as the issue of neighbourhood reputation. In the end, the analysis of the relation between heritage and modern mass housing is performed. In particular, the relation between the phenomenon and the concept of dissonant heritage (Tunbridge, Ashworth, 1996) is investigated. More than labelling the whole postwar mass housing as an object of dissonant heritage, the analysis is committed to investigate and comment on some specific factors of dissonance that may act in specific contexts. In particular, the text is focused on the obsolescence and the undesirability of meanings and messages transmitted by the postwar modern architecture and the socio-economic segregation that emerged in some neighbourhoods.

The third chapter of the research is the most experimental and innovative in its nature, and it performs a comparative analysis of the selected cases of study, i.e., Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo. The analysis is implemented according to specific criteria (*infra*), and for this reason, the structure of each subchapter follows

the same path. To begin with, the cases of study are historically contextualised in the wider framework of urbanisation in their respective countries; this historical contextualisation gives primary role to the political dynamics. Afterwards, the analyses of planning as well as physical and functional attributes of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo are carried out. Furthermore, the research is committed to stress the process of discursive construction, through written materials, media and exhibitions, and celebration, mostly through awards, of the selected cases. In the end, the third chapter is aimed at performing the analysis of the current situation and the role of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo in the contemporary urban context and analysing the heritage of the neighbourhoods.

Methodology

The methodology of the research is constructed around four main pillars: (i) the reading of texts of architectural theory and urban planning, written between the 1950s and the 1970s; (ii) the analysis of architectural periodicals, approached as primary historical sources; (iii) the investigation of the relation between postwar modern mass housing and heritage and, in particular, the analysis of the phenomenon through the lens of the concept of dissonant heritage; (iv) the comparative analysis of the selected cases of study, performed according to a specific set of criteria.

Within the field of modern planning and architecture, it is possible to perform a distinction between the works providing an intellectual background and the texts specifically focusing on the areas of interest of the dissertation. In order to reconstruct the phenomenon of modern urban planning, it was necessary to concentrate on the works produced before the postwar decades (Gropius, 1910/2007; Le Corbusier, 1941). In fact, the knowledge of such texts was necessary to have a complete understanding of the postwar production (Doxiadis, 1963; Rossi, 1966; Zevi, 1973). Italian works have been largely analysed. The motivation for the choice is twofold. On the one hand, the study of works written in Italian language made it possible to have a direct access to the texts written in the postwar decades without the intermediation of translation. On the other hand, a specific cultural position of the country must be mentioned. Due to a largely ideologised *intelligentsia*, Italy, together with France, was a Western country that was more receptive, though not a-critically, to the cultural production of the socialist states. Such a specific position makes Italian postwar production very valuable in the context of a comparative and pan-European perspective of the dissertation.

In relation to the specific contexts of the dissertation, the most relevant texts for the research are *General Plan for Stockholm* (1952), *The Ideal Communist City* (1968) and the works *The Origins of Modern Town Planning* (1967) and *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica* (1976) by Leonardo Benevolo.

The *General Plan for Stockholm* was developed by the city planning office of the Swedish capital, directed by Sven Markelius. The text is originally written in Swedish language, but the main points of the work were summarised in English for the international audience. The relevance of the document lies in the combination of

technical aspects with the aesthetic ideas and the socially progressive philosophy that characterised Swedish modern urbanism during the golden age of the social democratic welfare state. Written by a Moscow-based team, coordinated by Alexei Gutnov and composed by Baburov, Djumenton, Kharitonova, Lezava and Sadovskij, *The Ideal Communist City* is a text where the specific and transnational dimensions coexist and do not contradict each other. On the one hand, the work is characterised by a strong ideological connotation, which makes it possible to contextualise it in the framework of Soviet and socialist urbanism. On the other hand, the Moscow team raised questions and proposed solutions oriented towards spatial coordination and decentralisation, which were common to the international postwar modernism. The works of Leonardo Benevolo that had the most relevance for the research are *The Origins of Modern Town Planning* (1967) and *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica* (Brescia S. Polo: A Public Urbanisation Neighbourhood, 1976), which has never been translated into English. The former has been crucial to have a deep understanding of the theoretical aspects of the work of Benevolo, particularly in relation to the relationship between political power and urban planning. The latter constitutes a very valuable insight on the architectural and planning activity of Benevolo, and it is the main source to reconstruct the genesis of San Polo.

The architectural periodicals *Casa Bella* and *Domus* and *Architectural Review* have been analysed and approached as primary historical sources. The research was conducted on the issues published between the 1940s and 1991, the year of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the demise of the whole socialist bloc, and the date that conventionally marks the end of the mass housing era in Europe. In fact, since 1991, the institutional and cultural framework that sustained the mass housing effort in the socialist countries disappeared, while the phenomenon had already largely slowed down in the rest of the European continent. The research was carried out with the aim of investigating both technical and intellectual aspects that characterised postwar modern housing. The themes such as rationalisation and prefabrication of construction as well as decentralised planning have been widely analysed between the 1950s and the 1970s (Diotallevi, Marescotti, 1941; Ponti, 1956; Biondo, Rognoni, 1976). The issue of social housing, which was marginal in the Scandinavian debate¹ and absent in the Soviet context, was analysed in *Domus* (Ponti, 1956; Codice: Incontri e scontri sulla casa, 1972). Furthermore, the aesthetical value of postwar modernism (Ponti, 1951) and the international dimension of the phenomenon (Pica, 1970; Pica, 1972; Boissière, 1982) were not ignored. At the same time, the contemporary critical assessment of modern planning and architecture found space, particularly in the issues of *Domus* published between the 1970s and 1980s (Magistretti, 1973; Gravagnuolo, 1982; Bellini, 1988). Thus, the research in periodicals showed how the phenomenon of postwar modernism and its main attributes have been presented, perceived and evaluated.

¹ The Scandinavian welfare state was committed to implement an egalitarian and democratic housing. At least theoretically, different housing units were assigned on the basis of the size of families, not according to income; see chapter 3.

Before explaining the relevance of heritage for the methodological structure of the dissertation, it is necessary to quickly recap a crucial point of the dissertation. It has been previously pointed out that the dominant ideologies and cultural values are represented in the urban landscape. Furthermore, it has been argued that when a process of political and ideological transition takes place, a hegemonic position is acquired by new values and orientations. Nevertheless, while institutional transition is relatively quick, the transformation of the urban landscape is slower and, to some extent, impossible to fully accomplish. Therefore, the cities are constantly characterised by a tension between the past and the present as well as between what is considered valuable and meaningful and what is not.

Within this framework, the postwar modern mass housing made no exception. In the postwar decades, in northern and western Europe, and during the period of 1954–1991, in the Eastern bloc, the mass housing was one of the most visible instruments in the welfare state and socialist paths toward modernisation. Furthermore, postwar modern neighbourhoods were the main outcome of the effort to carry out a technically efficient and philosophically egalitarian approach to urbanisation. Nevertheless, after the process of political transition, the optimism related to the phenomenon vanished. In Nordic countries and Western Europe, a weakening of the welfare policies and a turn towards neoliberalism took place between the second half of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s. Consequently, the policies oriented toward collectivism and the set of values that were central in the mass housing era became marginal; at the same time, the public involvement in the housing sector decreased. In 1991, the post-socialist transition began in the former Soviet Baltic States² and in other central and eastern European countries. The attempt to establish a free market economy, the dismantling of the socialist-era production system, the efforts to erase the unwanted socialist past and the will to rediscover pre-socialist heritage shaped the attributes of the urban landscape and its perception. After the transition(s) began, the postwar modernist neighbourhoods survived as the representations of recent past and entered in a phase of intellectual and narrative afterlife. Such conditions made the heritage of postwar modern mass housing worth being investigated.

Particularly, the work is committed to approach the relation between postwar mass housing and heritage, applying the concept of dissonant heritage. Dissonant heritage is a specific kind of heritage “that involves discordance or lack of agreement and consistency” (Tunbridge, Ashworth, 1996, p. 20) as well as incompatibility and difference (Kisić, 2017). The research is aimed at identifying and assessing the factors that act as triggers of dissonance. Three main factors of dissonance may be relevant to the analysis. Two of them, the phenomena of

² The other Soviet republics are not mentioned for two reasons. To begin with, the dissertation focuses on the European continent. Therefore, it would be inappropriate and confusing to mention states that belong to different areas. Furthermore, the path of post-Soviet transition has been deeply differentiated; the attributes of transition in the Baltic republics followed a path common to other post-socialist European nations, but rather dissimilar from the rest of the post-Soviet context.

‘obsolete transmission’ and ‘undesirable transmission’, are associated with the messages contained in the heritage. The third factor, class-generated dissonance, must be related to the socio-economic dimension. It is necessary to briefly present each factor.

- ‘Obsolete transmission’ is a phenomenon that takes place when the messages related to a previous historical phase continue to be projected to societies characterised by different goals and ideological orientations. The fact that the mass housing was implemented in a period when the relation between political power and modern urban planning was deep gave the phenomenon a strong ideological connotation. The fact that postwar neighbourhoods continued to represent such a relation once it was over makes ‘obsolete transmission’ an interpretative category of primary importance.
- ‘Undesirable transmission’ is a phenomenon related to the transmission of messages that represent painful and/or unwanted past events. Undesirable transmission is likely to be a factor of dissonance, especially in central and eastern Europe, where the postwar modern architecture may be associated with the years of Soviet occupation or communist dictatorship.
- Class-dissonance is prominent in the urban context, and it is fostered by the socio-economic conditions of the most disadvantaged areas. Therefore, class-dissonance is a category of analysis that can be applied to the neighbourhoods that are characterised by bad socio-economic performances, income-based segregation and stigmatisation.

Due to the peculiarities of each case of study, it is reasonable to expect that the aforementioned factors of dissonance act with different intensity in Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo.

The comparative analysis of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo is performed according to a precise set of criteria. It is reasonable to argue that not all criteria have the same importance in each case of study. Nevertheless, they provide the most effective toolkit to analyse the cases of study in historical perspective, in relation to their architectural and functional features, and their heritage.

1. The first criterion focuses on the historical and political atmosphere as well as institutional steps that triggered the phenomenon of postwar modern mass housing in Sweden, Soviet Lithuania and Italy. To begin with, the analysis is committed to focusing on economic, social and demographic factors that fostered urbanisation and the consequent demand for housing. At the same time, the responses given by the local and state institutions to the issue of urbanisation are being investigated with particular attention to new urban plans and legislative acts. Furthermore, the concrete outcomes of the mass housing era in Sweden, Soviet Lithuania and Italy are being presented, before concentrating on the processes of planning and constructing Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo.
2. The second criterion is committed to performing physical and architectural analysis of the cases of study. The analysis focuses on the physical and

functional attributes, the main building types and the interaction between the natural and built environment in Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo. Furthermore, the study is committed to defining if and to what extent the physical and functional features of the selected neighbourhoods make them identifiable and legible areas. The overall task of the analysis is to understand if and to what extent the planners and architects managed to adapt the general principles of postwar modern planning to the local context and if they succeeded in providing an original interpretation of the phenomenon.

3. The third criterion that characterises the analysis of the cases of study is committed to reconstructing the effort to create a discourse, aimed at celebrating Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo in the years of construction or the immediately following period. Thus, the research is focused on written materials that presented the newly constructed neighbourhoods in the 1960s and 1970s, both in the respective home countries and abroad. Among these written materials, there should be mentioned the already cited *General Plan for Stockholm* (1952) and the work of Leonardo Benevolo *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica* (1976) as well as the international survey of panel housing in the Eastern bloc *Neue Wohngebiete Sozialistischer Länder* (1976), where Lazdynai was presented and represented on the cover. Furthermore, local and international architectural prizes, such as the Patrick Abercrombie Prize awarded to Vällingby in 1961 and the Lenin Prize for All Union Architectural Design received by Lazdynai in 1974, are being considered.
4. The fourth criterion of analysis concentrates on the contemporary situation of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo with the aim of analysing the heritage of these postwar modern neighbourhoods. In particular, the analysis is committed to investigate the heritage of the cases of study through the lens of the concept of dissonant heritage. Thus, the work attempts to define which factors of dissonance may be identified in each neighbourhood and how deeply they operate.

Thus, the first two criteria of analysis are inherently historical. The first criterion concentrates on the political and institutional aspects that fostered the development of mass housing and the construction of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo, and the third criterion focuses on the discursive construction and the optimistic celebration of the newly built neighbourhoods. However, the second criterion is strongly oriented towards the architectural analysis of the selected cases of study. In the end, the fourth criterion is focused on the analysis of the heritage of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo. The whole comparative analysis takes into deep consideration the transnational dimension of postwar modernism, and it is committed to understanding the extent to which dialogue with foreign models was influential in the planning and the construction of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo. Such an analytical perspective is expected to give further strength to the thesis that postwar mass housing had a strong transnational connotation without ignoring

the specificities of each case of the study. Such a complex approach reveals the heterogeneity of the disciplinary approach that includes political, social and cultural history, architecture and urban geography as well as heritage studies.

Literature review

The study of modern architecture and planning was mostly conducted on the basis of texts written by professionals and publications in the periodicals. Such a perspective, as it has already been pointed out, made it possible to approach such texts as primary sources and perform a deeper and more original analysis of the theme. Nevertheless, it would have been a mistake to ignore the vast academic literature on the topic. The authors, active in the fields of architectural theory and history, analysed the concepts of modernisation, modernity and modernism (Frisby, 2004; Bø-Rygg, 2004; Guillén, 2006; De Syon, 2008) and concentrated on the main attributes of modern architecture and urban design (Heynen, 1998; Donald, 1999; Boyd Whyte, 2004; Herbert, 2007; Birch, 2011; Crysler, 2012; Hall, 2014; Kip, Sgibnev, 2015).

In their reconstruction of postwar Europe, historians such as Bessel (2000), Judt (2005) and Buchanan (2012) presented the political, demographic, social and economic trends that triggered urbanisation and, consequently, the construction of modern postwar mass housing neighbourhoods. In the last few years, mass housing has been the topic of an increasing number of studies. The aspects of mass housing related to architecture and planning have been excellently presented by Wassenberg (2013), Wassenberg, Turkington and van Kempen (2004), Hess, Tammaru and van Ham (2018). Swenarton, Avermaete and van Heuvel (2015) focused on the active role of the welfare-state in the field of architecture. The geographical expansion of mass housing and its adaptation to different political models inspired a stimulating debate among the scholars that stressed local peculiarities and those who put an accent on the similarities between different areas. Recently, Sammartino (2018) and Zarecor (2018) presented the specificities of the central and eastern European cases, whereas the similarities between the blocs have been presented by Reid (2006), Borén and Gentile (2007), Glendinning (2011), Urban (2011), Monclús and Díez Medina (2016) and Glendinning (2021).

The study of the decline of postwar housing was introduced by Prak and Priemus (1986) and inspired a huge number of works in the field of urban studies, committed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current situation of European estates (Baldwin Hess, Tammaru, van Ham, 2018; Bolt, 2018; Dekker et al., 2005; Musterd, van Kempen, 2007; Musterd et al., 2017; Permentier, van Ham, Bolt, 2008; van Beckoven, Bolt, van Kempen, 2009). The concept of stigma was introduced by Goffman (1963), and since the 2000s, it has been successfully applied to the urban issues (Hastings, 2004; Permentier, van Ham, Bolt, 2009; Wacquant, 2001–2007; van Eijk, 2012; Garbin, Millington, 2012).

The effects of political transition on urban space have been largely investigated in the last two decades. The effects of post-socialist transition have been deeply analysed and interpreted by a remarkable number of scholars, such as Gentile

and Sjöberg (2006), Borén and Gentile (2007), Young and Kaczmarek (2008), Sýkora and Bouzarovski (2012), Hirt (2013) and Golubchikov (2016). The effects of the transition from welfare-oriented to neoliberal policies have been investigated by a noticeable amount of works, among which it is worth mentioning Peck and Tickell (2002), Weber (2002), Wacquant (2001; 2007), Peck (2004) and Theodore, Peck and Brenner (2011).

There has been seen an increasing number of publications that focused on the active involvement of ideology in the landscape formation in recent years (Humphrey, 2005; Cosgrove, 2008; Czepczyński, 2008; Czepczyński, Sooväli-Sepping, 2015). At the same time, the concept of memory has been widely investigated (Brockmeier, 2010; Assmann, 2011; Assmann, Shortt, 2012; Tamm, 2015) together with its relevance for the contemporary European identity (Logan, Reeves, 2009; MacDonald, 2013; Delanty, 2018; van Huis et al., 2019).

The concept of heritage has been an object of an intense debate that involved both institutions (European Commission, 2004; European Parliament, 2011; UNESCO, 2011; ICOMOS, 2013) and international scholarship (Smith, 2006; Graham, Howard, 2008; McDowell, 2008; Murzyn, 2008; Adam, 2010; Bianca, 2010; Hawke, 2010; Harvey, 2013). Moreover, the transnational dimension of heritage (Mäkinen, 2019; van Huis et al., 2019) has been recently considered. Beyond the mainstream presentation of the phenomenon, the theme of difficult or unwanted heritage has been an object of increasing attention (Logan, Reeves, 2009; MacDonald, 2009; McCarthy, 2017).

The category of dissonant heritage was introduced by Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996). More recently, the debate about dissonant heritage was extended (Tunbridge, 2008; Kisić, 2017; Battilani, Bernini, Mariotti, 2018), despite remaining largely focused on the heritage of totalitarianism and colonialism. The analysis of postwar socialism in relation to dissonant heritage has been recently performed in relation to Nowa Huta in Poland (Banaszkiewicz, 2017) and the administrative buildings of Soviet collective farms in Estonia (Ingerpuu, 2018). The works have very remarkable merits of opening the question of dissonant heritage in relation to the non-monumental and everyday areas. Nevertheless, it seems that the category of dissonant heritage has been applied in order to start a new debate, but both works lack deep conceptual analysis.

The efforts of local and international researchers were crucial to reconstruct the impact of postwar modern planning in Sweden, Soviet Lithuania and Italy. The relation between Swedish urbanisation and the welfare state has been investigated, among others, by Albertsen and Diken (2004), Creagh (2011) and Kautto and Kuitto (2021). Caldenby (2013) deeply concentrated on the theme of Nordic modernism. The case of Vällingby and its centrality in postwar Swedish and international urban discourse have been recently analysed by Cook (2018). The Soviet postwar urbanism in the Baltic area was studied, among others, by Cinis, Drémaitė and Kalm (2008), Kährlik and Tammaru (2010) and Kalm (2011). The Soviet urbanisation in the Baltic area has been recently presented and critically assessed by Gentile (2019), Glendinning (2019), Hess and Tammaru (2019) and Puur, Klesment and Sakkens

(2019). The specific case of Lithuania has been gaining increasing visibility thanks to the recent works of local scholars (Baločkaitė, 2010; 2012; Drėmaitė, Petrulis, Tutlytė, 2012; Drėmaitė, 2013; 2017; Ruseckaitė, 2016; Janušauskaitė, 2018; 2019; Burneika, Ubarevičiene, Baranuskaitė, 2019; Šiupšinskas, Lankots, 2019). Unlike the aforementioned counterparts, Italian mass housing was not central in the debate on the postwar residential architecture. Therefore, the theme was an object of a smaller number of publications, among which it is worth mentioning Sparke (1990), Tosi and Cremaschi (2001), Padovani (2003), Cremaschi (2004) and, very recently, Glendinning (2021).

Scientific novelty of the research

The main aspects of novelty of the dissertation are constituted by: (i) the investigation of the relation between modern mass housing and heritage; (ii) the comparative analysis of three postwar neighbourhoods located in different countries and resulting from different cultural and political systems, according to a specific set of criteria.

The theme of heritage is largely studied in relation to monumental or highly symbolic spaces. Most heritage studies focus either on space aimed at celebrating achievements that positively contributed to the development of a community or the places of mourning committed to reinforce the collective identity through the remembrance of painful past events. However, the dissertation is committed to raising a question of heritage of non-exceptional areas, such as residential districts. The use of analytical categories that are related to the concept of dissonant heritage constitute a further element of novelty. The dissonant heritage framework is mostly applied to present and interpret the undesirable legacy of traumatic moments, such as totalitarian regimes and colonial domination. However, it is less likely to be applied to the objects that constitute the legacy of democratic societies, such as postwar Sweden and Italy. Nevertheless, the obsolescence of messages embedded in the postwar mass housing and the disadvantaged socio-economic conditions of some neighbourhoods may operate as factors of dissonance. Given the transnational and pan-European nature of the phenomenon, the analysis of the heritage of postwar modernism is likely to give valuable elements to the contemporary debate about the European heritage.

The acknowledgement of shared trends in postwar European urbanisation *per se* is not a new element in the international scholarship. Nevertheless, most academic literature approaches the transnational similarities that characterised postwar housing as a generally accepted fact, without performing a further investigation of the issue. Furthermore, in vast international studies of the postwar mass housing, different cases of study are often simply juxtaposed and presented in separated essays. However, the dissertation is committed to study the cases of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo, based on a precisely defined model. Thus, the work is aimed at filling a gap in the literature and presenting postwar modern mass housing in a new perspective.

1. THE CONSTRUCTION OF POSTWAR MODERN MASS HOUSING IN EUROPE

1.1. The city and the experience of modernity: Modernism in architecture and urban planning

The theoretical roots of modern urban planning may be found in the late 19th century, when the industrial revolution brought about dramatic changes to the social order of certain zones of Europe. The transformation of environment and society fostered a deep intellectual activity that often transcended the purely intellectual sphere and extended to the political and economic fields (Heynen, 1999; Kip, Sgibnev, 2014). Since the origins and throughout the 20th century, the modern planning showed its commitment to bring radical innovations in housing and urban form and accomplish a fundamental reshaping of society with the aim of planning its future (Kip, Sgibnev, 2014).

Before engaging in a debate about modernism and architecture, it is necessary to perform a careful definition of terms ‘modernisation’, ‘modernity’ and ‘modernism’. The terms are distinct, but they are, at the same time, characterised by a dialectical relation.

The term ‘modernisation’ is used to describe the “process of social development” (Heynen, 1999, p. 10). Modernisation transformed social life, carried out a rational division of labour and enriched the traditional culture with scientific and technological progress. Giddens (1990) identified four dimensions that were central in the process towards modernity. To begin with, echoing the Marxist tradition, Giddens acknowledged the central role of capitalism that established a class-based system. The second dimension presented by the author was industrialism, which carried out the organisation of production and the coordination of human activities from workplace to home. The third and fourth dimensions identified by Giddens were the capacity of direct or indirect surveillance of societies and the monopoly of violence that took shape within the framework of modern nation states. The process of modernization was marked by the historical consciousness of ‘being modern’ (Cosgrove, 2008). However, the process fostered a certain degree of “instability, continual movement, and crisis” (Bø-Rygg, 2004, p. 25).

The term ‘modernity’ defines the experience of the process of modernisation. Modernity expresses how individuals engage in the evolutionary and transformative modernisation process (Heynen, 1999; Kip, Sgibnev, 2014). The experience of modernity was associated with the idea that the world could be positively transformed by human intervention, and while restructuring the overall social order, the future of a society could be planned and shaped (Kip, Sgibnev, 2014). Heynen (1999) pointed out that being associated with an endless evolution and the orientation towards a future that is different from the past and the present, modernity is a deeply Western concept. This progressive view expresses, in fact, the Western conception of time as linear and irreversible. However, such a unilinear portrait of modernity must not ignore the existence of differentiated paths of modernization and

the multiple and contested nature of modernity itself (Frisby, 2004; Boyd Whyte, 2004).

‘Modernism’ may be generally considered as a cultural and artistic response to the experience of modernity (Heynen, 1999; Boyd Whyte, 2004). The term modernism designates the Western (Bø-Rygg, 2004) cultural trends and artistic movements “that proclaim themselves as being in sympathy with the orientation toward the future and the desire for progress” (Heynen, 1999, p. 10). Therefore, modernism may be considered as an artistic and cultural movement as well as a force self-consciously oriented towards the progress. Modernism was committed to reversing the conception of art as an autonomous sphere with no impact on the social system and establishing new life praxis. Nonetheless, given the complexity of concepts of modernization and modernity, it is necessary to stress that the modernism itself was a plural and multifaceted phenomenon. Guillén defined the ideology that shaped architectural modernism as “antitraditional, antiromantic, futurist (i.e., forward-looking) and somewhat utopian” (2006, p. 14). Maki (2008) defined modernism as the philosophical and intellectual force that drove industrial society between the 19th century and the first three quarters of the 20th century.

The primary role of capitalism in the process of modernisation has been mentioned (*supra*). Nevertheless, given the comparative nature of the research and the fact that the analysis includes a non-capitalist political system, the Soviet Union, it is necessary to clarify the relationship between European modernity and socialism. Giddens (1999) stressed that both capitalist and socialist nation states relied on the industrial production, and that the socialist states constituted an “enclave within the capitalist world economy” (Giddens, 1999, p. 72), where the state control over industrial production was stronger. Hoffman (2000) demonstrated that it would be a mistake to make a rigid distinction between the framework of modernity and the socialist ideology. The author considered socialism itself as a product of European modernisation. If, according to the traditional representation, modernity is defined only in relation to the development of nation states, parliamentary democracies and industrial capitalism, it clearly cannot be associated with the socialist context. Nevertheless, the experience of modernity is much wider and encompassing, and it included elements, such as the belief in reason, science and progress, as well as the discarding of traditional and religious thought that shaped the ‘rationalist ethos’ of the Soviet system.

One further element of convergence between the modernity and socialism lies in the implementation of mass policies. Within this framework, the masses had to be assisted, on the one hand, and mobilised, on the other. Giving masses the central role in political practice and in the socialist mythology, the Soviet state implemented a “participatory, but non-democratic form of politics” (Hoffmann, 2000, p. 247). A last crucial question raised by Hoffmann is the one of the welfare state (*infra*). Undoubtedly, Russia was a latecomer if compared to the other European states. Nevertheless, the fact that the Soviet Union established a “Socialist and authoritarian form of welfare state” (Hoffmann, 2000, p. 251) must be acknowledged.

Modernism in architecture and urban planning was a response to a complex impact of modernisation on the urban space and consequent social transformations. The definition of modernism in architecture and planning must consider technical and ideological aspects. From the technical point of view, the phenomenon was characterised by the use of innovative and industrialised construction methods. Moreover, it introduced a deeply scientific approach to the construction and planning. Ideologically, architectural modernism was characterised by a linear conception of progress, and it was connected to a project of social emancipation. The benefits of scientific planning and rationalised construction had to improve the life of all citizens, despite their social class.

In the early 20th century, architecture was, perhaps, the art that absorbed new industrial methods the most. The influence of industrialisation enabled modernist architects to create an innovative approach to the subject and introduce innovations. During the 1920s, new cultural phenomena, such as German Bauhaus, Soviet Constructivism and Italian rationalism, aesthetically reinterpreted the principles of industrialization in architectural design. The innovative “aesthetic possibilities offered by the machine age” (Guillén, 2006, p. 37) gave, in fact, professionals the necessary toolkit to deal with chaotic urban growth, bad living conditions and the consequent feeling of alienation among the urban dwellers.

One of the main turning points of 20th century urban planning was the IV CIAM Congress, held in 1933 and committed to discuss the theme of the functional city. The CIAM (*Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne* – International Congress of Modern Architecture) was founded in 1928. From the year of foundation to 1956, CIAM organised annual congresses with some interruptions due to the Second World War. Initially, the Congress had to take place in Moscow. The reason for the choice was the will to analyse the possible interactions between the modernism and the socialist context. Nevertheless, the Stalinist attitude towards avant-garde made it clear that in the 1930s, there was no place for CIAM in the Soviet Union. Therefore, the Congress was held on the SS Patris II boat moving from Marseille to Athens and in a hotel in the Greek capital (Birch, 2011).

At first, the proceedings of the Congress have not been published due to the disagreements among CIAM members. They were later published by Le Corbusier in the *Athens Charter (La Charte d'Athènes)*. The text of the *Athens Charter* is divided into 95 points. To begin with, the document presents a general overview of the contemporary urban environment. Afterwards, it performs a critical examination of the contemporary city, in relation to the main urban pillars of urbanism: housing, work, leisure and transportation. In the end, the *Athens Charter* suggests measures to improve the contemporary urban conditions. The most striking feature of the Charter is that through the analysis of contemporary city and requirements to improve it, Le Corbusier attempted to organise and plan the whole life of the citizens. The guidelines were related to the place where people lived as well as their leisure time, their working life and the way they moved. Moving deductively, from general to specific issues, in fact, the *Athens Charter* ambitiously demonstrated how to solve urban problems and provided the basis for a better future.

Birch (2011) divided the modern planners of the XXth century into three generations: the founders, the pioneers and the developers. The generation of the founders emerged in the 1920s. Personalities, such as Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius, introduced the idea of solving urban problems such as un-healthiness, inadequate housing and inefficient transportation through 'enlightened' planning and the construction of a modern and rational city. The generation of pioneers included professionals and authors that were active between the 1930s and 1940s, whose contribution was mostly in writings and projects. In the end, the developers took over and fostered the growth of the modern urban planning during the postwar era.

The exact timing of architectural modernism is nearly impossible to define. The demolition of Pruitt Igoe estate in St. Louis in 1972 (*infra*) has been defined as the death of modernism, but it was not. Perhaps, it was the death of a specific idea of modernism in a specific geographical setting. However, it is always necessary to keep in mind that modernism was a multifaceted phenomenon, where universal values and trends had to deal with the local dimension. The different chronological paths of development of modernism are acknowledged by the comparative analysis performed in the research (*infra*). Nevertheless, there is little doubt that the "universalizing and progressive" (Curtis, 2000, p. 62) attempt to aesthetically and ethically transform societies that characterised modernism must be associated with a definite historical phase. Cosgrove pointed out that modernism was a "passing moment in cultural evolution" (2008, p. 29) and defined its theoretical claims as well as its physical manifestations historically contingent, as any other intellectual movement.

As it has already been pointed out, the following paragraphs are aimed at critically analysing the main themes and problems related to the modernist architecture and planning, which emerged by the comparative study of primary and secondary sources. The analysis is focused on:

1. The fact that a crisis in architecture and planning was acknowledged by modernists; this perspective of analysis is revealing the general commitment to solve a challenging housing and urban situation and use the technical instruments of modernism to overcome the contemporary problems;
2. The debate on decentralised planning and spatial coordination, which reveals how modern neighbourhoods have been planned in relation to the surrounding urban environment and how they have been positioned in the city;
3. The planning of residential districts according to different interpretation of the concept of residential unit, which clarifies how the space within the neighbourhoods had to be organised;
4. The themes of standardisation and industrialised construction, which concentrate on the architectural dimension of the phenomenon;
5. The socially progressive values of modernism and the extent to which they inspired the activity of professionals.

1.1.1. Defeating the ‘urban nightmare’: Modernism as a solution to crisis in architecture and planning

Wakeman (2014) stressed that postwar modern planning was characterised by two important qualities, i.e., the ‘hatred of disorder’ and the firm belief that public intervention and centralised planning could solve the urban chaos of the immediate postwar years. This extremely effective synthesis underlines one crucial fact: it is possible to present the history of postwar planning as a history of how professionals tried to overcome a situation of crisis with a precise set of solutions. The origins of this trend must be identified in the roots of the modern urbanism.

The founders (Birch, 2011) acknowledged the ineffectiveness of contemporary architecture and planning since the beginning. Gropius (1910/2007) stressed the conditions of deterioration of housing as well as the pompous and the falsely romantic architectural style of the time. Le Corbusier made a very bad evaluation of the contemporary cities in the *Athens Charter* as well.

After the Second World War, Constantinos Doxiadis (1963) claimed that contemporary architecture and urban planning have the problem of confusion. The main cause for such confusion was the transition that had been taking place in architecture and the consequent shifts from traditional to modern, from handicraft to industry and from local to international level. Architects were trapped between the old, which could not be demolished overnight, and the new, which was not simply a break with the past, but something carrying out positive contributions to the future. Doxiadis stressed that the problem was not merely that most of mankind was ill-housed, but that many of human needs were not served at all or badly served in the wrong kind of buildings. Doxiadis identified several causes for the crisis of architecture. To begin with, while the population was growing at an unprecedented fast rate, there was no comparable increase in architectural activity. At the same time, the economic development carried out quantitative and qualitative housing demand. Furthermore, the machines changed the modes of transportation and affected scales. Resulting from the coexistence of these trends, urbanisation became itself the major cause of the crisis. While changes in demographic, social and economic phenomena had been very fast, architecture did not transform at the same path.

The analysis made by the Soviet team coordinated by Alexei Gutnov, which resulted in the book *The Ideal Communist City* (1968), started from the recognition of a very similar problem. The contemporary city “did not fulfil its essential purpose” (1968, p. 1), and it did not provide the basis for the development of an organic community. Previous urban developments were carried out through accidental historical processes. In fact, old city plans were incapable of being functionally effective and unable to assimilate growing influxes of population. New structures, on the contrary, must correspond to social and economic needs of the urban world.

Bruno Zevi (1973) claimed that classicism has been the only architectural language that was codified through centuries. Other attempts to create a new language have been constantly considered as exceptions to the classic rule. Against

this backdrop, Zevi stressed the need for the creation of a new, anti-classical language, i.e., the language of modern architecture. For this purpose, the author considered it necessary to get rid of cultural taboos, dogmas and practices that affected the centuries of classicism to conduct a struggle for liberation to create a truly modern architecture.

1.1.2. Decentralised planning and spatial coordination

Modern planning was committed to reaching spatial coordination: all architectural elements must be coordinated with one another and with the surroundings. Within the framework of physical planning, the issue of decentralisation became crucial. A pivotal moment in the realisation of the decentralised urban scheme took place in Frankfurt in 1925, when Ernst May became the director of the department of housing and city planning. The aim of May was to counteract the dramatic housing need in the German city. The success was demonstrated by the fact that “every eleventh resident in the conurbation of Frankfurt obtained a new dwelling through this program, in most cases in one of the large modern-looking *Siedlungen* (settlements) that May built in a circle around the city” (Heynen 1999, pp. 43-44). The planning of Ernst May was based on the idea of *Trabantenstadt*, which consisted of “a core city surrounded by a number of satellites (*Trabanten*), at a certain distance from the centre but with very good transport connections” (Heynen 1999, p. 51). May split the city into separate parts. Nevertheless, it must be not forgotten that despite separation of functions, the master plan attempted to plan Frankfurt as a single whole, a coherent spatial unity. Therefore, it is a mistake to see the *Siedlungen* as ‘islands’ disconnected from the existing city.

Le Corbusier argued that a city must be studied within its whole area of influence: thus, municipal plans had to be replaced by comprehensive regional plans, be prepared on the basis of rigorous and scientific analyses carried out by the specialists of various disciplines. Reviewing the work of Le Corbusier for *Domus*, Pica (1966) explained that according to the planner, urbanism is a key, and towards urbanism, there is a convergence of sociology, economics, construction techniques, administrative organisation and knowledge of humankind.

While presenting, on the pages of *Casa Bella*, the unrealized plan of Sartoris and Terragni for a satellite district in the city of Como, in Lombardy, Pagano and Podestà (1941) made two relevant arguments to support the construction of modern suburban neighbourhoods. The first argument must be historically contextualised in the 1940s, when the population growth in the decades that followed the Second World War (*infra*) still had to take place. Pagano and Podestà argued that providing healthy and spacious houses to the working class could foster a demographic increase. Moreover, the authors claimed that the construction of a suburban district in Como, in the proximity of Milan, would have made it a modern suburban development of Milan itself, according to the efforts of decentralisation that characterised the modern suburban plans. The example can be valid in relation to any other large city. In 1961, in the article “Avvenire di Milano” (The future of

Milan), *Domus* provided the main guidelines for the development of the Italian city. The text reached conclusions that were relevant for the local context, but embodied the typical postwar urban ideology as well. The document expressed the need to organise the outskirts of the city and develop a unitarian plan to coordinate the historical city and new developments. Furthermore, the article stressed that the urban development could not be performed without an improved circulation and an effective system of public transport.

The Swedish suburb of Vällingby (*infra*) was cited as an example to follow in the overall decentralisation effort. In fact, the Swedish planning considered decentralisation a crucial asset of urban developments, as demonstrated by the *General Plan for Stockholm* of 1952 and the introduction of the A-B-C model. Since one of the main commitments of planners was the improvement of connections between the dwellings and workplaces, the proposed solution was the construction of satellite towns, relatively far from the centre and able to provide jobs; hence a relevant part of the inhabitants could find employment in their area of residence. The development of outer areas had to take place in accordance with the development of public transportation. Decentralisation was considered desirable for two reasons. First of all, the planners were convinced that the life of urban areas could be strengthened when residents lived and worked in the same place. Secondly, decentralisation could make what otherwise would have been dormitory towns more alive (*infra*).

The Moscow-based team coordinated by Gutnov deeply focused on the issues of spatial coordination and decentralisation and accompanied the work in this field with an important terminological innovation. The term ‘city’ was considered obsolete by the Moscow team. The main reason for discarding the term was that it would have been wrong to use an old and inadequate term to describe such a new phenomenon. The term ‘city’ accumulated several meanings throughout the history, being used in relation to ancient, mediaeval and capitalist settlements. On the contrary, the group decided to elaborate a new term to define the newly designed socio-spatial complex. It was called ‘new unity of settlement’ (NUS), “underlining in the very name the significance of this entity as the basic sociospatial unit of a new society” (1968, p. 97). A dynamic system of urban settlements was expected to replace the chaotic growth of cities, and the NUS represented the “integrated and self-sufficient nucleus” (1968, p. 101), from which the system would have evolved its fundamental unit. Many nuclei would form an urban region, which could have a population of several million people, a single system of transportation, a central administration and one system of education and research. NUS was expected to be connected to the industrial area by a rapid system of transportation, as well as to the agricultural areas and the areas that preserved in their natural state.

In the new residential units, vehicular and pedestrian traffic must be separated, and the units had to be supplied with modern and fast public transit systems (Fig. 2). The authors of *The Ideal Communist City* argued that private transportation was increasingly producing problems; thus, “even planners in bourgeois societies” (1968, p. 80) were committed to reduce car-dependency. Public transportation was

believed to improve the efficiency of commuting and provide the answer to the traffic congestion. In fact, the motorised traffic had to circulate on peripheral highways, and public transportation had to be accessible in no more than a seven-minute walk.

New needs required new theoretical approaches. In order to shape the city of the future, Constantinos Doxiadis introduced the concept of ekistics. Ekistics has been defined as “the science of human settlements [that] co-ordinates economics, social sciences, political and administrative sciences, technology and aesthetics into a coherent whole and leads to the creation of a new type of human habitat” (1963, p. 96).

Therefore, the evidence from different moments in history of architectural modernism and different geographical and political contexts as well as architectural discourses performed in periodicals demonstrate the crucial need of reaching spatial coordination and decentralisation to be carried out with a scientific approach.



Fig. 1. The Clarence Perry project of neighbourhood unit

- Diagram of NUS.
1. Residential units
 2. School and sports area
 3. Rapid transport above pedestrian level
 4. Highway
 5. Community center of NUS

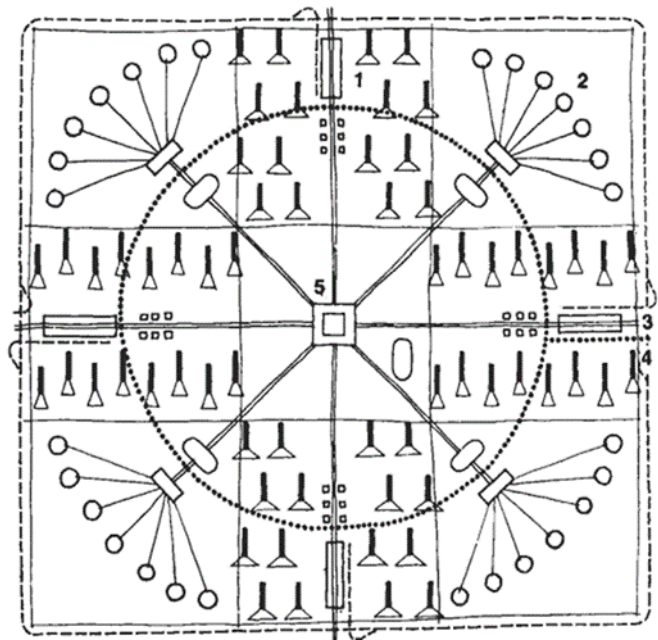


Fig. 2. Diagram representing the New Unity of Settlement (Source: Gutnov et al., 1968)

1.1.3. The concept of residential units and its interpretations

If dwelling could be considered the basic nucleus of urbanism and a social cell (Le Corbusier, 1933), then the postwar planning began to be considered ‘habitation’ as a group of activities that could be done inside and outside the domestic environment.

Within this framework, the influential role of American planning must be acknowledged. In particular, the concept of neighbourhood unit, introduced by Clarence Perry (Fig. 1), may be considered as a link between the ideas of the Garden City and postwar European urbanisation (Garde, 2011). Defining the neighbourhood unit, Clarence Perry stressed a few essential elements, such as an elementary school located in the centre of the area, the presence of playgrounds, small parks and shops besides dwellings. All the public services must be reached from the residential area through safe pedestrian paths. The layout of the neighbourhood unit was an attempt to facilitate social ties and satisfy the needs of families in the overall framework of urbanisation and social transformation.

The suburban centres designed in the *General Plan for Stockholm* of 1952 were functionally divided into units. The plan subdivided units into housing groups with a population of 500–700 inhabitants, neighbourhood groups inhabited by 1,000–3,000 people, residential areas populated by 7,000–15,000 inhabitants and town districts with 25,000–50,000 residents in total. Each area required two kinds of public services, i.e., commercial and institutional. The former, which could be divided into local and central, had to be scattered with the aim of reaching a certain

number of customers. The latter were financed by the government, local authorities or associations and were expected to serve various needs of inhabitants. Furthermore, the Plan stressed that traffic must stay outside the spaces where people spend most of their daily lives, and it was committed to divide the street system into: A-streets, which consisted in the main traffic arteries; B-streets, which have been defined as ‘feeding streets’ in the document and were aimed at connecting the main traffic arteries and local roads; C-streets, consisting in the local streets.

According to the Moscow-based group coordinated by Gutnov (1968), the basic element of the settlement was expected to be both the integrated and self-sufficient nucleus of a new urban system and the basic socio-spatial unit of a new society (Fig. 2). In the Soviet new unity of settlement, the residential sector had to include a shopping centre for 25,000 persons as well as some light industry, sport facilities and medical services. The residential units must be characterised by reasonable economy, privacy and comfort. Each building could house up to 1,750 persons. The structures of apartments could vary according to different combinations of standard units. In order to gain more sunlight, bilateral orientation was recommended, except for single-person apartments. Moreover, NUS should be planned in order to keep or create green belts between them. Forests and parks, surrounding the residential sectors, were expected to be at the same walking distance from each unit, allow residents equal opportunities to access public greenery. In order to satisfy the need for comfort and access to green space and the need for rational use of space, the Soviet planners argued that the future typology of residential building had to be high-rise. In fact, in high-rise structures, people could be concentrated in a relatively small space, could have access to an efficient system of services and green space. High-rise was committed to ensure the maximum of privacy to any unit. Therefore, such solution should not only have brought about technical innovations, but general improvements in the quality of life as well.

Leonardo Benevolo considered the residential unit as the basic urban ensemble. The definition of residential unit was representative of the idea of urban life that did not exclusively relate the concept of residence to dwellings and private space, but to the whole range of activities that could be conducted within the area and the infrastructures required to effectively conduct them. Benevolo divided San Polo into nine residential units. Every unit was composed of 500 dwellings and inhabited by 1,800–2,000 residents (Belli, 2020a).

All in all, the residential districts had to be built in the best locations on the previously empty land. The climate and the topography must be considered during the planning process. Each residential unit must have direct access to green and open space, where facilities for productive and beneficial leisure time had to be set up. Moreover, the residential units had to benefit from the exposure to sunlight; therefore, the dimension of height became very important. The whole traffic circulation must be strictly divided into separated routes for mechanised vehicles and pedestrians. A separated traffic system was expected to eliminate the dangers and inconveniences of heavy vehicular traffic and, at the same time, provide a rapid and easy access to the network of public transport. In the end, the workplaces had to

be rationally located to prevent workers from spending most of their time commuting.

Table 2. Comparative representations of the planned residential units, according to the countries where the cases of study are set

Sweden	Soviet Union	Italy
General Plan for Stockholm (1952)	The Ideal Communist City (1968)	Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica (1976)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town district: 25,000 – 50,000 residents • Residential areas: 15,000 – 7,000 • Neighbourhood groups: 1,000 – 3,000 • Housing groups: 500 – 700 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District: 25,000 residents • Each building: up to 1,750 residents 	<p>Neighbourhood divided into nine residential units: Each residential unit: 1,800 – 2,000 residents</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial centres and services <input type="checkbox"/> Wide range of activities outside the residential space 		

1.1.4. The ‘style of the time’: Standardisation and industrialised construction

The use of standardised plans and industrialised construction methods was an essential attribute of architectural modernism. Gropius (1910/2007) pointed out that the construction based on craftsmanship could not compete with industry anymore. Industrialization could carry several advantages and increase the quality of construction and design through the union of art and technology. Industrialised production had to be based on the use of a limited number of building components and a small variety of materials for all projects. Gropius claimed that only standardised and mass production could deliver satisfying products. A variety could be obtained through different combinations of forms, materials and colours. Gropius associated the methods of industrialised construction to the concept of *zeitstil*, the style of its time (Miller Lane, 2007).

In a programmatic article on the first number of *Das Neue Frankfurt*, Ernst May presented his goals and his vision of architecture. According to May, modernity “meant the creation of a new unified metropolitan culture” (Heynen, 1999, p. 46), and rationality, functionality and industrialised construction had the priority. Ernst May was convinced that the essence of things could be reached only by avoiding any excess and rejecting the superfluous. The beauty could be achieved through essential form and without excessive elements. Therefore, it is clear that the concept of *existenzminimum* was not exclusively an instrumental answer to the housing needs. Nevertheless, it was a blueprint to realise the ascetic ideal of essential, pure, minimal and authentic housing (Heynen, 1999, p. 48). In the *Siedlungen* (Fig. 4), the

neutrality and homogeneity formed the basis for equality, freedom and mobility for the residents.

As the historical issues of *Casa Bella* demonstrated, in the 1940s, the assessment of the productive normalisation that rationalist architecture was attempting to introduce was already positive among the specialists. In fact, the normalisation and production of objects in the series were believed to be beneficial for the industry and architecture. In particular, they would have provided house objects for everyday use that in the 1940s were still seen as a luxury, and they would have rationalised the costs related to production (Diotallevi, Maressotti, 1941). Gio Ponti (1956) as well argued that the rationalisation could be beneficial for the housing construction. In fact, the normalisation could reduce the production costs and increase the quality of houses and furniture. The fact that social housing had to be affordable did not mean that it had to be backward and technically imperfect. In the 1950s, however, the building process was far from being unified or standardised, and social housing made no exception. Therefore, Ponti proposed to make an adoption of a limited number of building typologies a necessary condition to receive the public funding. The adoption of a limited number of building typologies did not mean that the construction schemes had to be rigid and uniform. On the contrary, Ponti claimed that too uniform neighbourhoods were harmful for the development of humans. The architects of social housing must avoid repetitions and grey and provide greenery and differentiation. The Italian author and architect was an advocate of the use of colours: he claimed that grey neighbourhoods provoke sadness, while colours stimulate memory and fantasy.

Moreover, Ponti (1961) argued that art is deeply technical, and the combination of art and technique creates aesthetics. Therefore, the architecture does not aim at beauty, which can be found in nature, but to aesthetics, which can be found in human thoughts and activities. Thus, real architects are not committed to reach beauty, but aesthetics that overcomes natural beauty, and it is reached by mankind through technique and intelligence. The results of construction carried out with industrialised methods as well as their aesthetic implications were presented in international architectural periodicals, as it is demonstrated by the report about the newly constructed Park Hill neighbourhood in Sheffield, written by Banham (1962) on the *Architectural Review*.

Doxiadis (1963) considered standardised units essential for the creation of building complexes. Standardisation should not be limited to the parts of houses, but it must be extended to every element of construction. In the era of economic and technological changes, characterised by greater demand for quality, the standardised elements of construction could serve many purposes and solve many building problems. According to Doxiadis, repetition was not a problem. The architects should not have been afraid of expressing themselves in the same way and repeating something that is good. In fact, repetition was necessary to accomplish building goals, necessary to improve the standardisation of construction and pleasing from an aesthetic point of view. Therefore, the architects must look forward to constructing large buildings based on the repetition of horizontal and vertical.

Gutnov and the NUS group (1968) claimed that the architectural work could be defined contemporary only if it managed to grasp the change in the goals and techniques of the architecture. Since the end of the 1950s, in the Soviet Union, new construction has become a branch of the industrial production (*infra*). Standardised and homogeneous production was demanded by the new aesthetic trends and the dramatic need of mass-produced housing. Rationally planned architecture was considered as a victory over the material shortcomings and symbolised liberty as well as power of technology. Rather than emphasising the facades of each building, contemporary architects focused on the panoramic view. If previously visual attention focused on one single building, in the postwar decades, the attention was on the whole visual field experienced by the observers. As a consequence, a whole range of architectural needs could be met by the standard building types introduced by the industrialised construction. The monotony was a risk. Therefore, the ways buildings were assembled required variations. Nonetheless, infinite variety was considered unnecessary: contemporary architecture had to work with a limited number of prototypes. The desire to demonstrate originality, in fact, distracted the architects from the effort to solve the problems of mass construction.

Prefabrication carried out the use of new techniques and materials. Since the end of the 1950s, plastic was increasingly used and applied in industrialised construction. The adoption of plastic was very stimulating, especially in a period of optimism, such as the west-european economic miracle (Biondo, Rognoni, 1978). In the years of the economic miracle, the kitchen, the living room and the bathroom gave urban dwellers a chance to have access to domestic environments with modern design and higher technological standards and therefore, became the status symbols (Biondo, Rognoni, 1978).

In *Domus*, Biondo and Rognoni (1976) tried to tackle the criticism towards panel housing that began to grow in the mid-1970s. The authors argued that it would be a mistake to associate panels and the poor conditions of several postwar sleeping districts, whose difficult situation began to emerge in those years. Panel houses became a part of deprived urban context when wrong planning choices have been made. Therefore, the authors argued that it is not the use of prefabrication itself that determines the fortune of residential areas.

Thus, to summarise, architectural modernism introduced an unprecedentedly strong relation between the industry and construction. Standardised plans, new construction methods and the use of new materials were seen as beneficial by the specialists. Furthermore, industrialization introduced new aesthetic values in the field of architecture.



Fig. 3. Siedlung Westhausen in Frankfurt, Germany

1.1.5. Modern urban planning: Between construction and social progress

Following the founders of modernism, postwar professionals made it clear that it was no longer time to concentrate on the privileged classes, and the architects had to work to improve the living conditions of all citizens, despite professional, economic and social differences.

In 1941, in the pages of the journal *Casa Bella*, it was argued that the distinction between social³ and bourgeois architecture must not be considered valid. It was argued that, as there is one morality and one law for all humans, there must be only one architecture. In the periodical, it was claimed that what was missing was not the social housing itself, but a healthy and hygienic dwelling for workers. In this sense, the discussion of the 1940s can be contextualised within the wider framework of modern architecture that first expressed itself in the construction of working-class neighbourhoods and towns, inspired by progressive ethical orientations. In the same year, Diotallevi and Marescotti (1941) insisted on the fact that a problem related to working class housing did not exist. However, what did actually exist was a housing problem that included the whole humankind and that must have been solved with a universal and not contingent approach.

The positions expressed by the Italian professionals in the 1940s echoed the philosophical principle of *folkhemmet* (the people's home), introduced in Sweden in the previous decade (*infra*). The principle of *folkhemmet* demonstrated the commitment to make country a good home for all the citizens, regardless their

³ Translated from the Italian word *popolare*.

income or social level.⁴ This fact is the evidence that despite working in different political systems, professionals proposed similar sets of solutions for similar problems.

During the 1950s, in the *Domus* architectural journal, Ponti carried out an intense reflection about social housing. The first argument of Ponti was that social housing had to be a temporary phenomenon. On the one hand, the construction of qualitatively good social housing must be considered a moral duty. On the other hand, a modern house had to be considered as a primary need for every citizen; the distinction between the working class and bourgeois areas was discriminatory and must have been overtaken. Therefore, Ponti (1956) interpreted social housing as a temporary moment of a progressive civic action, leading to the realisation of improved housing for everyone. According to the author, habitation had to be a private fact and not related to the profession. The direct relation between habitation and profession would have been a limit to freedom and independence. Therefore, modern housing was expected to create social and moral conditions to accomplish this goal (Ponti, 1951).

One of the main principles guiding the activity of the Soviet NUS group (1968) was a humanistic vision of the city. Panteleyeva (2018) contextualised this tendency within a wider process of return of humanism to the cities that marked postwar Europe. In fact, the group attempted to create an innovative spatial agenda for the Soviet Union and represented new directions in architecture and planning that followed the Stalinist age. According to Gutnova (2018), in a time of great hope for the future, the NUS group united people who were aimed at moving forward and believed they could change the world (Gutnova, 2018).

Doxiadis stressed the need to move towards an ecumenic architecture, which would be able to create solutions suitable for all humanity and not bond to a specific locality. Therefore, architecture was conceived as a discipline “not of designing houses or buildings, much less of designing monuments, but of building the human habitat” (1963, p. 173). Zevi (1973) claimed that modern architecture had to be popular architecture. He focused on the necessity to establish a new relation between architect and user and involve the population in the design of dwellings, neighbourhoods and cities. Unlike narrow-minded bourgeois architecture, the techniques of prefabrication allowed users to decide among the range of flexible choices. Thus, after centuries of impositions, people would be able to shape their own physical, psychological and moral environment.

Carrying out a deeply renovated idea of architecture and planning, modernism gave new roles to the professionals as well.

Doxiadis claimed that contemporary architects, instead of dealing with an increasingly urban architecture, were still megalomaniacs. Most of them did not focus on the construction of housing for the masses; on the contrary, they behaved as they had “to create another Parthenon and this [was] a wrong and wasteful

⁴ The historical analysis of the conditions where the concept of *folkhemmet* was developed can be found in the third chapter of the dissertation.

approach” (1963, p. 37). Instead, architecture must adapt itself to the new urban context. Within this framework, architects had a great responsibility for studying contemporary problems and finding solutions. They were expected to concentrate on and interpret the evolving situation, present their conclusions in the form of designs, buildings and texts and motivate the necessity for a new architecture. Architects had no right to oppose industrialization and standardisation: they had to work for the sake of socialisation and improvement of living conditions. Moreover, architects had no right to dedicate themselves only to the monumental buildings. It was their responsibility to serve the general human needs and provide necessary conditions for a “better way of life” (1963, p. 68). In this sense, an architect was expected to “create the best possible human habitat by coordinating conception, design and building in one harmonious whole” (1963, p. 93).

According to Gutnov and his team (1968), the goal of the planners was to substantially alter housing for the population, without altering its fundamental purpose, i.e., to provide any human being a private place where to spend time with family and restore physical and moral forces required for productive and social life.

Therefore, modern architects were committed to serving the needs of society with the overall commitment to provide the basis for a “better tomorrow” (Wakeman, 2014, p. 154). The high level of expectations toward urban planning and architecture and their social consequences gave the professionals a “messianic ring [and a] moral prestige” (Wakeman, 2014, p. 154).

To summarise, it is possible to claim that architectural modernism was committed to working for every user and guaranteeing improved living conditions for all citizens, regardless of their class or income. These practical objectives were deeply influenced by an overall humanistic intellectual approach of architects and planners.

1.2. Postwar European urbanisation: Historical analysis

Postwar modern mass housing was born in a precise moment of European history. After the end of the Second World War, political, socio-economic and demographic trends fostered an unprecedented wave of urbanisation and consequent demand for housing. The state played a key role: in fact, the public sector was active in planning and construction and positively assessed the principles of modern urbanism, which have been used as tools to overcome new urban challenges. The work is committed to present postwar modern mass housing in a pan-European perspective. Despite different political systems and chronological patterns that do not perfectly overlap, it is impossible to ignore the similarities between Western and Eastern European city planning between the 1950s and 1980s. The study of modern mass housing helps understanding that “while it is tempting to discuss history of western and eastern Europe in separate categories - the one developed, the other backward; the one capitalist, the other socialist” (Bessel, 2000, p. 258), it is sometimes useful to consider European society beyond this dichotomy. It must be stressed that the approach does not ignore specific conditions of each country or intend to present postwar European society as a monolith. The goal of the research is

to analyse mass housing in a wider perspective to provide the best understanding of the phenomenon.

In 1945, a very limited number of European cities did not present any signs of destructive impact of the war. A very unlucky situation could be found in the areas that were hit the most by the final phases of the conflict, characterized by the bombing of the Allies and the advancement of Soviet army. The areas of Le Havre and Caen, in France, were literally demolished, similar to the German cities, such as Hamburg, Dresden, Dusseldorf and Cologne. The situation was not better in the eastern parts of Europe. In fact, 80% of the Belarusian capital Minsk was destroyed (Judt, 2005), and similar conditions could be found in other capital cities such as Kiev and Warsaw. Thus, the damage made by the Second World War to the physical environment and dramatic conditions of many cities provided one of the most effective representations of the aftermath of the conflict. Quite obviously, the cities hit by the war damage had to face another dramatic problem, i.e., homelessness. It was estimated that around 25 million people in the Soviet Union and about 20 million Germans (Judt, 2005) did not have a shelter at the end of the war. In the end, it must be noted that the damage caused by the Second World War to the European cities worsened the housing situation that was already characterised by the insufficiencies and shortage (Turkington, van Kempen, Wassenberg, 2004).

Therefore, it is legitimate to identify war damage as the initial element of pressure on the postwar states to increase the housing production. The necessity to build quickly and in great numbers was strengthened by spectacular postwar urbanisation, which was fostered by political, economic, demographic and socio-cultural trends.

After the immediate postwar years and after the death of Stalin, in 1953, both sides of the Iron Curtain shared a general will to move forward. Despite the paradoxical nature of the peaceful developments, which took place within the framework of two superpowers confronting and threatening the possibility of a nuclear conflict (Judt, 2005), from the second half of the 1950s, an unprecedented era of peace and stability began in Europe. Although the risks and uncertainties of the Cold War must be considered, the confrontation between the two blocs took place mostly outside Europe, and the threat of imminent conflict did not really affect the continent. At the same time, the dramatic events, such as the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961 and the Prague Spring of 1968, proved to be traumatic to the local societies and international public opinion, but they did not alter the general equilibrium between the Western and Eastern blocs.

The new political atmosphere went hand in hand with deep transformations in the economic and productive system. At the end of the war, European infrastructures were in ruin, the transportation system was broken down, and the financial system was destroyed. During the 1950s, Western Europe started to experience the so-called 'economic miracle', and it was "launched on an unprecedented boom that overturned all previous expectations and consolidated belief in boundless economic growth" (Buchanan, 2012, p. 79).

The timing of the economic miracle in the Western Europe showed little differences from one country to another. Furthermore, the way it was experienced varied according to the local or national contingencies. Nevertheless, it is a fact that European countries, after the deprivation and the depression of the wartime (James, 2000) saw a relevant economic growth. Between 1950 and 1973, the year of the first oil shock, German GDP per capita grew more than three times. In France, GDP per capita grew by 150% (Judt, 2005). In Italy, which started from a lower base, the GDP per capita grew by 5.3% per year (Toniolo, 2013). Inspired by the book *Les Trente Glorieuses: ou la Révolution invisible de 1946 à 1975* (The glorious thirty: Or the invisible revolution from 1946 to 1975), written by the French writer Jean Fourastié, the expression ‘the glorious thirty’ became one of the most powerful syntheses of the economic development of postwar Western Europe. In fact, although the book focused on the economic and social changes that took place in France, the labelling of the three postwar decades as economically and socially ‘glorious’ was acceptable for the whole western part of the continent. Among the effects of the economic miracle, it is necessary to mention the reduction of differences in income and the improvement of material conditions of the working class. Consequently, larger shares of the population had the power to purchase goods that were previously considered luxuries, establishing the basis for the development of the consumer society (Bessel, 2000).

Undoubtedly, one of the main catalysers of the European economic miracle was the Marshall Plan. The European Recovery Program was renamed after George Marshall, the US Secretary of State, and it was launched in June 1947 (James, 2000). The Marshall Plan was motivated by the aim to establish the basis for the development in Western Europe and create a defensive barrier to the Soviet influence through material satisfaction and political stability. Officially, the Marshall Plan ended in 1952, but its economic and cultural influence outlived it for the following decades.

Furthermore, it is possible to claim that the economic boom was one of the first visible effects of the process of European integration (Judt, 2005). During the 1950s, the process was marked by two crucially important moments. In 1952, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, Italy and West Germany joined the European Coal and Steel Community. On 25 March 1957, the same countries signed the Treaty of Rome that came into effect at the beginning of 1958. The main commitment of the Treaty was to establish a broader economic and political cooperation among the member states (James, 2000). Therefore, the birth of the European Coal and Steel Community and the Treaty of Rome can be acknowledged as the first institutional step toward the creation of the European Union.

The economic miracle and industrialization carried out a shift in the overall trends of the European job market. At the end of the Second World War, Europe was still largely an agricultural continent. In the postwar decades, an epochal transformation took place. Millions of Europeans began to abandon their land and move to the most developed cities. The evidence from different European areas demonstrates how strong the phenomenon was. In Italy, around 9 million people

internally migrated between 1955 and 1971. In the postwar years, about 250,000 Swedes left the rural areas and the north of the country to relocate to the largest cities on the coast (Judt, 2005).

Contextually, the Soviet Union and the socialist states attempted to increase industrial production with the aim of satisfying political and economic tasks in central as well as peripheral areas (Musil, 2005; Cinis, Drémaitè, Kalm, 2008; Baločkaitė, 2010). In the postwar years, the number of those who internally moved from rural to urban environments in the Soviet Union and in the whole socialist central and eastern Europe was impressive. In 1961, the Soviet urban population overtook the rural (Judt, 2005), and in the last decade of its existence, the Soviet Union could be defined as a “land of urban dwellers” (Morton, 1984, p. 3). While in 1926, the urban population was around 26.3 million, 17.9% of the total, in 1980, the number of urban dwellers grew to 168.9 million (Morton, 1984). In Soviet Lithuania, half of the population lived in towns and cities by the 1970s, while at the beginning of the 1950s, the urban population of the republic was around 28% (Judt, 2005; Drémaitè, 2017).

The major trigger of rural-urban migration was the search for employment opportunities and higher standards of living. Therefore, it is unsurprising that many of those who moved from the countryside to the city were young adults, both male and female (Stuart, 1984). In the specific Soviet case, the rural-urban developmental gap proved to be extremely deep. The largest and the most important cities, such as Moscow, Leningrad, and the capitals of the republics were undoubtedly the most attractive. For the farmers, it was particularly difficult to obtain an internal passport that was necessary to move within the country and relocate to the main cities. Therefore, informal ways and bribes were a common part of the process of internal migration (Stuart, 1984).

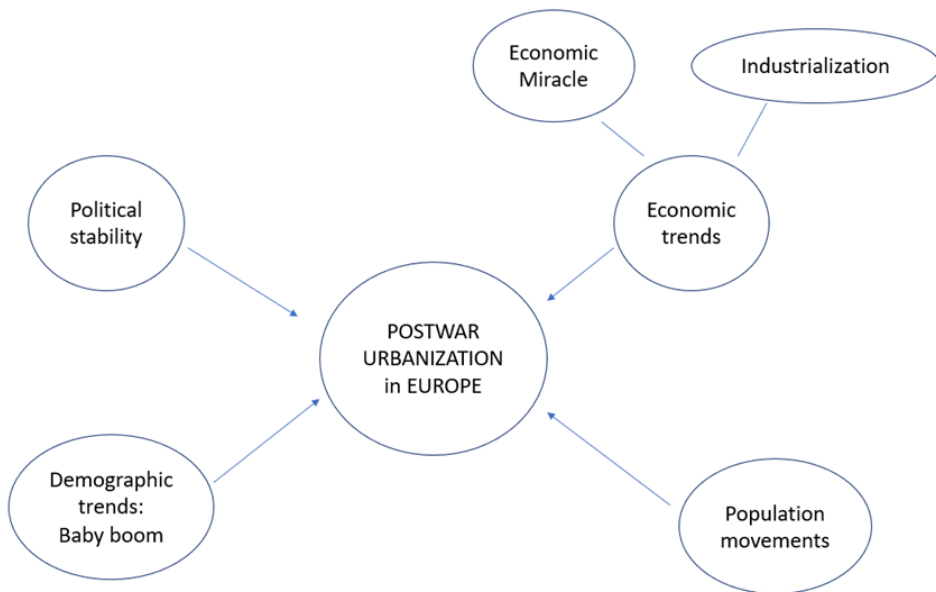
Nevertheless, the economic disparities are not enough to explain the postwar rural-urban migration. While the population employed in agriculture decreased, the countryside lost its social and cultural importance, and the city became the ideal place to live (Morton, 1984). Therefore, economic development and industrialization “marked the beginning of a new phase” (James, 2000, p. 203), and new values and ways of life spread all over Europe. Especially youngsters were aimed at escaping the harsh, isolated and backward rural life and embrace the urban lifestyle (Bessel, 2000; Judt, 2005).

Demographic trends must be included in the picture as well. The effects of the First World War on demography, the economic crisis of 1929 and the civil wars of the 1930s had already reduced the fertility rates. Moreover, the calamity of the Second World War made negative trends even stronger. Against this backdrop, the increased natality carried out by the postwar baby boom reversed the previously negative situation. As a consequence of the new atmosphere of confidence (James, 2000), for the first time, since the beginning of the 20th century, the share of the young population in Europe was increasing.

Political stability, industrialization and economic growth, population movements and demographic trends worked as triggers for the massive wave of

urbanisation of postwar Europe. The process affected the whole continent with no exception. In Yugoslavia, between 1948 and 1970, the population of Belgrade went from 368,000 to 746,000; in Zagreb, the population increased from 280,000 to 566,000. In the same years, in the Mediterranean countries, the population of Milan grew from 1,260,000 to 1,724,000, and the number of residents of Barcelona increased from 1,280,000 to 1,785,000. At the same time, the capital cities such as London, Paris and Madrid saw a rapid and unprecedented expansion of their suburbs (Judt, 2005). Perhaps, the most impressive data came from the Soviet Union, where during the 1956–1960 Five Year Plan, 474.1 million of m² of floor space were built, more than in the entire period from 1918 to 1946 (Varga-Harris, 2006). The evidences demonstrate that the urbanisation became a serious issue for postwar states, and the satisfaction of the unprecedented demand became an almost-impossible mission for urban planners.

Table 3. The main causes of postwar urbanisation in Europe, visual representation



1.3. Between architecture and social policy: The glorious decades of modern mass housing in Europe

If, on the one hand, it is possible to claim that mass housing represented a “love-match between architecture and social policy” (Urban, 2011, p. 39), on the other hand, it must be acknowledged that a comprehensive and satisfactory definition of the phenomenon is rather difficult to provide.

Wassenberg, Turkington and van Kempen, in one of the most influential works on the theme, defined modern estates as “distinct and discrete geographic housing

areas which are dominated by residential blocks of five storeys or more” (2004, p. 3). Furthermore, the authors identified seven factors that fostered the postwar construction boom: (i) the necessity to solve the housing shortage, (ii) the diffusion of new construction technologies, (iii) the confidence in modern planning as a way to make society more fair and equal, (iv) the will to preserve the countryside from the land consuming American model of suburban development, (v) the general demand for better living standards, (vi) the active role of municipal authorities, (vii) an intellectual and political support for radical architectural solutions.

Few years later, Wassenberg claimed that “a universal definition for housing estates does not exist” (2013, p. 27). Nevertheless, he managed to grasp some basic elements: the building, which resulted from a rationalised planning process, is geographically concentrated and grouped into coherent residential units, and the built environment is uniform and distinct. More recently, Hess, Tammaru and van Ham (2018) presented the distinctive features of mass housing estates. Each estate has a distinct form, it has been built as a single and planned development, and it makes large use of vertical space. For the sake of clarity, they defined housing estates as “areas containing at least 1,000 residences in high-rise buildings, established by a developer or development process between the 1950s and the 1980s as a coherent and compact planning unit” (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham, 2018, p. 9).

Although it is not a definition of the phenomenon *per se*, perhaps, the most successful term related to the European mass housing has been *mikrorayon*. Unlike terms such as ‘high-rise estate’ and ‘mass housing estate’, which mostly focus on the physical appearance of districts or ‘social housing’, widely used in the Western Europe to stress the social composition of the postwar neighbourhoods, *mikrorayon* is mostly related to planning itself. The word that was used both in the Soviet Union and some of the so-called satellite states in the second half of the 1950s indicated “the smallest administrative unit in the socialist reorganisation of the urban territory” (Maxim, 2011, p. 16). Therefore, each *mikrorayon* was expected to be “the basic unit of the residential development” (Monclús, Díez Medina, 2016, p. 547). In particular, the word ‘micro’ implied the existence of a larger scale of planning, whose *mikrorayon* was one constitutive part (Zarecor, 2018).

The fact that postwar modern mass housing belonging to different European states as well as the Eastern and Western blocs had relevant similarities has been widely stressed for only the last two decades. The comparative analysis of the phenomenon demonstrates the presence of trends operating beyond national borders. Such a comparative approach may help in the understanding of the postwar European society in its entirety, despite the typical east-west divide. Although Europe was divided in two parts, the desires and the aspirations in terms of housing were quite the same in the whole continent (Voldman, Fourcaut, 2011). Reid (2006) as well related the future-oriented philosophy of the construction plan developed in the Khrushchev years with the optimistic atmosphere of the postwar Western Europe. Glendinning identified two common aspects of pan-European mass housing, i.e., the general timing and the political goals. Postwar mass housing became, in fact, “part of a general socialist or welfare-state modernisation ethos” (2011, p. 10).

Borén and Gentile (2007), while admitting several differences between the communist and the Western city, argued that the modernist ideas inspired the rebuilding and modernization of Western European cities and massively put it into practice in the socialist central and eastern Europe after 1954. Consequently, the peripheries of capitalist and socialist European cities show remarkable similarities, which could not be found before the socialist advent in central and eastern Europe. Monclús and Díez Medina (2016) put the accent on the same aspects. They claimed that the postwar mass housing, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, constituted a radical version of pragmatic and functional urbanism introduced by the 19th and the early 20th century modernism. Moreover, Monclús and Díez Medina claimed that the morphological differences among the postwar neighbourhoods in the European states are not that relevant.

Both Nordic-Western welfare and state socialism considered housing a pillar of social contract with citizens. Undoubtedly, the central role of the state was a factor that must be added to the economic, social and demographic trends that put pressure on the urban environment and fostered the birth of the modern mass housing (Turkington, van Kempen, Wassenberg, 2004). Dekker argued that the phenomenon of mass housing was inspired by a “socially progressive” (2005, p. 2) ideological framework that was common to all the European countries involved.



Fig. 4. The Cimabue tower in the neighbourhood of San Polo in Brescia, Italy (photo by the author)

Despite some local exceptions, such as Sweden (*infra*), the establishment of a proper welfare system became an international priority only at the end of the Second World War. In the aftermath of the conflict, the Western European society was not held any more by the fascination for mass mobilisation and revolutionary attempts to reshape society. The European citizens shared the desire to obtain services, solve the economic inequalities and avoid their consequences. Therefore, the political parties and governments were committed to respond to the needs of the voters (Judt, 2005).

Swenarton, Avermaete and van Den Heuvel (2015) gave the implementation of the welfare system an explanation based on the practical and ideological aspects. Practically, the economic growth guaranteed more resources. Ideologically, in a context of geographical proximity and political confrontation with the socialist system, the states relied on the welfare to create a non-authoritarian and non-revolutionary way to make societies more egalitarian. Bessel added that the European states, inspired by “therapeutic intentions” (2000, p. 251), by the developing welfare managed to increase the administrative control over the population.

Similar to the postwar Western Europe, in the Soviet Union, the modern house “became a site for the concrete projection of ‘tomorrow’ and for the construction of the identity of the citizens” (Reid, 2006, p. 227). The Soviet regime was aimed at carrying out the realisation of the principles that inspired the Revolution, after the long Stalinist parenthesis. The commitment of the Soviet state must be contextualized in the fact that at the end of the 1950s, the Soviet Union entered the penultimate phase of advanced socialism, before the construction of communism. This transitional phase towards the ultimate goal was characterized by the goal to improve the material conditions of the masses (Buchli, 1997; Reid, 2006). The aim of the housing program was to secure the fundamental need for accommodation of every Soviet citizen and stop the housing shortage within a period of ten or twelve years (Varga-Harris, 2006). Within this framework, fast, cheap and improved construction could be seen as an instrument to pursue “social harmony, health and happiness” (Reid, 2006, p. 235).

In a sense, the Thaw represented an extremely remarkable but uneven jump in the creation of a Soviet modern way of life. While acknowledging that the Thaw is somehow perceived as a period of liberalisation, Buchli (1997) pointed out that the idea of political freedom, typical for liberal democracies, is not applicable to it. Besides, being strongly committed to return to the roots of the Revolution, the state and the Party were strongly engaged in the building campaign and deeply committed to shaping a truly socialist way of life. Moreover, Varga-Harris (2006) warned of the risk of considering the housing campaign as a turn towards the privatisation of housing. Despite the centrality given to the single-family apartments, the urban developments were coordinated within the strict ideological framework of the Soviet collectivist ideology. Zarecor (2018) stressed that the nature of the socialist system itself became a decisive factor in the Soviet mass housing experience. The forces driving the development of the socialist city worked “continuously as a synchronized instrument of economic production and social transformation in physical space” (Zarecor, 2018, p. 101). Therefore, compared to the welfare states, the socialist urban expansion was characterised by a higher degree of control.

Although later the physical and social outcomes would have been questioned, the three postwar decades were characterised by an apparently perfect connection between the tasks of political power and the principles of the modern urban planning. Spacious, relatively comfortable, well-designed dwellings and their locations made modern housing ‘ideal’ and most iconic architectural feature of its

era. Mass housing, being the most uniform, dominating, direct and visible outcome of the postwar urban planning, became the symbol of a new world (Wassenberg 2013, p. 31), where the urban working-class had a chance to rent or buy qualitatively improved apartments in the newly built neighbourhoods (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham, 2018). At first, the features, such as spacious and affordable dwellings, safe and car-free pedestrian paths and extensive greenery, were positively assessed (Dekker et al., 2005, p. 3). Therefore, in a short-time perspective, postwar urban planning became crucial in the solution of problems related to the demand for dwellings at times of massive industrialization, urbanisation and migration.

Nevertheless, the first half of the 1970s marked the end of the construction boom in the northern and western Europe. On the one hand, the transnational factors, such as the end of 'economic miracle' and the rise of neoliberal governments, weakened the structures of welfare, and consequently, the states had to limit the active involvement in housing provision. On the other hand, the mass housing itself began to face increasing criticism. Perhaps, the gas explosion in Ronan Point Tower in Newham, London, in 1968 was the first sign of alarm. The debates about mass housing began in France and Sweden as well, even before the Million Programme (1964–1975) was completed (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham, 2018). In the Soviet Union and the socialist states, the construction process did not decrease and stop until the removal of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the communist system two years later. All in all, from the second half of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1990s, "many of the assumptions that informed the development of large housing estates have been undermined" (Dekker, van Kempen, Tosics 2005, p. 4), and the honeymoon between socio-political needs and the modern planning came to an end. The subsequent political and cultural atmosphere carried out a different social and spatial organisation.

It must be underlined that although the development of modern mass housing included the whole European continent, its impact affected various countries differently. The post-socialist countries of central and eastern Europe have the biggest and the most homogeneous modern districts (Monclús, Díez Medina, 2016), while other nations have been only marginally affected by the phenomenon. The evidence of the differentiated impact of the postwar modernism may be found in the fact that the share of urban dwellers living in mass housing estates varies from less than 5% of Athens to 80% of Bucharest (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham, 2018, p. 9). In some post-socialist cities, mass housing had such an impact that the number of people living in the areas, such as Balta Alba in Bucharest and Lasnamäe in Tallinn (Fig. 7), is comparable to the size of the second largest cities in these countries (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham, 2018, p. 13). However, in west-European and Nordic cities, the share of population living in Modernist estates moves, on average, between 11% of the Paris region (Lelévrier, Melic, 2018) and 15% of Stockholm. (Andersson, Bråmås, 2018).

Despite different political conditions and unbalanced quantitative outcomes of the construction period, it is undeniable that the postwar modern mass housing followed a similar path of development on both sides of the Iron Curtain. On the one

hand, the construction was aimed at solving practical tasks, and on the other hand, it was inspired by a specific set of ideologies. The apparently perfect connection between political goals and the principles of modern planning fostered the development of modern mass housing from Moscow to Paris, from Vilnius to Stockholm.



Fig. 5. The Lasnamäe district in Tallinn, Estonia (photo by Kaupo Kalda)

2. 'AFTERLIFE' AND HERITAGE OF POSTWAR MODERN MASS HOUSING

2.1. The intellectual deconstruction of the modern urbanism

As it was demonstrated in the first chapter of the dissertation, modern urbanism was considered as a tool to overcome the past and provide the basis for a better future for the elite as well as the masses. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that modernism was widely debated and a subject to strong criticism even when the success of the phenomenon was at its peak.

In the first half of the 1970s, a certain degree of criticism toward postwar urbanisation emerged in the Italian architectural journal *Domus*. To begin with, the criticism was directed to the urban landscape that resulted from the modern planning. The city that was shaped in postwar decades was defined as the degenerated result of the rationalist utopia. According to this view, the monolithic typological approach of modern planning transformed the shame of slums into sleeping districts whose residents were trapped in a spiral of boredom, lack of perspectives, commuting and segregation.

Furthermore, the typical top-down approach of the postwar planning was blamed, in particular, due to the fact that the modernist architect acted as a *deus ex machina* instead of involving population in the decision-making process (Magistretti, 1973). The exclusion of residents from any involvement was stressed during a meeting that was held in Turin in 1972,⁵ the results of which were reported in *Domus*. When the participants of the meeting were asked whether and how the neighbourhood could be transformed, they defined the question utopian. Once housing blocks had been built, in fact, the physical structure of the neighbourhood could not be modified. The same event revealed the existence of several shortcomings in postwar peripheral neighbourhoods. In particular, the participants underlined the lack of green spaces, schools and playgrounds. Moreover, the existence of a clear division between the residential areas inhabited by the upper class and the working-class neighbourhood was stressed.

In the 1980s, a critical attitude towards postwar mass urbanisation emerged even more in periodicals. Gravagnuolo (1982) claimed that the technical progress had very damaging effects on the cityscape and the extent of the damage would have been possible to understand by looking at the European cities from above. Boissière (1982), moving from the case of French *grands ensembles*, reached a more general conclusion that the criticism towards postwar neighbourhoods was hypocritical and partial, since neighbourhoods were increasingly blamed for social failures, but not for the architectural shortcomings. The criticism of Bellini (1988) went even further. The author moved from the assumption that architecture is the most important and persistent sign of a civilisation. In fact, architecture, unlike painting or sculpture, is deeply rooted in a place and cannot be moved. Nevertheless, Bellini did not accept to include the outcomes of postwar modern planning, such as new towns, the

⁵ Il Codice: Incontri e scontri sulla casa.

satellite towns and the expansions of urban peripheries in the category of architecture. In order to avoid a potential impasse, Bellini delineated the distinction between monuments, which could be associated with the traditional architecture, and consumption buildings,⁶ which resulted from a more or less standardised production process.

The negative assessment of modernist planning and architecture was not confined in periodicals, but it did emerge as well in the essays and academic production. To begin with, it is interesting to stress the extent to which a crucially important and controversial figure such as Le Corbusier and the outcomes of his activity have been assessed negatively. Hall (2004) argued that the evil done by Le Corbusier outlived himself. Furthermore, Hall argued for the necessity to read the writings of Le Corbusier to understand the “at least questionable, at worst catastrophic” (2004, p. 238) impact that they had on the postwar planning. Personal criticism of the author of the *Athens Charter* was as well extended to his and CIAM’s lack of success in urban practice (Mumford, 2014) and the political opportunism of Le Corbusier (Scott, 1998). Besides harsh and sometimes even ironic criticism towards one of its main figures, the main features of modernist planning and architecture were negatively assessed by a large number of critics. Modernism has been interpreted as a phenomenon that looked at the past as an impediment and at present as a platform to launch plans for a better future (Scott, 1998) and realise a “utopian brave new world” (Bianca, 2010, p. 30). Furthermore, according to the critics, modernist attempts to break with the historical context were guided by the wrong conviction that modernization could be implemented exclusively through the eradication of precedent cultural and social infrastructure (Adam, 2010; Bianca, 2010), guided by a positivistic attitude towards science and technology that evolved in a quasi-religious faith in materials and industrial production.

In the end, the deep relation between planning and political power (*supra*) fostered a further element of criticism: the presentation of modernist urbanism as an undemocratic imposition. Scott (1998) demonstrated that the development of modernism coincided with a fundamental transformation of the role of state. For the first time, the states, regardless of their main ideological orientations, were committed to design and transform society. Wakeman (2014) stressed that, despite progressive and enlightened philosophy, modern planning often reinforced the state and the elite.

Nevertheless, the critical assessment of postwar modern urbanism was not a purely intellectual phenomenon, but it found evidence and support in the challenging situation that characterised several postwar neighbourhoods in the last three decades.

⁶ Translated from the Italian *edifici di consumo*.

2.2. What went wrong? The decline of the postwar modern mass housing

Before engaging in the discussion of the decline of postwar modern mass housing, it is necessary to remind that not every postwar modernist neighbourhood had to cope with the trend. Especially in areas where the construction was massive, such as the majority of the former socialist countries, the postwar housing blocks represent a common residential environment. Nevertheless, while it is important to avoid excessive generalisations and oversimplifications, it is undeniable that the position of postwar modern neighbourhoods changed in the last decades. In the most extreme cases, the events such as the notorious riots that hit the Paris *banlieue* in the 2000s shockingly revealed the challenging social situation of some European neighbourhoods. At the same time, the plans, such as the one developed by the Moscow Municipality to massively destroy and replace the postwar housing stock that would displace 1.6 million people (Luhn, 2017), demonstrate that even the physical obsolescence alone can be a strong argument for the advocates of demolition. Therefore, it is clear that something went wrong. While modern and socially progressive estates shaped the European postwar urban landscape with the promise of solving different urban problems; nowadays, many of them are involved in problematic areas (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham, 2018) or neighbourhoods whose future is deeply uncertain. Therefore, the analysis of the decline of postwar mass housing is crucially important to understand the phenomenon in its complexity.

While acknowledging that physical design and built environment play a role in the process of decline and negatively affect social life, it is necessary to stress that these factors are far from being the only cause of the decay of modern housing estates.

On the one hand, it is undeniable that in some areas, the problems emerged soon after the construction, and since the beginning, the physical conditions of many public and semi-public spaces proved to be very bad. At the same time, it is true that dwellings and buildings that were characterised by low initial quality were subject to a rapid increase of problems that negatively affected the quality of life of the residents. Without supporting the thesis that decline alone is the cause of a decline, Bolt (2018) acknowledged that physical shortcomings played a role in the future decay of estates, causing problems and malfunctions. Moreover, the author pointed out that despite the importance given by Le Corbusier and postwar modern planners to transportation and connectivity (Le Corbusier, 1933; Gutnov et al., 1968; Doxiadis, 1963; Benevolo, 1976), many estates had been constructed in very peripheral and badly connected areas from where the opportunities of jobs and leisure are difficult to reach, especially by the public transport. As a direct consequence of physical design, the issue of monotony must be stressed as well. Although not all estates shared the same degree of visual monotony, the overall standardisation of modern districts did not facilitate the processes of appropriation by the inhabitants (Power, 1997; Bolt, 2018).

Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to ignore the fact that the decline of postwar mass housing neighbourhoods was fostered by the joint action of physical conditions and other relevant factors. In the most disadvantaged areas, the problems

tended to influence each other and constitute spirals of decline that included technical, social and economic spheres. In this sense, Wassenberg argued that the physical environment and buildings “did not produce the social situations they came to stand for, but acted as vessels, conditioning rather than creating social relations” (2013, p. 134).

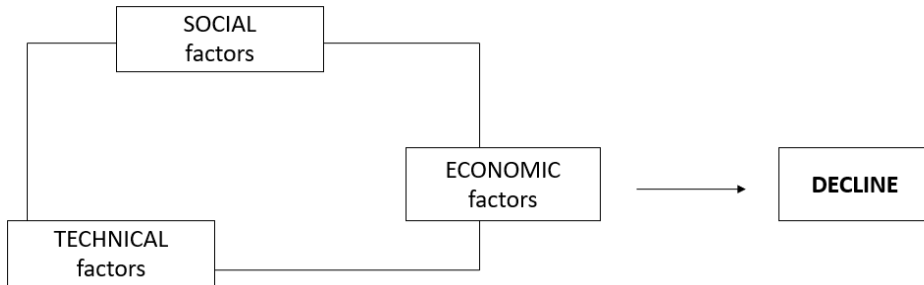
The first comprehensive model committed to analyse the decline of postwar housing was introduced by Prak and Priemus (1986). The Dutch scholars started their analysis from the acknowledgement that the age and size of postwar housing could be potentially problematic for the future fortune of neighbourhoods and predicted that many districts were likely to follow Pruitt-Igoe in a premature demolition (Fig. 6).⁷ The model of decline introduced by Prak and Priemus is based on the interdependence of causes. In fact, three interrelated factors: social, economic, and technical, influenced the housing decline. Furthermore, Prak and Priemus stressed that new housing supply could attract the residents of postwar housing to more convenient alternatives. Mentioning the interrelation between social, economic and technical factors, the ageing of the housing stock and the role of the housing market, the model introduced by Prak and Priemus provided the basis for the most recent analyses of the current situation of postwar mass housing (Hess, Tammaru, van Ham, 2018; Bolt, 2018; Dekker et al., 2005; Musterd, van Kempen, 2007; Musterd et al., 2017; Permentier, van Ham, Bolt, 2008; van Beckoven, Bolt, van Kempen, 2009).



Fig. 6. The demolition of Pruitt-Igoe (© St. Louis Post-Dispatch)

⁷ The Pruitt-Igoe estate was built in St. Louis (USA) between 1954 and 1955. Its dramatic conditions soon made Pruitt-Igoe one of the main symbols of decline of postwar modernism. The estate was demolished in 1972.

Table 4. Visual representation of the model introduced by Prak and Priemus (1986)



Following the path of the analysis introduced by Prak and Priemus, Power argued that “regardless of country, ownership, size or location, every estate had some problems that related to the way they were managed and their social composition, as well as their physical conditions” (1997, p. 83). On the one hand, the physical conditions fostered socio-economic problems; on the other hand, social problems themselves became more concentrated and more difficult to tackle. Although it excessively relies on the environmental determinism,⁸ the work of Power had the merit to continue the analysis of modern housing, based on the interaction of different factors, which inspired the upcoming research.

Moving from the assumption that a single explanation for the complicated situation of postwar modern mass housing estates is insufficient, Wassenberg, Turkington and van Kempen (2004) attempted to provide a comprehensive overview of the problems afflicting the postwar estates. The problems were subdivided by the authors: (i) structural problems: usually related to construction methods and materials; (ii) internal design problems: associated with inadequate domestic and external space, absence of amenities and communal facilities; (iii) urban design or spatial problems: related to the location of estates, housing density, noise, pollution and traffic; (iv) internal social problems: connected to anti-social behaviour, insecurity and poor relations between neighbours; (v) financial problems: expensive rents and services for tenants, rent arrears, vacancies, high maintenance costs and losses for landlords; (vi) competition problems: linked to the low market position as well as poor image; (vii) management and organisational problems: arising from poor maintenance and lack of resources; (viii) legislative problems: related to ownership of flats, blocks and surrounding space; (ix) wider social economic problems: associated with unemployment, poor schooling and less-than-average

⁸ Physical or environmental deterministic approach, represented by Alice Coleman’s book *Utopia on Trial* (1985), accused architects and developers of modern estates for generating problems through bad design. The arguments of physical determinism have not been proved and are generally considered invalid.

opportunities; social and economic problems do intensify when they are spatially clustered. Wassenberg (2013) defined the ones whose levels of deprivation are particularly high as sink estates.

Furthermore, Wassenberg, Turkinton and van Kempen (2004) argued that the factors operating in the downgrading of estates operate both at 'micro' and 'macro' level. Micro-level factors refer particularly to subjective hierarchies and housing preferences of households as well as to the characteristics of housing that determine to what extent people chose to live or not in the area. The quality of neighbourhoods, given by the factors such as location, services, public space, quality of construction, size and layout of single apartments, determines their attractiveness. If the quality is low or it worsens, the attractiveness of an area decreases too. The hierarchies and preferences are strongly linked to the resources of households, which can be divided into: "financial resources, including income, security of income and capital assets; cognitive resources, including education, skills, and knowledge of the housing market; political resources, including the political power people wield, either formally or informally; social resources, including the contacts to help find suitable housing or neighbourhood" (Wassenberg, Turkinton, van Kempen, 2004, p. 17).

Among the factors operating at the macro level, the authors included public policies and global megatrends. The policies may be divided into general policies that affect the housing market and specific measures aimed at mass housing estates. Global megatrends are defined as "structural movements which go beyond local developments" (Wassenberg, Turkinton, van Kempen, 2004, p. 19), and they can be subdivided into technological trends, economic trends, political trends, demographic trends, socio-cultural trends, environmental trends. Dekker, Hall, van Kempen and Tosics followed the same pattern of analysis and argued that "the problems of large housing estates are, to a significant extent, the expression of a more general economic, demographic and sociocultural developments" (2005, p. 7). Hall, Murie and Knorr-Siedow underlined that while the effects have been felt locally, "the origins of change at estate level may be located in the wider society or in developments outside the estate" (2005, p. 70). Therefore, it is clear that the fortunes of postwar modern estates are linked to the factors that move from the subjective sphere to the global scale, and that factors of decline tend to influence each other.

2.3. The impact of transnational trends on postwar modern mass housing: Political transition, reorganisation of labour and migration

In the last decades, the transnational macro trends that affected the postwar mass housing the most have been political transition, changes in the productive system and organisation of labour and migrations.

As pointed out by Sýkora and Bouzarovski (2012), urban transformation cannot happen without transformations in the general political and economic system. Political and economic transformation, in fact, allow and stimulate economic and social restructuring that is, in turn, expressed in urban change. Within this framework, postwar modern mass housing made no exception. After a strong

political involvement had characterised the construction years (*supra*), a changing role of the state negatively affected the fortune of the phenomenon. The most suitable category to describe the process is that of transition. Golubchikov (2016) defined the transition as an ideological and totalizing process. Transition is ideological because it is constituted based on specific philosophical, political and economic orientations. It is totalizing because it shapes the lives of all the people hit by the process, despite personal ideologies and aspirations.

While the case of post-socialist transition that took place after the collapse of the Soviet system is the most visible and identifiable example of this process, it would be a mistake to ignore the political, ideological, economic and social changes that characterised northern and western Europe after the construction boom of the modern mass housing. Similar to the former socialist system, these processes had crucially important consequences for the phenomenon of mass housing.

Since the 1980s, a neoliberal approach has become dominant in western Europe (Swenarton, Avermaete, van den Heuvel, 2015; Theodore, Peck, Brenner, 2011; Wacquant, 2001; Wacquant, 2007). Therefore, in most states, the collectivist dimension that characterised the previous decades “diminished in political significance in favour of market provision and an increase in personal responsibility” (Wassenberg, Turkington, van Kempen, 2004, p. 23). According to Wacquant (2001), the conversion to neoliberal ideology in Western Europe carried out erasure of the economic state and the dismantling of the social state. After the golden age of the welfare state came to an end, in fact, the public involvement in the housing sector declined. The trends of the 1980s proved that “housing was no longer a priority on the agenda of the public sector [and that] the time when the government had to address issues either of net housing shortage or of a severe lack of maintenance was now at a close” (Padovani 2003, p. 26). As a consequence, while public involvement in the housing sector as well as the quality and the attractiveness of the postwar housing decreased, a turnover in residents began. The residents who could afford it decided to move, while low-income residents got stuck in the poorest and most neglected segments of the housing stock.

Since the beginning of 1990s, on the other side of the old Iron Curtain, the principles of the state socialism were replaced by a new political and social system that profoundly changed the central and eastern European countries (Borén, Gentile, 2007; Czepczyński, 2008; Czepczyński, Soováli-Sepping, 2016; Gentile, Sjöberg, 2006; Golubchikov, 2016; Sýkora, Bouzarovski, 2012). In central and eastern Europe, the former communist city attempted to recreate its own identity, erasing the most symbolic representations of the communist past and rediscovering the pre-socialist and national attributes (Hirt, 2013). Moreover, the structure of the cities was being transformed. In fact, while the socialist city was dense and compact and characterised by clear edges, the end of the socialist system fostered the process of suburban sprawl. Within this framework, Hirt (2013) argued that the socialist demise represented a break with the modernist aesthetics, and Sýkora and Bouzarovski (2012) claimed that the reorganisation of the post-socialist urban landscape represented the beginning of the decline of some housing estates. After

the dismissal of the socialist system, due to the privatisation, the public sector was not responsible for housing provision and maintenance any longer. Nowadays, the former communist states have a very high rate of home ownership. Nevertheless, one of the most problematic consequences of privatisation was that “low-income households became homeowners without the ability to maintain and sustain the quality of their asset” (Wassenberg, Turkington, van Kempen, 2004, p. 24).

A second macro trend negatively affecting the postwar modern mass housing, that may be at least partially associated with transition, is the transformation from industrial to information-based society. In the last decades, the European industrial sector has been largely relocated or reduced in scale and importance, while information and service sectors have increased. There is no doubt that less labour opportunities in the previously relevant sectors negatively affected the income and careers of the inhabitants of the urban areas that used to be more dependent on the industrial plants. Bolt (2018) followed the same path of analysis and related the decline of estates to the decline of industry and job market, stressing the risk that declining employment and decreasing income led to the increasing inequality and segregation (*infra*). Moreover, he reminded that the process included the whole European continent and the deindustrialisation hit some eastern European estates even harder than their counterparts that were situated in the west (2018, p. 71). The collapse of the socialist industrial enterprises, in fact, carried out a change in the nature of work. While the rate of those employed in industry declined, the service sector increased. As a result of this transformation, the former urban industrial areas lost their function. While some of them have been refurbished and re-used, it is undeniable that several former industrial brownfields are still a relevant presence in the region (Hirt, 2013).

In the end, one very relevant evidence of how external trends affected the fortunes of postwar modern mass housing may be found in the issue of immigration. The changes in demographic composition that took place in several European countries in the last decades introduced a greater ethnic differentiation in the postwar estates. Since immigrants and their descendants tend to concentrate on the most deprived neighbourhoods, in several European cities, most of the newcomers in mass housing estates are either foreigners or have a foreign background (Bolt, 2018, p. 58). Immigration and ethnic differentiation are not problems *per se* and do not represent a cause of decline at all. Immigration, in fact, is beneficial for the neighbourhoods characterised by an oversupply in the housing market. Moreover, family or community contacts that were established by the immigrants may strengthen social networks at the neighbourhood level. However, the existence of critical issues related to the lack of integration between the residents with a foreign background and the locals must be acknowledged. Furthermore, it must be stressed that the immigration may have social consequences and cause social tensions with the established population, especially when the process is fast. It would be a mistake to consider ethnic differentiation only as a west European phenomenon. Nonetheless, the changes in the demographic and ethnic composition of postwar estates took place mostly in countries of that specific area. The member states of the

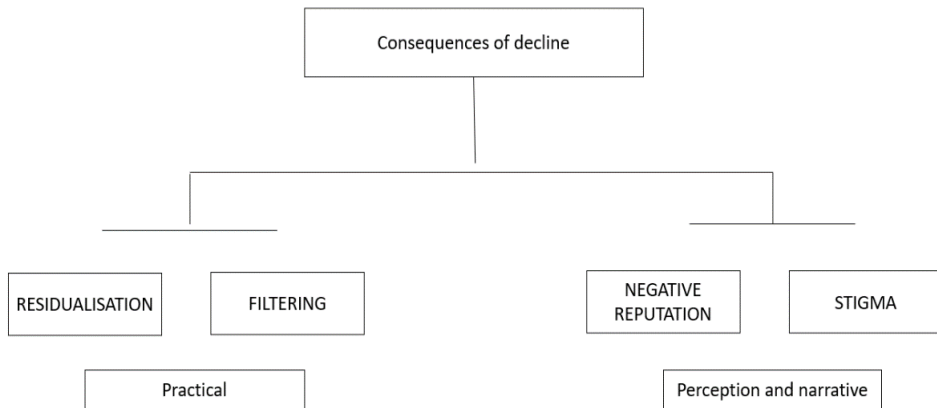
European Union where the presence of the foreign-born residents is inferior to 5% of the total population are the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland, Lithuania, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria, all post-socialist countries of the central and eastern Europe (Bolt, 2018, p. 69). The post-socialist countries with the highest share of immigrants are Estonia and Latvia, due to their large Russian or Russian-speaking communities; nevertheless, at the same time, the two republics are facing a remarkable process of emigration (Bolt, 2018, p. 69).

Despite single and subjective interpretations of political trends that characterised Europe, provided by the international scholarship, it is undeniable that the transnational macro trends brought about a different relation between the state and housing, and marked the beginning of a new era for mass housing estates.

2.4. The practical and narrative consequences of decline

The main consequences of the decline of postwar modern mass housing are both practical and related to the perception and the narrative of the most disadvantaged areas. Among the practical consequences, it is necessary to focus on the phenomena of ‘residualisation’ and ‘filtering’. In relation to the narrative dimension of the decline, it is necessary to analyse the issue of neighbourhood reputation and the stigmatisation of some areas.

Table 5. The consequences of the decline of postwar modern mass housing estates



2.4.1. Residualisation and filtering

In Nordic and Western countries, the increasing marginalisation of mass housing often caused a process of ‘residualisation’ of the postwar suburbs (Hall, Murie, Knorr-Siedow, 2005). It is possible to talk about residualisation when a certain area is inhabited exclusively by low-income dwellers (Bolt, 2018, p. 65). Residualisation is the result of different aspirations of households. Having the possibility of a choice, middle and higher-income groups, in fact, showed the

tendency to leave postwar estates and the socially rented sector, looking for home ownership and different types of accommodation.

The decision to leave is not necessarily motivated by the changes in estates themselves, but by the existence of more attractive solutions. Nevertheless, such social and demographic changes significantly altered the composition of estates and gave birth to the “new forms of social and spatial polarisation” (Dekker et al., 2005, p. 4).

The residualisation caused a relative depreciation of modern mass housing estates and the filtering of their position in the housing market. A neighbourhood is hit by a relative depreciation when its status declines compared to the newly built and more attractive areas (Bolt, 2018). The concept of filtering is central to explain how neighbourhoods are negatively affected by the changes. Although some neighbourhoods remain in good condition, it is increasingly complicated to keep up with the new areas “that are usually added to the market at the top of the quality and price hierarchy and are more geared to contemporary housing preferences” (Bolt, 2018, p. 58). Therefore, older neighbourhoods filter from higher to lower position in the housing market.

Relative depreciation and filtering are very visible trends in the western Europe. In central and eastern Europe, at first, the estates did not enter into the cycles of decline. In fact, a rather limited production of new housing and deteriorated city centres guaranteed a relatively good position on the housing ladder to the postwar estates. However, nowadays, the situation is slowly changing. In central and eastern Europe, the inner cities and pre-communist elements in the urban space had a dramatic revival (Young, Kaczmarek, 2008), and such a situation opens relevant questions about the future of the postwar estates in terms of attractiveness and desirability. Hirt (2013) stressed that the post-socialist elite of central and eastern Europe moved to the gentrified areas of the city centres, refurbished urban areas and single-family houses in the suburbs, considering the postwar modern estates less desirable solutions. In this sense, relevant trends may be noted in the three Baltic capitals: Tallinn, Riga and Vilnius. In Vilnius, the beginning of a tendency to socio-economic segregation and a declining status of the social housing estates (Herfert et al., 2013; Bolt, 2018, p. 64) must be noted. The same trend emerged in Tallinn and Riga. In the first decade after the transition, Estonian and Latvian capitals experienced a rapidly increasing income inequality, but not a sharp growth of residential segregation. Nonetheless, in the second decade after the transition, the construction of new housing aimed at the upper class in the suburban areas altered the situation, leading to a growing socio-economic segregation, which is as well amplified by the ethnic divisions in Tallinn (Herfert et al., 2013). The degree of segregation between Estonians and Russian-speakers is in fact higher than the one between Latvians and Russian-speakers. The ethnic issues are much less relevant in Vilnius, where the share of the Russian-speaking population is smaller.

Thus, residualisation, relative depreciation and filtering of position in the housing market affected the postwar estates in the last three decades. These trends worked as vicious circles and worsened the socio-economic segregation. While

Western Europe shows more visible evidence, the former socialist countries are increasingly involved in the process.



Fig. 7. The Tintoretto tower in San Polo, Brescia (photo by the author)



Fig. 8. San Polo, Brescia (photo by the author)

2.4.2. Neighbourhood reputation and stigma

It is possible to argue that the reputation of neighbourhoods does not naturally exist, but it is socially constructed, according to personal experiences, information from the media and easily observable functional and physical attributes of neighbourhoods (Permentier, van Ham, Bolt, 2008). Wassenberg, (2004), in fact, argued that the image is an important factor of the popularity of a neighbourhood, and it affects its position in local and regional hierarchy. In particular, a negative image can be a cause for further decline.

Within this framework, it is possible and important to distinguish between the internal and external reputation of a neighbourhood. On the one hand, internal reputation is shaped on the basis of social and physical features of the area. On the other hand, external reputation, “which is formed by outsiders, is often based on simple stereotypes, especially when the image is negative” (Wassenberg, 2004, p. 227).

According to Permentier, van Ham and Bolt (2008), the internal reputation of a neighbourhood is usually higher than the external. A first explanation of the higher rating by residents may be found in the fact that people who live in one area decided to do so, because they found it attractive or at least, acceptable. Nonetheless, a further explanation could lie in the fact that “residents with no choice regarding their neighbourhood, and with little prospect of any improvement, may show a psychological adaptation to their situation and rate their neighbourhood relatively high because it is the best they can get” (Permentier, van Ham, Bolt, 2008, p. 835). On the contrary, external reputation is shaped by non-residents or outsiders, which constitute a much diversified category, including the residents of other areas of the city, workers, real estate agents, teachers and police officers. Obviously, these groups do not have a relevant amount of information and personal experience; therefore, their views are based on the oversimplified ideas, mostly based on a superficial knowledge on the area and the tendency to emphasise the differences between neighbourhoods.

Musterd and Andersson pointed out that “negative images or reputations of neighbourhoods are especially harmful if important actors base their decisions on them” (2006, p. 122) and demonstrated that social composition of neighbourhoods can have effects on the career opportunities of their inhabitants. Permentier, van Ham and Bolt (2009) demonstrated that the perceived negative reputation often makes intervention aimed at improving the neighbourhoods insufficient to transform them into attractive places to live. Furthermore, the authors argued that “the perceived reputation of the neighbourhood is an important predictor of the intention to leave” (2009, p. 2163). In fact, the place where one lives functions as a status symbol and reflects the position in society.

When a neighbourhood is characterised by a remarkably bad reputation, it is a subject to the process of stigmatisation. Goffman (1963) defined stigma as a situation of a person who is disqualified from full social acceptance. The term stigma (στίγμα) was introduced in Ancient Greece, and it was used “to refer to bodily signs designed to expose something unusual and bad about the moral status

of the signifier” (Goffman, 1963, p. 1). Nowadays the term is still used to refer to deeply discrediting attributes. Wassenberg claimed that “an area with a negative image has a stigma” (2004, p. 225). Stigma is “associated with shame and disgrace, with the uncomfortable and unacceptable: all negative things” (2004, p. 225). The author linked stigmatisation to the social exclusion, the concept of the underclass and the residualisation.

Hastings (2004) argued that the problems of stigmatised estates are a subject to the pathological explanations. Therefore, social and urban problems are largely perceived as an outcome of the spatial concentration of a disadvantaged underclass. Within this framework, the members of the underclass “can be distinguished from the rest of society not simply by their relative poverty, but by their behavioural distance from mainstream norms” (Hastings, 2004, p. 236). Furthermore, Hastings presented two different attitudes towards urban problems, those of ‘normalizers’ and those of ‘pathologisers’. The normalizers present the residents of stigmatised estates as no different from the general population and distance themselves from the pathological and behavioural explanations of neighbourhood problems. Moreover, the normalising perspective presents problems of estates “as a consequence of external structures and influences, rather than as resulting from the internal tendencies and characteristics of residents” (Hastings, 2004, p. 245). The normalizers usually have a deeper knowledge of the estates. pathologisers follow a typical behavioural scheme and tend to blame the economically disadvantaged urban dwellers for their own misfortunes.

It was demonstrated by Permentier, van Ham and Bolt that “the perceived reputation of the neighbourhood is an important predictor of the intention to leave” (2009, p. 2163). In fact, the place where one lives functions as a status symbol and reflects the position in society. Furthermore, it must be considered that “if people believe their status suffers from (...) living in a certain neighbourhood they will try to dissociate themselves from that group and the stigma associated with group membership” (2009, p. 2163).

Wacquant argued that the territories that are blamed and characterised by a “regime of marginality” (2007, p. 67) face discourses of ‘vilification’. The trend affected each European society, even the ones, such as Scandinavians, that previously have dealt with the issue of marginality the best. According to Wacquant “the acute sense of social indignity that enshrouds neighbourhoods of relegation can be attenuated only by thrusting the stigma onto a faceless, demonised other” (2007, p. 68) in the logic of “lateral denigration and mutual distancing” (2007, p. 68). In fact, in some cases, the residents themselves “devalue their neighbourhood in order to stress their moral worth (...) and dissociate from their neighbourhood and its residents by stressing that they do not belong there” (van Eijk, 2012, p. 3012).

Van Eijk pointed out that the “analyses of social processes in ‘problem’ places need to distinguish carefully between narratives and practices. While narratives of residents living in such places may well suggest conflict, dissociation and withdrawal, this does not necessarily always mean that practices of neighbouring are affected – at least not for all residents” (van Eijk, 2012, p. 3010). Van Eijk stressed

that in explaining phenomena such as poor neighbourhood relations, a double standard is usually applied. In affluent areas, the reasons for poor neighbourhood relations are identified by what people do outside their district. In case of deprived neighbourhoods, the explanations are related to the internal characteristics. Such a double standard “demonstrates a lack of recognition (...) closely linked to a socioeconomically weak position” (2012, p. 3011). The application of double standards “is not only inaccurate, but it also serves to problematise and stigmatise areas and groups of people” (2012, p. 3011).

In their study of Parisian banlieues, Garbin and Millington (2012) stressed the gap between the external representation and reality. Furthermore, the authors have shown that according to many residents, the media have a great responsibility for stigmatisation. Media often represents urban peripheries through “negative and sensationalist images” (Garbin, Millington, 2012, p. 2073) that “conform to dominant representations” (Garbin, Millington, 2012, p. 2073). Thus, the stigma is strengthened and reproduced by various sources. Wassenberg (2004) argued that the television programmes as well as the photographs and articles in newspapers are examples of negative image building.

Garbin and Millington (2012), analysing the effects of stigma on Paris banlieues, demonstrated to what extent the territorial stigmatisation influences the political action and power relations. In May 2009, the mayor of La Courneuve (Fig. 9) submitted a formal complaint of ‘territorial discrimination’ to the National Authority against Discrimination and for Equality (HALDE). It was a turning point, since for the first time, the agency “had received a ‘collective’ complaint from a city council” (Garbin, Millington, 2012, p. 2067). In the complaint, “in addition to denouncing local failures and deficiencies in the spheres of education, housing and employment, the mayor addressed the stigma attached to La Courneuve” (Garbin, Millington, 2012, p. 2067). The fact was highly representative of social, symbolic and discursive landscape constituted around the French postwar districts, the so-called ZUP (*zones à urbaniser en priorité*). Furthermore, the work of Garbin and Millington stressed the gap between the external representations of a neighbourhood and the reality experienced everyday by the residents as well as the fact that the stigmatisation negatively affects professional and social life outside the quartier. In the most extreme cases, the residents are viewed as ‘races apart’. In this sense, “racism is redefined as directed not a particular ethnicity (...) but to the social (and spatial) category of those who reside in the banlieue” (Garbin, Millington, 2012, p. 2072).

The analysis of neighbourhood reputation demonstrated the power of negative representation. Despite being counteracted by the residents, stigma is negatively affecting the performances of negatively labelled areas as well as the opportunities of their inhabitants.



Fig. 9. La Corneuve, France

2.5. Selective and dynamic: The role of memory and heritage in the interpretation of the past

The urban landscape has not been shaped according to single ideological orientation. The aspect of cities is made by the sum of different moments. Aldo Rossi argued that “the city is something that remains through its transformations” (2018, p. 55), and through historical approach, it is possible to identify the permanency (*permanenze*) of the urban facts. The dialectical relation between transformation and permanency that characterises the urban landscape has been more recently analysed by Czepczyński (2008), who claimed that compared to the political arena, the landscape is characterised by a higher degree of inertia. Considering that the societies perceive their present and represent their past on the basis of changes in material and cultural spheres (Cosgrove, 2008), *permanenze* are crucially important to understand the city in its totality.

Any reflection on the past and the ways it is remembered would be incomplete without a careful analysis of the concept of memory. To begin with, it is necessary to point out that memory is not only a specific capacity that enables humans to remember, store and recall experiences. Memory is not only an archive, but it must be contextualised within a wider framework of cultural and social practices (Brockmeier, 2010). Doğan (2020) pointed out that memory is an instrument to keep the past events alive and establish the points of reference for people in time. Moreover, she stressed that when individual memories start interacting with each other, they provide the basis for the creation of cultural memory.

According to Jan Assmann (2011), cultural memory is one of the areas that form the exterior dimension of the human memory. Tamm defined cultural memory as “a supra-individual mechanism for the preservation and transmission of certain

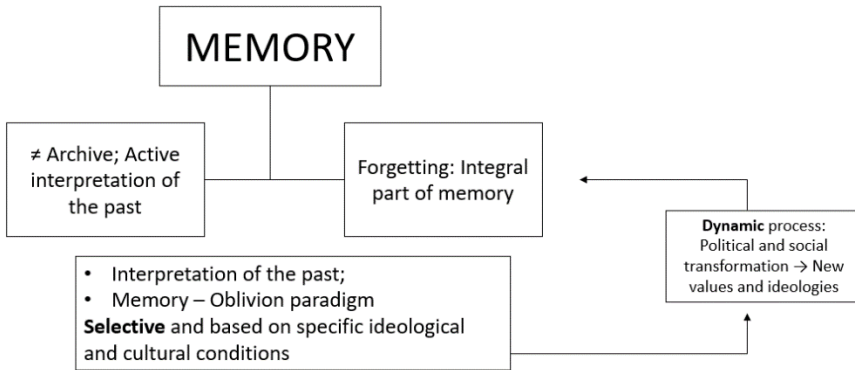
messages (texts) and the generation of new ones” (2015, pp. 132–133). The theme of cultural memory was deeply studied by Juri Lotman and Boris Uspensky, two scholars belonging to the Moscow-Tartu School of Semiotics, at the end of the 1970s. Similar to Rossi, the authors argued that within a culture, the past cannot be completely erased. On the contrary, the past is permanently present in cultural memory. Furthermore, Lotman and Uspensky noted that memory is not exclusively active in the creation of new texts, but in providing new interpretations of the ones that already exist as well.

The process of forgetting must be considered as an integral part of the memory (Belli, 2020b). Lotman stressed that in every culture, a paradigm of what must be remembered and what must fall into oblivion is defined. Nonetheless, the establishment of a new system and new cultural codes provokes a change in such a paradigm. Consequently, what was previously considered ‘existent’ may become ‘nonexistent’ and condemned to the oblivion, whereas what used to be considered as ‘nonexistent’ may become ‘existent’ and meaningful (Tamm, 2015, p. 135).

Aleida Assmann and Shortt (2012) related the change of the paradigm of memory to four main factors: time, regime change, transformation of social frame and generational change. In particular, the authors focused on the role that the memory plays in the processes of political change and transition. In fact, the change of a political regime carries out new systems of values that foster rethinking of the memory paradigm. Within this specific framework, memory is not only shaped by the transformations, but it can be able to foster them as well. In fact, memory is likely to change the relation with the past and, consequently, modify attitudes and value systems. The trend has been particularly visible in central and eastern Europe after the demise of the Soviet Union and the collapse of the socialist system. In the 1990s, a new political and historical phase began, and the European post-socialist countries had to deal with the need to rearrange collective memories in an overall effort to reconstruct their national identity (Brockmeier, 2010). Therefore, in this specific context, “memory and commemorative practices have become a cornerstone for cultural integration” (van Huis et al., 2019, p. 5) within European space.

Thus, it is possible to summarise that the interpretation of the past within a society is always politically conditioned (Belli, 2020b), and the decisions on what to remember and what to forget reveal the “social aspirations and desired cultural identities” (Czepczyński, 2008, p. 54). The same selective approach towards the past characterises the process of heritage designation.

Table 6. Visual representation of the concept of memory



The definition of heritage as a simple physical legacy of the past is incomplete. Heritage is a product of the present, consciously elaborated with the goal of responding to the contingent needs and demands. In fact, the designation of heritage is based on what contemporary societies decide to inherit or not (Tunbridge, Ashworth, 1996). MacDonald (2009) pointed out that heritage is the result of a process of gathering up and presenting the past that should be remembered. Van Huis, Kaasik-Krogerus, Lähdesmäki and Ellena defined heritage as an “act of communication, a cultural process and a performance” (2019, p. 8), carried out within the framework of cultural values, collective memories and historical narratives. Heritage is deeply connected to space. In fact, every past event happened somewhere, and every place has its own past.

Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) subdivided the process of heritage creation in three moments: the selection of resources that could be potentially transformed into the heritage objects, the transformation of the selected resources into the heritage objects, the new life of these objects as the heritage products. Once the process is complete, the heritage products are incorporated into the culture as museums, memorials, monuments or historic cities (Tunbridge, Ashworth, 1996). Heritage making is largely committed to strengthen the identity of communities as well as their self-esteem and their sense of distinctiveness (Hawke, 2010).

Heritage is undoubtful political resource; in fact, it is expected to reproduce dominant ideas (Tunbridge, Ashworth, 1996) and promote the values of the elite. The concept of authorised heritage discourse (Smith, 2006) codified these trends, focusing, in particular, on the efforts to establish a hegemonic control on heritage discourses and practices (Battilani, Bernini, Mariotti, 2018; van Huis et al., 2019).

The nation-state has traditionally been the arena where the heritage was created. Nevertheless, the increasing importance of the European institutions and the

attempts to establish a European identity are progressively adding a continental dimension to the heritage. Delanty (2018) argued for a shift towards a transnational approach, which presents cultural phenomena as resultant from the interrelations between nations. Furthermore, Delanty proposed to interpret the European heritage as a plurality of entangled narratives. Mäkinen (2019) presented cultural heritage as one of the cornerstones of the European identity.

The academic debate reflected the innovations introduced by the continental institutions. The establishment of the European Heritage Label was officialised by the European Parliament in 2011.⁹ The decision revealed the commitment to strengthen the sense of belonging to the European Union through the recognition of its shared and yet diversified heritage. The European Heritage Label may be applied to sites, transnational sites and thematic sites. By sites, the document referred to the monuments, natural and archaeological areas, industrial sites, urban areas as well as intangible heritage connected to a place. Referring to transnational sites, the document presented either sites focusing on a specific theme, located in more than one member state or one site located in more than one member state. National thematic sites are the sites that focus on one theme and are located in a single member state. In order to obtain the label of European Heritage, a site is required to satisfy at least one of the requirements: to have a pan-European or cross border nature, to have a role in the history of Europe or in the process of integration, to have a role in the development and in the promotion of the common values that inspired the European integration.

The main shortcoming of the authorised heritage discourse is that it promotes an official interpretation of heritage, but it tends to ignore the most difficult aspects of the phenomenon. MacDonald defined difficult heritage as the recognition of the significance of the past and the acknowledgement of its difficult features that impede to adopt it as a part of a “positive, self-affirming contemporary identity” (2009, p. 1). The label of difficult heritage may be applied to the elements that had been previously considered meaningful or successful achievements. Logan and Reeves (2009) argued that while heritage sites are committed to preserve the connection of a group with its past, the difficult heritage sites are the ones that represent episodes of the past perceived as painful. MacDonald warned that a difficult past is unlikely to be removed. This assumption is particularly true when material vestiges of previous regimes remain and act as “mnemonic intrusions” (2009, p. 3). McCarty (2017) performed a specific distinction between negative and difficult heritage. Heritage may be defined as ‘negative’ when it recalls clearly negative memories. Nevertheless, heritage is ‘difficult’ when it is related to the elements of dissonance.

The concept of dissonant heritage was introduced by Tunbridge and Ashworth, who defined it as a specific type of heritage that “involves a discordance or a lack of agreement and consistency” (1996, p. 20). Kisić (2017) enlarged the definition of dissonance, claiming that it is not exclusively associated with contradiction, but with

⁹ Decision No. 1194/2011/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 November 2011 Establishing a European Union Action for the European Heritage Label.

instability, incompatibility and difference as well. According to Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996), dissonance is inevitable and universal. It is inevitable because in a system based on selection, any heritage is a heritage of someone and not of someone else. Any creation of heritage from the past disinherits someone completely or partially. It is universal because it is a condition of all heritage, actively or latently. Following this perspective, Kisić claimed that “dissonance exists as a latent quality of any heritage” (2017, p. 56). Furthermore, Mäkinen (2018) stressed that any heritage is dissonant, since it is a construct, and it is shaped on the basis of specific contemporary interests.

In case of the ideological shift, the emergence of dissonant heritage is very likely. Delanty (2018) identified one of the main attributes of ideological transition in the phenomenon of cultural translation, which refers to the process that takes place when ideas, symbols and practices are ‘translated’ from one cultural context to another. The phenomenon takes place in relation to totalitarian regimes, decolonization and democracies. In fact, in each context, the ideologies become more or less pervasive, according to the normal process of social and political evolution.

2.6. Postwar modern mass housing and dissonant heritage: Analysis of the relation

One of the main arguments of the dissertation is that after the transition (*supra*), postwar modern mass housing became an object belonging to the past. The most direct implication of the argument is that postwar mass housing neighbourhoods may be approached as historical urban areas. Before engaging in a discussion on the heritage of postwar modern mass housing, it is worth focusing on the relation between historical urban landscape and heritage that has been largely discussed by institutions such as UNESCO, ICOMOS and the European Commission. A short analysis of the most relevant documents produced by the aforementioned institutions provides a deeper contextualization to the topic and a stronger background to the main argument of the dissertation.

The UNESCO *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* (1972)¹⁰ included in the category of cultural heritage the monuments, groups of buildings and sites “which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art and science” (Article 1). The UNESCO *Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and the Contemporary Role of Historic Areas* (1976)¹¹ argued that historic areas form a universal heritage must be safeguarded and integrated with contemporary social life by governmental and

¹⁰ UNESCO. *Recommendation Concerning the Protection at National Level, of the Cultural and Natural Heritage*. <https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/>

¹¹ UNESCO. *Recommendation Concerning the Safeguarding and the Contemporary Role of Historical Areas*. <https://www.icomos.org/publications/93towns7o.pdf>

nongovernmental actors. The ICOMOS *Washington Charter* (1987)¹² regarded the conservation of historic urban areas as an integral segment of planning, economic and social policies. The document expressed the need to conserve the historical character of the urban area together with its material and spiritual features. In particular, the *Washington Charter* revealed the commitment to preserve urban patterns, synergies between buildings, greenery, empty spaces, the physical aspect of construction, the relation between the area and natural or anthropic surroundings.

The SUI Project (2004), carried out by the European Commission,¹³ expressed the need for a more comprehensive analysis of the built urban heritage. The document stressed that most of the charters and conventions are focused on sites whose heritage is of exceptional cultural value. Nevertheless, such an approach ignores the complexity of everyday experience of the urban environment, which is characterised by a complex network of buildings and patterns. Non-exceptional heritage elements are relatively abundant and require a different conservation and management approach. Furthermore, SUI Project introduced a new concept, i.e., the urban fragment. Each urban fragment is characterised by specific morphological, societal and architectural features that are easily recognisable for residents and visitors. The distinctive elements of an urban fragment can be identified within the urban fabric.

The UNESCO *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape* (2011)¹⁴ stressed that urban transformations often carry out social and spatial fragmentation and negatively affect the quality of the urban environment. Therefore, some historical areas must face consequences such as the decrease in functionality and population. In other words, urban transformations are undermining the essence of several historical areas. According to the document, the Historic Urban Landscape approach may be helpful in coping with the effects of urban transformations and mitigating their harmful impacts. According to the recommendation, urban heritage is a key source in making areas more liveable, economically developed and socially cohesive.

The negative impact of transformations mentioned by the UNESCO *Recommendation on Historic Urban Landscape* ideally represents the current situation of postwar modern mass housing in Europe. Mass housing represents the legacy of a different political context, a different socio-cultural atmosphere and a

¹² ICOMOS. *Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas*. Adopted by ICOMOS General Assembly in Washington, DC, October 1987.

https://www.icomos.org/charters/towns_e.pdf

¹³ European Commission. SUI, sustainable development of urban historical areas through an active integration within towns: Guidance for the environmental assessment of the impacts of certain plans, programmes or projects upon the heritage value of historical areas, in order to contribute to their long-term sustainability: research report n° 16. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c0fe3aca-1639-4554-aca7-d3dccb2158d>

¹⁴ UNESCO. *Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape*.

<https://whc.unesco.org/uploads/activities/documents/activity-638-98.pdf>

different relation between power and urban planning. Most modern neighbourhoods continue to exist and provide a physical representation of the era when they were planned and built to contemporary societies, which are characterised by new values and new relations with the urban landscape. In the postwar decades, mass housing has been subjected to a process of physical and discursive construction and represented dominant ideologies. Nonetheless, after the neoliberal transition and the collapse of the socialist system, the phenomenon has been marginalised and even stigmatised by the official discourses.

The specific condition of postwar modern mass housing makes the analysis of its heritage a worthy and intriguing task. The dissertation is committed to analyse the heritage of postwar mass housing through elements provided by the overall theoretical framework of dissonant heritage. As it has been previously pointed out, dissonant heritage may be defined as a specific type of heritage whose messages generate discordance or are incompatible with the dominant values of a society. The theme of dissonant heritage is mostly studied in relation to monumental or highly symbolic spaces. Moreover, the concept is almost totally applied to the undesirable legacy of traumatic moments, such as totalitarian regimes and colonial domination.

However, the dissertation does not focus on the lives of dead bodies (Verdery, 1999). Following the path suggested by SUIT (*supra*), the work is aimed at investigating the heritage, and its dissonance of non-exceptional urban fragments. Furthermore, the analysis performed in this dissertation is committed to investigate the role of dissonant heritage in a former authoritarian context, such as the post-Soviet, as well as in relation to the ideological shifts that occurred in democratic societies.

On the basis of the theoretical framework introduced by Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996), the research is committed to identify the factors of dissonance that are affecting the heritage of postwar modern mass housing the most. It is possible to claim that the three factors of dissonance are relevant to the analysis. Two factors, the phenomena of 'obsolete' and 'undesirable' transmission, are related to the messages embedded in the postwar modern mass housing. The third factor, class-generated dissonance, must be related to the social and economic context. It is necessary to stress that the factors do not act monolithically in every postwar estate with the same intensity. Each factor may act with more or less intensity or even be non-active, according to the specific conditions of each area. In some areas, the factors may interact: for instance, the obsolescence of the values embedded in the built environment may act together with the disadvantaged socio-economic conditions or association with the unwanted past (*infra*).

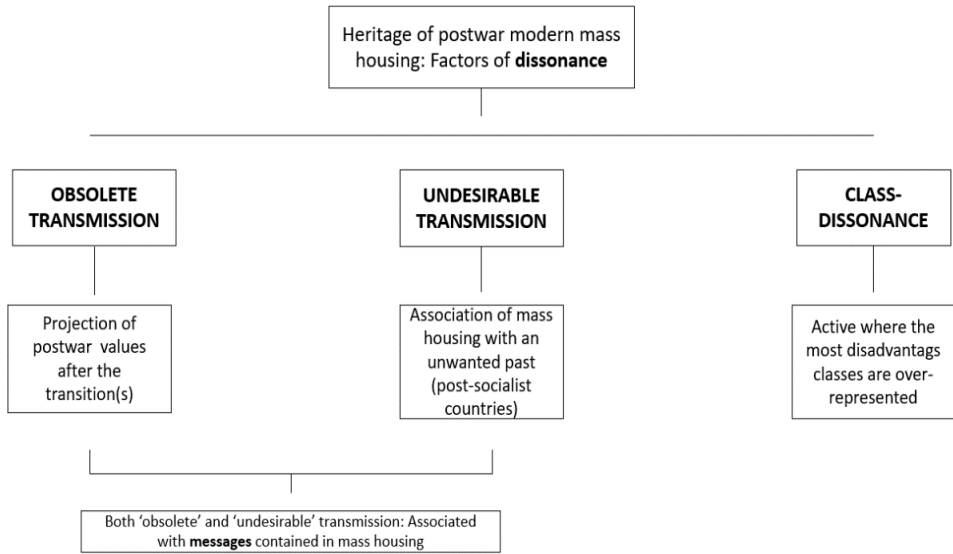
The phenomenon of 'obsolete transmission' takes place when messages related to a specific historical and ideological context continue to be projected to the societies that are characterised by different orientations and expectations. Political and ideological transitions that took place in post-socialist countries as well as northern and western Europe raised questions about the postwar modern mass housing. As it has already been pointed out, the phenomenon of modern urbanism can be considered one of the most visible architectural manifestations of a precise

historical and socio-cultural phase of the postwar Europe (*supra*). When the welfare policies declined between the second half of 1970s and the beginning of 1980s and the socialist system collapsed between 1989 and 1991, the cityscape became one of the main arenas of transition. The Soviet demise and the end of the socialist system in the former 'satellite states' carried out the most visible case of transition in contemporary Europe. Post-socialist transformation has been a multifaceted phenomenon and included every aspect of the economy, policymaking and society. Nevertheless, democracies have not been excluded from such processes. In the normal socio-political transformation, some ideologies may become more or less pervasive, and their legacy may cause social and cultural issues. While the institutional transition is relatively fast, the modification of the urban landscape is a slow process, and it is impossible to fully accomplish to some extent. Thus, on the one hand, iconic modern mass housing districts continued to represent social, political and architectural values of the postwar decades. On the other hand, the societies were characterised by new goals, new official discourses and new expectations related to the urban space. Modern housing blocks became objects belonging to the past, a paradoxical situation for the outcomes of positivist and future-oriented post-war planning (Belli, 2020b).

'Undesirable transmission' is a factor of dissonance that acts when the messages embedded in objects represent painful past events or unwanted historical eras. Undesirable transmission is likely to be a central factor of dissonance, especially in central and eastern Europe, where the postwar modern architecture is one of the most visible architectural outcomes of the years of Soviet occupation or communist dictatorship.

Class-dissonance is fostered by the socio-economic conditions of the most disadvantaged areas. It is a prominent factor of dissonance in the urban context. The differences between the most affluent and the lower classes find vivid representation in the residential space. The symbolic meaning of home is very influential in class dissonance. In fact, house and status are deeply tied: the place where people live reveal their level of income, the way they live and who they are in the outside world. After transition, socio-economic disparities increased, and the European city became a more unequal place. The inequalities, the change of economic structures and welfare regimes and new housing systems fostered socio-economic urban segregation. Therefore, especially in northern and western Europe, the most disadvantaged citizens clustered in the postwar estates. Meanwhile, middle and higher-income groups moved to more attractive locations. Thus, mass housing districts have been increasingly associated with the processes of marginalisation and 'residualisation' (*supra*). As a consequence, several estates became enclaves of social problems and stigmatised areas, which is ironic for neighbourhoods that were planned on the basis of strongly egalitarian principles.

Table 7. The factors of dissonance that affect the heritage of postwar modern mass housing



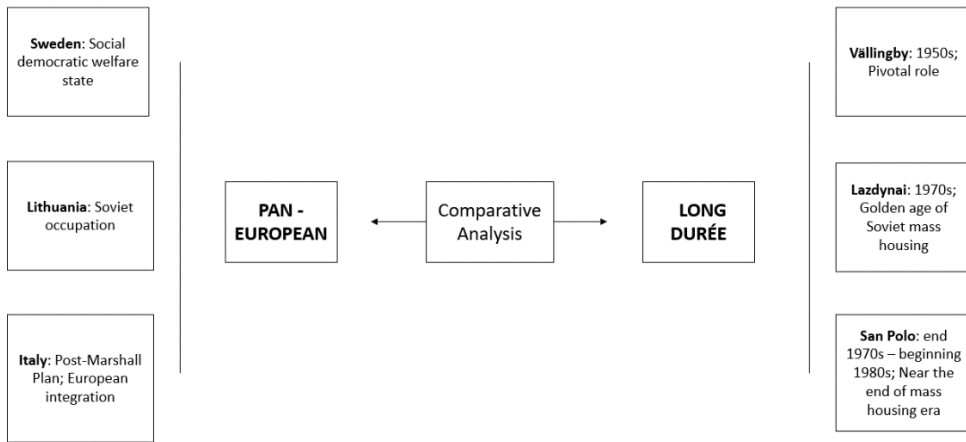
3. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF VÄLLINGBY, LAZDYNAI AND SAN POLO

The third chapter of the dissertation is committed to comparatively analyse the neighbourhoods of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo. Vällingby was inaugurated in 1954 in the north-western Stockholm, in Sweden. Vällingby was one of the first realisations of the A-B-C town model, and it may be considered as one of the first modern neighbourhoods in Europe. Lazdynai was built in the north-western outskirts of Vilnius, the capital of the republic of Lithuania, between 1967 and 1973. After the construction, the district was considered the jewel of postwar Soviet urbanisation in the Baltic republics, and in 1974, it received the Lenin Prize for All-Union architectural design, the most important Soviet award. San Polo was built between the second half of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s in the south-eastern area of Brescia, the second city of Lombardy, in Italy. Designed by Leonardo Benevolo, San Polo is undoubtedly one of the most striking cases of postwar modern urban planning in Italy.

The presentation of the cases of study reveals the specific geographic and chronological perspective of the analysis. From the geographical point of view, the research is heterogeneous, and it is committed to investigate the historical evolution of postwar mass housing in three different political contexts. In fact, in the postwar decades, Sweden was governed by the social-democratic party that attempted to establish a welfare-based social contract between the state and the citizens and implement a 'third way' of development, beyond the socialist-capitalist dichotomy. Lithuania was subject to the Soviet occupation that forcefully influenced its path of development, according to the needs of the centralised system. Italy, after the postwar reconstruction, entered into a post-Marshall Plan phase of (unequal) socio-economic development and integration with the Western European states. Therefore, the geographical location of the selected cases of study reveals the commitment to present postwar modern mass housing as a pan-European phenomenon.

Furthermore, the fact that the construction of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo took place in different moments of the mass housing era reveals the *long durée* approach of the research. The focus on neighbourhoods that had a pivotal role in the European development of postwar modernism (Vällingby), were built in the middle of the golden age of the phenomenon (Lazdynai) and near the end of the mass housing era (San Polo) is aimed at providing the most complete historical background to the analysis.

Table 8. The geographical and chronological approach of comparative analysis

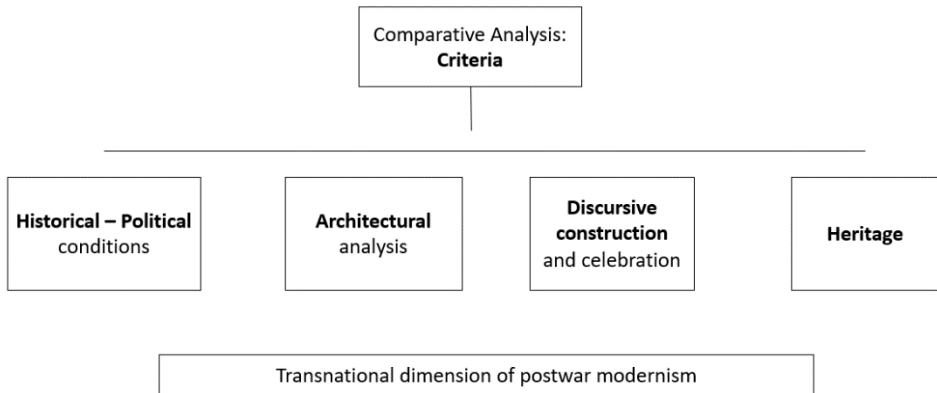


The comparative analysis of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo is performed according to a precise set of criteria. Although not all the criteria have the same importance in each case of study, they provide the most effective toolkit to analyse the historical context that fostered the construction of the neighbourhoods, their architectural and functional features and their heritage.

1. The first criterion focuses on the historical and political atmosphere as well as the institutional steps that triggered the phenomenon of postwar modern mass housing in Sweden, Soviet Lithuania and Italy and the outcomes of the phenomenon.
2. The second criterion of analysis focuses on the architectural dimension of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo. The study is committed to defining if and to what extent the planners and architects managed to adapt the general principles of the postwar modern planning to the local context and if they succeeded in providing an original interpretation of the phenomenon.
3. The third criterion of the analysis is aimed at presenting the efforts to discursively construct and celebrate Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo in the years of construction or in the immediately following period.
4. The fourth criterion of the analysis is committed to analyse the heritage of the selected cases of study. In particular, the analysis is committed to investigate the heritage of the cases of study on the basis of the concept of dissonant heritage.

The whole comparative analysis is performed, taking into deep consideration the transnational dimension of the postwar modernism. The research, in relation to each criterion, is committed to demonstrate the extent to which dialogue with foreign models was influential in the planning and the construction of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo. Such an analytical perspective is expected to give further strength to the thesis that the postwar mass housing had a strong transnational connotation, without ignoring the specificities of each case of the study.

Table 9. The criteria of comparative analysis



3.1. Vällingby



Fig. 10. Aerial view of *Vällingby Centrum* (photo by Oscar Bladh CC: License: BY)

3.1.1. Investigating the context: Historical analysis of postwar modern mass housing in Sweden

In the postwar decades, the Swedish mass housing program reached the greatest prestige at international level (Glendinning, 2021). The reasons for the success of Swedish modern urbanism must be reconducted to the specific historical and political atmosphere of the Scandinavian country.

The influence of modern urbanism reached Sweden at the end of the 1920s due to the new models that came from Germany (*supra*). The Swedish quest for modernism found a vivid representation in the Stockholm Exhibition in 1930 (Sidenbladh, 1981; Andersson, Bråmås, 2018). According to Caldenby (2012), the exhibition was an inspiration as well as the first concretization of the Swedish ‘middle way’ in relation to the housing and urban issues. The event introduced functionalism, standardisation and mass production in the official discourse. Furthermore, for the first time, the Stockholm Exhibition gave centrality to the issue of housing for a broader public, showing commitment to democratisation and egalitarianism.

Since the beginning of the 1930s, the progress in urban planning and the political asset of the country mutually reinforced each other. In 1932, after the years of weak and frequently changing minority governments, the Social Democratic party gained the majority both at the municipal elections of Stockholm and in the national government (Creagh, 2011). The new political atmosphere fostered a transformation of Swedish urban landscape that lasted for four decades. The planning of the built environment was one of the key areas, in which the welfare state attempted to achieve its ambitions of economic redistribution and social justice (Albertsen, Diken, 2004; Swenarton, Avermaete, van den Heuvel, 2014).

The concept of *folkhemmet* (the people’s home) was central in the Social Democratic narrative and directly influenced the Swedish housing policies. According to the philosophy of *folkhemmet*, Sweden had to be a good home for its people, which constituted “a nation-family under the shared roof of social equality and welfare solidarity” (Creagh, 2011, p. 5). The centrality of the concept, which gained a moral hegemonic position (Glendinning, 2021) revealed the effort to improve the living conditions and guarantee equal access to the services. Furthermore, the desire to democratically raise the living standards disclosed the attempt to increase the capability of citizens to consume goods. These factors fostered the evolution of the Swedish as a third way that combined socialist and capitalist elements and reinterpreted them originally. Thus, the concept of *folkhemmet*, starting from the domestic environment, provided the philosophical background to project a new type of society.

Therefore, since the 1940s, the housing production has been influenced by two fundamental guidelines that combined the *folkhemmet* tradition and the principles of modern urban planning. To begin with, a good home was an inalienable right of all citizens, regardless of their income. Secondly, the optimal solutions in the design of houses and urban planning existed and must be researched. It must be stressed that, as it has already happened with the First, Sweden was not directly affected by the

Second World War. On the one hand, the avoidance of the conflict allowed the country to avoid dealing with the challenging issues of the war damage and reconstruction and concentrate on expanding urbanisation, *de facto* anticipating the other European states and playing a pivotal role in the whole continent. On the other hand, as the former Stockholm planning commissioner Yngve Larsson (1962) pointed out, the end of the conflict constituted an important turning point in economic and urban development.

The Swedish postwar urbanisation made the cooperation between professionals and authorities even stronger than in the previous decade. Since the beginning of the 1940s, the state introduced a system of subsidies aimed at favouring the municipal and cooperative housing sector. In 1947, in Stockholm, the rent was put under municipal control. In the same period, the measures aimed at controlling rents were introduced in the whole country (Creagh, 2011). The acts had a practical and a cultural commitment. The idea of public housing where the urban lower class could find a shelter was rejected, and the new housing stock was accessible to all the citizens. Nonetheless, these measures did not prevent some areas, especially those built during the Million Program (*infra*), to become dominated by the low-income dwellers and socially problematic.

The urbanisation of Stockholm was characterised by a relevant administrative peculiarity, i.e., the municipal ownership of the land. In 1904, the Stockholm City Council began to purchase land around the city with future developmental purposes. As a result, in the postwar decades, Stockholm owned 80% of the municipal land, located outside the city centre. Therefore, the city had the right to control the construction within the municipal boundaries and prevent the real estate speculation and the inflation of land prices. Thus, the municipality of Stockholm became “its own real estate developer” (Larsson, 1962, p. 221). In 1947, the municipality acquired the philanthropic housing company Svenska Bostäder, which became centrally involved in the urbanisation of the city. In the following decade, the company, together with the municipal housing agency Familje Bostäder, built half of the new flats of the capital (Glendinning, 2021). The City Planning Office of Stockholm was directed by Sven Markelius from 1944 to 1954 and by Göran Sidenbladh from 1955 to 1973.

The *General Plan for Stockholm*, published in 1952, is perhaps the most relevant source of the historical analysis of postwar urbanisation in Sweden. The text was developed by the City Planning Office, under the supervision of Sven Markelius. The plan provided the main guidelines for the construction of Vällingby and other suburban centres. The document combined the description of the most technical aspects with the philosophy that inspired urban transformations, drawing a clear line that linked the norms for planning, the factors creating a specific social atmosphere and the aesthetic ideas.

The word that best describes the overall goals of the *General Plan for Stockholm* is ‘decentralisation’. Since one of the main commitments of planners was the improvement of connections between the dwellings and workplaces, the proposed solution was the construction of satellite towns, relatively far from the

centre and able to provide jobs that a relevant part of the inhabitants could find employment in their area of residence. The development of new residential areas had to take place in accordance with the development of public transportation. Decentralisation was considered desirable for two reasons. To begin with, the planners were convinced that the life of urban areas could be strengthened when residents lived and worked in the same place. Secondly, decentralisation could make what otherwise would have been dormitory towns more alive. In fact, the *General Plan for Stockholm* was committed to ensure the physical well-being of inhabitants and provide the infrastructures that were necessary for professional development and social progress. The document explicitly stressed the task to adapt the proposed solutions to the needs of ‘tomorrow’, showing the active attempt to shape the future of the city, which constituted a decisive feature of the overall postwar modern planning.

The document officially introduced the A-B-C town model in the planning discourse. According to the A-B-C acronym, which was coined by Sven Markelius (Creagh, 2011), any newly established residential area must contain workplaces (A, *arbete* = work), dwellings (B, *bostäder* = dwellings) and its own centre (C, *centrum* = centre). Therefore, the main aim of the A-B-C model was to create communities with their own profiles and identities, where it would have been possible to live and work (Hall, 1991). Thus, the A-B-C neighbourhoods were expected to relieve pressure from the inner city and bring the advantages of urban living to the residents of areas that are located far from the centre.

Nonetheless, it is important to stress that the new urban developments were not supposed to be completely autonomous towns. The neighbourhoods were part of the city of Stockholm, and the residents were expected to think about themselves as Stockholmers. The task of integration with the rest of the city is demonstrated by the fact that around 50% of the inhabitants were expected to commute out of the neighbourhood, and 50% of the workforce was supposed to be taken from other areas. Thus, new suburbs were not expected to be fully self-contained but only half-contained (Cervero, 1995). Therefore, it is necessary to stress that although sometimes, the two concepts overlap (International New Town Institute n.d.), the postwar Swedish suburbs must not be considered as new towns (Glendinning, 2021). Undoubtedly, the new town model was a source of inspiration for the A-B-C planning. Nevertheless, Vällingby and the other centres have always been considered and approached as constitutive parts of the city, which had to be separated and then united again in a whole comprehensive system (Caldenby n.d.).

The Swedish urban developments can be undoubtedly contextualised in the international dimension of postwar modernism. Glendinning (2021) stressed the dialogue between Swedish and British planning and the inspiration that came from the American models. Creagh (2011) argued that the work of Lewis Mumford was very influential to the Swedish postwar planning. Mumford, in fact, was an advocate of the idea of a “poly-nucleated city” (Creagh, 2011, p. 12) that is made of small units, locally administered and based on the human scale. Nevertheless, due to its pivotal role in the whole European continent, the phenomenon of Swedish planning,

in general, and developments, such as Vällingby, in particular, became an internationally recognised sources of inspiration (*infra*).

Despite their international celebration, the planning innovations introduced in the 1950s did not solve the most challenging issue in the Swedish cities, i.e., the housing shortage. In order to find a way out of the situation, the Parliament set a new task and created what has become known as the Million Program. According to the program, one million new dwellings should have been built in about ten years, from 1965 to 1974. The goal was impressive, considering that the total stock of the time was barely three million dwellings (Hall, Vidén, 2005). The Million Program was the concretization of the 1960s ambition to create an exemplary welfare state and an optimistic and future-oriented ideology that characterised the decade. In fact, the program must be contextualised within the larger framework of the ‘record years’, the period that went from the beginning of the 1960s to the 1975. During the ‘record years’, the state made large investments that together with large scale industrialised construction guaranteed a dramatic increase in the housing production and immediate improvement of the living standards for the masses.

The housing built during the ‘record years’ in general and during the Million Program in particular has been mostly associated with large and uniform mass housing estates. Although huge housing blocks undoubtedly characterised the period and transformed the urban landscape of the country, a certain degree of architectural diversification must be noted. While 66% of apartments built between 1965 and 1974 were in multi-family blocks, the 34% of new construction had the form of single-family houses (Hall, Vidén, 2005). Single-family houses were mostly built in smaller towns. About half of them have been built in groups and produced following the identical and rationalised procedure. However, large housing blocks dominated the production in the metropolitan regions of Stockholm, Göteborg and Malmö, where more than one third of the overall construction concentrated. The task of the Million Program was achieved. Half-way, the housing shortage was replaced by a housing surplus caused by the unprecedented expansion of the stock and economic stagnation. The demand for rented flats had a drastic reduction around 1970 and after 1975; the production of the housing reached the lowest level, since the beginning of the ‘record years’. Therefore, 1975 marked the end of the era. Such a historical turning point made it possible to regard the Million Programme as a single and iconic project.

The end of the Million Program marked the end of the massive and iconic urbanisation of Sweden. The deceleration went hand in hand with the progressive weakening of the Social Democratic political and cultural hegemony. Glendinning (2021) argued that the assassination of the prime minister Olof Palme marked the definitive end of the *folkhemmet* era in the Scandinavian country.



Fig. 11. Vällingby, construction of residential area (photo by Herman Ronninger. Svenska Dagbladet CC: License: BY)

3.1.2. Physical and architectural analysis of Vällingby

The planning of Vällingby began in 1949, and it was carried out by the City Planning Office, under the supervision of Sven Markelius. Vällingby was built on municipally-owned land, previously acquired for the developmental purpose (*supra*). The construction process was managed by the Svenska Bostäder company. The neighbourhood, located in the north-western area of Stockholm, was inaugurated in November 1954 (Fig. 12), and it can be considered as the first implementation of the A-B-C town model.



Fig. 12. *Vällingby Centrum*, opening day (photo by Gunnar Lantz. Svenska Dagbladet. CC: License: BY)

Nowadays, the whole Hässelby-Vällingby district, whose central Vällingby is a part and the original nucleus, has a surface of 19.60 km² and a population of about 70,000. The central Vällingby, which constitutes the core of the analysis performed in the chapter, has a surface of 1.73 km² and a population of about 25,000. The geographical boundary of Vällingby is quite strong and effective. In fact, the neighbourhood is surrounded by roads: Länsväg 275 along the south-west and north-west directories and Ärevägen and Vällingbyvägen in the south-eastern side and green space in the north-eastern boundary. The effectiveness of the boundary makes Vällingby a highly identifiable area (Fig. 13).

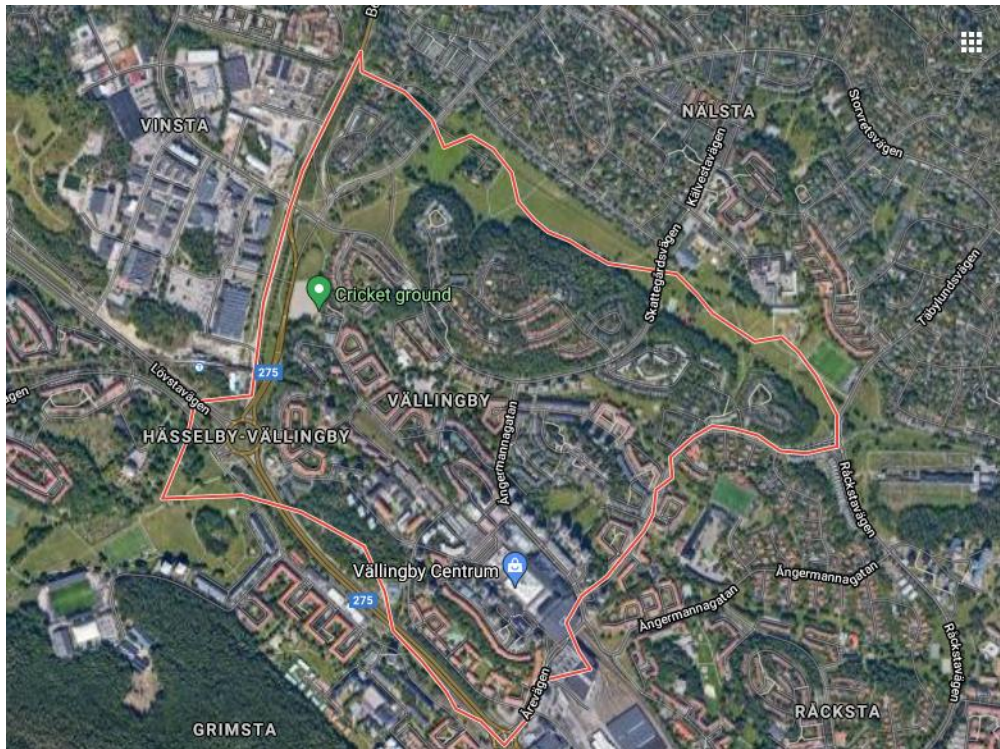


Fig. 13. The area of Vällingby from the satellite

The traffic system of Vällingby is based on a strict differentiation. The main roads that cross the western area of Stockholm, Länsväg 275 and Räckstavägen, are kept outside the residential area. Moreover, the busiest streets entering in the residential core of the neighbourhood are reserved for the vehicular traffic. The pedestrian paths connect the housing units with the green areas and the centre, guaranteeing direct access to the facilities and public transport. The road pattern of Vällingby is rather composite (Ching, 1979, p. 2015) and not based on the typical modernist path of the parallel roads. In fact, Vällingby was planned and built with the aim of exploiting the morphology of the site, and the composite pattern of the roads reflects the physical attributes of the area.

Vällingby was concentrically built around the central hub that can be identified with the *Vällingby Centrum* (Fig. 14–15).

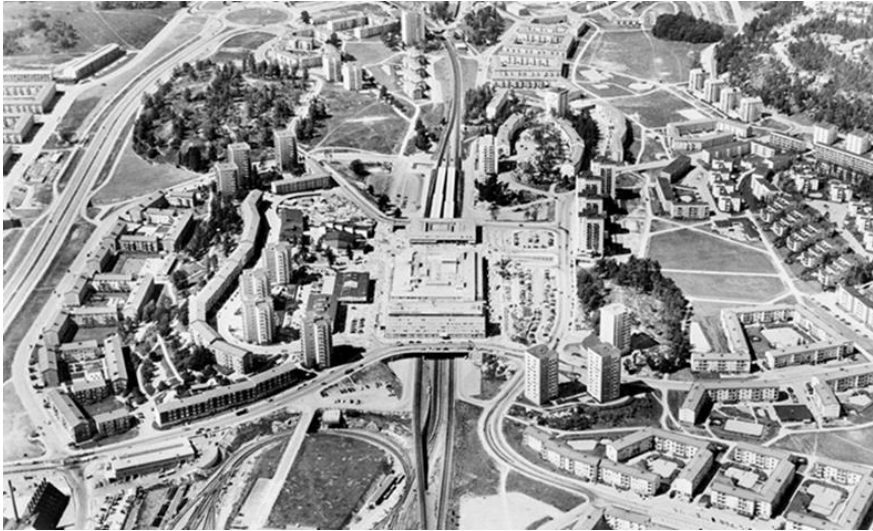


Fig. 14. View of the *Vällingby Centrum* (photo by Oscar Bladh CC: License: BY)

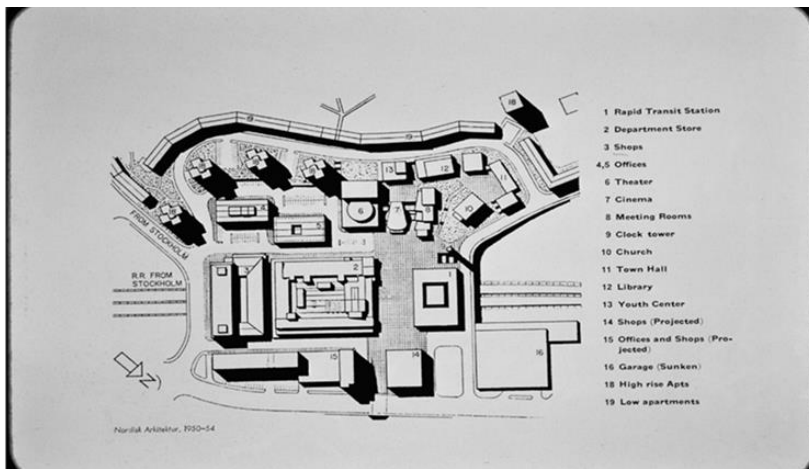


Fig. 15. Vällingby town centre layout plan (Vällingby, Stockholm, SE), (John Reps Collection)

The residential environment of Vällingby is characterised by three main housing typologies: 11-storey tower blocks, 3–4 storey apartment blocks and detached single-family houses.

- The fourteen 11-storey tower blocks (Fig. 16–17–18) surround the *Vällingby Centrum* and mark its limits. Each block was constructed with one elevator and one stair, and the corridor space was kept to the minimum to allow each apartment to have more exterior space, better ventilation and more exposure to the sunlight. Each floor has four apartments. The blocks were designed

for single people, young couples and families without children, which were supposed to make the biggest use of the facilities located at the centre.



Fig. 16–17–18. 11-storey tower blocks near the *Vällingby Centrum* (photo by the author)

- 3–4 storey apartment blocks (Fig. 19–20) are located within the area of 500 m from the Vällingby centrum (Creagh, 2011). The blocks contain larger apartments designed to host the families with children. The 3–4 storey residential blocks are characterised by a relative architectural differentiation and include cruciform constructions, stepped row houses (Fig. 21) and circular buildings.



Fig. 19–20. Three storey multi-family housing (photo by the author)



Fig. 21. 3-storey stepped house in Vällingby (photo by the author)

- Detached single-family houses are located in the outskirts of Vällingby. Despite their density reminiscent of the suburban environment, they have resulted from the standardised production, not differently from the other building typologies. The distance of single-family houses from the Vällingby centrum and the subway station does not exceed 900 m (Terris, 1957).

The *Vällingby Centrum* (Fig. 22–23) is located in the middle of the district, and since the inauguration, it provided cultural, social, commercial and recreational services. The *Vällingby Centrum* was planned to be the local commercial and service centre even for the immediate surroundings. The proximity of the centre of Stockholm made the *Centrum* an instrument to keep people in the neighbourhood. The number and the quality of shops revealed that the centre was a place where the most essential needs could be met as well as a location where the freedom of choice of customers could be satisfied (Creagh, 2011). In this sense, the *Vällingby Centrum* reflected the most consumer-oriented component of the Swedish welfare state. Furthermore, the centre was planned and still works as a hub for public transportation. In fact, the centre provides a direct access to the bus station and the subway station that connects Vällingby to the centre of Stockholm.



Fig. 22–23. The *Vällingby Centrum* (photo by the author)

Unlike suburbs constructed during the Million Program between the 1960s and the 1970s, Vällingby does not present the overwhelmingly big volumes and an extremely standardised physical environment. A good balance between the built and natural environment was reached, and the original topography of the site was maintained and valued (Fig. 24). Furthermore, the neighbourhood was well-integrated with the centre of Stockholm, of which it constituted an integral part.



Fig. 24. Vällingby: integration of architecture and natural topography of the site

3.1.3. Discursive construction and celebration of Vällingby

The Swedish desire to actively promote modern urban developments clearly emerged since the publication of the *General Plan for Stockholm* (1952) (Fig. 25). Although it was written in Swedish, the plan included, in fact, a 20 page summary in English, aimed at showcasing the urbanism of the welfare state abroad and engaging in a dialogue with the international audience. Being one of the first implementations of the urban trends that were gaining popularity both in Sweden and internationally (Huth, 1995), Vällingby may be considered as the most innovative case of the modern planning of its time (Downies, 1972). Göran Sidenbladh, who was the director of the City Planning Office of Stockholm between 1955 and 1973, defined Vällingby as the most important achievement in the career of Sven Markelius. Furthermore, Sidenbladh argued that “Pioneering the ‘A-B-C-Town’ concept, Vällingby was planned as an integral, sustainable ensemble of public services, local workplaces, private enterprises, a varied architecture and housing typologies and careful landscaping [and that] it included all facilities required for a happy and modern life” (1981, p. 11). Creagh (2011) claimed that Vällingby represented the zenith of the Social Democratic welfare policies in Sweden.

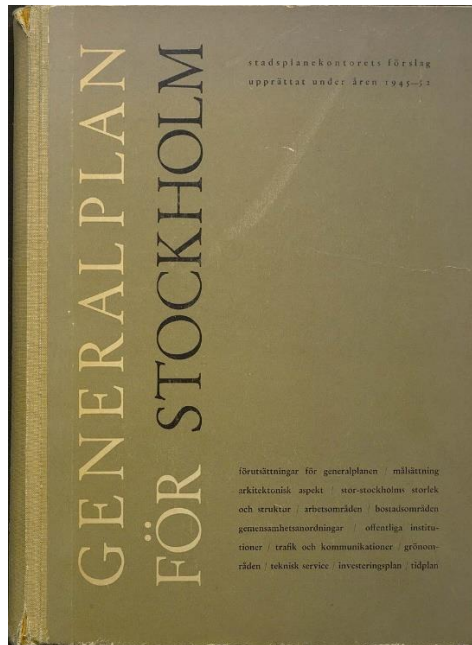


Fig. 25. The General Plan for Stockholm

The success of Vällingby became clear in the early 1960s. In 1961, the suburb received the Patrick Abercrombie Prize for Town Planning by the International Union of Architects. One year later, in 1962, the Royal Institute of British Architects awarded Sven Markelius with the Royal Gold Medal in Architecture. During the 1960s, Vällingby was visited by planners, architects and professionals from Europe and North America, including Le Corbusier and several delegations from the British new towns (Cook, 2018). Moreover, in those years, the efforts were conducted to transform the modern suburb into a tourist attraction. The tours were organised, and between 1956 and 1964, the number of visitors grew even among the non-specialists of architecture and planning.

The case of Vällingby was promoted through the media and exhibitions. The written materials, such as public documents, brochures, plans and models, were used for this purpose. Although most publications were written in Swedish, a significant number of documents were written or summarised in English to reach a wider audience (Terris, 1957; Downies, 1972; Sidenbladh, 1981). In 1960, the National Association of Swedish Architects and the Swedish Institute organised an exhibition on the contemporary architecture in country at the American Institute of Architects of Washington DC. In 1961, the exhibition “The New Stockholm” was organised in London.

In July 1956, the BBC broadcasted a short documentary “Modern Life in Sweden” where the newly constructed Vällingby was presented (Fig. 26). The neighbourhood was defined as the most modern place in Europe (and possibly in the world) as well as the symbol of Swedish prosperity. The physical environment of

Vällingby was assessed positively. In particular, the documentary concentrated on some specific features, such as traffic separation, variety and modernity of shops, safe pedestrian paths, playgrounds for children and efficient public transportation from and to the city centre. Despite some elements of criticism, related to the conservative and moralistic attitude towards the Swedish model, “Modern Life in Sweden” internationally showcased Vällingby only two years after its inauguration.

Nonetheless, the centrality of Vällingby in the international debate remained unique in the field of postwar modernism. The celebration of Vällingby must be reconducted to its pivotal role and the fact that immediately after the construction, it ideally represented the modern way of life that the postwar Europe was trying to realise.



Fig. 26. Frame from the documentary “Modern Life in Sweden” (BBC Archive)

3.1.4. The heritage of Vällingby: A case of ‘obsolete transmission’

Following the analytical framework of dissonant heritage, it is possible to argue that the factor of ‘obsolete transmission’ is operating in Vällingby. As it has already been pointed out, the factor of ‘obsolete transmission’ operates when a specific object projects values and meanings that are typical for a specific epoch to a transformed society.

To begin with, in the architectural and planning field, the immediate success of Vällingby did not last. The neighbourhood lost its uniqueness and its prestige and consequently, the interest of the international audience (Cook, 2018). After the golden age of Vällingby, at the beginning of the 1960s, the Million Programme (*supra*) in Sweden and the massive construction of estates in the whole Europe deprived decentralised and rational modern planning from any idea of exceptionality. Therefore, Vällingby, despite its pivotal role and its undeniable

architectural value, was increasingly perceived as one of the many and not-so-attractive postwar urban developments.

The second question to be analysed is related to the A-B-C model itself. Although it remained a local centre, Vällingby did not develop its own potential in the way it was planned and hoped. In fact, 50% of the active population was expected to work in the area (Creagh, 2011). Nevertheless, local workplaces did not reach the predicted numbers. Several residents continued to work in other areas of Stockholm, and therefore, the planned ABC town soon transformed into the B-C town (International New Towns Institute, n.d.). Between the second half of the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, even more workplaces were lost, especially in the industrial and commercial sectors. Nowadays, less than half of the working population has a job in the area, and the share of car-dependent commuters, moving to workplaces spread in the region, has increased (International New Towns Institute, n.d.).

From the demographic point of view, between the 1980s and the 1990s, Vällingby began to depopulate, and its inhabitants were ageing. Nowadays, the demographic composition of the neighbourhood has changed: 43.3% of the population of the whole Hässelby-Vällingby area is composed of migrants. The ethnic mix does not constitute a problem itself. Nevertheless, such a complex ethnic composition requires a specific approach aimed at favouring integration and identification of the inhabitants with their place of residence. Such a situation suggests that the original political and philosophical principles that inspired Vällingby became outdated. Albertsen and Diken (2004) analysed the relation between the welfare state and nation state and presented the idea of *folkhemmet* as a romantic idea of a national community. In this sense, the commitment to universal rights was linked to the citizenship. With increasing migration, the idea became outdated and ineffective. Therefore, the current situation of Vällingby demonstrates the need to adapt the Swedish welfare state to the new social and political environment (Kautto, Kuitto, 2021).

Thus, the loss of uniqueness and prestige in the architectural and urban sphere, the incomplete development of the A-B-C model and the inability to keep up with the social and demographic transformation demonstrate the difficult adaptation of an urban model that was developed in the golden age of Swedish social-democracy to the contemporary context. Such a situation reveals the centrality of the 'obsolete transmission', as a factor of dissonance, in Vällingby.

3.2. Lazdynai



Fig. 27. Lazdynai in 1976 (photo by Marius Baranauskas)

3.2.1. Investigating the context: Historical analysis of postwar modern mass housing in Soviet Lithuania

The Soviet postwar revolution in architecture began in December 1954. In the speech “On the extensive introduction of industrial methods, improving the quality and reducing the cost of construction” delivered to the Congress of Soviet Builders and Architects, Khrushchev expressed the necessity to speed up the construction process and the need for a radical break with the past. It is interesting to note that the speech was made almost two years before the so-called “Secret Speech” delivered at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party in 1956, when Khrushchev denounced the crimes of Stalinism. Therefore, it is possible to see architecture as one of the very first arenas of Soviet destalinisation.

In order to pursue the objective of building faster, cheaper and better, Khrushchev called for centralised planning and industrialised construction methods. The practical commitment of dealing with the increasing urbanisation of the Soviet Union was accompanied by “the idea that rational town planning and architecture [could] engineer social harmony, health and happiness” (Reid, 2006, p. 237). It has been recently argued that the shift of Khrushchev to modern architecture “was not motivated by ideology so much as by practical commitment to cost reduction and efficiency [and] by his desire to provide the maximum number of homes to socialist citizen-consumers” (Sammartino, 2018, p. 84). Nevertheless, it is impossible to ignore the fact that “architecture became one of the key arenas of

ideology” (Humphrey, 2005, p. 39). From this perspective, architecture and planning represented two pillars of the Soviet Union during the Thaw, i.e., the effort to break up with the Stalinist past without questioning the whole Soviet system as well as the attempt to increase the mass consumption and create a modern and urban way of life.

A series of acts and decrees adopted by the state provided the legal and institutional framework for the post-Stalinist planning and building. In 1954, the Soviet Council of Ministers adopted the act on Development of Mass Production of Assembled Reinforced Concrete Structural Components. In January 1955, the Construction Norms and Rules (SNiP) became effective. In the same year, the decrees On the Elimination of Excesses in Architecture and Construction and On the Development of Means to Improve, Industrialise and Reduce the Cost of Construction were approved as well. The responsibility for planning was shared by *Gosplan* and *Gosstroy*. *Gosplan*, the State Planning Committee, was responsible for national and regional economic planning that included investments in building. *Gosstroy*, the State Construction Committee, controlled every phase of regional and city planning and construction. *Gosstroy* included *Gosgrazhdanstroy*, the State Committee on Civil Construction. *Gosplan*, *Gosstroy* and *Gosgrazhdanstroy* had branches in each Soviet republic. In 1956, at the 20th Party Congress, *Sovnarkhozi*, the Regional Economic Councils, were established with the aim of replacing the central ministries in Moscow in the supervision of industrial and construction developments and making them faster (Drémaitė, 2017).

In the very first phases of construction, the design of residential buildings was rather minimal. The first residential blocks were mostly 4-storey, but they have been quickly substituted by 5-storey buildings, which could be constructed without installing an elevator, compulsory for the higher buildings. Such residential blocks were characterised by very small apartments. The living space was 9 m² per resident, and most of the buildings were made for one- or two-room apartments. In 1958, the standard interior height for apartments was 2.5 m (Drémaitė, 2017). Therefore, it is clear that despite the rhetoric of good standards, the Soviet norms for construction stuck most residents into largely inadequate living space (Hess, Tammaru, 2019). Nevertheless, at least in the very first years of the Soviet mass housing era, the minimal living conditions were not perceived as a relevant or problematic issue. On the one hand, the most immediate goal of the state was to provide each family its own flat, however small (Drémaitė, 2017). On the other hand, most new urban settlers never had their own apartment before. Therefore, even the conduction of everyday life in very small spaces could be seen as an improvement of the previous living conditions (Janušauskaitė, 2019).

The issue of the visual monotony of postwar modern housing stock became evident already in the early 1960s. In November 1962, at a plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, Khrushchev himself stressed the lack of aesthetic quality in industrialised construction. The secretary claimed that the question of expressiveness had to be considered, and the architects were expected to reveal themselves within the limits of the Soviet aesthetics (Drémaitė, 2017). Other

shortcomings related to the bad quality of construction materials, such as poor sound insulation (Janušauskaitė, 2019), emerged soon after the construction. In this sense, the structural weaknesses that became endemic after the Soviet collapse were anticipated less than a decade after the 1954 speech on architecture.

As it has already been pointed out, one of the triggers of Soviet postwar modern urbanism was the commitment to overcome the dramatic housing shortage that was caused by the population movements and the impressive rate of urbanisation of the country.¹⁵ Gentile (2019) considered the Soviet housing effort far from being a success story. In fact, despite massive and fast construction, the scarcity of dwellings has always characterised the Soviet experience both at central level and in the republics. According to the author, the roots of such a shortage must be found in the Soviet programs themselves. In fact, the postwar reconstruction gave priority to the areas that were most affected by the conflict, such as city centres and industrial areas, and it focused on the full restoration of industrial production with a strong emphasis on the heavy industry. Furthermore, Stalinist architectural grandeur did not prioritise housing for the masses, which became a goal only after Khrushchev took power. Nevertheless, at the beginning of the 1950s, the basis for the situation that was characterised by plentiful opportunities of industrial employment and inadequate urban infrastructures were already in place.

As a result of the aforementioned situation, the demand for housing continued to exceed the supply, especially among the groups of people who were not employed in the prioritised sectors (Puur, Klesment, Sakkeus, 2019). In fact, in the Soviet system “the provision of an accommodation was an important fringe benefit that enterprises could offer to their employees, thus strongly guiding individuals’ employment and migrations decisions” (Puur, Klesment, Sakkeus, 2019, p. 39). Nonetheless, the industrial enterprises had different abilities to house workers. The enterprises that were formally subordinated to the central system and directly dependent on Moscow and those working in sectors, such as heavy industry and military sector, had more power to allocate their employees in the housing stock. Therefore, the Soviet experience has been constantly characterised by the urban landscape of priorities (Gentile, 2019). The priorities were expressed both at the macro-level, where some cities were favoured at the expenses of others, as well as at the micro-level, where certain neighbourhoods were advantaged more than others.

One last relevant aspect of the postwar Soviet urban planning was its intrinsic transnational dimension. The new direction in architecture and planning was committed to update the construction methods and apply the most recent technological solutions. Therefore, it became necessary for the Soviet professionals to find inspiration in the experience of foreign mass housing methods. In 1954, a delegation of Soviet experts visited France to study the Camus System, the first fully prefabricated construction system, introduced by engineer Raymond Camus. The Camus System was based on a production factory, a fleet of transportation trucks

¹⁵ The quantitative data about the postwar Soviet urbanisation are presented in the first chapter of the dissertation.

and the assembly work made on site. The system did not require highly specialised labour force and led to efficient and cheap construction. Thanks to its speed and efficiency, the System became successful in France and abroad and was deeply influential for the Soviet professionals. In 1957, *Gosstroj* organised one-month long trips to Nordic countries and West Germany. Besides apartment blocks, the Soviet delegations visited schools, kindergartens, hospitals and administrative buildings. From October to November of 1957, the Soviet professionals visited Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland: the suburbs of Vällingby in Stockholm and Tapiola in Helsinki were of special interest (Drémaitė, 2017).

From the ideological and practical point of view, the Nordic countries and especially Sweden were the main source of inspiration outside the socialist system. Some western European countries, such as the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands, massively expanded their modern housing stock as well. Nevertheless, in those countries, the model of social housing became dominant: several postwar estates have been destined to the working class and low-income strata of the population. Such a model was not acceptable to the Soviet Union due to its peculiar ideological features and the commitment of the Soviet leaders to create equal housing. However, the welfare-state urbanisation had a strong egalitarian character and resulted from a public effort directed to the whole population, regardless of the socio-economic conditions of citizens, being more acceptable according to the Soviet value system (Hess, Tammaru, 2019).

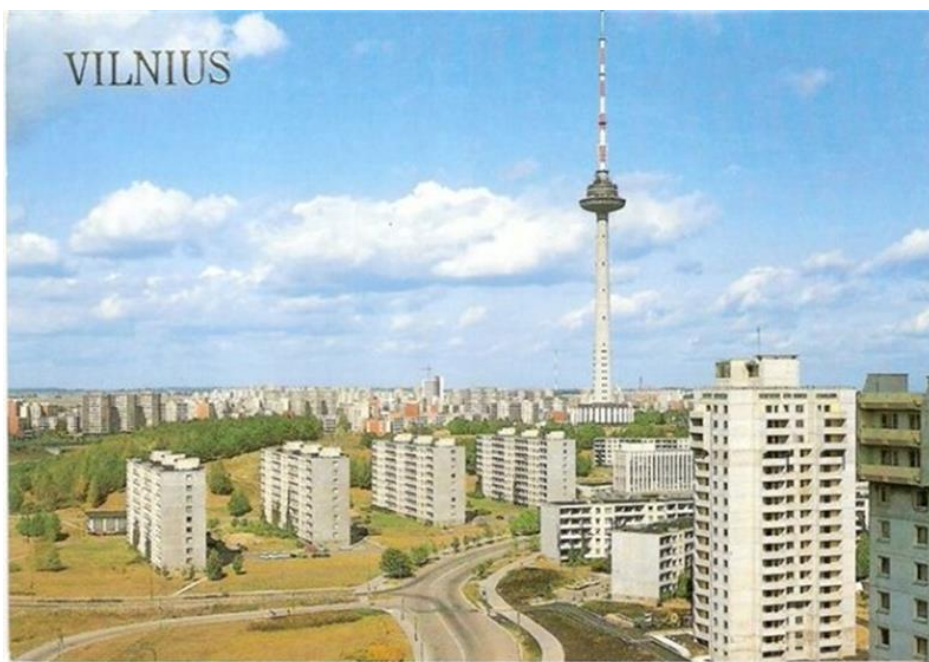


Fig. 28. The area of Lazdynai represented on a postcard

What characterised Lithuanian postwar urbanisation was the constant tension between the attempts to find a local way and the necessity to adhere to the Soviet centralised planning. The Baltic estates were, in fact, “usually ambitious and often original” (Hess, Tammaru, 2019, p. 8), since they resulted from the attempts of planners to give a sense of uniqueness to the designed districts within the economic and expressive limits imposed by the Soviet system.

In conformity with the trends that characterised the whole postwar Europe, the development of mass housing in Lithuania was strictly connected to the socio-economic and demographic factors. During the postwar decades, Lithuania experienced a remarkable population growth. Between 1959 and 1989, the republic had a 36% demographic increase, and by the late 1980s, the population of the republic reached 3,675,000 inhabitants (Drėmaitė, 2017). Unlike Estonia and Latvia, which did not witness a real baby-boom (*supra*), Lithuania showed high fertility rates in the late Soviet era. Therefore, although the migration rate was relevant, it did not shape the demographic and ethnic composition of Lithuania as deeply as it did in the other republics. Furthermore, Lithuania had a particularly rapid urban growth. The overall urban population increased by more than 50% in the 1960s and by over 30% in the following decade. In 1970, 50.2 % of the Lithuanian population lived in cities and towns, and in 1989, when the last Soviet census took place, 68% of the population of the republic was urban (Puur, Klesment, Sakkeus, 2019).

As a result of being included in the Soviet system and having to respect the timetables and the objectives imposed by Moscow, the Baltic republics, in general, and Lithuania, in particular, saw a desirable or not development of mass housing. Despite being belated, compared to Scandinavia and Western Europe, once the phenomenon started, it did not stop until the Soviet collapse, and it deeply transformed the urban landscape. When the Soviet occupation finished, 67% of the population of Vilnius lived in large housing estates (Hess, Tammaru, 2019).

The case of Vilnius was very remarkable. The Lithuanian capital “grew at a particularly fast rate. In 1945, the post-war Lithuanian capital had 110,000 inhabitants. By 1959, that number had more than doubled to 236,000 and in 1979 Vilnius was nearly at the half-million inhabitant mark” (Drėmaitė, 2017, pp. 158–159). Thus, the massive urban expansion and the increasing housing needs made the city an excellent testing ground for architects and planners (Šiupšinkas, Lankots, 2019).

As it happened for Stockholm in the 1950s (*supra*), the development of a general plan was crucial for the future of the city. The *General Plan for Vilnius* of 1967 designed the construction of new housing estates as integral parts of the urban development (Burneika, Ubarevičienė, Baranuskaitė, 2019). In particular, the Plan was committed to urbanise the north-western part of the city, along the current Laisvės prospektas (former Kosmonautų) and build the districts of Lazdynai, Karoliniškės, Viršuliškės, Šeškinė, Pašilaičiai and Fabijoniškės (Ruseckaitė, 2016), which had to be linked to the city centre through a series of bridges and roads.

One important moment in the development of Lithuanian postwar planning was constituted by the design of Burbiškės. The plan for Burbiškės was made by

young architects Vytautas Čekanauskas, Vytautas Brėdikis, Janutis Makariūnas, Algimantas Nasvytis and Vytautas Nasvytis between 1961 and 1962. The task was to build a residential district for 30,000 inhabitants in the southern areas of Vilnius. Despite the careful and meticulous plan, Burbiškės project was not translated into practice, because the land was unstable and unadapted for large-scale residential housing. Nonetheless, the plan allowed the young architects to gain experience that is necessary for future developments (Drėmaitė, 2017). In 1962, a new development for 45,000 inhabitants was planned, i.e., the Žirmūnai residential district. Žirmūnai consisted of three micro-districts, each with its own centre, facilities and stores. Following the Nordic examples, the core of the district was a two-storey building with stores, a restaurant and a library.

The inspiration coming from abroad was crucial for the postwar Lithuanian architects. Scandinavia and Finland were the ideal destinations for the delegations of professionals. The first field trip to Finland was organised in June 1959. Twenty-one professionals from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Leningrad participated, and Lithuanian architects met Aarne Ervi, who designed the district of Tapiola in Helsinki. Finland was visited by Lithuanian delegations in 1961, 1963, 1964 and later (Drėmaitė, 2017). The visits to a country that was considered an emblem of modern architecture deeply influenced Lithuanian architects, who found inspiration to develop new and local approaches. The factors such as the innovative design processes and the importance of interaction between architecture and its natural context became crucial in planning and construction of Lazdynai.

3.2.2. Physical and architectural analysis of Lazdynai

The design of Lazdynai, a district of 40,000 residents in the western outskirts of Vilnius, was assigned to the architects Vytautas Brėdikis and Vytautas Čekanauskas. The construction of Lazdynai began in 1967 on the site of the former Lazdynai village, which gave the name to the future neighbourhood, and it was completed in 1973.

Lazdynai has a surface of 9.9 km². The area of Lazdynai is almost completely surrounded by the Neris river. The main accesses to the neighbourhood are two bridges, Lazdynų tiltas on the eastern boundary and Gariūnų tiltas on the western, and Laisvės prospektas in the north. The two fastest and most trafficked roads, Oslo gatvė that crosses the neighbourhood from east to west and Laisvės prospektas that moves from north to south, enter into the area of Lazdynai, but they are kept outside the residential core of the neighbourhood. The natural environment and the limited number of gateways make the boundary of Lazdynai very strong. Similar to Vällingby (*supra*), due to the necessity to adapt to the already-existing topography, the road pattern of Lazdynai is composite.

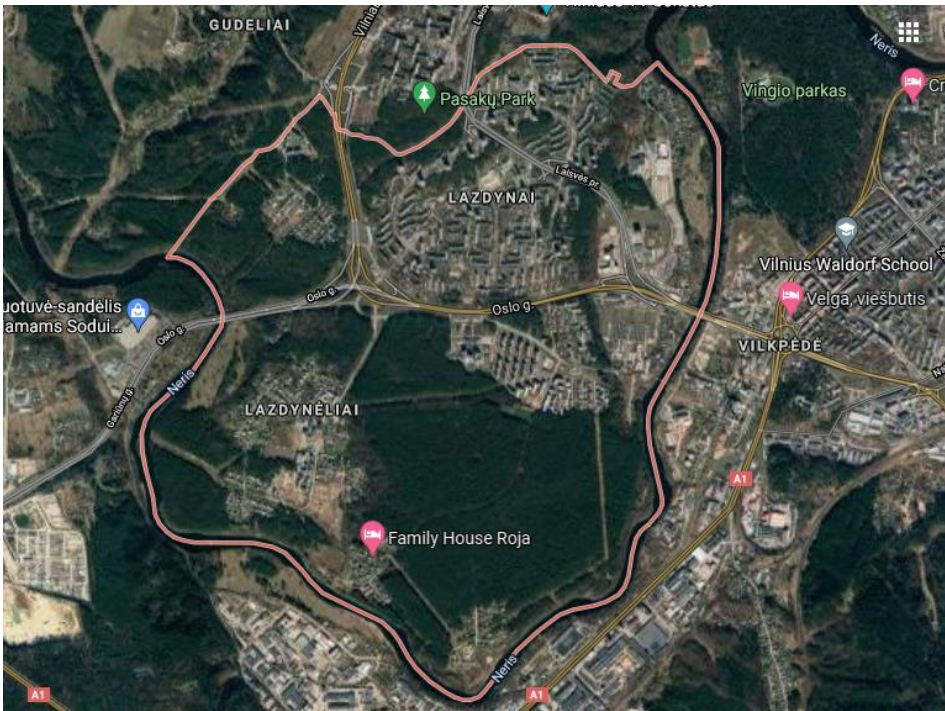


Fig. 29. The area of Lazdynai from the satellite

Lazdynai presents the urban morphology that differentiates it from the average Soviet *rayon*. The Standard Design Department of the Vilnius Urban Construction Planning Institute developed fifteen improved versions of the I-464-LI building series specifically for Lazdynai. Nine types of 5-storey buildings, three types of 9-storey buildings and for the first time, 12-storey towers were added to the standard series. Furthermore, the natural site of Lazdynai, characterised by hills and forests, was exploited to provide diversity and original urban form.

Unlike in Vällingby and San Polo, where different buildings housed different dwellers, in Lazdynai, the diversity was exclusively an architectural feature. Any type of family could live in any type of building in relation to the size of apartments. The apartments of Lazdynai presented improvements, if compared to the typical Soviet units. According to Soviet standards, the buildings had only one-, two-, three- and four-room apartments. By the first half of the 1970s, the average number of inhabitants per room was 1.43, which was considered an indicator of convenience and comfort. Two-room apartments constitute 42.9% of units in Lazdynai, and they formed the majority; three-rooms represent 33.3% of units; one-room and four-rooms constitute 13.3% and 10.4%, respectively (Drémaitė, 2017). The modern urban environment and the improved apartments made Lazdynai an attractive neighbourhood.

The development of a pedestrian commercial centre was included in the original plan of Lazdynai. Nevertheless, due to budget shortages, the project was not

realised. The plan represented an attempt to introduce a new element in Soviet urban space. In fact, the commercial centre was supposed to symbolise the hybrid nature of the late socialist society (Šiupšinkas, Lankots, 2019), where consumption and individual behaviour gained an increasing importance. Nonetheless, it must be stressed that the access to products remained limited. The plan to build a commercial centre was not aimed at providing consumer goods, but representing a new lifestyle and new aesthetic codes.

Ruseckaitė (2016) argued that the planning of Lazdynai was inspired by the attempt of planners to engage in a dialogue with the urban history of Vilnius and grasp the main and more persistent feature of the city, i.e., the human scale. Therefore, the design of Lazdynai attempted to implement a new, socialist, scale and contextually follow the old human scale of the historic Vilnius. According to Janušauskaitė (2018), the combination of modern conveniences and well-kept green space surrounding them provided one of the bases for the identification with the place and the local *genius loci*. Drėmaitė claimed that Lazdynai was considered a qualitatively different neighbourhood, and its housing units “were perhaps the most prominent examples of successfully implemented panel housing architecture” (2017, p. 171).



Fig. 30. Lazdynai in 1973 (photo by Marius Barauskas)



Fig. 31–32–33. Lazdynai (photos by the author)

3.2.3. Discursive construction and celebration of Lazdynai

The celebration of Lazdynai and the centrality gained by the neighbourhood must be contextualised in a positive and optimistic attitude towards the modern mass housing solutions that characterised the Soviet Union in the 1960s and 1970s. Moreover, the enthusiastic assessment of Lazdynai may be seen as the culmination of a process of celebration of Soviet-Lithuanian modern districts that began with the construction of Žirmūnai. In 1968, Žirmūnai won the USSR State Prize for Housing Design; for the first time, the prize went to the mass-produced residential project. Furthermore, from December 1969–January 1970, the international architectural magazine *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* (Architecture of Today) published the special issue *Architecture Soviétique* (Soviet Architecture) (Fig. 34). Žirmūnai and the Estonian district of Väike-Õismäe in Tallinn, which were among the most representative cases of the Baltic postwar urbanism (Glendinning, 2019), were presented as the outstanding cases of modern Soviet mass housing in the republics.

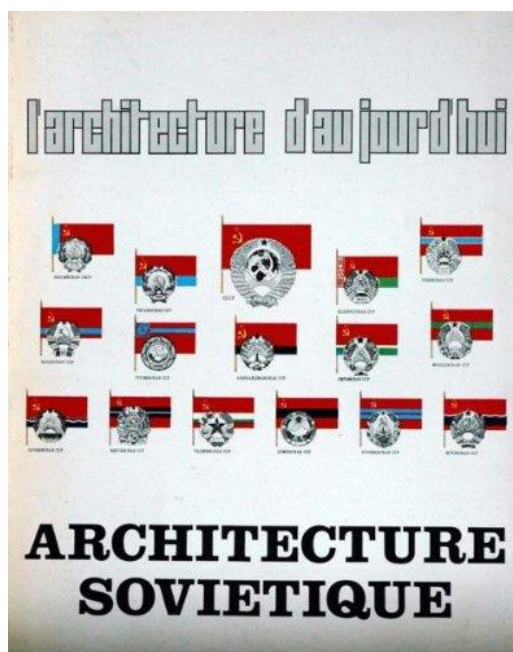


Fig. 34. The cover of the special issue *Architecture Soviétique* (Soviet Architecture), published by *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* (Architecture of Today) in December 1969–January 1970

The golden age of Lazdynai began in 1974, when it won the Lenin Prize for All-Union Architectural Design, the most important award for the urban design in the whole Soviet Union. For the first time in Soviet history, the Lenin Prize was not received by a single building, but by a residential district. Subsequently, the case of Lazdynai had visibility both in the Lithuanian republic and abroad. Perhaps, the peak of the international success of Lazdynai was reached in 1976, when the

neighbourhood appeared on the cover of *Neue Wohngebiete Sozialistischer Länder* by Werner Rietdorf, an international survey of modern panel housing construction in the Eastern bloc (Fig. 35).

The awards and international visibility demonstrated the extent to which the planners of Lazdynai have been successful in exploiting the natural site, integrating natural and built environment and creating an improved residential environment. Thus, Lazdynai shared with Vällingby the initial success and the centrality in the discourse on architecture and urban planning. At the same time, the open celebration made Lazdynai a strong instrument of Soviet propaganda.



Fig. 35. Lazdynai on the Cover of *Neue Wohngebiete Sozialistischer Länder* in 1976

3.2.4. The heritage of Lazdynai: Between recognition and dissonance

The situation related to the heritage of Lazdynai is complex and to some extent, contradictory. On the one hand, Lazdynai has been recently listed in the Register of Heritage Objects of Lithuania. Therefore, the neighbourhood has an officially recognised heritage status in the country. On the other hand, considering the potential factors of dissonance presented by Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996), it is difficult not to think about Lazdynai as a case of ‘obsolete’ and ‘undesirable’ transmission. It is worth reminding that while in the case of ‘obsolete transmission’, the projected values and meanings refer to the previous historical phase; in case of 98

‘undesirable transmission’, such values are associated with a different, but painful and unwanted epoch.

Since the demise of the Communist system, the institutional framework and the cultural atmosphere that shaped the development of the mass housing have been undermined. The end of the centralised planning produced new forms of social and spatial organisation (Dekker, van Kempen, Tosics, 2005). Consequently, an increasing number of housing estates lost their initial attractiveness. Although the Soviet-era housing estates in the Baltics experienced only minor changes in their socio-economic structure (Burneika, Ubarevičienė, Baranuskaitė, 2019), their relative position on the housing ladder declined. Contextually, the position of the central areas and new suburban zones has risen. Therefore, the Socialist housing estates are increasingly perceived as obsolete (Hess, Tammaru, 2019). On the one hand, the Soviet mass housing districts continue to physically represent the social, political and architectural values of the postwar decades. On the other hand, contemporary society is characterised by new goals, new official narratives and new expectations. Therefore, the mass housing is likely to be perceived as a bulky architectural manifestation of the past. Within this picture, Lazdynai makes no exception. The suburb lost its glamour and its status of model residential district, becoming an outdated example of the grey mass construction of Soviet times (Janušauskaitė, 2018).

Furthermore, the paradoxical consequences of the initial success of Lazdynai must be considered. As it has already been stressed, the suburb was designed following the blueprint of west European and Nordic modernism, and the planners were committed to introduce planning and architectural innovations within the limits of the Soviet legal framework and seek a Lithuanian-Baltic way to postwar mass housing. Nevertheless, when Lazdynai obtained the Lenin Prize in 1974 (*supra*), it became an excellent instrument of Soviet propaganda and the celebration of outcomes of socialist urbanism (Dremaitė, 2013). Such a peculiar situation raises questions about the desirability of what, despite the efforts of the architects, can be presented as one of the most distinctively Soviet neighbourhoods of Vilnius.

Thus, similar to Vällingby and San Polo, the representation of values that were codified in a previous and different historical phase makes ‘obsolete transmission’ an active factor in Lazdynai. Furthermore, the clear association with the Soviet past makes it possible to present Lazdynai as a case where the factor of ‘undesirable transmission’ operates.



Fig. 36. View of the area of Lazdynai from the Vilnius TV Tower (photo by the author)

3.3. San Polo

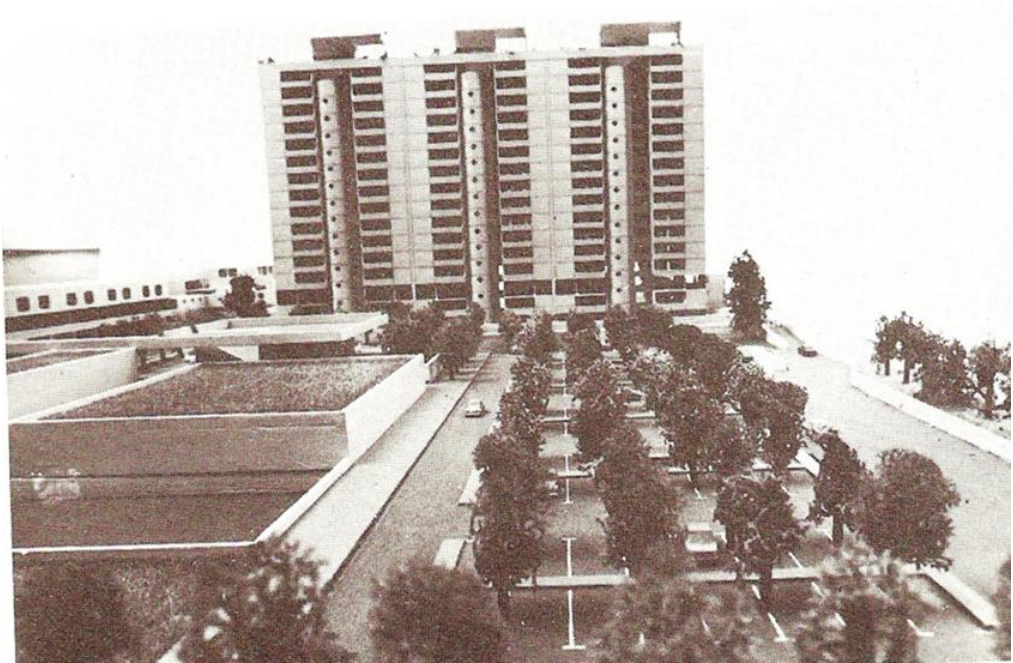


Fig. 37. Details of the 3D model of San Polo (photo by Università degli Studi di Parma, Laboratorio di Urbanistica, Paesaggio e Territorio)

3.3.1. Investigating the context: Historical analysis of postwar modern housing in Italy

In the three postwar decades, Italy entered in an epoch of unprecedented prosperity (Tosi, Cremaschi, 2001). Nevertheless, the growth of the Italian economy as well as social and cultural developments were not territorially homogeneous phenomena. In the 1950s and at the very beginning of the 1960s, most developments took place in the north-western regions, especially Piedmont and Lombardy. Milan and Turin together with the port city of Genoa formed the three summits of the so-called ‘industrial triangle’ (*triangolo industriale*), where most industries and productive activities were located. Moreover, the country was deeply affected by the postwar baby boom (*supra*), and the population dramatically increased.¹⁶ The demographic increase brought about by the baby boom was unbalanced, since rural and economically less developed areas were demographically shrinking. The aforementioned economic, social and demographic conditions catalysed a dramatic and fast urbanisation.

¹⁶ Quantitative data about the demographic situation in Italy can be found in the first chapter of the dissertation.

The Italian postwar urbanisation had a deep social and cultural meaning. As neorealist films showed, the newly built neighbourhoods of Italian peripheries were the most common setting for the representation of “the tough apprenticeship of arrivals from deprived rural regions to such cities as Rome, Milan and Turin” (Cremaschi, 2004, p. 75). Although the demographic situation of Italy was comparable to France, the Italian response in terms of housing was weaker and less coordinated (Glendinning, 2021). Despite quite a relevant state investment in housing, the Italian government made a rather limited attempt to establish a comprehensive public housing sector. Therefore, in the first postwar decades, the Italian model of urban development was quite dissimilar from the ones that were carried out in the states, characterised by strong and centralised welfare systems, such as France, Nordic or eastern European countries.

The “founding stone of the postwar housing drive” (Glendinning, 2021, p. 270) was constituted by the INA Casa Program. The program was launched in 1949, and it provided housing subsidies for fourteen years, until 1963. The basis of the program, as the name suggested, was INA, the national insurance institute (*Istituto Nazionale delle Assicurazioni*). During its activity, the INA Casa Program fostered the construction of 312,000 residential units, which represented 10% of the new residential stock. Among the publicly-funded dwellings, half of them were constructed under the program (Glendinning, 2021, p. 270).

During the first phase of the INA Casa Program “housing policies as well as urban policies were marked by what could be defined as a *laissez-faire* orientation” (Padovani, 2003, p. 202). Such a situation resulted in a wide range of differentiated solutions, mostly constituted by relatively small-scale developments, where the vernacular elements were largely used. Furthermore, in opposition to the labour-saving orientation of postwar modern architecture, the traditional construction techniques were largely used with the aim of creating jobs in the construction sector. When the INA Casa Program was abolished in 1963, the individualised outcomes in urban design and the deep regional differences suggested that Italy was a potential “world leader in adventurous social housing architecture” (Glendinning, 2021, p. 280).

The 167 Law, which was introduced in 1962, can be considered as the main turning point of Italian postwar urbanisation. The 167 Law gave municipalities the right to purchase areas where social housing projects could be developed and assign the reserved plots to the public and cooperative agencies. In particular, the 167 Law introduced the Plan for Economic and Popular Construction (PEEP: *Piano per l’edilizia economica e popolare*), modelled on the basis of the French ZUP (*Zones à urbanisation prioritaire*). The plan was committed to establish a meeting point of private and public interests, avoid speculation and facilitate the assembling of large peripheral complexes on the site.

In 1963, the INA Casa Program was replaced by a new public agency called GESCAL (*Gestione Case per i Lavoratori*, i.e., Workers’ Housing Administration). From the architectural point of view, the GESCAL phase did not bring about centrally planned and standardised housing. However, the newly built

neighbourhoods were characterised by a “further explosion of adventurous creativity” (Glendinning, 2021, p. 282) that is ideally represented by cases such as the Vele di Scampia in Naples, Corviale in Rome and Rozzol Melara in Trieste.

The last years of the 1970s in Italy were marked by an economic deceleration (Belli, 2020a) and more decentralised and redistributed urban developments, which included areas in the centre and the north-east that had not been affected by the immediate postwar developments. Contextually, the cities of the postwar ‘industrial triangle’: Genoa and Turin, but especially Milan, slowly began to enter in a post-industrial dimension. With the beginning of the 1980s, the construction of areas to be destined to public housing slowed down, although it did not stop totally. Padovani commented that the new urban trends were guided by the idea that “housing was no longer a priority on the agenda of the public sector” (2003, p. 206). Consequently, the postwar mass housing districts have been increasingly “considered of a residual character” (2003, p. 206).

To summarise the postwar urban experience, it is possible to claim that while the building of large and identifiable modern estates took place in Italy as well, the country substantially lacked a solid central coordination. On the one hand, the involvement of the state has constantly been rather limited. On the other hand, the deep regional differences made it difficult to implement a one-fits-for-all intervention. The scarce availability of social housing and not sufficient policies aimed at satisfying the needs of the whole urban population, despite the position on the socio-economic ladder that made it possible to claim that in Italy, the “housing policies have been relatively weak from a welfare viewpoint” (Tosi, Cremaschi, 2001, p. 206).

It is in these complex national conditions that the activity of Leonardo Benevolo in Brescia must be contextualised. Leonardo Benevolo moved from Rome to Brescia, the second city of Lombardy, in 1977. Since then, the Italian planner lived in Brescia until his death in 2017 (Belli, 2020a). The decision of Leonardo Benevolo to leave the capital was motivated by a strong sense of disillusionment, related to the academic environment, and the feeling of being limited by the professional and intellectual context of Rome. However, in Brescia, Benevolo found fertile ground for the development and realisation of his idea of public urbanisation. Brescia was characterised by peculiar political circumstances. The Christian Democracy that administered the city and the Communist Party, the primary opposition force, shared the effort to architecturally and socially improve the urban environment. Such conditions were positively assessed by Leonardo Benevolo, who had started a professional cooperation with the assessor of city planning Luigi Bazoli even before moving to Brescia, at the beginning of the 1970s.

Moreover, in the Lombard city, Benevolo had a chance to enter in contact with and be inspired by the neighbourhoods planned by Ottorino Marcolini. Marcolini, a catholic priest and engineer, designed a new neighbourhood type, mostly composed of industrially made single-family houses, the so-called ‘village’. The first Marcolini village Violino was built in the western outskirts of Brescia, and it included 252 dwellings, a church, a kindergarten and a primary school (Belli, 2020a). Over 6,500

dwellings built from 1953 to 1987 in the Marcolini villages provided accommodation to 25,000 inhabitants, mostly belonging to the working class (Benevolo, 2011). Due to the strong social commitment of its designer and the rationalised construction, it is possible to consider the Villaggio Marcolini “the first example of social housing” (Belli, 2020a, p. 84) in Brescia and one of the first implementations of the concept in Italy.

The main goal in the work of Leonardo Benevolo in the 1970s was to demonstrate that the traditional urban system was outdated, and it must be replaced by the public urbanisation to be considered as an innovative and comprehensive approach for planning and construction. In fact, Benevolo was convinced that the political sector was not sufficiently involved in city planning and housing provision. The 167 Law (*supra*), according to Benevolo, was not the turning point that it should have been. In fact, the Italian public housing plans did not go beyond the level of normal urban interventions and lacked the central coordination of other European countries. As a matter of fact, Benevolo looked at the Swedish A-B-C town model (*supra*), the British new towns and the French *grands ensembles* as evidence of the effectiveness and the overall superiority of public urbanisation, capable of threatening the traditional system (Benevolo, 1976). Benevolo claimed that thanks to the advantages that derived from coordinated planning of each urban element, the residents would have appreciated public urbanisation and preferred it to the previous system.

Based on the 167 Law, a plan for social housing was introduced in Brescia in 1965. The municipality included the urbanisation of eight peripheral areas in the plan, and six of them were urbanised in the eight years after the introduction of the plan between 1965 and 1973. According to the 1973 modification to the original plan, the two remaining areas, corresponding to the territory of San Polo, were merged. Leonardo Benevolo attempted to exploit the situation and translate the idea of public urbanisation into practice in the San Polo area.

3.3.2. Physical and architectural analysis of San Polo

San Polo was built on a previously agricultural zone in the south-eastern periphery of Brescia. The area of San Polo, whose total population is more than 21,000, was split in 2014 into four parts: San Polo Case, San Polo Cimabue, San Polo Parco and San Polino. Nevertheless, the analysis of the neighbourhood concentrates on the entire area. The territory of San Polo is delimited by the national railway in the north and the A4 highway in the south. The western and the eastern boundaries of the neighbourhood are constituted by the green space and agricultural land. The strength and the effectiveness of the boundaries make San Polo a highly identifiable neighbourhood. Unlike Vällingby and Lazdynai, San Polo was built on a flat and empty area. Therefore, the original morphological composition of the site was not an element to preserve. These conditions are reflected in the road pattern of San Polo, which is characterised by a rigid structure of parallel roads with smaller local roads opening off them. Separated pedestrian paths link houses, green space

and public transport. Nowadays, three subway stations operate in the area of San Polo: San Polo Parco, San Polo and San Polino.



Fig. 38. The area of San Polo from the satellite (photo by Università degli Studi di Parma, Laboratorio di Urbanistica, Paesaggio e Territorio)



Fig. 39. The area of San Polo (photo by SAB Studio Architetti Benevolo)

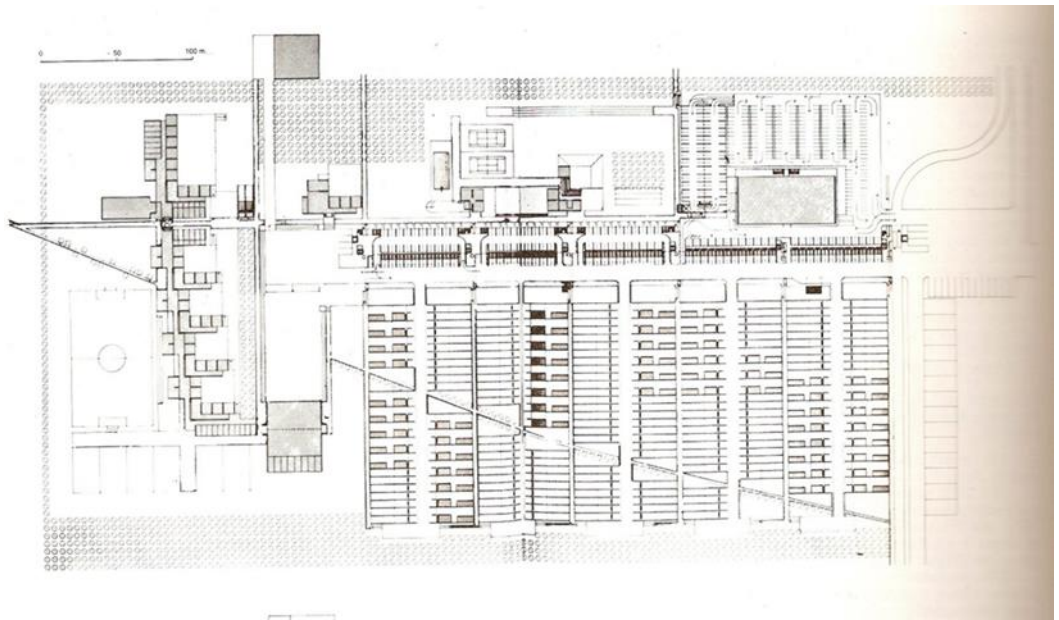


Fig. 40. The plan of the residential unit (photo by Università degli Studi di Parma, Laboratorio di Urbanistica, Paesaggio e Territorio)

One of the main tasks of Leonardo Benevolo was to realise a proportionate quantitative relation between the inhabitants and the urbanistic standards. The planner was aimed at providing each resident access to the surface of 50 m² of green space, 9 m² of street and 18 m² of public services (Premoli, Servi, 2014). Leonardo Benevolo subdivided San Polo into nine residential units (*supra*). Each residential unit of San Polo was composed of three housing typologies:

- 2 or 3-storey buildings dedicated to single-family housing (Fig. 41),



Fig. 41. Single-family housing in San Polo (photo by the author)

- 4 of 5-storey ‘spine’ housing blocks¹⁷ (Fig. 39–40),



Fig. 42–43. The spine-house (photo by the author)

¹⁷ Translated from the Italian *casa a spina*.

- Five large tower blocks. The towers are named Tiziano (Fig. 43), Raffaello (Fig. 44), Michelangelo (Fig. 45), Tintoretto (Fig. 46) and Cimabue (Fig. 47). The Tiziano, Raffaello and Michelangelo towers are situated in the western area of San Polo, and they are 15-storey buildings. The Tintoretto, which was demolished in February 2022, and Cimabue blocks were constructed later in the 1980s in the eastern San Polo (Trapelli, 2012). Leonardo Benevolo considered the two 17-storey buildings an improvement of the tower block typology (Trapelli, 2012).



Fig. 44. The Tiziano tower (photo by the author)



Fig. 45. The Raffaello tower (photo by the author)



Fig. 46. The Michelangelo tower (photo by the author)

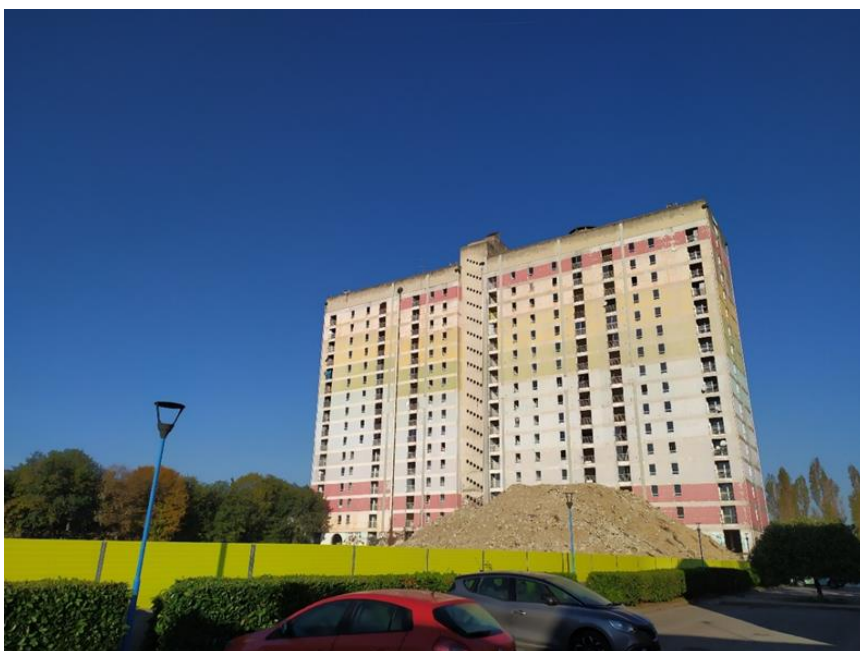


Fig. 47. The Tintoretto tower before the demolition (photo by the author)



Fig. 48. The Cimabue tower (photo by the author)

In San Polo, the differences in housing typologies reflected differences in the ownership structure: the towers became clusters of socially rented habitations, while the dwellings located in the spine-houses and single-family houses were mainly privately owned.

The first large shopping centre of the whole city of Brescia, the Margherita d'Este (Fig. 48), was inaugurated in San Polo in 1985. The Margherita d'Este is located near the major traffic artery, the strada statale Goitese, that separates the western and the eastern parts of San Polo. At the same time, the shopping centre is accessible to pedestrians, who can reach it through dedicated paths. The construction of the Margherita d'Este in the middle of the newly built San Polo reflects an attempt to increase the attractiveness of the area for the locals and outsiders.



Fig. 49. The Margherita d'Este shopping centre (photo by the author)

3.3.3. Discursive construction and celebration of San Polo

The process of celebration and discursive construction of San Polo deeply differed from the cases of Vällingby and Lazdynai. The Swedish and the Lithuanian neighbourhoods were actively promoted and celebrated. Both Vällingby and Lazdynai were the objects of local and international publications and received prestigious awards. The architectural attributes of the neighbourhoods undoubtedly contributed to the fortunes of Vällingby and Lazdynai, but they are not enough for the complete explanation.

The success of Vällingby is largely explained with the centrality of Sweden in the international modern urban planning discourse and the pivotal role of the neighbourhood, which during the 1960s, set an example not only in Sweden, but in the whole Europe. The positive assessment of Lazdynai was directly shaped by another crucial factor, i.e., ideology. Through the promotion of Lazdynai, the Soviet power was aimed at celebrating the outcomes of the Soviet urbanisation. Within this framework, the Lenin Prize, which was won by the neighbourhood in 1974, could be interpreted as a sign of political and ideological appropriation.

However, the fortune of San Polo was affected by a different historical and ideological context. The neighbourhood was built between the 1970s and the 1980s, during a historical phase where the enthusiastic attitude towards postwar modern mass housing expired. Furthermore, due to the substantial lack of political and

cultural effort to create a discourse on the postwar urbanisation in Italy, the active promotion and the celebration of San Polo was far from being a priority.

The promotion of San Polo was mostly conducted by Leonardo Benevolo himself. The technical aspects and the arguments in support of the public urbanisation (supra) have been presented in the book *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica* (Brescia S. Polo: A neighbourhood of public urbanisation) (Fig. 49). Moreover, in the book *La fine della città* (*The end of the city*) that was published in 2011 and was a deeply autobiographical work, Benevolo expressed his satisfaction for San Polo, arguing that the innovations introduced in Brescia shaped the improved and more integrated urban space, capable of positively influencing the life of the citizens.

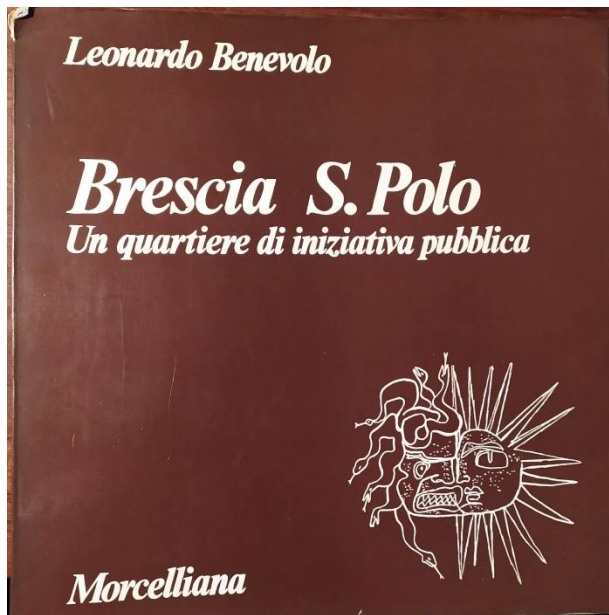


Fig. 50. Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica (photo by the author)

3.3.4. The heritage of San Polo: Between dissonance and stigmatisation

Following the analytical framework of dissonant heritage, it is possible to argue that the factors of ‘obsolete transmission’ and ‘class-dissonance’ are operating in San Polo. Furthermore, the disadvantaged conditions of the residential blocks of the neighbourhood, especially the Tintoretto and Cimabue towers, brought about a certain degree of stigmatisation.

To some extent, the construction of San Polo chronologically marked the end of the golden age of mass housing in the western Europe. In fact, Italy was not excluded from the ideological transition from welfare-oriented to more neoliberal-oriented policies that inevitably altered the relation between power and urban landscape. In the specific case of Brescia, the cooperation between the Christian Democracy and the Communist Party came to an end with an immediate effect on

the joint efforts to implement public urbanisation in the city. Being the most representative postwar modernist neighbourhood of Brescia, after the ideological transition, San Polo quickly became one of the most vivid evidence of the historical and cultural phase of the past. The neighbourhood acted as the physical representation of the ideologies that previously dominated the political arena and continued to embody outdated meanings and project them. Thus, ‘obsolete transmission’ is clearly operating in San Polo, and it constitutes an undeniable source of dissonance.

Since the years that immediately followed the construction, the socio-economic differentiations were substantially reflected in different housing typologies. Single-family houses and apartments in smaller multi-family blocks have been characterised by a social composition that is not dissimilar from the rest of Brescia. However, the tower blocks have been inhabited by households that shared rather disadvantaged socio-economic conditions (Trapelli, 2012). The roots of socio-economic differentiation are partially historical. When the efforts to gentrify neglected areas of the city centre began, a relevant share of the inhabitants of these zones moved to the socially rented flats, located in the towers of San Polo. In particular, a significant movement of dwellers took place from the old Carmine neighbourhood, an area of the historic centre of Brescia that was previously characterised by a dramatic social context and deteriorated housing stock. Moreover, the foreign families, whose income was generally lower than the average, progressively increased their presence in the towers. Due to the socio-economic disparities, the towers of San Polo, especially Tintoretto and Cimabue, have constantly been characterised by very weak social interactions between the residents and inhabitants of other housing typologies. Thus, although the plan of San Polo was practically and ideologically committed to creating an egalitarian environment, “it did not prevent a certain degree of ghettoization” (Belli, 2020a, p. 85). Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996) demonstrated that socio-economic segregation and class differences are strong factors of dissonance. Since the construction of Cimabue and Tintoretto towers, San Polo had to deal with the issue of segregation based on class. Therefore, the class-based dissonance is an excellent key to interpret the heritage of the neighbourhood.

Furthermore, the socio-economic segregation that resulted from clustering the most vulnerable households in one single building typology was one of the main triggers of physical decline and discursive marginalisation of San Polo and its iconic towers. In fact, the concentration of low-income inhabitants strengthened the negative reputation of the area. Due to the physical factors, such as a declining construction and neglected public space as well as a complicated social context, characterised by crime and lack of safety, the towers and their inhabitants have been subjected to a process of stigmatisation. The stigmatisation of San Polo towers was actively influenced by the media. Reporting evidence of class-based segregation, local media, such as *Giornale di Brescia* and *BresciaOggi*, reinforced the thesis of the dissonant heritage of San Polo and strengthened the negative reputation of the neighbourhood.

The negative situation of towers fostered a discussion whether to demolish or to renovate them, which included institutions and political parties, the private sector and the social activists. The arguments of the proponents of demolition may be subdivided into a few points. To begin with, San Polo in general, and particularly its tower blocks, has been aesthetically blamed and presented as the worst result of postwar urbanisation of Brescia. The second question raised by the advocates of demolition was financial. Those who opposed renovation argued that it would have been too expensive and the cost would not be balanced by significant benefits. Moreover, the supporters of demolition claimed that any attempt to renovate the area and reverse the tendency to decline would be ineffective due to the persisting physical and social problems and the lack of safety. The advocates of the renovation focused on the potential value of San Polo and the social benefits of public urbanism. Such a position implied the acceptance of the challenges of the overall renovation effort that includes aesthetic, physical and social spheres.

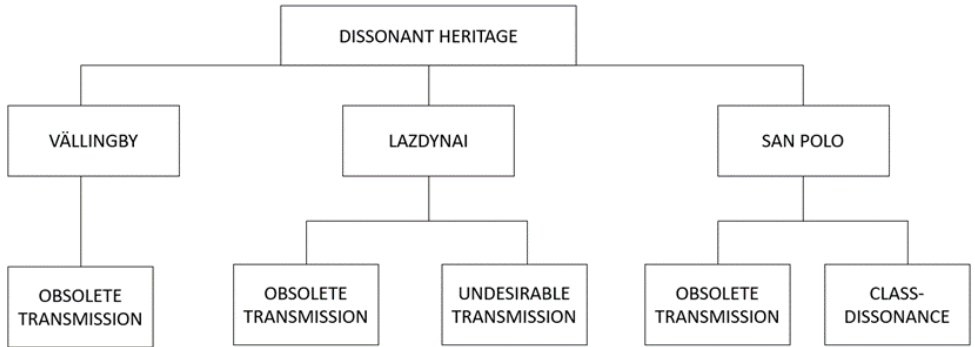
The Tintoretto tower was emptied in 2013. Nonetheless, the social problems that characterised the building were not solved by that decision. The former dwellers of the tower were relocated to the new San Polino neighbourhood, where the previous problematic issues were reproduced, in the area that did not provide residents with qualitatively improved dwellings or a more satisfying urban environment. The Tintoretto tower was completely demolished in February 2022. Nevertheless, except for the radical decision to demolish Tintoretto, the general debate did not bring significant solutions, but rather increased uncertainties. The lack of solutions and too many question marks increased the frustration among the residents and strengthened the general perception of San Polo as a controversial neighbourhood.

Thus, the outdated messages, embedded in the built environment, and the complicated class-related conditions make it possible to analyse San Polo through the lens of dissonant heritage, specifically in relation to the factors of 'obsolete transmission' and 'class-dissonance'.



Fig. 51–52. Badly kept public space under the Cimabue tower (photo by the author)

Table 10. The factors of heritage dissonance active in Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo



CONCLUSIONS

1. The economic and social transformation that the industrial revolution brought about in the 19th century fostered a deep intellectual debate. The roots of modernism, to be considered as an intellectual response to the process of modernisation and the experience of modernity, may be found in this historical phase. Since its origins and throughout the 20th century, modern urbanism was committed to scientifically study the problems of the city and solve them through the introduction of radical innovations in housing and urban form. The theory and practice of modernism moved from the acknowledgement of the poor state of architecture and the ineffectiveness of planning, which were unable to cope with economic, social and demographic transformations. Therefore, the modernist professionals stressed the need for the creation of a new architectural language and a rational approach to planning. Within this framework, the industrialised construction methods, new materials and standardised plans were introduced. Moreover, along with the most technical aspects, the modernist professionals worked to develop new aesthetic values. Ideologically, the efforts to reshape the physical urban environment were inspired by a humanistic and future-oriented intellectual approach. Rejecting the idea of art as an autonomous sphere, the modernist architects and planners were aimed at radically transforming and improving the life of the citizens, regardless of their income or social position. Modernist architects and planners considered the cooperation with the political power a critical asset to successfully implement urban and social transformation. The attributes of modern planning had a crucial influence of the postwar European urbanisation.

2. Despite clear differences related to political and geographical contingencies, it is possible to identify a set of trends that fostered the urbanisation of Europe after the Second World War. The economic development and industrial expansion, the internal migration from rural to urban areas and a positive demographic rate caused a remarkable growth of population of the European cities. Such a process pressured the already-existing housing stock and made the construction of new dwellings a necessity. Rational planning, industrialised and standardised the construction methods as well as egalitarian ideological orientations made the modern planning an ideal tool to cope with the process of urbanisation. Thus, the principles of urban planning were largely adopted by the states. On the one hand, the implementation of mass housing was motivated by the practical task of solving the housing shortage. On the other hand, the residential housing physically represented the efforts to modernise societies and create a new social harmony. In northern and western Europe, the welfare-oriented governments considered modern housing as an instrument to democratically expand the beneficial effects of economic development and trigger mass consumption. In the authoritarian context of the Soviet Union and satellite states of central and eastern Europe, the socialist establishment attempted to improve the living conditions of the urban working class and find

a communist path to modernisation. The apparently perfect connection between the political goals and planning characterised the glorious decades of modern mass housing in Europe.

3. Each intellectual movement operates in a well-defined historical phase, and postwar modernism made no exception. In the 1980s, in northern and western Europe, the weakening of the welfare state and the centrality gained by neoliberal trends re-oriented the political discourse, marginalising the collectivist dimension of the previous decades. Within this framework, the phenomenon of mass housing lost its centrality. In the Soviet Union and in central and eastern Europe, the mass housing era lasted until the socialist collapse in 1991, which brought about new values and new forms of spatial organisation. Thus, if the initial intellectual criticism did not really affect the fortune of modern mass housing, the same cannot be said about the process of political transition and its effects on the urban landscape. The claim that all European estates were negatively affected by the transformations that took place in the political and urban sphere would be an oversimplification. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the decline of postwar mass housing became a serious issue in the last three decades. The decline has not been limited to the physical aspect of buildings, but it affected the economic conditions and the social dimension of the most disadvantaged areas. Because of such cycles of decline, the value of postwar estates were filtered from higher to lower positions, and the residents belonging to the higher-income groups gradually left to resettle in more attractive areas. The declining areas must cope with the negative reputation that in the worst cases, takes the form of stigmatisation. While decline and socio-economic polarisation are undoubtedly more visible and debated in northern and western Europe, the former socialist countries are increasingly involved in the process. The factors such as the revitalisation of historical centres and suburbanisation raise questions about the desirability of the large socialist estates and their position in the housing ladder.

4. The fact that the modern mass housing represents the legacy of a different political context, a different relation between the power and urban planning and a different socio-cultural atmosphere raised the question of heritage of the phenomenon. The analysis performed in the dissertation presents the heritage of the modern mass housing, according to the interpretative framework of dissonant heritage. Although not being the only potential perspective to analyse the phenomenon, dissonant heritage revealed to be the most complete. Unlike ideas, such as unwanted, difficult or painful heritage, which are rather narrow and to some extent inappropriate for the objects such as residential districts, the concept of dissonant heritage made it possible to effectively assess the phenomenon in its complexity. In particular, three main factors of dissonance, operating in the context of postwar modern mass housing, have been identified. The first and most relevant factor of dissonance is 'obsolete transmission', which takes place when the messages that are produced in a specific historical moment continue to be transmitted to the societies

characterised by new values and orientations. In fact, after being built and having received a strong ideological connotation in the postwar decades, modern mass housing continued to exist and project a specific set of values and meanings even after the transition(s). In this sense, it is possible to identify the 'obsolete transmission' as an active factor of dissonance in the majority of mass housing estates, despite their geographical location. The second factor of dissonance analysed in the dissertation is 'undesirable transmission', which differentiates from the 'obsolete transmission' in the unwanted and painful nature of the projected messages. The 'undesirable transmission' may be a factor of dissonance in the post-Soviet Baltic States and in the central and eastern Europe, where the postwar modern architecture is associated with the undesirable communist past. The third factor operating in mass housing estates is class-related dissonance, which may be a strong trigger of dissonance in the areas where the most economically disadvantaged classes are overrepresented. Due to the deeper socio-economic polarisation, class-dissonance is a strong factor of dissonance in the western European countries, while its effects in central and eastern Europe are still limited. It is important to point out that the concept of dissonant heritage is not irreversible. The interventions aimed at making areas more sustainable, liveable and resilient may contribute to reverse the narrative about the mass housing.

5. Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo cannot be analysed without a deeper historical contextualization. In particular, it clearly emerged that the relation between the urban planning and public institutions was a *conditio sine qua non* for the realisation of the neighbourhoods. The construction of Vällingby has been inspired by two peculiarities of welfare-state Sweden: the ideological commitment to realise the folkhemmet (the people's home) and make country a good home for its inhabitant, as well as the public efforts to carry out a decentralised urban expansion. Therefore, Vällingby was the first and one of the most representative examples of the social contract between Swedish government and citizens. The case of Lazdynai is an excellent representation of the relation between power and planning as well. In fact, the Vilnius district is a case of Soviet postwar mass housing as well as an implementation of the phenomenon in a non-Russian republic. Therefore, through the study of Lazdynai, it is possible to reconstruct the birth and development of Soviet modern housing and at the same time, show the attempts to locally reinterpret it. The planning and the construction of San Polo must be related to a more local dimension. Despite being supported by the Italian legal framework, the cooperation between planning and institutions took place at the municipal level. It was the specific conditions of Brescia that made it possible for Leonardo Benevolo to implement his view of public urbanisation.

6. The first years of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo were marked by a process of discursive construction and an optimistic narrative. The early 1960s may be considered as the glorious years of Vällingby. In 1961, the neighbourhood received the Patrick Abercrombie Prize for Town Planning by

the International Union of Architects. One year later, in 1962, the Royal Institute of British Architects awarded Sven Markelius, the head of the office of city planning of Stockholm, with the Royal Gold Medal in Architecture. The district was promoted through written materials, media and exhibitions. Moreover, the newly built Vällingby was visited even by the non-specialists of architecture and planning. The celebration of Lazdynai reached its peak in the mid-1970s, immediately after the construction. In 1974, Lazdynai won the Lenin Prize for All-Union Architectural Design, the most important Soviet award for urban design. Subsequently, the case of Lazdynai gained visibility both in the Lithuanian republic and abroad. In 1976, Lazdynai was represented on the cover of *Neue Wohngebiete sozialistischer Länder* by Werner Rietdorf, an international survey about modern housing in the Eastern bloc. In the case of San Polo, it was mostly Leonardo Benevolo himself who promoted his work and the advantages of public urbanisation, especially in the book *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica*, published in 1976.

7. Unlike Vällingby and Lazdynai, San Polo did not receive any awards. In order to explain the success of Vällingby, it is necessary to consider the pivotal role of the neighbourhood. In the 1960s, the outcomes of Scandinavian urbanism were seen as a point of reference by the professionals all over Europe. In case of Lazdynai, one more element must be considered, i.e., ideology. The Soviet state was committed to celebrate the Soviet urbanisation through the promotion of Lazdynai. To some extent, it is possible to interpret the Lenin Prize as imperial and colonial, aimed at celebrating a truly socialist and Soviet urban development in the Baltic republics. However, San Polo was in a different historical and ideological situation. Historically, San Polo was completed in a phase where the enthusiastic attitude towards modern mass housing had expired. Therefore, it would have been quite unlikely that the international architectural organisations could think about celebrating the neighbourhood, despite the direct involvement of a figure, such as Leonardo Benevolo. Ideologically, the absence of an Italian political and cultural effort to implement an undivided postwar urbanisation effort, compared to the ones in Scandinavia or the Soviet Union, made an official celebration of San Polo far from being a priority.

8. It is possible to contextualise Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo in the international dimension of postwar modernism. In this sense, the role of Vällingby is rather peculiar. In fact, due to its pivotal role and the centrality gained by Scandinavia in the modern urban discourse, the neighbourhood itself became one of the most relevant references in the field of postwar modernism. The case of Lazdynai is even more representative of the international dimension of postwar planning. It has been claimed that Lazdynai was considered an ideal representation of Soviet modern urbanisation. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that the Soviet postwar modernism itself found direct inspiration from countries such as France, West Germany and Sweden. Furthermore, the planning of Lazdynai found huge inspiration in the

field trips that local professionals took to Scandinavia and Finland. European models, particularly the British New Towns and the French *grands ensembles*, have been a source of inspiration for the design of San Polo as well. Foreign models inspired Benevolo both in the physical planning of the residential units and developing his idea of public urbanisation.

9. Although mass housing is generally associated with standardisation and industrialised production, the planners of Vällingby, Lazdynai and San Polo managed to design distinguishable neighbourhoods. Vällingby has been planned and built following the ABC model and as a semi-autonomous neighbourhood with its own centre, the Vällingby centrum. The physical outline of the suburb is characterised by different housing types: 11-storey tower blocks, 3 and 4-storey houses and single-family houses. The traffic system was carefully planned, and the pedestrian paths were separated from the heavily trafficked roads. The district of Lazdynai in Vilnius was considered a qualitatively different neighbourhood within the whole Soviet Union. In Lazdynai, the typical structure of the Soviet *mikrorayon* has been enriched with new building typologies and managed to create a certain degree of variety. Furthermore, the natural environment of the site was successfully exploited. It is important to remember that the neighbourhood was not considered an experiment, but it was expected to give new directions to the Soviet-Lithuanian urbanism. San Polo is characterised by three main housing types: 13 and 15-storey tower blocks, 3 and 4-storey spine houses and single-family houses. On the one hand, different housing typologies guarantee a certain degree of differentiation. On the other hand, the ensemble of building types contributes to the identifiability of the neighbourhood.

10. Nowadays, all the selected districts are coping with the challenges related to their meaning in the contemporary context. Although it remained a local centre, Vällingby did not fully develop its own potential in the way it was planned and hoped. Moreover, following a continental trend, between the 1970s and the 1980s, the centre began to show signs of decline. At the same time, after the initial and rapid success, the district lost its uniqueness in the postwar planning arena. Consequently, the interest of the international audience decreased after the golden age of the 1960s. Thus, Vällingby became an outdated neighbourhood and showed a certain inability to keep up with the urban and social transformations of the last decades. Analysing Vällingby, according to the theoretical framework of dissonant heritage, it is possible to claim that the loss of uniqueness and the inability to keep up and successfully adapt to the transformed reality reveal the centrality of the 'obsolete transmission' factor. Lazdynai has been included in the Lithuanian Register of Heritage Objects. Therefore, it is the case of study whose significance in the field of cultural heritage had the largest official recognition. However, there is little doubt that Lazdynai lost its status as a model residential district and that gradually became an outdated example of Soviet grey mass construction. The association with the Soviet past, strengthened by the winning of the Lenin

Prize and the centrality held by Lazdynai in the 1970s, raises questions about the perception of the neighbourhood. Such a situation makes Lazdynai a neighbourhood where the factors of 'obsolete' and 'undesirable' transmission concomitantly operate. The public urbanisation introduced by Leonardo Benevolo in San Polo did not result in the predicted advantages. On the contrary, San Polo experienced a rapid process of decline. In the 1980s, immediately after the construction of Cimabue and Tintoretto towers, San Polo had to deal with a dramatic socio-economic segregation, which resulted from the top-down decision to concentrate the most vulnerable households in one single building typology. The complicated socio-economic situation triggered a downward spiral of physical decline and discursive marginalisation of San Polo and its iconic towers. The Tintoretto tower was demolished in February 2022. The fact that the urban plan of Leonardo Benevolo did not age well and the complicated class-related conditions make San Polo a neighbourhood that can be diffusely analysed through the lens of dissonant heritage, specifically in relation to the factors of 'obsolete transmission' and 'class-dissonance'.

SUMMARY

Urbanistinę teritoriją, susidariusią dėl istorinių vertybių ir savybių sluoksnių, UNESCO (2011 m.) apibrėžė kaip istorinį urbanistinį kraštovaizdį. UNESCO pateiktas apibrėžimas išskiria du pagrindinius urbanistinio kraštovaizdžio bruožus: jis formuojamas ir interpretuojamas pagal konkrečias vertybes ir šios vertybės kontekstualizuojamos pagal laikotarpį ir vietą. Todėl UNESCO rekomendacijoje nubrėžta linija, jungianti fizinės kraštovaizdžio savybes su ideologine sistema, kuri įkvepia kraštovaizdžio kūrimą ir interpretavimą.

Tekstas, kuris neabejotinai suteikė pagrindą ir tam tikra prasme iš anksto numatė diskusijas, yra Aldo Rossi 1966 m. išleista *The architecture of the city* (liet. *Miesto architektūra*). Rossi teigimu, miestas realizuoja pats save vadovaudamasis konkrečiomis idėjomis, o miestovaizdis yra materialaus darbo ir vertybių, įkvepiančių jo įgyvendinimą ir transformaciją, rezultatas. Leonardo'as Benevolo'as (1996 m.) teigė, kad net iš pažiūros grynai techninis miesto planavimas nėra politiškai neutralus ir kad abipusis miesto dizaino ir socialinių bei ekonominių sąlygų santykis, taip pat bendra ideologinė struktūra apibūdino modernios Europos urbanizacijos istoriją (Belli, 2020 m.). Juanas Pablo'as Bonta (1979 m.) pateikė dar vieną svarbų diskusijų, susijusių su architektūros ir prasmės santykio klausimu, elementą bei palygino fizinę architektūros tikrovę ir jos kultūrinės sampratos. Jo teigimu, fizinę architektūros tikrovę sudaro pastatų struktūra ir jų gyventojai. Fizinės tikrovės tyrimais siekiama apibrėžti, kas yra architektūra, jos formas ir savybes. Kita vertus, kultūrinės architektūros sampratos yra susijusios su kultūriniais procesais ir jomis siekiama suprasti, ką *reiškia* fizinė architektūros tikrovė. Todėl Bonta pabrėžė, kad kultūrinė architektūros samprata teikia pirmenybę urbanistinėje aplinkoje įtvirtintoms vertybėms, ideologinei konotacijai ir istorinei prasmei.

Vėliau Cosgrove'as ir Jacksonas (1987 m.) pabrėžė dominuojančių ideologijų svarbą suteikiant materialiams reiškiniams prasmę ir vertybes. griežtai praktinę sritį, kurioje idėjos ir įsitikinimai turi konkrečių materialių pasekmių. Anot Jacksono, ideologijos negali būti išskirtinai susijusios tik su įsitikinimų ir idėjų sritimi, bet sudaro „griežtai praktinę sritį, kurioje idėjos ir įsitikinimai turi konkrečias materialias pasekmes“ (1989 m., 50 p.). Humphrey'us pabrėžė, kad „ideologija tai ne tik tekstai ir kalbos, bet ir politinė praktika, pasireiškianti kuriant materialius objektus“ (2005 m., 39 p.). Czepczyński (2008) kraštovaizdį apibrėžė kaip metaforą, kuri, kaip ir kalba, veikia kaip reprezentacinė sistema. Mitchellis (1994) tvirtino, kad kraštovaizdis yra mainų tarp savęs ir kito terpė ir kad šiems mainams tarpininkauja kultūra. Rowentree'ė ir Conkey'us (1980) teigė, kad toks mainų procesas gali vykti efektyviai, jei perduodamas pranešimas ir gavėjas priklauso tai pačiai socialinei-kultūrinei sistemai. Pasak Cosgrove'ės (2008), europiečiai per kraštovaizdį reprezentavo savo pasaulį ir socialinius santykius sau ir kitiems. Todėl kraštovaizdžio istorija yra platesnės ekonomikos ir visuomenės istorijos dalis.

Vis dėlto urbanistinis kraštovaizdis – tai ne tik ženklų ir simbolių galios reprezentacijos būdas, bet ir vertybių hierarchijos bei mąstymo būdų raidos istorijoje

atspindys. Todėl miesto kraštovaizdį būtina pateikti kaip palimpsestą, sudėtingą ir dinamišką darinį, kuris, įvykus istorinėms ir ideologinėms permainoms ir perėjimams, perrašomas ir interpretuojamas iš naujo. Kai perėjimas prie kitos sistemos yra susijęs su režimo permainų procesais autoritarinėse ar buvusiose autoritarinėse visuomenėse, jų poveikis būna akivaizdus ir kartais drastiškas. Šie procesai vyksta ir demokratinėse visuomenėse, tačiau subtilesne forma, be ryškaus ir aiškaus perėjimo nuo senojo prie naujojo režimo. Visiems perėjimo procesams būdinga tai, kad tai, kas buvo sukurta ankstesniame periode, tampa praeities objektu.

Ryšys su praeitimi atveria aktualų paveldo klausimą, taip pat ir tai, kad paveldo sąvoką būtina kruopščiai apibrėžti ir atskirti nuo paprasto praeities palikimo, ir tai, kad netikslinga paveldą apibrėžti kaip artefaktų, paveldėtų iš ankstesnio istorinio laikotarpio, rinkinį. Pastarųjų dviejų dešimtmečių teorinės diskusijos (Smithas, 2006; Tunbridge'as, 2008; Hawke'ė, 2010; Kisić'as, 2017) parodė, kad paveldas yra dabarties produktas, sąmoningai kuriamas siekiant reaguoti į galimus poreikius ir reikalavimus. Paveldas įvardijamas atsižvelgiant į tai, ką visuomenė nusprendžia prisiminti, minėti bei puoselėti, o ką nori išbraukti iš kolektyvinės atminties, todėl paveldo objektų vertė yra tiesiogiai susijusi su jų reikšme visuomenei.

Disertacijos tikslas yra pritaikyti minėtą teorinę sistemą analizuojant pokario modernizmo masinius gyvenamuosius namus.

Disertacijos tikslas

Tyrimo tikslas – atliekant trijų atvejų lyginamąją analizę ištirti masinių gyvenamųjų namų statybų periodo Europoje (1950–1980 m.) fizinių ir diskursyvių konstravimą bei jų paveldą po pereinamojo laikotarpio.

Tyrimo objektai

Lyginamosios analizės objektai yra Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo mikrorajonai.

Vällingby mikrorajonas, atsiradęs 1954 m. šiaurės vakarų Stokholme, Švedijoje, yra vienas iš pirmųjų ABC miesto modelio įgyvendinimo pavyzdžių ir taip pat yra laikomas vienu iš pirmųjų modernių mikrorajonų Europoje. Pokario laikotarpiu Vällingby atliko lemiamą vaidmenį tolimesniam jų vystymuisi, o jo įtaka peržengė nacionalines ribas.

Lazdynai pastatyti 1967–1973 m. Lietuvos Respublikos sostinės Vilniaus šiaurės vakariniame pakraštyje. Po pastatymo mikrorajonas buvo laikomas pokario sovietinės urbanizacijos Baltijos respublikų perlu ir 1974 m. gavo svarbiausią sovietinį apdovanojimą – Lenino premiją už visasąjunginį architektūrinį projektą. Lazdynų planavime ir statyboje atsispindi įtampa tarp bandymų rasti kompromisą tarp vietos modernios masinės gyvenamųjų namų statybos ir griežtos sovietinės institucinės bei ideologinės sistemos.

San Polo mikrorajonas pastatytas XX a. aštuntojo dešimtmečio II pusėje – devintojo dešimtmečio pradžioje antro pagal dydį Lombardijos regiono miesto Brešos pietrytinėje dalyje, Italijoje. Leonardo Benevolo suprojektuotas San Polo

mikrorajonas neabejotinai yra vienas ryškiausių pokario Italijos urbanistikos planavimo pavyzdžių. Tyrimo objektų pristatymas atskleidžia specifines geografines ir chronologines tyrimo perspektyvas.

Tiriamieji mikrorajonai, esantys Švedijoje, Lietuvoje ir Italijoje, priklauso trims skirtingiems Europos regionams, kuriems, ypač pokario dešimtmečiais, buvo būdingi skirtingi politiniai režimai ir socialinės bei ekonominės sąlygos. Švedija, valdoma socialdemokratų partijos, stengėsi sudaryti socialinę sutartį tarp valstybės ir piliečių ir įgyvendinti modernizacijos ir socialinės pažangos *trečiąjį kelią*, peržengiant kapitalistinės ir socialistinės dichotomijos ribas.

Lietuva patyrė sovietų okupaciją, kuri tęsėsi iki pat Sovietų Sąjungos žlugimo ir stipriai nulėmė jos ekonominio, pramoninio ir urbanistinio vystymosi kryptis. Po pokario fizinės ir politinės rekonstrukcijos ir Maršalo plano Italija pradėjo integracijos su Vakarų Europos valstybėmis etapą. Italija po pokario fizinės ir politinės rekonstrukcijos bei Maršalo plano pradėjo integracijos su Vakarų Europos valstybėmis etapą. Šis geografinis heterogeniškumas atskleidžia disertacijos tikslą – pristatyti pokario modernių gyvenamųjų namų statybą, kaip visos Europos reiškinį, kurio raida peržengė tipišką poliarizacijos tarp Rytų ir Vakarų ribas. Be to, šiame darbe daugiausia dėmesio skiriama trims mikrorajonams, pastatytiems skirtingais masinės gyvenamosios statybos epochos laikotarpiais, ir bandoma laikytis *long durée* požiūrio, siekiant pateikti kuo išsamesnį šio reiškinio vaizdą. Pasitelktas chronologinis požiūris yra aiškus atsižvelgus į pasirinktus tyrimo atvejus: Vällingby buvo suplanuotas ir pastatytas šeštajame dešimtmetyje, ir jo statyba numatė pokario modernizmo plėtrą plačiu mastu. Lazdynų mikrorajonas, inauguruotas 1973 m., gali būti laikomas sovietinės masinių gyvenamųjų namų aukso amžiaus viduriu. O San Polo dėl vėlyvų statybų tapo vienu iš paskutiniųjų aktualių pokario modernios urbanizacijos pavyzdžių Vakarų Europoje.

Disertacijos struktūra

Disertaciją sudaro trys skyriai.

Pirmasis darbo skyrius siejamas su pokario modernių masinių gyvenamųjų namų statyba. Pirmiausia šiame skyriuje analizuojami modernizmo principai architektūroje ir urbanistiniame planavime. Pagrindiniai autoriai ir svarbiausi šios srities tekstai pateikiami ne schematišku, o lyginamuoju būdu, atsižvelgiant į tam tikrus pagrindinius aspektus. Pirmiausia modernizmas pristatomas kaip urbanistikos ir architektūros krizių sprendimo būdas. Toliau analizuojama erdvinio koordinavimo, gyvenamųjų rajonų fizinio planavimo, standartizavimo ir pramoninės statybos problematika. Taip pat modernizmas pristatomas kaip ideologija, kuriai būdingos socialiai progresyvios vertybės; architektams ir projektuotojams buvo suteiktas naujas vaidmuo ir bendras įsipareigojimas racionalia statyba gerinti žmonijos būtį. Be to, pirmasis disertacijos skyrius skirtas politinių, ekonominių, demografinių ir socialinių veiksnių, skatinusių pokario urbanizaciją ir sudariusių palankią terpę masiniam modernizmo principų taikymui masinėje statyboje, istorinei analizei. Galiausiai, skyriuje daugiausia dėmesio skiriama modernių masinių

gyvenamųjų namų aukso amžiui Europoje, siekiant suprasti modernaus planavimo, politinių tikslų ir istorinių sąlygų ryšių, formavusių miesto kraštovaizdį, mastą.

Antrasis disertacijos skyrius skirtas dabartinės pokario masinių gyvenamųjų namų situacijos tyrimui. Skyrius gali būti siejamas su *intelektualinės* arba *diskursyvinės* dekonstrukcijos idėja. Apžvelgus argumentus, kuriais remiantis kritikuojamas architektūrinis modernizmas, pagrindinis dėmesys skiriamas pokario modernių masinių gyvenamųjų namų nuosmukio analizei. Toliau darbe skiriamas dėmesys įtakos, kurią šiam reiškiniui daro konkrečių politinių permainų poveikis, tyrimui ir kaimynystės reputacijos klausimams. Galiausiai analizuojamas paveldo ir modernių masinių gyvenamųjų namų santykis. Visų pirma tiriamas šio reiškinio ir disonansinio paveldo (Tunbridge'as ir Ashworthas, 1996) sąvokos ryšys. Analizės tikslas – ne tik įvardyti visą pokario masinio gyvenamųjų namų fenomeną kaip disonuojančio paveldo objektą, bet ir iširti ir pakomentuoti kai kuriuos konkrečius disonanso veiksnius, galinčius veikti tam tikruose kontekstuose. Ypač daug dėmesio skiriama pokario moderniosios architektūros perduodamų prasių ir pranešimų atgyvenimui ir nepageidaujamumui bei socialinei ir ekonominei segregacijai, atsiradusiai kai kuriuose rajonuose.

Trečiasis tyrimo skyrius yra eksperimentinis ir novatoriškiausias savo pobūdžiu ir jame atliekama pasirinktų tyrimo atvejų – Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo – lyginamoji analizė. Analizė atliekama pagal konkrečius kriterijus, todėl kiekvieno poskyrio struktūra yra tokia pati. Pirmiausia tyrimo atvejai yra istoriškai kontekstualizuoti platesniame atitinkamų šalių urbanizacijos kontekste; šiame istoriniame kontekste svarbiausias vaidmuo tenka politinei dinamikai, po to atliekama Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo planavimo, fizinių ir funkcinų savybių analizė. Taip pat tyrimo atvejai apžvelgiami nagrinėjant rašytinę medžiagą, žiniasklaidą, parodas ir apdovanojimus. Galiausiai, trečiajame skyriuje analizuojama dabartinė Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo mikrorajonų situacija ir jų vaidmuo šiuolaikiniame urbanistiniame kontekste bei analizuojamas šių rajonų paveldas.

Metodologija

Tyrimo metodologiją sudaro keturi pagrindiniai tikslai: (i) architektūros teorijos ir urbanistikos tekstų, parašytų 1950–1970 m., skaitymas; (ii) architektūrinių periodinių leidinių, traktuojamų kaip pirminiai istoriniai šaltiniai, analizė; (iii) pokario modernių masinių gyvenamųjų namų ir paveldo santykio tyrimas ir šio reiškinio analizė per disonuojančio paveldo sąvokos prizmę; (iv) pasirinktų tyrimo atvejų lyginamoji analizė, atlikta pagal tam tikrus kriterijus.

Modernaus planavimo ir architektūros srityje galima atskirti darbus, suteikiančius intelektualinį pagrindą, ir tekstus, sutampančius su disertacija dominančiomis sritimis. Siekiant atkurti modernaus miestų planavimo fenomeną, būtina sutelkti dėmesį ir į darbus, sukurtus iki pokario laikotarpio (Gropius'as, 1910/2007; Le Corbusier'ė, 1941). Susipažinimas su šiais tekstais buvo būtinas norint visapusiškai suprasti pokario produkciją (Doxiadis'as, 1963; Rossi's, 1966; Zevi's, 1973). Didelis dėmesys buvo skiriamas italų darbų analizei, ir jų pasirinkimas gali būti motyvuojamas dvejopai. Viena vertus, italų kalba parašytų

kūrinių tyrimas leido tiesiogiai, gimtąja kalba susipažinti su pokario dešimtmečiais parašytais tekstais. Kita vertus, būtina paminėti specifinę šalies kultūrinę padėtį. Dėl ideologizuotos *inteligentijos* Italija Vakarų Europoje, kartu su Prancūzija, buvo labiausiai, nors ir nevisapusiškai, atvira šalis socialistinių valstybių kultūrinei produkcijai. Dėl tokios specifinės pozicijos Italijos pokario produkcija yra labai vertinga disertacijos lyginamosios ir visos Europos perspektyvos kontekste.

Atsižvelgiant į konkrečius disertacijos kontekstus, tyrimui svarbiausi tekstai yra *General Plan for Stockholm* (liet. *Stokholmo bendrasis planas*, 1952 m.), *The Ideal Communist City* (liet. *Idealus komunistinis miestas*, 1968 m.) ir Leonardo Benevolo išleisti *The Origins of Modern Town Planning* (liet. *Modernaus miesto planavimo ištakos*, 1967 m.) bei *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica* (liet. *Breša S. Polo: Visuomenės iniciatyvos rajonas* 1976 m.).

General Plan for Stockholm parengė Švedijos sostinės miesto planavimo biuras, vadovaujamas Sveno Markeliuso. Tekstas iš pradžių buvo parašytas švedų kalba, tačiau dėl tarptautinės auditorijos poreikių pagrindiniai darbo aspektai buvo apibendrinti anglų kalba. Dokumentas aktualus tuo, kad jame techniniai aspektai derinami su estetinėmis idėjomis ir socialiai progresyvia filosofija, būdinga Švedijos moderniajam urbanizmui socialdemokratinės gerovės valstybės aukso amžiuje. Maskvoje įsikūrusios komandos, kurios veiklą koordinavo Aleksejus Gutnovas ir kurią sudarė Baburovas, Džumentonas, Charitonova, Lezava ir Sadovskis, parašytame *The Ideal Communist City* konkretūs ir tarptautiniai aspektai dera tarpusavyje ir neprieštarauja vienas kitam. Viena vertus, kūrinys pasižymi stipriu ideologiniu atspalviu, leidžiančiu jį kontekstualizuoti sovietinio ir socialistinio urbanizmo kontekste. Kita vertus, Maskvos komanda kėlė klausimus ir siūlė sprendimus, orientuotus į erdvinį koordinavimą ir decentralizaciją, kurie buvo būdingi tarptautiniam pokario modernizmui. Tyrimui svarbiausi Leonardo Benevolo darbai yra *The Origins of Modern Town* (1967 m.) ir *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica* (1976 m.), kuris niekada nebuvo išverstas į anglų kalbą. Pirmasis leidinys labai svarbus norint gerai suprasti teorinius Benevolo darbo aspektus, ypač susijusius su politinės valdžios ir urbanistinio planavimo santykiu. Antrasis yra labai vertingas kaip įžvalga apie Benevolo architektūrinę ir planavimo veiklą ir yra pagrindinis šaltinis, leidžiantis atkurti San Polo genezę.

Architektūriniai periodiniai leidiniai *Casa Bella*, *Domus* ir *Architectural Review* buvo analizuojami ir vertinami kaip pirminiai istoriniai šaltiniai. Tyrime nagrinėjami leidiniai, išleisti nuo 1940-ųjų iki 1991-ųjų metų, Sovietų Sąjungos žlugimo ir viso socialistinio bloko išnykimo metų, įprastai žyminčių masinių gyvenamųjų namų eros Europoje pabaigą. Nuo 1991 m. iš esmės išnyko institucinė ir kultūrinė sistema, palaikiusi masinės statybos pastangas socialistinėse šalyse, o likusioje Europos žemyno dalyje šis reiškinys jau buvo gerokai sulėtėjęs. Tyrimas atliktas siekiant iširti techninius ir intelektualinius aspektus, būdingus pokario moderniam būstui. Temos, tokios kaip statybos racionalizavimas ir surenkamųjų konstrukcijų gamyba bei decentralizuotas planavimas, buvo plačiai analizuojamos nuo šeštojo iki aštuntojo dešimtmečio (Diotallevi's ir Marescotti's, 1941; Ponti's, 1956; Biondo's ir Rognoni's, 1976). Socialinio būsto klausimas, kuris

skandinavų diskusijose buvo antraeilis ir kuris sovietiniame kontekste neegzistavo, buvo analizuojamas leidinyje *Domus* (Ponti's, 1956; *Codice: Incontri e scontri sulla casa*, 1972). Be to, nebuvo ignoruojama estetinė pokario modernizmo vertė (Ponti's, 1951) ir tarptautinė šio reiškinių dimensija (Pica, 1970; Pica, 1972; Boissière'as, 1982). Tuo pat metu šiuolaikinis kritinis modernaus planavimo ir architektūros vertinimas buvo sutinkamas leidinio *Domus* numeriuose, išleistuose tarp 1970 ir 1980-ųjų (Magistretti's, 1973; Gravagnuolo'as, 1982; Bellini's, 1988). Taigi periodinių leidinių tyrimai parodė, kaip buvo pristatomas, suvokiamas ir vertinamas pokario modernizmo reiškinys ir pagrindiniai jo atributai.

Prieš paaiškinant paveldo reikšmę disertacijos metodologinei struktūrai, būtina trumpai priminti esminį disertacijos aspektą. Jau anksčiau buvo pažymėta, kad urbanistiniame kraštovaizdyje atsispindi vyraujančios ideologijos ir kultūrinės vertybės. Be to, teigiama, kad, vykstant politiniam ir ideologiniam pereinamajam procesui, hegemoninę poziciją įgyja naujos vertybės ir orientacijos. Vis dėlto, nors institucinė transformacija vyksta palyginti greitai, urbanistinio kraštovaizdžio transformacija yra lėtesnė ir tam tikra prasme neįgyvendinama, todėl miestams būdinga nuolatinė įtampa tarp praeities ir dabarties, taip pat tarp to, kas laikoma vertinga ir reikšminga, ir to, kas ne.

Šiuo atžvilgiu ne išimtis ir pokario modernūs masiniai gyvenamieji namai. Šiaurės ir Vakarų Europoje pokario laikotarpiu, o Rytų bloke 1954–1991 m. masiniai gyvenamieji namai tapo viena ryškiausių gerovės valstybės ir socialistinio modernizavimo priemonių. Be to, modernūs pokario mikrorajonai buvo pagrindinis pastangų įgyvendinti techniškai veiksmingą ir filosofškai egalitarinį požiūrį į urbanizaciją rezultatas. Tačiau, prasidėjus politinėms permainoms, su šiuo reiškiniu susijęs optimizmas pradėjo blėsti. Šiaurės šalyse ir Vakarų Europoje tarp 1954–1991-ųjų susilpnėjo gerovės politika ir stiprėjo neoliberalizmas. Todėl politika, orientuota į kolektyvizmą, ir vertybės, kurios buvo svarbiausios masinių gyvenamųjų namų laikotarpiu, tapo antraeilės, taip pat sumažėjo ir visuomenės išitraukimas į būsto sektorių. 1991 m. buvusiose sovietinėse Baltijos šalyse ir kitose Vidurio ir Rytų Europos šalyse prasidėjo posocialistinė transformacija. Bandytas sukurti laisvosios rinkos ekonomiką, siekis sunaikinti socialistinės sistemos produkciją, pastangos ištrinti nepageidaujamą socialistinę praeitį ir noras iš naujo atrasti ikisocialistinį paveldą formavo urbanistinio kraštovaizdžio savybes ir suvokimą. Prasidėjus permainoms, pokario modernistiniai rajonai išliko kaip netolimos praeities palikimas, taip pat pasikeitė jų intelektualinė bei naratyvinė vertė. Šios priežastys paskatino pokario modernaus masinio gyvenamųjų namų paveldo tyrimus.

Šiame darbe siekiama ištirti pokario masinių gyvenamųjų namų ir paveldo santykį disonuojančio paveldo atžvilgiu. Disonansinis paveldas yra specifinė paveldo rūšis, „susijusi su nesuderinamumu arba sutarimo ir nuoseklumo stoka“ (Tunbridge'as ir Ashworthas, 1996, 20 p.), taip pat ir su nesuderinamumu bei skirtingumu (Kisić'as, 2017). *Taip pat tyrime siekiama nustatyti ir įvertinti veiksnius, sukeliančius disonansą. Analizei svarbūs trys pagrindiniai disonanso veiksniai: du iš jų – pasenusio perdavimo ir nepageidaujamo perdavimo veiksniai,*

susiję su pavelde esančiais pranešimais, trečiasis – socialinių klasių disonansas, susijęs su socialiniu ir ekonominiu aspektu. Trumpas kiekvieno veiksnio pristatymas:

- *pasenęs perdavimas – tai reiškiny, kai su ankstesniu istoriniu etapu susiję pranešimai ir toliau perduodami visuomenėms, kurių tikslai ir ideologinės orientacijos jau yra pasikeitę.* Masinių gyvenamųjų namų reiškinio įgyvendinimui stiprų ideologinį atspalvį suteikė gilus ryšio tarp politinės valdžios ir modernių miestų planavimo laikotarpis. Tai, kad pokario metu pastatyti mikrorajonai ir toliau reprezentuoja šį ryšį, net jam pasibaigus, paverčia *pasenusį perdavimą* itin svarbia interpretacine kategorija.
- *nepageidaujamas perdavimas – tai reiškiny, susijęs su pranešimų, atspindinčių skausmingus ir (arba) nepageidaujamus praeities įvykius, perdavimu. Tikėtina, kad nepageidaujamas perdavimas yra itin aktualus Vidurio ir Rytų Europoje, kur pokario modernioji architektūra gali būti siejama su sovietų okupacijos ar komunistinės diktatūros metais.*
- *Socialinių klasių disonansas dažniausiai sutinkamas urbanistikos kontekste, ir jį skatina labiausiai nepalankioje padėtyje esančių vietovių socialinės ir ekonominės sąlygos. Todėl socialinių klasių disonansas yra analizės kategorija, kurią galima taikyti rajonams, pasižymintiems prastais socialiniais ir ekonominiais rodikliais, pajamų segregacija ir stigmatizacija.*

Atsižvelgiant į kiekvieno tyrimo atvejo ypatumus, galima pagrįstai manyti, kad minėti disonanso veiksniai Vällingbyje, Lazdynuose ir San Polo pasireiškia skirtingai.

Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo lyginamoji analizė atliekama remiantis konkrečiais kriterijais ir galima teigti, kad ne visi kriterijai yra vienodai svarbūs kiekvienu tyrimo atveju. Nepaisant to, jie yra veiksmingiausia priemonė analizuojant tiriamuosius atvejus istorinėje perspektyvoje, atsižvelgiant į jų architektūrinės ir funkcinės savybes bei paveldą.

1. Pirmasis kriterijus skirtas analizuoti istorinei ir politinei atmosferai bei instituciniams veiksniams, paskatinusiems pokario modernių masinių gyvenamųjų namų reiškinį Švedijoje, Sovietų Lietuvoje ir Italijoje. Todėl pirmiausia analizėje daugiausia dėmesio skiriama ekonominiams, socialiniams ir demografiniams veiksniams, kurie skatino urbanizaciją ir su ja susijusią apgyvendinimo paklausą. Tuo pat metu, ypatingą dėmesį skiriant naujiems miestų planams ir teisės aktams, tiriamas vietos valdžios ir valstybės institucijų reagavimas į urbanizacijos sukeltas problemas. Be to, sutelkiant dėmesį į Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo planavimo ir statybos procesus, pristatomi konkretūs masinių gyvenamųjų namų epochos rezultatai Švedijoje, sovietinėje Lietuvoje ir Italijoje.
2. Antrasis kriterijus skirtas atlikti fizinę ir architektūrinę tyrimo atvejų analizę. Analizuojami fiziniai ir funkciniai požymiai, pagrindiniai pastatų tipai ir gamtinės bei užstatytos aplinkos sąveika Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo mikrorajonuose. Be to, tyrimu siekiama nustatyti, ar ir kokių mastu atrinktų mikrorajonų fizinės ir funkcinės savybės leidžia juos atpažinti ir

identifikuoti. Bendras analizės uždavinys – suprasti, ar ir koku mastu planuotojams ir architektams pavyko pritaikyti bendruosius pokario modernaus planavimo principus prie vietos konteksto ir ar jiems pavyko originaliai interpretuoti šį reiškinį.

3. Trečiasis kriterijus skirtas diskursui atkurti analizuojant rašytinius šaltinius, kuriuose minimi Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo mikrorajonai statybų laikotarpiu arba iškart po jų. Taigi tyrime daugiausia dėmesio skiriama rašytinei medžiagai, kurioje mikrorajonai pristatomi tiek vietiniu, tiek tarptautiniu lygiu. Tarp rašytinių šaltinių yra ir jau minėti darbai: *General Plan for Stockholm* (1952 m.), *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica* (1976 m.), taip pat ir *Neue Wohngebiete Sozialistischer Länder* (1976 m), ant kurio viršelio buvo pavaizduoti Lazdynai. Taip pat minimos vietinės ir tarptautinės reikšmės architektūros premijos, tokios kaip Patrick'o Abercrombie'io premija, 1961 m. įteikta Vällingby, ir Lenino premija, 1974 m. įteikta Lazdynų mikrorajonui.

4. Ketvirtasis kriterijus skirtas dabartinei tiriamų Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo atvejų padėčiai analizuoti per disonansinio paveldo koncepcijos prizmę. Taigi darbe bandoma nustatyti, kokius disonanso veiksnius galima identifikuoti kiekvienu atveju ir koks yra jų poveikis.

Taigi pirmieji du analizės kriterijai iš esmės yra istoriniai. Pirmasis kriterijus skirtas politiniams ir instituciniams aspektams, skatinusiems masinių gyvenamųjų namų plėtrą ir Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo statybas, analizuoti, o trečiasis sutelkia dėmesį į naujai pastatytų mikrorajonų diskursyvų konstravimą ir vyravusias optimistines tendencijas. Kita vertus, antrasis kriterijus yra stipriai orientuotas į pasirinktų tyrimo atvejų architektūrinę analizę. Galiausiai ketvirtasis kriterijus skirtas Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo paveldo analizei. Visoje lyginamojoje analizėje gilinamasi į tarptautinę pokario modernizmo dimensiją ir siekiama išsiaiškinti, kokią įtaką, planuojant ir statant Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo mikrorajonus, turėjo dialogas su užsienio pavyzdžiais. Tikimasi, kad ši perspektyva dar labiau sustiprins tezę, jog, nepaisant kiekvieno tiriamojo atvejo specifikos, pokario masinių gyvenamųjų namų reiškinys turėjo stiprų tarptautinį atspalvį.

Toks kompleksinis požiūris atskleidžia disciplinų, apimančių politinę, socialinę ir kultūros istoriją, architektūrą, urbanistinę geografiją ir paveldo studijas, heterogeniškumą.

Tyrimo mokslinis naujumas

Pagrindiniai disertacijos naujumo aspektai: (i) modernių masinių gyvenamųjų namų ir paveldo santykio tyrimas; (ii) trijų pokarinių rajonų, esančių skirtingose šalyse ir susidariusių dėl skirtingų kultūrinių ir politinių sistemų, lyginamoji analizė pagal tam tikrus kriterijus.

Paveldo tema dažniausiai nagrinėjama per monumentalias ar itin simbolines erdves ir dažnai tyrimų dėmesys sutelkiamas į pasiekimus, teigiamai prisidėjusius prie bendruomenės raidos, bei į negatyvius įvykius, kurie, primindami skaudžius praeities įvykius, stiprina kolektyvinę atmintį. Kita vertus, disertacijoje siekiama

iškelti neišskirtinių teritorijų, pavyzdžiui, gyvenamųjų rajonų, paveldo klausimą. Dar vienas darbo naujumo elementas – kategorijų, susijusių su disonansinio paveldo sąvoka, vartojimas. Disonansinio paveldo sistema dažniausiai taikoma pristatant ir interpretuojant nepageidaujamą trauminių periodų, tokių kaip totalitariniai režimai ir kolonijinis dominavimas, palikimą. Kita vertus, mažai tikėtina, kad ji bus taikoma objektams, kurie yra demokratiškos visuomenės, tokių kaip pokario Švedija ir Italija, palikimas. Disonansinis paveldas veikia kaip ir pokario masiniuose gyvenamuosiuose namuose įdiegtų pranešimų pasenimas ir nepalankios kai kurių mikrorajonų socialinės ir ekonominės sąlygos. Atsižvelgiant į tarptautinį ir europinį šio reiškinio pobūdį, tikėtina, kad pokario modernizmo paveldo analizė suteiks vertingų elementų dabartinėms diskusijoms apie Europos paveldą.

Bendrų pokario Europos urbanizacijos tendencijų pripažinimas pats savaime nėra naujas elementas tarptautinėje mokslinėje literatūroje. Vis dėlto daugumoje mokslinės literatūros šaltinių tarpvalstybiniai panašumai, būdingi pokario gyvenamiesiems namams, traktuojami kaip visuotinai pripažintas faktas ir įprastai toliau nėra nagrinėjami. Be to, didžiulėse tarptautinėse pokario masinių gyvenamųjų namų studijose skirtingi tyrimo atvejai dažnai tiesiog sugretinami ir pateikiami atskirai. Taigi disertacijos tikslas – pagal tiksliai apibrėžtus kriterijus ištirti Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo atvejus ir užpildyti literatūros spragą bei pristatyti pokario modernių masinių gyvenamųjų namų reiškinį iš naujos perspektyvos.

Rezultatai

Pagrindinius tyrimo rezultatus galima apibendrinti dešimčia punktu:

1) XIX a. pramonės revoliucijos sukelta ekonominė ir socialinė transformacija paskatino galias intelektualines diskusijas. Modernizmo, laikytino intelektualiniu atsaku į modernizacijos procesą ir modernybės patirtį, šaknys glūdi šiame istoriniame etape. Nuo pat savo ištakų ir per visą XX a. modernusis urbanizmas siekė moksliskai tirti miesto problemas ir jas spręsti diegiant radikalias būsto ir miesto formos naujoves. Modernizmo teorija ir praktika nukrypo nuo prastos architektūros būklės ir neefektyvaus planavimo, nepajėgiančio susidoroti su ekonominiais, socialiniais ir demografiniais pokyčiais, pripažinimo, ir modernizmo specialistai pabrėžė naujos architektūrinės kalbos kūrimo ir racionalaus požiūrio į planavimą poreikį, todėl buvo pradėta taikyti naujus pramoninius statybų metodus, medžiagas ir standartizuotus planus. Techniniu aspektu modernistai siekė sukurti naujas estetines vertybes, o į ateitį orientuotu intelektualiniu požiūriu – pertvarkyti fizinę miesto aplinką. Atmesdami meno kaip savarankiškos srities idėją, modernizmo architektai ir planuotojai iš tiesų siekė radikaliai pakeisti ir pagerinti piliečių, nepriklausomai nuo jų ekonominės ar socialinės padėties, gyvenimą. Taip pat jie bendradarbiavimą su politine valdžia laikė itin svarbiu dalyku, leidžiančiu sėkmingai įgyvendinti urbanistines ir socialines permainas. Taigi moderniojo planavimo bruožai turėjo lemiamą įtaką pokario Europos urbanizacijai.

2) Nepaisant ryškių skirtumų tarp politinių ir geografinių aplinkybių, galima išskirti tendencijas, skatinusias Europos urbanizaciją po Antrojo pasaulinio karo. Ekonomikos vystymasis ir pramonės plėtra, vidinė migracija iš kaimų į miestus ir teigiami demografiniai rodikliai lėmė didelį Europos miestų gyventojų skaičiaus augimą ir skatino naujų gyvenamųjų namų statybą. Dėl racionalaus planavimo, industrializuotų ir standartizuotų statybos metodų ir egalitarinės ideologijos vyravimo modernus planavimas tapo idealia priemone spręsti problemas, susijusias su urbanizacijos procesu. Taigi valstybės iš esmės priėmė naujus miestų planavimo principus. Viena vertus, masinių gyvenamųjų namų statyba buvo sprendžiamos būsto trūkumo problemos, kita vertus, tai skatino visuomenės modernizavimą ir naujos socialinės darnos kūrimą. Šiaurės ir Vakarų Europos į gerovę orientuotos valdžios sistemos modernius gyvenamuosius namus laikė priemone, leidžiančia demokratiškai išplėsti teigiamą ekonomikos vystymosi poveikį ir skatinančią masinį vartojimą, o Sovietų Sąjungos ir Vidurio bei Rytų Europos valdžios bandė gerinti miesto darbininkų klasės gyvenimo sąlygas ir rasti komunistinį kelią į modernizaciją. Iš pažiūros tobulas ryšys tarp politinių tikslų ir planavimo apibūdino šlovingus modernių masinių gyvenamųjų namų dešimtmečius Europoje.

3) Kiekvienas intelektualinis judėjimas priklauso ir veikia aiškiai apibrėžtame istoriniame etape, ne išimtis ir pokario modernizmas. Po 1980 m. prasidėjęs Šiaurės ir Vakarų Europoje gerovės valstybių silpnėjimas ir neoliberalių tendencijų centriškumas perorientavo politinį diskursą, marginalizuodamas ankstesnių dešimtmečių kolektyvistinę dimensiją, todėl masinių gyvenamųjų namų fenomenas prarado svarbiausią vaidmenį. Sovietų Sąjungoje ir Vidurio bei Rytų Europoje masinių gyvenamųjų namų era tęsėsi iki socializmo žlugimo 1991 m., atnešusio naujas vertybes ir erdvinio organizavimo formas. Pradinė intelektualinė kritika neturėjo didelės įtakos masinių gyvenamųjų namų likimui, tačiau to paties negalima pasakyti apie politinių permainų procesą ir jo poveikį urbanistiniam kraštovaizdžiui. Teigti, kad politinėje ir urbanistinėje sferoje įvykę pokyčiai neigiamai paveikė visą Europos nekilnojamąjį turtą, būtų netikslinga ir pernelyg supaprastinta. Vis dėlto neabejotina, kad pokario masinių gyvenamųjų namų nuosmukis per pastaruosius tris dešimtmečius tapo rimta problema. Šis nuosmukis neapsiriboja tik fiziniu pastatų aspektu, bet paveikė nepalankiausiose padėtyse esančių vietovių ekonomines sąlygas ir socialinius aspektus. Dėl šio nuosmukio pradėjo mažėti pastatų vertė, o gyventojai, priklausantys didesnes pajamas gaunančioms grupėms, ilgainiui persikėlė į patrauklesnes vietas. Todėl nuosmukį patyrusioms vietovėms iškeltas naujas tikslas – susidoroti su neigiama reputacija ir siekti išvengti stigmatacijos. Nors nuosmukis ir socialinė bei ekonominė poliarizacija neabejotinai labiau pastebimi ir aptarinėjami Šiaurės ir Vakarų Europoje, į šį procesą vis labiau įsitraukia ir buvusios socialistinės šalys. Tokie veiksniai, kaip istorinių miesto centrų atgaivinimas ir priemiesčių plėtimasis, iš tiesų kelia klausimų dėl didžiųjų socialistinių gyvenamųjų namų padėties ir geidžiamumo.

4) Tai, kad modernūs masiniai gyvenamieji namai reprezentuoja ne tik pasikeitusį politinį kontekstą, santykį tarp valdžios ir miesto planavimo bei kitokią socialinę ir kultūrinę atmosferą, iškėlė klausimą dėl šio reiškinio paveldo reikšmės. Nors galimos šio reiškinio skirtingos analizės perspektyvos, dėl aktualumo disertacijoje atlikta analizė pristato šio reiškinio paveldą pagal disonansinio paveldo interpretacinę sistemą. Disonansinis paveldas pasižymi ne tik siauromis sąvokomis, tokiomis kaip *nepageidaujamas*, *sudėtingas* ar *skausmingas paveldas*, bet ir kompleksišku, leidžiančiu efektyviai įvertinti šį reiškinį. Išskiriami trys pagrindiniai veiksniai: *pasenęs perdavimas* – tai konkrečiu istoriniu momentu sukurtų pranešimų perdavimas visuomenėms, kurioms būdingos naujos vertybės ir kryptys. Pokario dešimtmečiais pastatyti ir stiprų ideologinį atspalvį įgavę modernūs masiniai gyvenamieji namai net ir po pereinamojo(-ųjų) laikotarpio(-ų) toliau egzistuoja ir projektuoja tam tikras vertybes ir reikšmes. Nepaisant skirtingos geografinės padėties daugumoje mikrorajonų, *pasenusį perdavimą* galima įvardyti kaip aktyvų disonanso veiksmą. Antrasis disertacijoje analizuojamas disonanso veiksnys yra *nepageidaujamas perdavimas*, kuris nuo *pasenusio perdavimo* skiriasi nepageidajamu ir skausmingu pranešimų pobūdžiu. *Nepageidaujamas perdavimas* per pokario moderniąją architektūrą, siejamą su nepageidaujama komunistine praeitimi, gali būti laikomas disonansiniu veiksmu posovietinėse Baltijos šalyse ir Vidurio bei Rytų Europoje. Trečiasis veiksnys yra su socialinėmis klasėmis susijęs disonansas, kuris dažniausiai pasireiškia vargingiausiuose rajonuose. Dėl didesnės socialinės ir ekonominės poliarizacijos socialinių klasių disonanso poveikis, priešingai nei Vidurio ir Rytų Europoje, yra stipresnis Vakarų Europos šalyse. Svarbu pabrėžti, kad disonansinio paveldo sąvoka nėra neigžiama, o intervencijos, kuriomis siekiama teritorijas paversti tvaresnėmis, tinkamesnėmis gyventi ir atsparesnėmis, gali padėti pakeisti požiūrį į masinius gyvenamuosius namus.

5) Vällingby, Lazdynai ir San Polo negali būti analizuojami be gilesnio istorinio konteksto. Visų pirma, mikrorajonų įgyvendinimui buvo būtinas *conditio sine qua non* santykis tarp urbanistinio planavimo ir viešųjų institucijų. Vällingby statybą įkvėpė du Švedijos gerovės valstybės ypatumai: ideologinis įsipareigojimas įgyvendinti *folkhemmet* (liaudies namų) koncepciją ir paversti šalį tinkamais namais jos gyventojams bei visuomenės pastangos vykdyti decentralizuotą miestų plėtrą. Taigi Vällingby buvo pirmasis ir vienas iš reprezentatyviausių socialinės darnos tarp Švedijos valdžios ir piliečių pavyzdžių. Taip pat Lazdynų atvejis puikiai atspindi valdžios ir planavimo santykį, kadangi šis Vilniaus rajonas reprezentuoja ne tik sovietinio pokario masinių gyvenamųjų namų fenomeną, bet ir šio reiškinio įgyvendinimą už sovietinės Rusijos ribų. Todėl Lazdynų mikrorajono tyrimas leidžia rekonstruoti sovietinių modernių gyvenamųjų namų gimimą ir vystymąsi bei suteikia erdvės lokaliai interpretacijai. San Polo siejamas su vietiniu aspektu, nes nors buvo remiamas Italijos teisinės sistemos, planavimo ir institucijų bendradarbiavimas vyko savivaldybių lygmeniu ir būtent specifinės Brešos miesto sąlygos leido Leonardo'ui Benevolo'ui įgyvendinti savo požiūrį į viešąją urbanizaciją.

6) Pirmieji Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo mikrorajonų metai pasižymėjo diskursyvia konstrukcija ir optimistiniu požiūriu. Septintojo dešimtmečio pradžia gali būti laikoma Vällingby šlovės laikotarpiu: mikrorajonas 1961 m. už urbanistiką gavo Tarptautinės architektų sąjungos Patriko Aberkrombio premiją. Po metų, 1962 m., Karališkasis britų architektų institutas apdovanojo Stokholmo miesto planavimo biuro vadovą Sveną Markeliusą Karališkuoju architektūros aukso medaliu. Vällingby buvo reklamuojamas per rašytinę medžiagą, žiniasklaidą ir parodas, taip pat sulaukė ne tik architektūros ir planavimo specialistų vizitų. Lazdynų mikrorajonas savo piką pasiekė iškart po statybų. 1974 m. Lazdynai pelnė Lenino premiją už visasąjunginį architektūrinį projektavimą – svarbiausią sovietų urbanistikos apdovanojimą, taip pat išgarsėjo Lietuvoje ir užsienyje. 1976 m. Lazdynai buvo pavaizduoti ant Wernerio Rietdorfo tarptautinio tyrimo apie modernius gyvenamuosius namus Rytų bloke *Neue Wohngebietesozialistischer Länder* viršelio. San Polo atveju savo darbus ir viešosios urbanizacijos pranašumus daugiausia propagavo pats Leonardo'as 'as, ypač knygoje *Brescia S. Polo: Un quartiere di iniziativa pubblica*, išleistoje 1976 metais.

7) Skirtingai nei Vällingby ir Lazdynų mikrorajonai, San Polo negavo jokių apdovanojimų. Norint paaiškinti Vällingby sėkmę, būtina atsižvelgti į esminį mikrorajono vaidmenį. XX a. septintajame dešimtmetyje specialistai visoje Europoje Skandinavijos urbanistikos rezultatus laikė atskaitos tašku. Lazdynų atveju būtina atsižvelgti į dar vieną elementą – ideologiją. Tuometinė Sovietų Sąjungos valstybė per Lazdynų mikrorajoną buvo įsipareigojusi švęsti sovietinę urbanizaciją, todėl Lenino premiją tam tikra prasme galima interpretuoti kaip imperinę ir kolonijinę premiją, kuria buvo siekiama pagerbti tikrai socialistinę ir sovietinę Baltijos respublikų urbanistinę plėtrą. Kita vertus, San Polo istorinė ir ideologinė situacija buvo kitokia, ir San Polo buvo baigtas statyti tuo metu, kai entuziastingas požiūris į modernius masinius gyvenamuosius namus jau buvo išblėšęs. Taigi buvo mažai tikėtina, kad tarptautinės architektūros organizacijos būtų galėjęsios galvoti apie rajono pagerbimą bei apdovanojimų skyrimą, nepaisant to, kad jo kūrime tiesiogiai dalyvavo tokia asmenybė, kaip Leonardo'as Benevolo'as. Prie to prisidėjo ir vidinės Italijos politinės ir kultūrinės sritys, kurios nesiekė įgyvendinti unitarinės pokario urbanizacijos, panašios į Skandinavijos ar Sovietų Sąjungos, ir kurioms nebuvo toks svarbus San Polo.

8) Vällingby, Lazdynus ir San Polo galima įtraukti į tarptautinį pokario modernizmo kontekstą, kuris atspindi Vällingby atveju, kadangi jis dėl savo pagrindinio ir centrinio vaidmens modernios urbanistikos diskurse Skandinavijoje tapo vienu iš svarbiausių orientyrų pokario modernizmo srityje. Tačiau tarptautinį pokario planavimo aspektą dar geriau atspindi Lazdynų atvejis, kuris buvo laikomas idealiu sovietinės modernios urbanizacijos pavyzdžiu. Vis dėlto negalima pamiršti, kad sovietinis pokario modernizmas tiesiogiai įkvėpimo sėmėsi iš tokių šalių, kaip Prancūzija, Vakarų Vokietija ir Švedija, o vietos specialistai, planuodami Lazdynų

projektą, vizitavo Skandinaviją ir Suomiją. Taip pat Europos modeliai, ypač britų *New Towns* ir prancūzų *grand ensembles*, buvo įkvėpimo šaltiniai projektuojant San Polo. Užsienio modeliai įkvėpė Benevolo'ą tiek fiziškai planuojant gyvenamuosius kvartalus, tiek plėtojant viešosios urbanizacijos idėją.

9) Nors masiniai gyvenamieji namai paprastai siejami su standartizacija ir pramonine gamyba, Vällingby, Lazdynų ir San Polo projektuotojams pavyko suprojektuoti išskirtinius rajonus. Vällingby suplanuotas ir pastatytas pagal ABC modelį ir kaip pusiau autonominis rajonas turi savo centrą – *Vällingby centrum*. Fizinis rajono kontūras pasižymi skirtingais pastatų tipais: 11 aukštų daugiaaukščiais, 3 ir 4 aukštų namais ir vienbučiais gyvenamaisiais namais. Taip pat kruopščiai suplanuota ir eismo sistema – pėsčiųjų takai atskirti nuo intensyvaus eismo kelių. Lazdynų mikrorajonas, esantis Vilniuje, visoje Sovietų Sąjungoje išsiskyrė savo kokybiškumu. Šio tipiško sovietinio *mikrorajono* struktūra buvo praturtinta naujomis pastatų tipologijomis ir sėkmingai išnaudota jo natūrali aplinka. Svarbu paminėti, kad mikrorajonas nebuvo laikomas tik eksperimentiniu, ir buvo tikimasi, kad jis suteiks naujų krypčių sovietinei Lietuvos urbanistikai. San Polo būdingi trys pagrindiniai pastatų tipai: 15 ir 17 aukštų daugiaaukščiai, 3 ir 4 aukštų *case a spina* (3–4 aukštų daugiaaukščių namų tipas, kurį San Polo rajonui suprojektavo Benevolo'as) ir vienbučiai gyvenamieji namai. Skirtingi pastatų tipai suteikia tam tikrą diferenciaciją ir prisideda prie mikrorajono identifikavimo.

10) Šiuo metu atrinkti mikrorajonai susiduria su iššūkiais dėl savo reikšmės šiuolaikiniame kontekste. Nors Vällingby išliko vietiniu centru, jis ne iki galo išnaudojo savo potencialą taip, kaip buvo planuota ir tikėtasi. Po pirminės ir greitos sėkmės pokario planavimo sferoje rajonas prarado savo išskirtinumą, ir, atsižvelgiant į tarptautinės auditorijos susidomėjimo sumažėjimą ir į pakitusias žemyno tendencijas, XX a. pabaigoje pradėjo matytis nuosmukio požymiai. Taigi Vällingby tapo atgyvenusiu rajonu, nesugebėjusiu prisitaikyti prie pastarųjų dešimtmečių urbanistinių ir socialinių permainų. Analizuojant Vällingby pagal disonuojančio paveldo teorinę sistemą, galima teigti, kad unikalumo praradimas ir nesugebėjimas neatsilikti bei sėkmingai prisitaikyti prie pasikeitusios tikrovės atitinka *pasenusio perdavimo* veiksnio sąvoką. Lazdynai kultūros paveldo srityje sulaukė didžiausio oficialaus pripažinimo ir buvo įtraukti į Lietuvos paveldo objektų registrą. Kita vertus, nekyla abejonių, kad Lazdynų mikrorajonas prarado pavyzdinio gyvenamojo rajono statusą ir palaipsniui tapo pasenusiu sovietinės pilkosios masinės statybos pavyzdžiu, taip pat kyla klausimų ir dėl jo asociacijos ir ryšio su sovietine praeitimi, kurį sustiprino Lenino premijos laimėjimas ir užimtas centrinis vaidmuo. Dėl šių priežasčių Lazdynų mikrorajone sutinkami tiek *pasenusio*, tiek *nepageidaujamo* perdavimo veiksniai. Viešoji urbanizacija, kurią Leonardo'as Benevolo'as įvedė San Polo, nedavė numatytų pranašumų, bet, priešingai, rajonas patyrė spartų nuosmukį. XX a. aštuntajame dešimtmetyje, iškart po *Cimabue* ir *Tintoretto* bokštų pastatymo, San Polo susidūrė su dramatiška socialine ir ekonomine segregacija, kurią lėmė vietos valdžios sprendimas apgyvendinti

pažeidžiamiausius namų ūkius viename pastate. Sudėtinga socialinė ir ekonominė padėtis paskatino San Polo ir jo simbolinių pastatų fizinių nuosmukį ir diskursyvią marginalizaciją. *Tintoretto* bokštas nugriautas 2022 m. vasario mėnesį. Taigi Leonardo Benevolo urbanistinis planas prarado svarbą, ir dėl sudėtingų su socialinėmis klasėmis susijusių sąlygų San Polo galima analizuoti per disonuojančio paveldo prizmę, ypač atsižvelgiant į *pasenusio perdavimo* ir *socialinių klasių disonanso* veiksnius.

Pranešimai konferencijose ir publikacijos akademinuose žurnaluose

Doktorantūros studijų metu pagrindiniai teoriniai pagrindai ir disertacijos rezultatai buvo pristatyti tarptautinėse mokslinėse konferencijose ir paskelbti akademinuose žurnaluose.

Pristatymai konferencijose

[1]. 2018 m. gegužės 3–5 d., *23rd Annual ASN World Convention*, Niujorko Kolumbijos universitetas. Straipsnio „Memory and oblivion in the contemporary Baltic city“ pristatymas.

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[5]. 2020 m. spalio 16 d. *Riga Technical University 61st International Scientific Conference of Architecture and Urban Planning*. Nuotoliniu būdu. RTU Rygos technikos universitetas. Pranešimas „From Construction to Deconstruction. The Heritage of Postwar Modern Mass Housing.“

Mokslinės publikacijos

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Nicola Belli (Brescia, April 13, 1989) obtained his bachelor's degree in History at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Trento, Italy. He obtained his master's degree in Interdisciplinary Research and Studies on Eastern Europe (MIREES) at the University of Bologna, Forlì Campus, Italy. From the last year of the MA programme, he has concentrated his research interests on the urban history of the postwar Soviet Union with a specific focus on the Baltic region (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania). More recently, his interests have included the theme of cultural and dissonant heritage and the comparative history of postwar modern mass housing in Europe. Nicola Belli has presented the results of his research at the international conferences (Lithuania, Germany, The United States, Estonia, Latvia) and published his articles in peer reviewed journals.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

Conference Presentations

1. May 3–5, 2018. 23rd Annual ASN World Convention. Columbia University of New York. Presentation of the paper: "Memory and Oblivion in the Contemporary Baltic City".
2. June 9–11, 2019. Fourth Annual Tartu Conference on Russian and East European Studies Communities in Flux: Rethinking Sovereignty and Identity in an Era of Change. University of Tartu, Estonia. Presentation of the paper: "Modern Mass Housing in Lithuania: Anatomy of a Decline?".
3. November 28–30, 2019. International Symposium "Making and Shaping Things in Creative Economies. From History to Present Day". Vilnius University (Kaunas Faculty), Lithuania. Presentation: "Inter-bloc Modernism: State and Architecture in Post-war Europe".
4. October 15, 2020. 1st Baltic Conference of Young Researchers in Architecture, Landscape & Urbanism. Online. RTU Riga Technical University. Presentation of the author's doctoral dissertation.
5. October 16, 2020. Riga Technical University 61st International Scientific Conference of Architecture and Urban Planning. Online. RTU Riga Technical University. Presentation: "From Construction to Deconstruction. The Heritage of Postwar Modern Mass Housing".

Scientific Publications

1. Belli, N. (2020a). Modern Urban Planning and Dissonant Heritage: The Case of San Polo. *Art History & Criticism/ Mēno istorija ir Kritika*, 16, 79–93.
2. Belli, N. (2020b). From Construction to Deconstruction. The Heritage of Post-war Modern Mass Housing. *Architecture and Urban Planning*, 16 (1), 93–98.

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