



LA CASA

ESPACIOS DOMÉSTICOS
MODOS DE HABITAR

ABADA EDITORES

LA CASA

ESPACIOS DOMÉSTICOS MODOS DE HABITAR

II CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL CULTURA Y CIUDAD
GRANADA, 23-25 ENERO 2019



Este Congreso ha contado con una ayuda del Vicerrectorado de Investigación de la Universidad de Granada obtenida en concurrencia competitiva.



UNIVERSIDAD
DE GRANADA

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C/ Gobernador, 18
28014 Madrid
www.abadaeditores.com

Imagen de portada: La cabaña primitiva, frontispicio realizado por Charles-Dominique-Joseph Eisen para el *Essai sur l'architecture* de Marc-Antoine Laugier, edición de 1755
Fuente: ETH-Bibliothek Zürich

Imagen de contraportada: Grabado encabezando el capítulo "Adspetus Incauti Dispendium" del libro de Theodoor Galle *Verdicus Christianus*, 1601
Fuente: Vilnius University Library

ISBN 978-84-17301-24-8
IBIC AMA
Depósito Legal M-607-2019

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II Congreso Internacional Cultura y Ciudad
La Casa. Espacios domésticos, modos de habitar
Granada 23-25 enero 2019

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| | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| Presentación | XIX |
| Juan Calatrava | |

BLOQUE TEMÁTICO 1

**Arquitecturas de la casa: el espacio doméstico
a través de la historia**

| | |
|---|-----|
| Lo público y lo privado en la forma urbis de Santiago 1910. El espacio doméstico en el Canon Republicano | 22 |
| Josep Parcerisa Bundó, José Rosas Vera | |
| La Alhambra habitada. Experiencias del paisaje desde el espacio arquitectónico.. | 37 |
| Marta Rodríguez Iturriaga | |
| Housing and Children: Architectural Models from the Modern Movement | 48 |
| Alexandra Alegre | |
| Högná Sigurðardóttir. La misteriosa marca indeleble del origen | 59 |
| Julio Barreno Gutiérrez | |
| Las casillas de peones camineros y su implantación en la costa del sudeste de España | 73 |
| Antonio Burgos Núñez, Juan Carlos Olmo García, Francisco José García Castillo | |
| El <i>palazzo all'italiana</i>, de la casa del príncipe al principio urbano | 82 |
| Michele Giovanni Caja, Maria Pompeiana Iarossi | |
| The City and the House: Going Back to the Future | 95 |
| Antonio Alberto Clemente | |
| Traditional Urban Housing at Alentejo's "Marble Area" | 104 |
| Ana Costa Rosado | |
| La consolidación del cuarto de baño en las viviendas de la ciudad de São Paulo, Brasil | 117 |
| Clarissa de Almeida Paulillo, Tatiana Sakurai | |
| La cama <i>amueblada</i>: del objeto a la estancia | 126 |
| María de Miguel Pastor, Carla Sentieri Omarrementería | |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The Spaces, the People and the Ways of Being at Home in the North of Portugal in the 19th Century | 136 |
| Alexandra Esteves | |
| Casa de John Soane en Londres (1792-1827). Luz, iluminación y patrimonio | 143 |
| Rosalía Fenutría Aumesquet, José Joaquín Parra Bañón | |
| Rita Fernández Queimadelos. Los proyectos de viviendas realizados en la DGRD (1943-1946) | 154 |
| Paula M. Fernández-Gago Longueira, Eduardo A. Caridad Yáñez | |
| Arqueología urbana en Barcelona: aproximación a los espacios domésticos entre los siglos IV-VI | 167 |
| Francesc Xavier Florensa Puchol | |
| Memoria e identidad: el espacio de almacenaje en el imaginario doméstico | 178 |
| Marta García Carbonero | |
| Between Doorkeeper Apartments and Housemaid Rooms: Ways of Living in a Changing Lisbon | 188 |
| María Assunção Gato, Filipa Ramalhete | |
| La casa popular de zaguán, patio y corral. Habitabilidad y protección para el siglo XXI | 196 |
| Vidal Gómez Martínez, Blanca del Espino Hidalgo, María Teresa Pérez Cano | |
| Casa en transformación: cocina y tecnología en el siglo XX en Cuenca (Ecuador) | 206 |
| María Augusta Hermida, María José Cañar, Guillermo Mauricio Torres | |
| Granada: la arquitectura doméstica de la ciudad cristiana | 218 |
| Carlos Jerez Mir | |
| Consideraciones históricas sobre la casa tradicional gallega y otras construcciones adjetivas | 230 |
| Francisco Xabier Louzao Martínez | |
| Modern, Rationalist and Mediterranean: Residential Architecture during the Italian Colonization in Libya | 236 |
| Andrea Maglio | |
| El confort en la vivienda canaria: de la arquitectura tradicional a los EECN | 250 |
| Eduardo Martín del Toro | |
| Instalaciones de la casa: el espacio doméstico en el siglo XX en España a través de la tecnología | 261 |
| César Martín-Gómez, José Manuel Pozo Municio | |
| El diedro casa ciudad en la arquitectura nobiliaria de Sevilla: la plaza del Duque | 272 |
| Pedro Mena Vega | |
| Un primer acercamiento a la <i>Quinta Nova da Assunção</i> en Sintra | 282 |
| Iván Moure Pazos | |

| | |
|---|-----|
| The Construction of “Minho’s” Domestic Space in Portugal’s 18th Century..... | 294 |
| Flávia Oliveira | |
| Arquitectura moderna en la ciudad histórica. Adalberto Libera y la casa Nicoletti (Roma 1932)..... | 302 |
| Carlos Plaza | |
| Casa Bellia en Turín: nuevos espacios para la burguesía..... | 315 |
| Alice Pozzati | |
| Live-Work Architecture. Learning from Peripheral Neighborhoods of Rio de Janeiro..... | 327 |
| Ana Slade | |
| The Relationship Between Inhabitants and Vegetation in the Houses of Maceió in the 19th..... | 339 |
| Tharcila Maria Soares Leão, Josemary Omena Passos Ferrare, Veronica Robalinho Cavalcanti | |
| The Home and the World: Domestic Dynamics of the Postwar American Suburban House..... | 350 |
| Luísa Sol | |
| El hogar de Telva. Miradas femeninas al interior doméstico español 1963-1975..... | 360 |
| Jorge Tárrago Mingo, Cristina Sunga Zamora | |
| La casa jesuita en Granada: el Colegio de San Pablo..... | 371 |
| María del Carmen Vílchez Lara, Jorge Gabriel Molinero Sánchez | |
| La habitación en la arquitectura agraria granadina..... | 381 |
| Eduardo Zurita Povedano | |

BLOQUE TEMÁTICO 2

El proyecto doméstico como núcleo de la modernidad: casa singular y vivienda colectiva, del Movimiento Moderno al siglo XXI

| | |
|--|-----|
| Habitar el arte: la casa del coleccionista como modelo experimental de espacio doméstico..... | 394 |
| Ángeles Layuno | |
| Domesticidad Mediterránea vs. Modernidad americana de Posguerra. Sert y Rudofsky..... | 411 |
| Mar Loren-Méndez | |
| Tradiciones en las políticas de vivienda pública..... | 422 |
| Josep Maria Montaner Martorell | |

| | |
|---|-----|
| De la Weissenhoff a Oporto, un camino de servicio | 430 |
| José Manuel Pozo Municio | |
| Le Corbusier's <i>Immeuble-villas</i> and an After Lunch Remembrance | 441 |
| Marta Sequeira | |
| Le Corbusier. <i>Une science de logis</i> | 454 |
| Jorge Torres Cueco | |
| La casa productiva. Propuestas para la autosuficiencia alimentaria durante la República de Weimar | 470 |
| David Arredondo Garrido | |
| <i>Modernità y mediterraneità: sincretismo habitacional de Luigi Figini y Gino Pollini</i> | 482 |
| Emilio Cachorro Fernández, Cristina Medina Valverde | |
| El <i>piano Fanfani</i> en Roma: la torre de viviendas y la casa patio | 496 |
| Ana del Cid Mendoza | |
| Feet on the Sand: Living Spaces in Apartment Buildings by the Sea in Maceió, Brazil | 510 |
| Camila Antunes de Carvalho Casado, Maria Angélica da Silva | |
| Atomic-age Housing. The Fallout Shelter in Cold War America | 521 |
| Chiara Baglione | |
| De la manzana a la supermanzana. Recuperación e innovación en la cultura urbanística | 531 |
| Raimundo Bambó Naya, Javier Monclús Fraga | |
| La ventana y el balcón sobre avenida Providencia (1931/1981): evolución y permanencia de la arquitectura doméstica | 544 |
| Pedro Bannen Lanata | |
| Towards the Modern Block: Evolution of an Urban Type in Kay Fisker's Prewar Architecture | 554 |
| Guia Baratelli | |
| La casa en Isle of Wight (1955-1956) de James Gowan, austeridad en la modernidad británica | 566 |
| Alicia Cantabella Gallego | |
| <i>Villeggiatura</i> urbana: una residencia secundaria en el núcleo urbano de São Paulo | 576 |
| Sara Caon | |
| Otrredades en la habitabilidad de un Monterrey moderno: primeros edificios de departamentos como alternativa a la vivienda unifamiliar | 586 |
| María de los Ángeles Castillo Soriano, Alberto Canavati Espinosa | |
| Brutalismo doméstico. Un espacio para la contemplación | 597 |
| Rubens Cortés Cano | |

| | |
|---|-----|
| La Casa Barata dos Santos como experimento, por Nuno Portas y Nuno Teotónio (1958-1962) | 608 |
| Mª Ángeles Domínguez Durán | |
| Exploraciones cartográficas comparadas de paisajes residenciales: polígonos vs periferias ordinarias | 620 |
| Isabel Ezquerro, Carmen Díez-Medina | |
| The House as Experiment: House in Sesimbra (1960-64) by Portas and Teotónio Pereira | 634 |
| Hugo L. Farias | |
| La piedra en la casa moderna | 645 |
| María Ana Ferré Aydos | |
| Las casas unifamiliares no construidas del programa <i>Case Study Houses</i> | 657 |
| Pauline Fonini Felin | |
| Modern Housing and Duplex Apartments: Study of Discourses and Practices of a Typology | 670 |
| Sabrina Fontenele | |
| Polígonos de vivienda. Relevancia del diagnóstico en la regeneración urbana de espacios libres | 681 |
| Sergio García-Pérez, Javier Monclús, Carmen Díez Medina | |
| A City of Order: on Piccinato's Ataköy | 692 |
| Esen Gökçe Özdamar | |
| Paisaje y ciudad en las viviendas de la Universidad Laboral de Almería | 702 |
| José Ramón González González | |
| La imagen de arquitectura en la construcción del subconsciente colectivo | 713 |
| Carlos Gor Gómez | |
| Prácticas Concretas | 725 |
| Pablo Jesús Gutiérrez Calderón | |
| Tropical and Colonial: Single Houses as a Modern Lab in Angola and Mozambique (1950-1970) | 737 |
| Ana Magalhães | |
| Casa y Monumento: Roma habitada | 748 |
| Sergio Martín Blas, Milena Farina | |
| Las viviendas para empleados realizadas por las grandes empresas en la España de la posguerra | 760 |
| Miriam Martín Díaz, Enrique Castaño Perea | |
| Lecciones de Louis Kahn: la sala y la casa en Rogelio Salmons y Livio Vacchini ... | 771 |
| Clara E. Mejía Vallejo, Ricardo Merí de la Maza | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Interior Biopolitics—Domesticity as Mass Media in the Making of Swedish Social Democracy | 783 |
| Carlota Mir | |
| El arte de lo doméstico. Las casas de Alison y Peter Smithson | 795 |
| Carmen Moreno Álvarez, Juan Domingo Santos | |
| La vivienda colectiva como reactivador de hechos de vida urbana | 806 |
| Sebastián Navarrete Micheliní | |
| The Façade as an Interface in the Housing Architecture of Rio de Janeiro: Design Repertoire | 819 |
| Mara Oliveira Eskinazi, Pedro Engel Penter | |
| Manuel Gomes da Costa. La casa algarvia del arquitecto | 831 |
| José Joaquín Parra Bañón | |
| A Wealth of Typological Solutions from the Twenties: Vienna and Frankfurt | 842 |
| Alessandro Porotto | |
| Un pueblo entre los muros de un cortijo | 856 |
| Ana Isabel Rodríguez Aguilera | |
| This House Is Not a Home | 872 |
| Ugo Rossi | |
| Los dibujos de Rafael Leoz sobre vivienda social | 883 |
| Jose Antonio Ruiz Suaña, Jesús López Díaz | |
| La calle sube al edificio. Vivienda en galería en Madrid, 1949-1956 | 897 |
| María del Pilar Salazar Lozano | |
| Casas como células. La metáfora biológica y los nuevos hábitats plásticos, 1955-73 | 908 |
| Massimiliano Savorra | |
| El hogar que envejece | 918 |
| Marta Silveira Peixoto | |
| Repetition and Geometry: The House of the Painter Zigaina Designed by Giancarlo De Carlo | 928 |
| Luisa Smeragliuolo Perrotta | |
| Plinio Marconi's Public Housing Projects between Innovation and Historical Continuity | 938 |
| Simona Talenti, Annarita Teodosio | |
| Casas patio y bloques: las formas de la vivienda para la ciudad moderna, Arica 1953-73 | 949 |
| Horacio Enrique Torrent Schneider | |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Doméstico y prefabricado: vivienda unifamiliar en Collado Mediano de Alejandro de la Sota | 961 |
| Miguel Varela de Ugarte | |
| Modern Living: Particularities in Rio de Janeiro | 971 |
| Denise Vianna Nunes | |
| Equipando la casa moderna. España, 1927-1936 | 982 |
| María Villanueva Fernández, Héctor García-Diego Villarías | |

BLOQUE TEMÁTICO 3

La vivienda contemporánea desde el punto de vista patrimonial

| | |
|--|------|
| Un carmen en el barrio del Realejo de Granada | 997 |
| Ricardo Hernández Soriano | |
| T y Block House, dos viviendas en Nueva York | 1007 |
| Antonio Álvarez Gil | |
| Experimentos de casas en el paisaje. Lo cotidiano y lo sublime | 1020 |
| Rafael de Lacour | |
| Cooperativas vecinales para la recuperación patrimonial de barriadas. Sixto (Málaga) | 1031 |
| Alberto E. García-Moreno, María José Márquez-Ballesteros, Manuel García-López | |
| Domesticidades del proyecto social del Régimen a través de los poblados de Bárcena (León) | 1043 |
| Jorge Magaz Molina | |
| La casa como memoria viva: injertos domésticos en ruinas vernáculas | 1055 |
| David Ordóñez Castañón, Jesús de los Ojos Moral | |
| PAX – Patios de la Axerquía. Rehabilitación urbana y de casas-patio con procesos cooperativos | 1068 |
| Gaia Redaelli | |
| La casa contemporánea en el cine: estrategia de difusión y promoción del patrimonio cultural | 1080 |
| Iván Rincón Borrego, Eusebio Alonso García | |
| Rehabitar después de Habitar | 1092 |
| Conceição Trigueiros, Mario Saleiro Filho | |

BLOQUE TEMÁTICO 4
La casa: mitos, arquetipos, modos de habitar

| | |
|--|------|
| Notas sobre la casa como jardín..... | 1104 |
| Xavier Monteys | |
| Interiores de exteriores. La otra raíz del habitar..... | 1116 |
| José Morales Sánchez | |
| Género y modos de habitar en la Andalucía del siglo XIX..... | 1127 |
| Juan Manuel Barrios Rozúa | |
| La casa veneciana, desde fuera..... | 1139 |
| Francisco A. García Pérez | |
| Muerte de la ciudad y desintegración de lo urbano. La casa como refugio..... | 1151 |
| Juan Carlos Reina Fernández | |
| The Home and Its Transformations in the Daily Life of a Brazilian Social Housing Complex..... | 1164 |
| Fernanda Andrade dos Santos, Eda Maria Góes | |
| El jardín secreto de Luis Barragán..... | 1177 |
| Paloma Baquero Masats, Juan Antonio Serrano García | |
| A «Part of Sky and a Part of Sea, Even Alone»: Luigi Moretti Villas..... | 1189 |
| Gemma Belli | |
| La cocina como principal motor de cambio en la vivienda moderna y contemporánea..... | 1199 |
| Juan Bravo Bravo | |
| Casa contra arquitectura, Bernard Rudofsky y el “arte de habitar”..... | 1212 |
| Alejandro Campos Uribe, Paula Lacomba Montes | |
| El espacio doméstico en las exposiciones: nuevos conceptos durante la 2ª mitad del s. XX..... | 1224 |
| Manuel Carmona García | |
| La cocina-moderna en la vivienda colectiva española de la primera mitad del siglo XX..... | 1236 |
| María Carreiro Otero, Cándido López González | |
| Espacios de sombra y aire, transiciones en la arquitectura mediterránea..... | 1248 |
| Antonio Cayuelas Porras | |

| | |
|--|------|
| Habitar los hospitales: el bienestar más allá del confort | 1259 |
| Pilar Chías Navarro, Tomás Abad Balboa | |
| La cocina genérica: del marco físico a la atmósfera esencial | 1272 |
| José Antonio Costela Mellado, Luis Eduardo Iáñez García | |
| The House of Silence: The Franciscan Dwellings in the Colonial Convents of the North-East of Brazil | 1282 |
| Maria Angélica da Silva | |
| Arquitectura y jardín en la vivienda doméstica española del movimiento moderno | 1294 |
| Manuel de Lara Ruiz, Carlos Pesqueira Calvo | |
| The Italian House vs The American House. Decoration and Life-Style in the 50's... | 1309 |
| Elena Dellapiana | |
| Casas de vidrio – 1950: análisis de cuatro ejemplos coetáneos | 1321 |
| Ana Esteban Maluenda, Héctor Navarro Martínez | |
| Microarquitecturas a medida. Experiencia de arquitectura social | 1330 |
| Antonella Falzetti | |
| The Made-to-Measure House: From an Ideal Home to a Palace Between the 19th and 21st Centuries | 1341 |
| Maria Teresa Feraboli | |
| Holiday Houses in Italy in the 1930s | 1351 |
| Adele Fiadino | |
| Habitar la materia: apilar Cerdeña. Casa de vacaciones en Arzachena, Marco Zanuso | 1361 |
| Mario Galiana Liras, Miguel A. Alonso del Val | |
| 1978. La Gran Casa, o sobre el interior en la obra de Enric Miralles | 1372 |
| Carolina B. García Estévez | |
| Donde termina la casa y empieza el cielo | 1384 |
| Ubaldo García Torrente | |
| Green Housing Dream. From Welfare Equality to Deregulation and Desire: Understeshöjden, 1989 | 1397 |
| Andrea Gimeno Sánchez | |
| The “Medieval House” of Coimbra: Archeology of Architecture in the Demystification of Archetypes | 1407 |
| António Ginja | |
| La casa de luz tenue. A propósito de Alvar Aalto, Luis Barragán y Antonio Jiménez Torrecillas | 1418 |
| José Miguel Gómez Acosta | |

| | |
|---|------|
| Un análisis de la casa excavada-subterránea basado en la Sintaxis Espacial..... | 1428 |
| Antonio J. Gómez-Blanco Pontes | |
| King's Foundation: House, Power and Modernity in King Manuel I's inventory (1522-25)..... | 1440 |
| Luís Gonçalves Ferreira | |
| “Raumplan-dwellings”: domesticidad y espacio en proyectos de Sejima-SANAA.. | 1449 |
| Aida González Llavona | |
| La casa moderna en Cereté, una lección patrimonial..... | 1461 |
| Massimo Leserrí, Merwan Chaverra Suárez | |
| When a Big House Opens Its Doors: The São Marcos Hospital in Braga (17th-18thCenturies)..... | 1471 |
| Maria Marta Lobo de Araújo | |
| El mito de la casa pompeyana entre los siglos XIX y XX..... | 1478 |
| Fabio Mangone, Raffaella Russo Spina | |
| Tiendas de campaña en Marte..... | 1493 |
| Josemaría Manzano-Jurado, Santiago Porras Álvarez, Rafael García Quesada | |
| La casa patio tradicional de la medina marroquí..... | 1506 |
| Miguel Martínez-Monedero, Jaime Vergara-Muñoz | |
| La forma tectónica de la casa: lo ontológico frente a lo representacional..... | 1518 |
| Alejandro Muñoz Miranda | |
| Habitar el cerro: la casa del arquitecto Bruno Violi en Bogotá..... | 1530 |
| Serena Orlandi | |
| Comida a domicilio..... | 1541 |
| Nuria Ortigosa Duarte | |
| Domestic Topographies: The House of Lino Gaspar, Caxias, 1953-1955..... | 1551 |
| Maria Rita Pais | |
| La ritualidad higiénica como domesticación espacial en el arte contemporáneo.... | 1563 |
| José Luis Panea Fernández | |
| The Housing General Histories and Classes in Literature..... | 1572 |
| Fabrizio Paone | |
| “Paraísos” en el armario: homosexualidad y negociación doméstica en la California prebélica..... | 1587 |
| José Parra-Martínez, María-Elia Gutiérrez-Mozo, Ana-Covadonga Gilsanz-Díaz | |

| | |
|---|------|
| Profundidad espacial. Abriendo el muro. De la habitación sin nombre al jardín de invierno..... | 1599 |
| Marta Pérez Rodríguez | |
| Rooms. Aldo Rossi and the House in Ghiffa: Symbol, Dust and Desire..... | 1609 |
| Michelangelo Pivetta, Vincenzo Moschetti | |
| La colina habitada: características morfológicas y modos de habitar el campo..... | 1620 |
| Luigi Ramazzotti | |
| El <i>studiolo</i> como teatro de la mente..... | 1632 |
| Jaime Ramos Alderete, Ana Isabel Santolaria Castellanos | |
| Modos de habitar en contexto de montaña: la región oriental del Atlas en Marruecos..... | 1641 |
| Miguel Reimão Costa, Desidério Batista | |
| La casa en Santiago de Chile a fines del siglo XVIII: valores materiales y simbólicos..... | 1652 |
| Marisol Richter Scheuch | |
| Hombres de condición inquieta y despegada: el fascinante espectáculo de la precariedad..... | 1660 |
| Carmen Rodríguez Pedret | |
| Maid Rooms and Laundry Sinks Matter: Modern Houses in a Non-modern Context..... | 1671 |
| Silvana Rubino | |
| Inquietante domesticidad..... | 1679 |
| Alberto Rubio Garrido | |
| Houses for Whom? Between the Habitat and the Inhabiting, on Henri Lefebvre's Quest..... | 1688 |
| Teresa V. Sá | |
| Una casa es una «machine de l'émotion»..... | 1698 |
| Javier Sáez Gastearena | |
| Espacio doméstico e higiene. Políticas del habitar en Sevilla entre los siglos XIX y XX..... | 1710 |
| Victoriano Sainz Gutiérrez | |
| La vivienda de los fareros, entre la casa y la máquina..... | 1720 |
| Santiago Sánchez Beitía, Fernando Acale Sánchez | |
| Naturalezas en la intimidad; acerca del jardín en los espacios domésticos contemporáneos..... | 1732 |
| Juana Sánchez Gómez, Diego Jiménez López, Isabel Jiménez López | |
| Cármenes, pequeñas historias domésticas..... | 1743 |
| Juan Antonio Sánchez Muñoz, Vincent Morales Garoffolo | |

| | |
|--|------|
| Algunas casas modernas: de la caverna al hogar | 1755 |
| Rafael Sánchez Sánchez | |
| Recuerdos de una escalera. Experiencias domésticas desplazadas en la obra de Siza | 1764 |
| Juan Antonio Serrano García | |
| ¿No habitar es modo de habitar? Siglos de permanencia de mitos y criminalización | 1778 |
| Sonia María Taddei Ferraz, Evelyn Garcia da Cruz, Paula Andréa Santos da Silva | |
| Tres modos de habitar la casa popular: cereal, vid y olivar | 1787 |
| Salvador Ubago Palma | |
| La expresividad de la racionalidad: La casa estudio para Diego Rivera y Frida Kahlo | 1800 |
| Luis Villarreal Ugarte | |
| Habitar en Iberoamérica | 1811 |
| Graciela María Viñuales | |

BLOQUE TEMÁTICO 5

Miradas externas: la casa en la pintura, el cine y la literatura

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| Habitar la aventura: casas de Jules Verne | 1824 |
| Juan Calatrava Escobar | |
| Casas vacías, olvidadas y recordadas: arte, literatura y memoria | 1836 |
| Marta Llorente Díaz | |
| La villa Arpel: machine à habiter, “donde todo se comunica...” (Mon Oncle, J. Tati, 1958) | 1850 |
| Antonio Pizza de Nanno | |
| El relato doméstico desde una estrategia vertical | 1855 |
| Agustín Gor Gómez | |
| Fondos de escena en el cine de Ozu | 1868 |
| Carlos Barberá Pastor | |
| Habitar tras la Transición: los hogares cinematográficos de P. Almodóvar y A. Gómez | 1879 |
| Ruth Barranco Raimundo | |
| Espacios domésticos en transición y la ciudad moderna en Ohayo (1959) de Yasujiro Ozu | 1888 |
| Bernardita M. Cubillos Muñoz | |

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| La casa Stahl, una vida de ficción | 1898 |
| Daniel Díez Martínez | |
| Habitaciones para la escritura: el autor y su espacio de trabajo | 1909 |
| Tomás García Píriz, F. Javier Castellano Pulido | |
| Ámbitos privados de la residencia colectiva en el imaginario cinematográfico español | 1920 |
| Josefina González Cubero, Alba Zarza Arribas | |
| Los registros de la luz. Vermeer y Hopper | 1929 |
| Luis Eduardo Iáñez García | |
| Allí reside el tiempo, mi infancia. La cabaña telúrica de Andréi Tarkovski | 1940 |
| Alejandro Infantes Pérez, Javier Muñoz Godino | |
| La casa, la calle y el territorio. Narraciones fotográficas de Guido Guidi | 1951 |
| Marco Lecis | |
| Entre la literatura y el cine. La casa de Sokúrov en <i>El segundo círculo</i> | 1961 |
| Pablo López Santana | |
| Habitar un espacio, contemplar un paisaje: mujer, jardín y arquitectura doméstica en China (desde el siglo X hasta el XVIII) | 1972 |
| Antonio Mezcu López | |
| Registro de una mirada, Cape Cod House | 1981 |
| Jorge Gabriel Molinero Sánchez, María del Carmen Vílchez Lara | |
| La casa como metáfora del viaje. Fotógrafos y arquitectos en Mallorca | 1993 |
| Maria Josep Mulet Gutiérrez, Joan Carles Oliver Torelló, María Sebastián Sebastián | |
| La mirada indiscreta: la ventana en el cine como generador de emociones | 2004 |
| Patricia Pozo Alemán | |
| El telar es el cuerpo, el cuerpo es la casa | 2016 |
| Anita Puig Gómez | |
| El espacio doméstico en el cine de Jacques Tati: del bloque tradicional a la vivienda sobre ruedas | 2024 |
| Helia de San Nicolás Juárez | |
| Fisonomías arquitectónicas. La mediatización de casas de personalidades en Galicia | 2034 |
| Jesús Ángel Sánchez-García | |
| Mujeres y jardines en la China clásica: espacios domésticos en <i>Sueño en el Pabellón Rojo</i> | 2046 |
| Beatriz Valverde Vázquez | |
| Notas autobiográficas de los autores | 2054 |

La riqueza de soluciones tipológicas de los años veinte: Viena y Fráncfort

A Wealth of Typological Solutions from the Twenties: Vienna and Frankfurt

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Resumen

De entre las experiencias europeas en el periodo de entreguerras, “La Viena roja” (1919-1934) y “el nuevo Fráncfort” (1925-1933) desarrollan las soluciones tipológicas más convincentes para dar respuesta a la creciente carestía de vivienda y las terribles condiciones de higiene de aquella época. Los pequeños apartamentos vieneses y los inmuebles unifamiliares de Fráncfort corresponden a dos alternativas diferentes, si bien complementarias, de tipologías de vivienda. El objetivo de este artículo es el de dibujar una comparativa a través de casos de estudio redibujados con el mayor grado de homogeneidad entre estas diferentes composiciones arquitectónicas acorde a los siguientes criterios: dimensiones, superficies y organización espacial. Ambas soluciones son el resultado de un acercamiento moderno y racional al diseño de viviendas asequibles, a través de la propuesta de nuevos estándares de confort, la mejora de las condiciones higiénicas y una nueva cultura de vida.

Palabras clave: vivienda colectiva, Viena, Fráncfort, tipología, estudio comparativo

Bloque temático: El proyecto doméstico como núcleo de la modernidad: casa singular y vivienda colectiva, del Movimiento Moderno al siglo XXI

Abstract

Of the European housing experiences from the interwar period, das rote Wien (Vienna, 1919-1934) and das neue Frankfurt (Frankfurt am Main, 1925-1933) developed the most convincing typological solutions for responding to the rising housing shortage and terrible sanitary conditions. In this perspective, the Viennese small apartments and the Frankfurt single-family house correspond to two alternative but complementary dwelling types. The objective of this paper is to draw a comparison, employing novel re-drawings of dwelling plans with the highest degree of graphic homogeneity, between these opposing architectural arrangements according to the following criteria: dimensions, surfaces and spatial organisation. Despite their evident differences, both are the result of a modern and rational approach towards designing affordable housing as well as for promoting new comfort standards, an improvement of the hygienic conditions, and a new living culture.

Keywords: mass housing, Vienna, Frankfurt, typology, comparative study

Topic: *The domestic project as the heart of modernity: the single, one-off house and collective housing, from the Modern Movement to the 21st century*

Introduction

The social housing policies during the inter-war years produced several architectural experiences in different cities in Europe in order to address the housing issues deriving from the speculative system of the 19th century.

Among the architectural initiatives of the Twenties, two main models can be identified which, beyond their peculiarities, however conceived the relationship between architecture and the city as the connection between spatial organization and social practice.¹ The so-called *Das rote Wien* (Red Vienna) is a particularly significant example (Tafari, 1980), while in the urban initiative *Das neue Frankfurt* (New Frankfurt) «the link between the municipal urban policy and architecture reaches a level rarely equalled in other German cities».² Specifically, both cities adopted two alternative urban models of mass housing:³ on the one hand, the large courtyard block (*Hof*) in Vienna, on the other hand, the row houses in slab formation (*Siedlung*) in Frankfurt. In this sense Vienna and Frankfurt are the extreme polarities of the history of social housing in Europe in the first decades of the 20th century.⁴

Both cities developed their housing policies by considering the relationship between urban morphology and typology. Despite the two models being located on opposite spectrums, the design of different dwelling types is always linked to the research for the most adequate dimensions for the modern housing. This is linked to a typological evolution from the point of view of organization and distribution of the domestic spaces. Both had the common objective of solving the housing shortage and, at the same time, of improving the quality of urban dwelling.

The issue of the dwelling size is evidently linked to studies on comfort and convenience and represented a collective vision of society. For this reason, the typological research in the inter-war years marks a new paradigm, literally a new chapter in the history of the social housing.

Few studies provide a typological analysis through a comparative approach.⁵ This paper proposes to analyse the main typological principles, clearly stated in the housing programs, and to examine a select number of case studies, in order to highlight the differences between the program's intentions and the complexity of the projects' solutions. It offers specific analytical tools, in order to compare the typological solutions between different urban contexts with the highest possible degree of homogeneity.

1. Typological principles

Two publications concerning the housing policies had a crucial role in revealing the importance of typological research in the design process of new and modern dwellings. In Vienna, *Die*

¹ Philippe Panerai, Jean Castex, Jean Charles Depaule and Ivor Samuels, *Urban Forms: the Death and Life of the Urban Block* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2004).

² Panerai, Castex, Depaule and Samuels, *Urban...*, 90.

³ Gert Kähler, *Wohnung und Stadt: Hamburg, Frankfurt, Wien: Modelle sozialen Wohnens in den zwanziger Jahren* (Braunschweig: Friedr. Vieweg & Sohn, 1985).

⁴ Alessandro Porotto, "Logement de masse: Vienne et Francfort" (PhD thesis, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, 2018), <https://infoscience.epfl.ch/record/255946>.

⁵ The most complete comparative studies about Vienna and Frankfurt are Kähler, *Wohnung...*, and Porotto, "Logement...".

*Wohnungspolitik der Gemeinde Wien*⁶ was published at the end of the second five-year plan for housing policies; in Frankfurt, Ernst May presented the constructed *Siedlungen* and elaborated projects in the architectural review *Das neue Frankfurt*.⁷

The common starting point concerns the precarious conditions of the urban fabric and dwelling that the speculation system had given rise in the second half of the nineteenth century. Therefore, it is important to note that the logic behind two respective architectural ideas was based on an in-depth knowledge of urban conditions and the set of problems related to housing. In this perspective, it is clear that both architectural experiences considered the dwelling type as the most efficient instrument for constructing the city and for addressing the poor hygienic conditions of urban fabric. As a consequence, the typological research carried out in Vienna and Frankfurt corresponded to the success of urban policies: at the same time, the adopted architectural model and the degree of typological variations were intended to satisfy housing demand from a quantitative and qualitative point of view.

The *Hof* and the *Siedlung* models constitute a radical position that involves a set of fundamental distributive and compositional principles, which were capable of rationally responding to the housing issues.

In the Viennese residential buildings,

Das Gangsystem ist ausgeschlossen worden, jede Wohnung ist von der Stiege aus zugänglich, da höchstens vier Kleinwohnungen in jedem Stockwerk an einer Treppe liegen. Die Anzahl der Treppenhäuser ist demnach auch größer. Jede Wohnung enthält den mit Wasserspülung versehenen Abort im Wohnungsverschluß, tunlichst von dem ausgeführten kleinen Vorraum aus zugänglich. In jeder Küche ist ein Auslauf der Wasserleitung vorgesehen. Es gibt keine indirect belichteten Aufenthaltsräume mehr. Auch die Küche hat fenster unmittelbar ins Freie, auf die Straße oder in den großen Hof. In den Familien der Minderbemittelten hat die Küche als Aufenthaltsraum größte Bedeutung. Um so wichtiger sind gute Beleuchtung und leichte Durchlüftbarkeit.⁸

These principles can be defined as a “spontaneous” reaction dictated by the critical observation of the pre-existing city and, above all, by new housing and societal needs.

On the contrary, the Frankfurt typological study is linked to the *a priori* choice of the building type itself: «The ideal residential form, as the most natural, is the single-family house. It guarantees domestic peace and an intimate life to the family [...] Only this dwelling type allows every single house to be directly connected with a garden,...».⁹ Therefore, the attention is focused on the spatial articulation, in order to «first of all conceive harmonic plans».¹⁰ For this

⁶ Gemeinde Wien, ed., *Die Wohnungspolitik der Gemeinde Wien. Ein Überblick über die Tätigkeit der Stadt Wien seit dem Kriegsende zur Bekämpfung der Wohnungsnot und zur Hebung der Wohnkultur* (Wien: Gesellschafts und Wirtschaftsmuseum, 1929).

⁷ Ernst May, “Fünf Jahre Wohnungsbautätigkeit in Frankfurt am Main”, *Das neue Frankfurt* 4, n.° 2-3 (1930).

⁸ [Translation by the author: The construction system with a corridor was excluded, so each dwelling can be reached from the staircase, because each floor has at most four small apartments. Consequently, the number of staircases is higher. Each dwelling is provided with a toilet with water flush, which can be accessed by a small entrance. The kitchen is provided with a water conduit. There is no longer any indirectly lit living rooms. The kitchen windows face out directly onto the open towards the road or towards the large inner courtyard. With the poorer families the kitchen is of great importance as a collective room. Which is why good lighting and ventilation are so much more important]. Gemeinde Wien, *Die Wohnungspolitik...*, 45.

⁹ May, “Fünf Jahre...”, 36.

¹⁰ May, “Fünf Jahre...”, 37.

reason, the rigorous typological study published in the pages of *Das neue Frankfurt* assumes the connotations of an experimental open-air laboratory. The guidelines for defining dwelling types confirmed the “scientific” character of the whole approach used in Frankfurt:

1. Die Gesamtanordnung der Räume zueinander ist so gestaltet, dass der hauswirtschaftliche Prozess mit einem Mindestaufwand an Kraft entwickelt werden kann...
2. ... muss die Wohnung so beschaffen sein, dass sie ihn auch gefühlsmäßig befriedigt. Dies wird nicht nur durch die Art der Ausbildung der einzelnen Räume und ihrer Anordnung zueinander erreicht, sondern in ganz besonderem Masse durch Hereinsaugung von Licht und Sonne in die Wohnung.
3. Die Grundrisse aller Mehrfamilienhäuser sind so orientiert, dass möglichst alle Schlafräume Morgensonne, der Wohnraum Nachmittagssonne empfängt...
4. Der Wohnraum als Hauptaufenthaltsraum der Familie wird auch in den Dimensionen eindeutig zum Hauptraum gemacht...
5. Die Küche selbst erhält Einbauten, die eine rationelle Ausnützung des geringen zur Verfügung gestellten Raumes sichern. Die Anordnung der einzelnen Teile geschieht nach den Grundsätzen sinngemäßer Küchenwirtschaft...
6. Das Zusammensuchen von Eltern und größeren Kindern in einem Raume muss durch Bereitstellung einer genügenden Zimmerzahl ausgeschlossen werden.
7. Die Dreizimmerwohnung ist die Durchschnittswohnung für die Masse der Minderbeimittelten. Sie kann schon in einer Größe von 44 qm in einwandfreier Beschaffenheit hergestellt werden [...]. Dieser Typ sieht für Eltern und Kinder besondere Schlafräume vor...
8. Keine Wohnung sollte ohne eigenen Abort gebaut werden [...] Bad und Waschgelegenheit sollten wenn irgend möglich zwischen die Schlafzimmer gelegt und von diesen mittels Kommunikationsflures zugänglich gemacht werden.
9. Jeder Wohnung soll ein Keller und eine Abstellkammer zugeteilt werden...¹¹

The instructions expressed by Ernst May in 1930 as well as the standardization of housing typologies produced a total of 21 dwelling types, as well documented in the drawings published in *Das neue Frankfurt* and featured in the famous exhibition *Die Wohnung für das Existenzminimum* at the second International Congresses of Modern Architecture held in Frankfurt in 1929.¹²

The typological guidelines, developed in Vienna and Frankfurt, were not only fundamental in improving social housing from a theoretical point of view. To understand the importance of the type within housing policies, it is also essential to observe how much the general statements of

¹¹ [Translation by the author: 1. The distribution of rooms is such that domestic economy processes are carried out with the least expenditure of energy... 2. ... the dwelling must be arranged so that it is also emotionally satisfying. This will not depend only on the shape of the rooms and their respective position, but especially on the penetration of light and the sunlight in the dwelling. 3. The groundplans of all multi-family houses are oriented so that possibly all the bedrooms receive the sunlight in the morning and the living rooms receive the afternoon sunlight... 4. The dimensions of the main family living room emphasize its importance in contrast with the other rooms... 5. The kitchen is fully equipped, allowing the rational exploitation of the limited space available. The organization of single parts is based on a rational use of the kitchen... 6. The need to avoid parents having a shared bedroom with their adult children is fulfilled by the construction of a sufficient number of rooms,... 7. The three-room dwelling is the average model for the mass of less well-off people. It can be designed perfectly in an area of 44 m². This type features separate bedrooms for parents and children... 8. No dwelling should be without a toilet [...] The bathroom should be between the bedrooms and be accessible through a hallway. 9. Each house should have a cellar and a storage room...]. May, “Fünf Jahre...”, 38.

¹² See the exhibition catalogue: Internationale Kongresse für Neues Bauen, ed., *Die Wohnung für das Existenzminimum* (Frankfurt am Main: Englert & Schlosser, 1930).

housing programs correspond to a great variety and typological flexibility, as well shown by most of the built solutions (Figure 1).

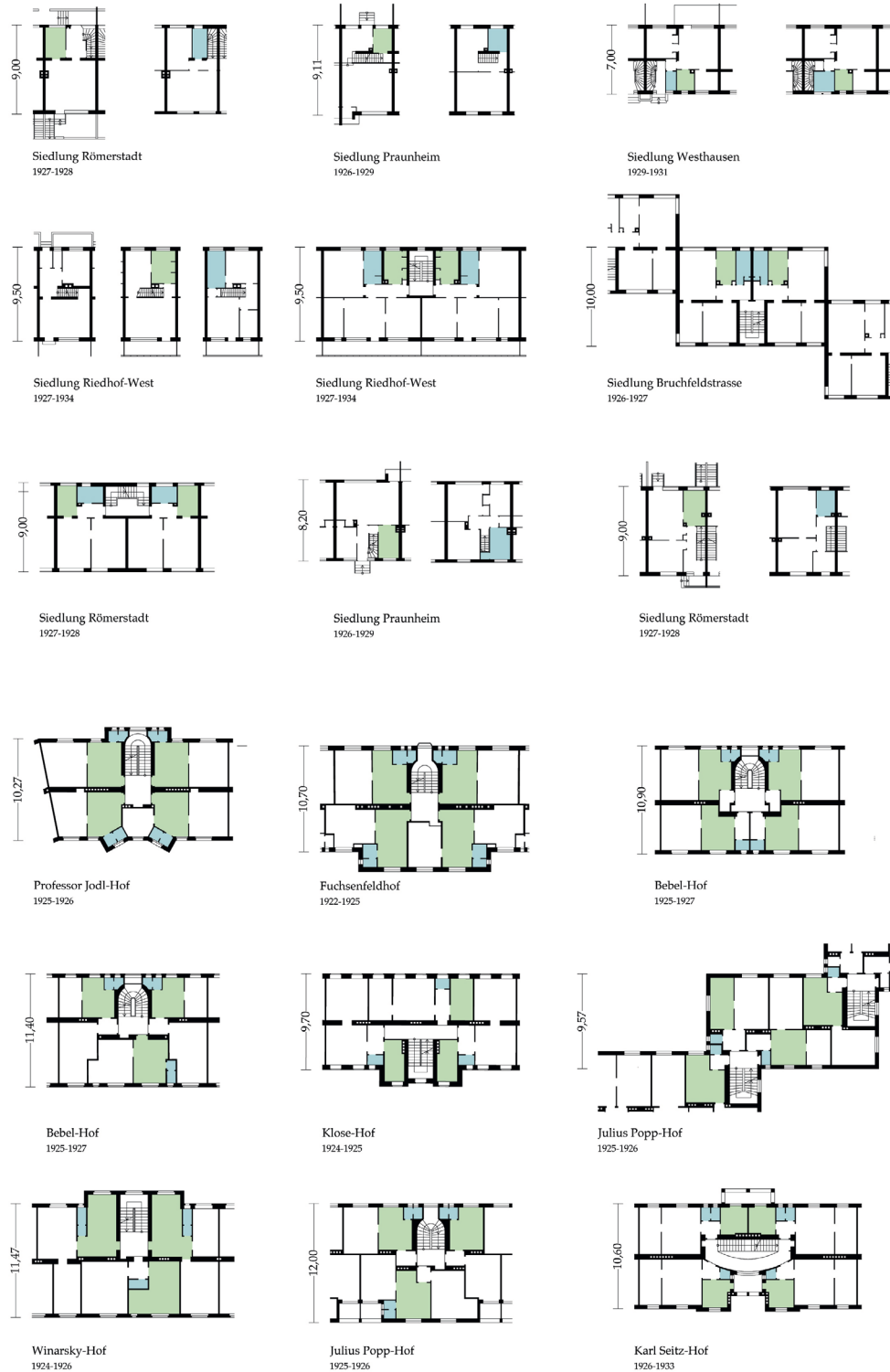


Figure 1: Typological comparison between Vienna and Frankfurt examples
Source: A. Porotto (2018)

2. Dwellings, sizes and types: a comparative perspective

Based on the wealth of typological richness characterizing the achievements of the two experiments, the analysis focuses on the comparison of some carefully chosen examples.

The basic assumption is that the achievements in Vienna and Frankfurt constitute a typological research that enable their intrinsic qualities to be highlighted. Indeed, all the examples in Vienna and Frankfurt present remarkable solutions from a distributive and spatial-organizational point of view, in particular for their clarity of the arrangement, that enable the solution of situations that show a high level of complexity.

In Vienna the typical unit of the Viennese Bebel-Hof (1925-1927), designed by Karl Ehn, shows a recurring pattern in the realized *Höfe*. Each staircase distributes four single-orientated apartments, which therefore respect the continuity of the central structural wall (Figure 2).

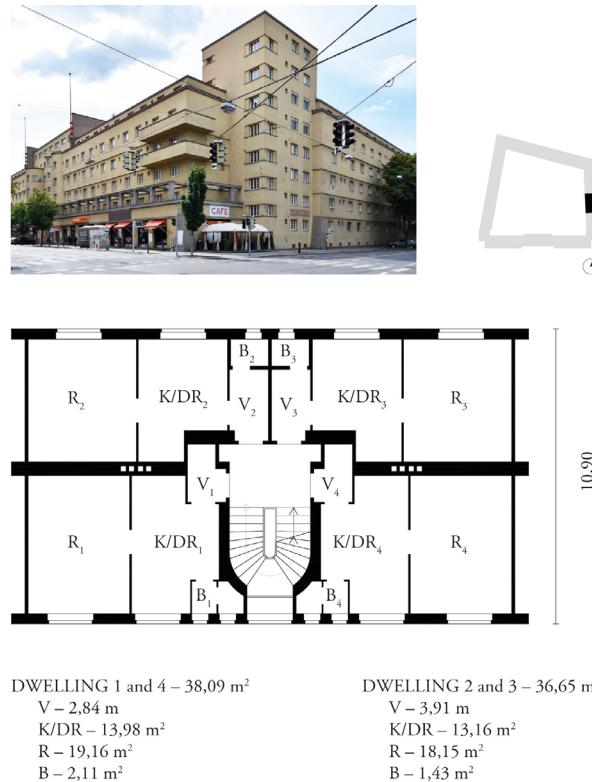
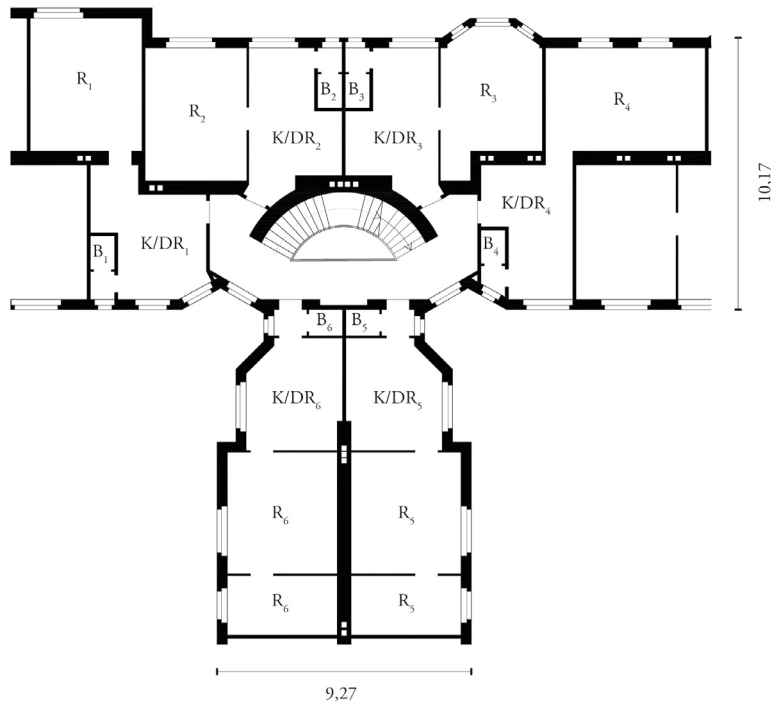


Figure 2: Bebel-Hof (1925-1927), Vienna
Source: A. Porotto (2018)

The small entrance or *Vorraum* distributes the kitchen-living room and, in sequence, enables access to the bedroom. The only variation that can be noticed is in the positioning of the toilets. Indeed, in the courtyard-side apartments the toilets are accessible through the kitchen area, while in the street-side apartments, the toilets are distributed directly by the entrance space. In all cases, they are positioned along the facade to benefit the natural ventilation.

From a distributive point of view the Schüttau-Hof (1924-1926), designed by A. Rodler, A. Stutterheim and W. Tremmel, is probably a unique example of the Red Vienna experience (Figure 3).



DWELLING 1 – 38,90 m²
 K/DR₁ – 16,22 m²
 R₁ – 20,54 m²
 B₁ – 2,14 m²

DWELLING 2 – 36,24 m²
 K/DR₂ – 15,69 m²
 R₂ – 18,53 m²
 B₂ – 2,02 m²

DWELLING 3 – 35,44 m²
 K/DR₃ – 15,69 m²
 R₃ – 17,73 m²
 B₃ – 2,02 m²

DWELLING 4 – 39,41 m²
 K/DR₄ – 14,59 m²
 R₄ – 22,79 m²
 B₄ – 2,03 m²

DWELLING 5 and 6 – 44 m²
 V₅ – 1,56 m²
 K/DR₅ – 13,88 m²
 R₅ – 18,35 m²
 R₆ – 8,98 m²
 B₅ – 1,24 m²

Figure 3: Schüttau-Hof (1924-1926), Vienna
 Source: A. Porotto (2018)

Where the built volumes form a “T”, the staircase distributes six apartments per floor without renouncing the criteria of hygienic improvement laid down in the housing guidelines. Despite the complexity of the system, this space is provided at the corners, on the courtyard side, with two windows that allow natural lighting and ventilation. The apartment types demonstrate a high-level of typological diversity: each floor consists of two double-exposed apartments and four single-orientated apartments, two of which face onto the street, and the other onto the inner

courtyard. Here the presence or not of the *Vorraum* has an essential role in the dwelling arrangements. Not only for the high number of dwellings distributed per floor, the *Schüttau-Hof* is also remarkable for the clarity of the system designed to solve a situation characterized by a high level of complexity.

In Frankfurt the single-family house of the *Siedlung Römerstadt* (1927-1928), designed by Ernst May, H. Boehm, W. Bangert, C. H. Rudloff, F. Schuster and others collaborators, probably the most famous *Siedlung* of *Das neue Frankfurt* experience, is based on typological principles opposed to those of the Viennese apartments. This terraced house consists of two floors (Figure 4).

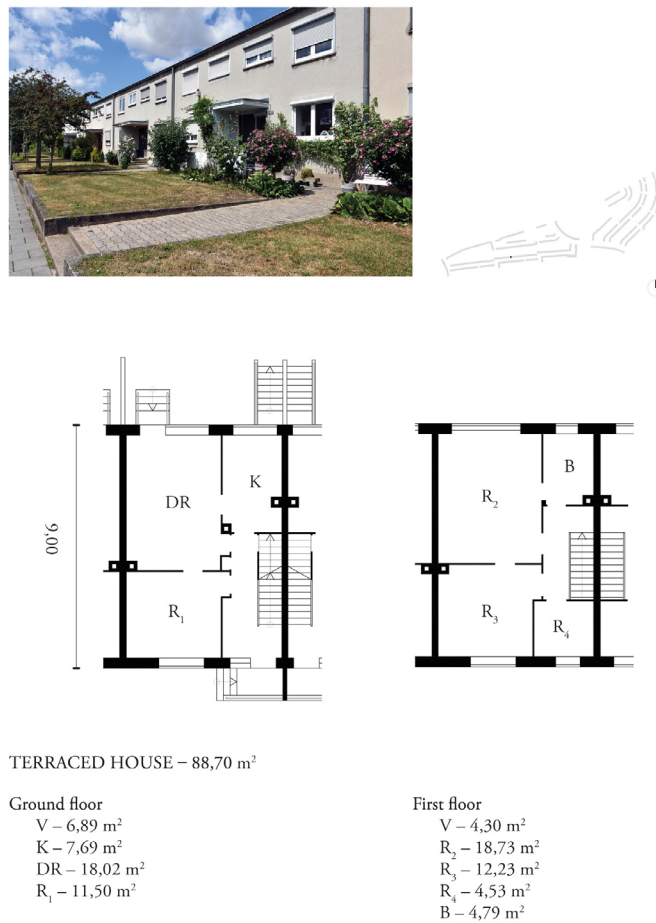


Figure 4: *Siedlung Römerstadt* (1927-1928), Frankfurt
Source: A. Porotto (2018)

The access is on the south side in an entrance-distribution corridor which becomes the core of the spatial arrangement. Indeed, all the rooms can be accessed from this space, eliminating the *enfilade* sequence seen in the Viennese examples. A room used as an office is located to the south, while to the north the dining room is directly connected to the garden and the Frankfurter kitchen designed by Margarethe Schütte-Lihotzky. The general principle of separation of the parts is in this case solved, thanks to the introduction of a corridor allowing an efficient spatial distribution. Here it should also be noted that direct circulation between the rooms and the kitchen is also provided for. This arrangement is also repeated on the first floor: the corridor

distributes the bathroom, the parents' bedroom, the children's bedroom and another small bedroom.

The projects realized in Frankfurt are composed of the so-called *Mischbebauung* (construction mix), which combines single-family houses and high-rise buildings in the same layout. Hence in this case we can notice the different approaches to the design of the apartment types.

Their features in the Siedlung Bruchfeldstrasse (1926-1927), designed by Ernst May, H. Boehm and C. H. Rudloff, are completely different to the Vienna examples. The staircase is positioned in the middle and symmetrically distributes two apartments per floor (Figure 5). The apartment includes an entrance vestibule that is also the main distribution space. For these reasons, the internal composition is very simple: one side of the apartment holds the dining room, the Frankfurter kitchen and the bathroom, the other side holds the parents' and the children's room.

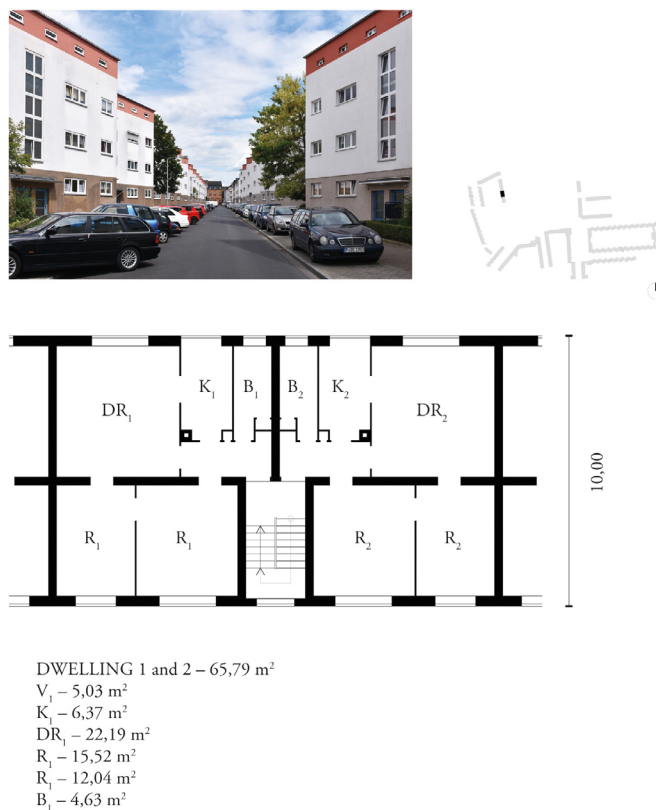
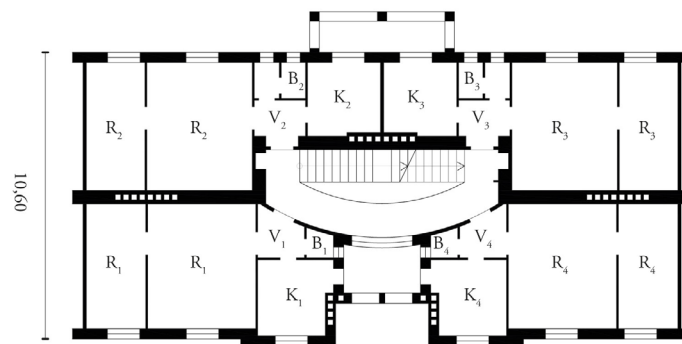


Figure 5: Siedlung Bruchfeldstrasse (1926-1927), Frankfurt
 Source: A. Porotto (2018)

The solutions are effective in respecting the principles underlying the improvement of comfort and the rational organization of the domestic space. We can identify two cases in order to highlight the highest points of the rationalization processes carried out in both cities.

In the Karl Seitz-Hof in Vienna (1926-1932), designed by Hubert Gessner, the main distribution system provides four apartments per floor (Figure 6). All the apartments consist of a *Vorraum*, a ventilated toilet, a kitchen, a room and a bedroom. This configuration implements the general guidelines for the Viennese Höfe. However, we note some innovative elements: firstly, the *Vorraum* performs the essential role of defining the spatial arrangement; secondly, the kitchen is designed as an autonomous space in contrast with the multifunctional *Wohnküche*; thirdly, each

dwelling has a loggia designed as an extension of the dwelling into the courtyard. This example clearly shows how the Höfe or courtyards can also meet and integrate certain architectural criteria that characterize the Frankfurt plans, without neglecting the fundamental features enshrined in the Viennese principles.



DWELLING 1 and 4 – 40,21 m²
 V₁ – 3,16 m²
 K₁ – 7,43 m²
 Z₁ – 18,49 m²
 KA₁ – 10,28 m²
 B₁ – 2,48 m²

DWELLING 2 and 3 – 41,84 m²
 V₂ – 2,87 m²
 K₂ – 7,64 m²
 Z₂ – 18,52 m²
 KA₂ – 10,18 m²
 B₂ – 1,00 m²

Figure 6: Karl Seitz-Hof (1926-1932), Vienna
 Source: A. Porotto (2018)

In Frankfurt the Siedlung Westhausen (1929-1932), designed by Ernst May, H. Boehm, W. Bangert, E. Kaufman, F. Schuster and others collaborators, consists of rows featuring the same terraced house, in which the level of standardization and research towards the *Existenzminimum* reaches its highest point (Figure 7). Indeed, the goal of typological design is to reduce the construction and rent costs, by decreasing dimensions, but aboveall by radically rationalizing the arrangement.

To address the economic problems of that time, the terraced house was conceived and designed for two families, with one apartment per floor. However the house has a flexible system that allows the apartments to be modified to create a two-storey, single-family house. Therefore, the reduction in dimensions is accompanied by a new feature that corresponds to an additional quality of the Siedlungen houses: their typological flexibility. In the configuration with one apartment per floor, the arrangement is repeated on each level. The apartment entrance provides access to the bathroom and to the dining room which also functions as a distribution space to the kitchen, the children's and the parents' bedroom.

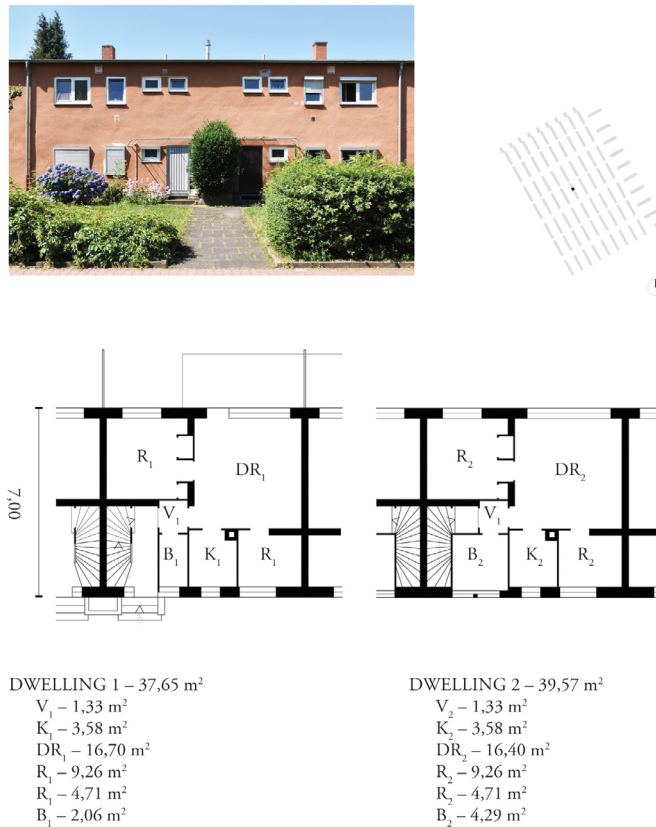


Figure 7: Siedlung Westhausen (1929-1932), Frankfurt
Source: A. Porotto (2018)

It is a fact that the rationalization and principles of the *Existenzminimum* contribute to a significant decrease in the surface area of each part compared to the previous examples, in particular the distribution of space is drastically reduced to avoid unusable space. Westhausen's apartment is strictly calibrated by a dimensioned and proportionated scheme that allows no exceptions, but only the opportunity to transform the house into a single family dwelling, in order to regain the same qualities of the other *Siedlungen*. In contrast, in Vienna, the small apartment does not provide for any change in compositional principles. By introducing precise architectural elements the logic offers new spatial qualities inside and demonstrates that Viennese apartments have a degree of flexibility that lies in their waiving the implementation of a fixed framework of pre-established schemes.

Due to the similar dimensions and some similar features, these two types are able to offer the same qualities and comfort, while remaining models in opposing spectrums. In both cities, the typology is the basic unit for achieving a social model based on human dignity. In this perspective, from an object of liberal-capitalist speculation of the bourgeois era, the dwelling becomes the social instrument of the fundamental right to housing.¹³

Despite the obvious differences, the two models, as well as many other dwelling types, marked in both cities a profound “revolution” concerning the *Wohnkultur* (living culture): the dwelling comfort is not limited to the family, but includes an entire social class. Both experiences

¹³ Kähler, “*Wohnung...*”, 159.

produced the most significant examples of the Twenties in their field and paved the way for a modern vision of social housing architecture.

3. Conclusions

The comparison of the 1920s housing models in Vienna and Frankfurt made in this paper doesn't aim to determine which one prevails over the other, on the contrary it proposes a key to interpretation without any prejudices. In addition to the large number of typological solutions and variations compared to the general guidelines, the detailed analysis highlighted two fundamental aspects.

The first is that in both cases typological research has a very specific objective: housing rationalization. In Vienna, this constitutes the search for arrangements that can come close to the most modern criteria of the time, while in Frankfurt, rationalization concerns the "efficiency" of housing. Indeed, the compositional logic must be designed in parallel with the reduction of construction costs and the rent itself.

This first hypothesis implies the second: the dimensions, surfaces and proportions of the rooms play an essential role in the project from a typological point of view. Despite their opposition, Höfe and Siedlungen aim to offer different dwelling types characterized by the most appropriate dimensions for a modern living culture. The comparisons showed that the different solutions focus on the arrangement and distribution of domestic space. All the examples propose a qualitative improvement of the dwelling through a spatial configuration based on rational logic.

The term "mass housing" should not only be perceived in quantitative terms, in order to build dwellings for "the greatest number" of people, but also as allowing the inhabitants to access and enjoy a quality of life deriving from the very housing features and solutions.

The typological comparison of some examples built in Vienna and Frankfurt indicate that the history of architecture has transmitted a distorted view of the great mass housing experiences of the Twenties. Indeed, architectural history books offer us a limited understanding of mass housing projects, especially with regard to typology. In particular, architectural critics have never shown any specific interest or they have completely discredited the typological solutions realized by the architects of Red Vienna, claiming implicitly that the modern terraced houses in Frankfurt were more advanced from an architectural and typological point of view. For example, Oswald Mathias Ungers explains that

Apartment layouts meet minimal requirements and barely satisfy tenants' needs. The architecture is often banal and borders on the inferior. The methods of structural engineering employed are almost primitive and below the progressive standards of that era [...] Only by pre-World War I standards do they seem advanced.¹⁴

Or, according to Manfredo Tafuri,

L'organizzazione delle cellule [...] dimostra un profondo disinteresse per la ricerca tipologica. Gli alloggi del Karl Marx-Hof, come quelli della maggior parte degli Höfe viennesi fra le due guerre, del resto, si basano su una successione di vani del tutto empirica e ricca di inconvenienti funzionali. Alla qualità e alla densità dei servizi collettivi [...] corrispondono sorprendenti carenze nella distribuzione e nell'attrezzatura degli alloggi. Le distanze prese dalla cultura che informa il "movimento moderno" e le ricerche sul tema dell'Existenzminimum da esso condotte pesano non

¹⁴ Oswald Mathias Ungers, "The Vienna Superblocks", *Oppositions*, n.° 13 (1978): 83.

poco sui progettisti viennesi. Lo Hof, in tutte le sue varianti, non sembra ammettere standard fissati a priori; il basso coefficiente tecnologico che caratterizza la realizzazione del programma viennese ha un suo correlato nella definizione tipologica...¹⁵

Assessments based probably on ideological criteria do not *a priori* reflect the real impact made by these modern housing experiences. It can be noted that the domestic quality in both cities represents not only an improvement of housing compared with the conditions before 1918, but it also constitutes the genesis of modern housing in terms of dimensions, spatial configuration and interior equipment and facilities. A clear analysis is provided by Carlo Aymonino, who states:

Il "minimo" è anche una questione di misure, di dimensioni, ecc. ma non in senso assoluto (tecnico, ad esempio o strettamente biologico), bensì relativo a delle condizioni genericamente "civili" o comunque indispensabili non tanto alla sopravvivenza quanto a un'esistenza sociale [...] In questo senso il valore reale di un alloggio non deve essere commisurato alla superficie, ma al numero dei letti che può contenere. (Intendendo per letto non il semplice mobile, ma il rapporto tra questo e un vano che lo renda fruibile in modo indipendente) [...] È la "razione di abitazione" che diviene lo standard cui commisurare ogni impostazione edilizia correttamente intesa; ma la razione di abitazione trova l'altro parametro della propria "necessità" nella composizione numerica del nucleo familiare. Sono i due parametri a condizionare e definire l'alloggio minimo come rispondente alla necessità di indipendenza abitativa di ogni nucleo.¹⁶

It is important to stress again that small rational dwellings do not coincide with a simple decrease in size. The organization of space and equipment are the standards whereby maximum comfort is attained. Thanks to the comparative study, we understand that for Vienna and Frankfurt the surfaces of the rooms have been determined in the most appropriate dimensions for the correct use of space in order to improve its use as well as the quality of domestic life. This approach doesn't belong to any speculative logic and refuses the application of quantitative data in a mechanical way.

In Vienna and Frankfurt, typological research is the basis of a rational process capable of controlling and intervening on different scales. «The process is articulated as a "summation": the more rooms make up a dwelling, the more dwellings form a typological unit (building), the more typological units develop a complex, and the more complexes "are" the city».¹⁷

Typological research is therefore the direct instrument with concrete effects on the scale of the private sphere of the house, but also on the scale of the city. In Vienna, typological research is

¹⁵ [Translation by the author: the organization of the housing units [...] shows a great lack of interest in typological research. The apartments of Karl Marx-Hof, like those of the majority of the Viennese Höfe between the two wars, consist of a succession of rooms that is completely empirical and characterized by functional disadvantages. The quality and importance of community facilities [...] are matched by surprising deficiencies in the distribution and equipment of apartments [...] The Hof, in all its variants, does not seem to accept *a priori* fixed standards; the low technical level that characterizes the buildings of the Viennese programme leads to typological deficiencies]. Manfredo Tafuri, ed., *Vienna Rossa: La politica residenziale nella Vienna socialista 1919-1933* (Milano: Electa, 1980), 94.

¹⁶ [Translation by the author: the "minimum" is also related to an issue of measures, dimensions, etc., not in absolute terms (technical or specifically biological, for instance), but rather of "civil" conditions in general terms or in any case essential not so much for survival as for social existence [...] In this sense, the real meaning of a dwelling must not be proportional to the surface area, but to the number of beds it can contain. (I am not talking about a bed as a simple piece of furniture, but about the relationship between the bed and the room that makes it independently accessible) [...] "Housing ration" becomes the norm for every correct building design, but housing ration finds another parameter of "necessity" in the numerical composition of the nuclear family. Both parameters influence and define the minimum dwelling as a response to the necessity of housing independence for every nuclear family]. Carlo Aymonino, ed., *L'abitazione razionale: Atti dei congressi C.I.A.M. 1929-1930* (Padova: Marsilio, 1971), 81.

¹⁷ Aymonino, *L'abitazione...*, 82.

based on a housing type belonging to the city culture and urban fabric (the large courtyard block), while in Frankfurt it corresponds to the adoption of a model that is considered a priori as the only solution to the housing issue (the terraced house as the ideal type). These choices form a clear image that corresponds to a clear position related to the housing, the city and the society. Consequently, in the Höfe and the Siedlungen the purpose is the search for the most appropriate architectural and typological elements, in order to translate their position into urban reality. For this reason, the dwellings conceived and built for the Höfe and the Siedlungen base their spatial logics on concrete, even technical, components that are intrinsically part of everyday life.

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