THE CONCEPT OF A HOUSING ESTATE AFTER YEARS

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1. Introduction and historical overview

The phenomenon of urban housing estate has to be looked at from at least two points of view: as a material creation – a piece of urban space shaped in some special way, on the other hand, as a social phenomenon shaped according to some social objectives (values) linked with the functioning of estate groups, sometimes forming local communities.

This separation in the approach to the estate is especially necessary when the history of a housing estate is being investigated. The fate of urban estate as an urban unit was different than the fate of the estate as a social unit.

One often hears the view that the Dubrovnik CIAM congress in 1956, in which Le Courbusier announced the end of this organisation, is also the end of the history of the housing estate created by modernist architects. According to Charles Jencks this organisation ended at 3.32 p.m. on 15th July 1972. That was the moment when in St. Louis, Missouri (USA), the Pruitt-Igoe communal housing estate built in years 1952-1955 was demolished by a controlled implosion. This complex of eleven floor large panel blocks of flats occupying 23 hectares was designed by an architect Minoru Yamasaki (he also designed two towers of the World Trade Center destroyed in the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001).
The end of the housing estate... One could not ask for a more simplified view. In a bad or better way housing estates have been present in the modern city since the 1920s. Ł. Heyman and J. Musil Heyman pointed out the originality of the concept of the housing estate writing about an innovative trend of the Polish pre-war housing on the example of the Warsaw Housing Cooperative. They did not hesitate to say that “the WHC has made (...) an enormous effort (...) to develop and implement a new concept of the human dwelling”¹. Based on Czech experience, an outstanding sociologist J. Musil stated that: “The creators of modern architecture had the courage to take a critical stance in relation to a traditional city and its traditional housing areas. They wanted, in a conscious way, to create a “new kind”².

In his classification of urban forms, Krzysztof Chwalibóg calls this ‘new kind’ a ‘block of flats’ and its more developed form a ‘superblock of flats’, also describing them as an “entirely new spatial value”³.

The concept of the housing estate could not have been eliminated from the urban planning even in the times of toughest attacks on the foundations of modern urban planning. I would like to recall that even in the so-called ‘socialist realism’, when the facade-ally understood city was recognised primarily as a space of representational squares and streets intended for mass demonstrations and parades, the relevant ministry was called the Ministry of Building of Cities and Housing Settlements (Ministerstwo Budownictwa Miast i Osiedli), and the institution practically building the city at that time was called the Office of Workers’ Settlements (Zakład Osiedli Robotniczych – ZOR).

Neither the end of the CIAM nor the demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe housing estate as a hatchery of social pathology ended the history of the housing estate in the modern city. Paradoxically, in the Polish People’s Republic, but also in other ‘demoludy’ (Translator’s note: pejorative shortcut for ‘demokracje ludowe’ (people’s democracies)), the estate housing in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s has become one of the dominant, next to the industrialisation, way of shaping the structure of a socialist city.

However, it has to be said here that the contemporary practice of building departed from the principles adopted primarily for shaping a ho-

² Musil, Jiří. Społeczne aspekty oceny zespołów mieszkaniowych. „Sprawy Mieszkańcowskie”, z. 3-4/1984, 134.
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using estate (either as a neighbourhood unit or school unit, or an estate as an ‘extension of a flat’). Instead of originally projected private estates, the so-called blocks of flats began to be constructed at a fast pace and in the standardised factory technologies. What they had in common with the Le Corbusier’s ‘super-unit’ was that they were located in free, open spaces, devoid of any meanings and symbols referring to designata of social community. Their social content expressed almost exclusively the will of the dominant political power for which the blocks of flats were incubators of simple reproduction of the labour force.

After the fall of CIAM, the concept of the housing estate has reappeared a few times in the city in various forms. In the 1970s, it could have been found in the concept of Oscar Newman’s defensible space⁴.

The concept of the Newman’s estate was implemented numerous times in the cities of the West. These were small complexes of several-family or single-family residential buildings clustered around the inner space, to which led a communication and transport cul-de-sac. Courtyards at the end of cul-de-sacs were under social control of neighbourhood groups – inhabitants. Communication cul-de-sacs in this kind of estates often had a form of one line connecting the inner space of the estate with the arterial road, but sometimes – in larger housing complexes – they created a hierarchical ‘tree’ system of colonies connected with a branched system of communication cul-de-sacs.

The confidence that such an urban system can ensure safety to the residents more effectively than other urban planning systems was dented primarily by the studies of B. Hillier. These studies have shown that defensible space is no more secure than a busy traditional main shopping street in the city⁵.

The objective – shaping a safe (residential, public or other) space – was not foreign to the modern concept of the housing estate. However, it was never a dominant one. In today’s metropolitan culture it has become a priority, as evidenced since the 1980s by the mass construction of the so-called ‘estates behind walls’, otherwise called ‘gated estates’.

2. Gated estates

Small Newman’s housing complexes can be described rather accurately with respect to their objectives and realised spatial features. Gated estates escape this type of characteristics. Apart from gating and ostentatious separation it is difficult to identify any other features of their space. These estates are little explored.

As B. Jałowiecki B. and W. Łukowski write, this type of estates are most common in the so-called third-world countries “…where next to the old, usually colonial city, only closed estates for the wealthy classes are being constructed as well the sea of bidonvilles, favelas, barriadas and slums”\(^6\). It is estimated that in the 1990s, several to tens of millions of inhabitants lived in them in the USA. These imprecise estimates of the number of inhabitants show that these estates are, demographically speaking, also poorly explored.

In the report on gated estates in Poland published in 2005 in the weekly magazine “Polityka” M. Czubaj specified their number in Warsaw at about 250, which – as he stated – is “a phenomenon at European level”\(^7\). B. Jałowiecki and W. Łukowski state in this matter that in 2002 in France there were 183 guarded estates (including only 72 gated estates). Also in Germany, these estates are not widespread, and in Berlin, on the border with Potsdam, there is only one such estate\(^8\).

In the absence of scientific knowledge about gated estates, certain journalistic observations are particularly valuable. These estates are often viewed in terms of their expropriation of public space in the city. M. Czubaj sees the absence of public spaces… inside gated estates. While inside them there are landscaped green areas, “… the action of cleaning after the dogs initiated on the S… estate in Warsaw by the owners have failed. Walking paths and lawns are not considered as ‘their own’ area. For this reason, there are conflicts between the new inhabitants of gated estates and the old local ones”. “The new ones leave their cars outside the area of their estate. They walk the dogs outside the gate. They encourage their children to use someone else’s area, while children from the outside are prohibited to enter the gated estate”\(^9\).

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\(^7\) Czubaj, M. Polska płotem przedzielona. „Polityka” Issue No. 30, July 2005.
\(^8\) Jałowiecki, B. and Łukowski, W. op. cit.
\(^9\) Czubaj, M. op. cit.
In 2005, Andrzej Kiciński characterised anomalies of space of gated estates in the following way: “If complexes with two gates are build on an area of 20 hectares, it is not just a matter of space, but a threat to the entire city. Dozens of gated estates are combined to form an impenetrable chain – something that I would describe as the Warsaw’s Gulag Archipelago. In the case of natural disasters such impenetrable areas can cause difficult to predict today disasters”\(^{10}\).

In the phenomenon of gated estates Maciej Cesarski sees lack of connection to the surrounding urban space (“they are scattered in ahistorical space”), which results from the fact that to a large extent they are a “mutation of traditional suburban suburbs”. Compared to typical suburbs they are characterised by “a reduction of costs due to more intensive development and technical infrastructure”. Despite that they are part of a growing spatial chaos increased by gaps and lack of clarity of urban planning law and the passiveness of the local government\(^{11}\).

Famous architect J. Kuźmienko made an intriguing comment in connection with stereotypical views about the luxury of living in gated estates: “We are re-doing with my wife newly completed flats all the time… They turn out to be a substandard for people who bought them for 2,500 dollars per m². Under Gierkent lentex was ripped and the elements of kitchen fittings were thrown away. Now people are literally lunging at new flats with pickaxes”\(^{12}\). “As it turns out, when acquiring a flat, also in gated estates, we do not deal with the consumer market, but rather the dominance of developers who largely also create the phenomenon of gated estates.

The spatial isolation of gated estates is not only their physical feature. It also has strong social traits. The modernist concept of urban housing estate from the 1920s was a reaction to such features of the contemporary capitalist city as social segregation (class divisions), bad living conditions (including housing) of less privileged layers of society strongly marked in the city areas. The concept of the housing estate in the city fighting these stigmatising features was a social ‘utopia of an island’. In the first realisations of the estates they are facing away from the city (in the estate

\(^{10}\) A statement of A. Kiciński at the conference “Od osiedla społecznego do osiedla strzeżonego” (From social estate to guarded estate) organised by the monthly magazine “Architektura – Murator”, Warszawa: August 2005.


buildings kitchens were overlooking the street, windows of living rooms were facing green areas within the estate). The boundaries of estates were marked clearly, but rather in a symbolic way (hedges) than with impassable physical barriers (additionally guarded by uniformed guards).

But the most important *differentia specifica* of new estates was to be their social content expressed as a kind of social ideology of the housing estate. Estates were intended for ‘all’, they were to be an instrument of social homogenisation, and not to segregate socially. The physical proximity of their inhabitants was to lead to the social neighbourhood, that is to the creation of direct links that were undergoing atrophy in big cities. The community of inhabitants of estates were – in the right ‘setting’ of the estate space – to evolve into local communities. More importantly, the faint opportunities of access of poorer people to services were to be offset by the function of the estate as an ‘extension of a flat’.

What are – socially speaking – contemporary gated estates? We know about them not more than about their urban and spatial features.

M. Castells and Z. Bauman see them in the perspective of the locality – globality relation, noticing the aspect of locality of these estates as a ‘weak’ factor, almost entirely dependent on globalisation. J. Gądecki has a slightly different look at the macrosocial context of the phenomenon of gated estates. He captures them in the perspective of his own concept of ‘translocality’, in which global changes and the position in these changes of specific locations of gated estates interact with each other. M. Cesarski comments it this way: gated estates spread through globalisation at the same time adapting itself to local conditions. If these estates were completely extraterritorial creations in the cosmopolitan space of globalising metropolis, they probably would not need these securities and barriers that are being raised around them. The perception of these estates in relation to the socially ‘inferior’ surrounding indicates that we are dealing with the perspective, in which phenomena of gentrification are being examined.

J. Gądecki wonders if communities of gated estates form local communities at all. In the sociology of local communities space-sharing was so far considered to be an important bond-forming factor. Poorly recognised functioning of gated estates raises, as it turns out, doubts even as to this certainty.

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13 Cesarski, M. op. cit.
M. Czubaj described the everyday life in the gated estates this way: “Gated estates are deserted during the day, the inhabitants slave away to pay off outstanding loans. During that time the largest group are babysitters… On Sunday emptiness again – you leave with the family. Housing cooperative meetings that begin after 8 in the evening, attended usually by people tired with work, are a tiny taste of something resembling a social life15. M. Cesarski believes that purchasing the ownership of the property with a flat or a house in the gated estate becomes a kind of pass to a higher social class for the inhabitants of such an estate, and it is much more important than social ties in the estate and the real sense of security16.

Sometimes, it is believed that gated estates are inhabited by a newly emerging ‘creative’ class (separated by the criterion of ‘cultural capital’, based on a specific way of living) or a ‘metropolitan’ class. With the help of more traditional categories revealing the motives for choosing to live in the Polish gated estates, B. Jałowiecki characterises the inhabitants of ‘estates behind the walls’ in this way: “Other reluctantly disclosed motives hide behind the sense of threat… It is contempt for poorer people who failed and cannot afford the luxury of flat, private schools or foreign trips. These are attitudes characteristic of money makers and nouveau riches, to whom living in the closed estate gives a sense of superiority and provides prestige”17. B. Jałowiecki describes other social features of living in gated estates in this way: “Ghettoisation of space causes that people of similar levels of education, income and cultural capital live in enclaves with little contact with other people. Reducing the opportunities for mutual cultural communication causes feelings of mutual alienation, and often hostility”18.

In these distinctive characteristics of motives of inhabiting Polish gated estates there is, however, certain inconsistency. After all, the author of these characteristics states that: “at present, open estates are hardly ever build, thus the buyer has no choice but to live in gated communities, even if he/she does not want to19”. So, not only selfish reasons, but also limited opportunities of choosing the form of inhabiting incline in Poland to living ‘behind the walls’.

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15 Czubaj, M. op. cit.
16 Cesarski, M. op. cit.
18 Jałowiecki, B. op. cit.
19 Jałowiecki, B. op. cit.
Sometimes it can be noticed that the pressure on gating the new residential development is placed not only by developers. As early as in 2005, M. Czubaj noted that also security companies, manufacturers of security systems and insurers have been working on the propagation of gating of estates. The studies of B. Jałowiecki show that it takes place in an atmosphere of acquiescence of the urban citizens at large. He writes that “Gating the estates among the citizens of Warsaw does not arouse emotions or an objection”\textsuperscript{20}.

M. Czubaj stated on two examples (from Nowa Huta and Środa Wielkopolska) that separation with the wall has been chosen as a way to resolve the conflict of two feuding estates of similar level of wealth of the inhabitants\textsuperscript{21}. B. Jałowiecki gives examples of gating not only housing estates, but also streets (Kaszubskia Street and Giewont Street in Warsaw). The author comments it this way: “This obsession (of gating of W.S.) is becoming common in the city, where four-fifths of the inhabitants acc. to the survey of the Public Opinion Research Centre (CBOS) from 2007 feels safe in their place of residence and the immediate area, but the vast majority of them does not live in closed estates yet”\textsuperscript{22}. As this author goes on to say: “Unfortunately, there is no information about the real state of security in the closed estates, but the U.S. studies show that gated communities are also often exposed to various types of crime and theft rates are similar to those in other parts of the city. The studies explain it with an illusory sense of security that reduces alertness. As a result, gating is predominantly symbolic (Low 2004)”\textsuperscript{23}.

Social symptoms of the phenomenon of gated estates, so far known, induce M. Cesarski to draw a general reflection on “breaking the physical space away from the social space”\textsuperscript{24}. In a similar way, on the example of gated estates it could be said that the ideology of neo-liberalism spreading with globalisation promotes individualism at the expense of community values, which has so far dominated in the concepts of the housing estate.

In his book about gated estates in Poland J. Gądecki draws attention to the “social discourse” accompanying their creation. In the opinion of B. Jałowiecki, supported by the results of sociological studies, these estates in

\textsuperscript{20} Jałowiecki, B. op. cit.
\textsuperscript{21} Czubaj, M. op. cit.
\textsuperscript{22} Jałowiecki, B. op. cit.
\textsuperscript{23} Jałowiecki, B. op. cit.
\textsuperscript{24} Cesarski, M. op. cit.
Poland are created with the full consent of the public (very differently than in Western Europe). J. Gądecki observes in this area an official absence of municipal local government authorities. At the same time, these authorities barely meet the housing needs in terms of communal housing. They silently approve gated estates in exchange for funding, from the private sector, of the improvement of equipping with communal infrastructure and (alleged) improvement of the image of the city. J. Gądecki shows in his studies that promotional and advertising threads dominate in newspaper articles about gated estates, which proves the “marketisation of the press discourse on gated estates in Poland”. A lot will have to change before the tendency to ‘open’ gated estates, already present in the United States, comes to Poland.

3. Problems of revitalisation of large-panel estates

In Poland there is a need for broad unfeigned public discussion about the pressing housing problem, in which the topic of estate housing has to occur for many reasons. Gated estates are probably a secondary topic for discussion against the large number and importance of the problems of modernisation of large-panel residential buildings and revitalisation of housing complexes (estates) constructed in this technology in Poland in the period 1960-1985 (reached its height in the 1970s).

It is simply a problem of gigantic scale. J. M. Chmielewski and M. Mirecka estimate that in Poland “…in years 1951-1988 the state sector (…) constructed nearly 5 million new flats in urban areas. (…) Other estimates talk about 4 million flats. Assuming the lower value it can be said that 7 to 8 million Poles live in housing estates, that is a fifth of the country’s population”\(^{25}\).

Based on the experiences of Germany from the 1990s, these authors estimate that: “If we can reduce the costs of comprehensive modernisation of an estate up to 40 % of the costs of construction of a new estate and we spread the financial burden in the correct proportions between all modernisation shareholders, i.e. the state, local governments and inhabitants, then the modernisation intention may be closer to realisation”\(^{26}\).

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\(^{26}\) Chmielewski, J. M. and Mirecka, M. op. cit.
Although the above calculation was prepared in a very simplified way, it clearly shows that the costs of renovation of estates will be high. Are they worth to bear them? Experience in this area, originating from European countries much richer than Poland (mainly from Germany), prescribes caution.

Actions to renovate the large-panel housing complexes of the GDR taken in the 1990s after the reunification of Germany did not produce the expected results. The users of already modernised large-panel flats show a clear tendency to exchange them for better ones. “Now, many modernised flats in the former GDR are empty flats (in 2000 there were 1.1 million). The information obtained in 2004 in Frankfurt (Oder) shows, for example, that only nine out of 50 flats in one of the large-panel skyscrapers were inhabited after modernisation. This forced the municipal authorities to reduce the number of floors from eleven to four – one year after the completion of the modernisation. After 2000, a decision was made in Germany to demolish 400,000 flats in large-panel buildings, often already modernised”\textsuperscript{27}.

Due to the fact that Poland is among the countries with the worst housing situation in Europe, with the housing deficit reaching about 2.5 million homes, we cannot afford the demolish of ‘large-panel’ that has elsewhere worn out ‘morally’ rather than technically. There is no doubt that in Poland, large-panel buildings should be modernised and the areas of residential housing complexes (estates) of these buildings – revitalised.

The problem of modernisation of large-panel residential buildings is a technical one concerning improving the utility value of buildings erected in a specific technology. This process has been carried out for a long time from the budget resources of the state and housing cooperatives (Dobrucki, A. R. – the President of the Polish Chamber of Civil Engineers says that after 1996 the programme of removing defects in the external walls – leaks and damages caused by frost – concerned 18,013 buildings at national level).

The revitalisation does not apply – in principle – to objects, but whole areas of degraded development. In principle, it is an attempt to improve the condition of several factors degrading the situation of the crisis area – economic, social as well as building and spatial. So far, there have not been programmes and resources of the Polish government for such revitalisation. After 2004, such resources have not appeared in EU assistance programmes and will probably function in this form until 2020.

\textsuperscript{27}Ostańska, A. Europejskie programy rewitalizacji osiedli. „Administrator” No. 7-8/2010, 37-41.
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The modernisation of large-panel buildings is carried out on the basis of technical designs (so far – from own resources). The revitalisation of degraded areas (which already includes, in general, the areas of Polish estates) is carried out on the basis of Local Revitalisation Programmes (LPR) required by the EU – primarily from EU funds (some financial contribution of the Polish beneficiary is also required here). The scale of the current revitalisation of large-panel housing complexes (blocks of flats/estates) is insignificant, almost none, compared to the modernisation of buildings made in this technology. A. Rębowska could provide in the summary from 2000, as her examples, only two revitalised estates (in Miechowie and Kraków)\textsuperscript{28}. In revitalisation activities based on EU funding in years 2004-2008 only two out of 177 completed projects related to the revitalisation of housing estates\textsuperscript{29}.

Tables of criteria and indicators qualifying the area as degraded (which is a prerequisite for eligibility for Local Revitalisation Programme allowing pursuing efforts for obtaining EU funds for revitalisation) in the Regional Operational Programmes (ROP) take ten criteria into account. Two of them are related to housing (low level of the housing stock value and low level of energy-efficiency of the buildings). Crisisness (degradation) of an area facing revitalisation must be confirmed by several (more than one) criteria and their indicators.

Polish academic, programme and project achievements is rather modest in comparison with the enormity of the needs of the revitalisation of estates (blocks of flats). The first Polish programme of “humanisation of interpersonal relations in the estates and giving social space effect to the housing space” comes probably from the period 1983-1985. It was created by a research and development team from Kraków called “Blokowisko”, which comprised among others Janusz Bogdanowski, Aleksander Bohm, Zbigniew Nęcki, Jerzy Mikulowski-Pomorski and others.

It was not until fifteen years later that A. Rębowska published an article “Rehabilitacja blokowisk” (Rehabilitation of blocks of flats) on the humanisation of blocks of flats\textsuperscript{30}. In 2003, G. Węclawowicz, S. Kozłowski and R. Bajek published the results of their studies on the perspectives of moderni-

\textsuperscript{30} Rębowska, A. op. cit.
sation of two estates/blocks of flats in Warsaw\(^{31}\). S. Kozłowski popularised the results of these studies in a series of articles. In 2007, M. Chmielewski and M. Mirecka published a book: „Modernizacja osiedli mieszkaniowych” (Modernisation of housing estates), which should be considered the most, so far, comprehensive work devoted to the need for regeneration of housing estates in Poland\(^{32}\). Its authors – architects, urban developers – express the renovation of estates primarily as ‘modernisation’ requiring technical, construction and urban planning actions without referring to a more complex concept of revitalisation. Nonetheless, it must be admitted that the range of modernisation measures proposed by them is very broad.

Modernisation measures proposed by them can be divided into two categories: new measures and problems that did not occur at the construction of estates in the period of the People’s Republic of Poland, as well as measures and issues that were not used at the construction of estates in the People’s Republic of Poland, even though they were included in the objectives of designs of housing estates.

The new conditions of the modernisation of estates include: issues concerning the ownership of residential lands (problem completely ignored in the Polish People’s Republic), the need for renovation processes with public participation, relations between the estate and the city and the invasion of passenger cars. The authors probably do not appreciate the dissimilarity of the current situation of housing estates from their situation in the Polish People’s Republic in terms of responsibility for the condition of the estates. The answer provided in the book to the question of who should most often modernise the estates is: the state! Yet it is known that currently the state is discriminating and restricting the development of housing cooperatives that manage and often even are the legal owner of housing estates.

The concept of modernisation proposed by J. M. Chmielewski and M. Mirecka is based on three main grounds and a number of ‘patterns’ of modernisation.

These three main ‘grounds’ of the proposed modernisation processes of estates are:
1) extensive renovations and modernisations of residential buildings, the costs of which must significantly burden the owners;


\(^{32}\) Chmielewski, J. M. and Mirecka, M. op. cit.
2) organising the management of open spaces and the technical infrastructure of the estate; these works should be primarily funded from the municipal budget, particularly in terms of streets and engineering equipment;

3) adapting the service infrastructure to the needs of the estate community that in terms of social services should be supported by central funds, while in terms of commercial services by a private sector.\(^{33}\)

In addition to indicating (and justifying) the grounds of modernisation, J. M. Chmielewski and M. Mirecka present a number of ‘patterns’ of modernisation, that is the rules of conduct in specific areas of transformation of estates. The ‘fundamental’ patterns include:

- the need for an unambiguous classification of open and developed spaces into three distinctive areas of use: public, group (neighbourhood) and private,
- leading to strengthening of rights of territoriality of institutions and individuals responsible for the condition of space owned and used by them,
- making the boundaries of individual utilisation zones more understandable by shaping the development, distribution of services and the communication system,
- the elimination of no one’s space in the estates and the tendency to seize or degrade them by stronger institutions and pressure groups,
- building a system of natural and socially acceptable control over individual actions, contrary to the interests of the estate community.\(^{34}\)

One of the ‘patterns’ of modernisation of estates recommended by above authors is “creating the neighbourhood infrastructure”. J. M. Chmielewski and M. Mirecka believe that the social infrastructure in housing estates is currently of “communal nature” and it is necessary to “create colonies of neighbourhood nature in the estate organism (…) a cubature intended for common use by a specific small group of inhabitants without creating an institutional setting for them”\(^{35}\). The latter ‘pattern’ has been taken directly from the original concept of the estate as a neighbourhood unit. One of the bitter reflections that irresistibly come to mind upon reading the book is that its authors could have indicated, just like A. Rębowska, only two examples of completed modernisations of Polish estates.

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\(^{34}\) Chmielewski, J. M. and Mirecka, M. op. cit., 230.

\(^{35}\) Chmielewski, J. M. and Mirecka, M. op. cit., 245.
4. Conclusion

The housing estate in the modern city, a relatively young concept functioning in the urban planning from the 1920s, seems to be deeply growing into the practice of urban growth. The practice of development of modern cities has adapted, as it seems, the housing estate as part of the development in a higher degree than theoretical concepts of urban growth. The concepts strongly contest these weak objectives being lavished by the practice of building estates, e.g. the myth of safety that the Newman’s defensible space or gated estates constantly erected in contemporary Poland were allegedly to ensure.

But there are other reasons for which the estate concepts must be considered today. In sociological surveys studying the housing preferences of the younger generation of Poles over 90% of respondents prefer to reside in a single-family house.

If the Polish state has decided to engage in a certain urban policy and a housing policy, it is clear that such preferences cannot be realised. In addition to single-family housing, there is highly justified need to develop in the cities housing of a much more intense way of using areas than in case of single-family housing. Will this more intensified urban development have a spatial form of traditional urban streets and squares or the modernist form of housing estates?

Resolving this issue will not only be of urban and spatial nature. In case of appearing of the estate housing preferences, one will need to seriously consider the issue of the ratio between the community and individualistic form of functioning of the group of inhabitants of a new urban housing. However, it is certain that in the community mainstream one will have to take into account, in a higher degree, the need of privacy and individualised style of living of inhabitants than it had place in the estate concepts of Helena and Szymon Syrkus, Jacek Nowicki or Barbara Brukalska.
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