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Ernst May and the campaign to resettle the countryside: rural housing in Silesia, 1919-1925

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To our readers!
The fourth year of our journal . . . begins at a time when the future of settlement construction appears more uncertain than ever before. With almost the same speed that the French retreated before an armed Germany in the fall of 1914, they now rush into the heart of our industrial lands where they confront an unarmed people. In spite of this, indeed because our people stand firm and unified, this plunder of our land may be the turning point in our resurrection.

The more difficult our situation becomes, the more we realize the importance of a planned, sustained program of housing construction and settlement building. . . . It is therefore all the more unfortunate that the current economic crisis will hinder an extensive building program in the coming years.[1]

Schlesisches Heim, 1923

By 1923, the peak year of the inflation crisis in Germany, Ernst May had spent four years struggling to build housing in rural Silesia, a province beset by everything but unity. May is known principally for his work as the *Stadtbaurat* of Frankfurt am Main (1925–1930), when he launched the "Neue Frankfurt" program and produced a ring of modern suburban settlements encircling the city as part of a sweeping municipal reform initiative.[2] Concentration on these "heroic" years of early Modernism, from the stabilization of the mark in 1925 through the rise of fascism in 1933, has eclipsed the complex interplay between modernization efforts and nineteenth-century reform movements, between center and periphery, between progressive and regressive elements in the first years of the decade. May's earlier and little-known tenure as head of the Silesian rural housing office is a compelling episode in this history.[3]

In 1918, the Social Democratic Party (SPD) assumed leadership of the German Reich following the November Revolution and the collapse of the monarchy. Facing food shortages, oppressive armistice terms, and an entrenched elite, the Weimar Republic had a doubtful future, one further threatened by the open street battles, strikes, political assassinations, and crises that followed. Meanwhile, the devastated economy continued its decline as five years of shortages and rising prices were followed by the infamous hyperinflation of 1923 and 1924.[4]

For the reforming middle that dominated the governing political culture of Weimar, the immediate task was to restore social and political stability. Amid this uncertainty and despite formidable obstacles, indeed impelled by them, the state forged ahead with major reforms: the institution of the eight-hour day, the right to unionize, universal suffrage and votes for women, national health and unemployment insurance, and vastly expanded programs in education, housing, and public health.[5] This remarkable array of initiatives forwarded the possibility of radical social transformation by instituting immediate improvements in the quality of life for the working class.

The comprehensive Prussian Housing Law, passed in March of 1918, was among the most significant reforms.[6] It

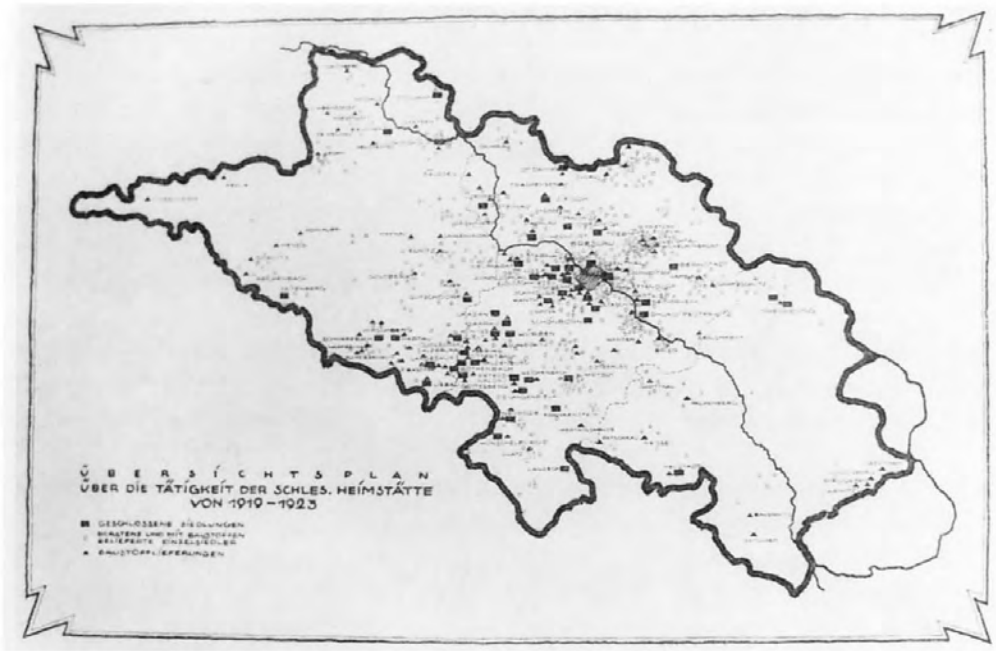

Figure 1 Map of Silesia showing settlements built by the *Schlesische Heimstätte* between 1919 and 1923, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1923)

was followed in 1919 by the constitutional declaration of the right of every German citizen to a sound residence and the establishment of expropriation laws to acquire land for housing. Further legislation formed municipal and provincial authorities that centralized public housing programs and ended the myriad and quixotic variants in agencies across the country. By 1920 the basic legal structure of the Weimar housing program was in place.[7]

The vast array of Weimar reform legislation was a response to a center-left that wanted political and economic democracy and a secular state. It was an urban constituency. In the countryside, politics and society were conservative, bound by tradition and the rule of a landed aristocracy. Yet many of the problems facing the nation were common to both milieux, among them a profound housing crisis. Parallel rural, provincial, and urban housing agencies were created to deal with the problem. Although the hinterland initiatives rivaled their urban counterparts in scope and political significance, the provincial and rural housing authorities have received little scrutiny. In 1919, 1,820 rural settlements were built under public auspices. The figure climbed to 3,268 in 1922. It remained around 2,000 a year in the prosperous years of 1925 and 1926, and then with stabilization it climbed again, reaching 4,253 in 1928. The numbers of settlement expansions were even higher. Major rural housing programs existed in the precarious border provinces of Silesia, East Prussia, and Saxony. [8]

Among reform advocates on both the left and the right, the idealization of rural life was a common theme, and farmworker housing, published in journals like *Die Volkswohnung*, *Das Zentralblatt für Bauverwaltung*, and *Die Siedlungswerk des Deutschen Bundes Heimatschutz*, inevitably assumed a romanticized form. Germany distinguished itself in its devotion to rural settlement, as was evident in annual regional building fairs and international exhibitions. For example, at the building fair in Gottenburg, Sweden, of 1922, Germany was the only country that had a rural housing exhibit. On display were projects from Bavaria and Saxony and an impressive exhibit on interior colonization. Ernst May exhibited photographic transparencies of his work in Silesia and featured a self-help settlement built of thatch and clay bricks.[9]

May headed the Silesian Rural Settlement Authority *(Schlesische Heimstätte)* between 1919 and 1925. The authority's jurisdiction encompassed unincorporated suburbs and towns, and homesteads and settlements in the rural outreaches. His immediate charge was to solve the provincial housing shortage, and in doing so, to stabilize the population and reinforce its allegiance to a German Silesia. A bewildering array of duties included administering the program, the design of settlements, housing standardization, editorial duties at the journal he founded, *Schlesisches Heim*, and launching publicity efforts through exhibitions and lectures. By the end of five years, May had constructed more than 4,000 units of housing for white-collar, suburban settlements outside the larger cities like Breslau and dozens of rural settlements and homesteads in the countryside, and had performed numerous experiments in the rationalization of housing design, mass production, and new materials, efforts that would prove of signal importance for his later career in Frankfurt (Figure 1).

Within this body of work, hinterland politics and the need to build allegiances between the state and the region dictated that some rural housing be devoted to particular constituencies, groups that were distinguished culturally and politically and whose resettlement could secure a German majority in the province. Foremost among the constituent groups were the farm laborers, the miners, and, after 1922, the refugees resulting from partition. This paper concerns these special housing constituencies as they represent an effort that typifies the complexities of these years and this locale, an effort that encouraged modernization while at the same time filtering it through a prevailing political ideology bent on traditional culture, here described as Weimar corporatism.

Weimar corporatism was one of a number of "third way" solutions aimed at eluding partisan politics while fostering capitalist growth. Thus, a corporative affiliation envisioned the working classes and trades not as one entity, as parties on the left did and which became the prevailing view after 1925, but in quasi-feudal terms, as a panoply of distinct social groups whose skills and resources could be fostered and coordinated. Proponents argued that modernization would be less disruptive in this "organic" and decentralized society in which group-imposed discipline would temper the extremes of capitalism, and estates and crafts, city and countryside could work together in harmony.[10] The concept took form in the reconstruction plan presented to the National Assembly by the moderate democrats Walter Rathenau and Richard von Moellendorff in 1919.[11] Although their plan went down to defeat, and a multiparty compromise called the Great Coalition ended in 1923, the ideas persisted in state policy and political language through 1925.[12]

The corporative effort to coordinate governing bodies and vested interests confronted a particularly complex mix in Silesia. Dominated by the conservative Catholic Center Party, Silesia remained hostile to the center-left coalition that held sway in the federal and Prussian governments. Silesians, of Polish and German ethnicity alike, believed that they had suffered persecution from the federal government beginning with the anti-Catholic measures of the 1870s *Kulturkampf*. In their view, this persecution had been reaffirmed in modern times by the brief but damning reassertion of anti-Catholicism in 1918. Throughout the 1920s the Social Democrats were ineffectual in canvassing the Silesian countryside and its union strongholds in the mining districts.[13] Meanwhile, the administration of Silesia was contested among the federal government, the old and powerful Prussian state, and local parties, which included advocates for Catholicism, for conservatism, and for a separatist, autonomous region.[14] Ideally, corporative rhetoric would reassure the separatists, religious conservatives, and vying ethnicities that they could retain a measure of independence and cohesion while remaining within Germany.

Ernst May was part of the moderate reforming class associated with the new Weimar democracy. In Silesia he was an outsider, an agent of the federal government, and part of the center-left cohort that formed a ruling majority in the regional capital of Breslau but had few allies in the hinterland. At the same time, his sympathy for regional culture and the plight of its premodern traditions was deeply felt. His passion for the local vernacular became a point of mutuality with conservative proponents of *Heimatkunde*, as between the center and peripheral spheres of power. Further, he would couch his Silesian work in terms of a pact of accord and civility among classes.

May's Silesian work is distinguished from that which followed in Frankfurt by its regionalism and by modernization strategies argued in vernacular terms. As such it forms something of a missing link in the continuum between prewar reform efforts in housing and the heroic Modernism of the later 1920s, when the anonymity of the working class was reconceived as a positive model and issues of tradition and region were left behind, between May's employment on Hampstead Garden Suburb under Raymond Unwin and his post as *Stadtbaurat* in Frankfurt.[15] Corporative themes in May's work did not end with the Silesian program; rather, they continued in an ameliorated ideal of Modernism in Frankfurt, one that would, like this earlier work, propose an apolitical way to reform, a discourse primarily embedded in his discussions of nature and the garden.[16] Knitting this chapter back into Weimar history provides both a background to the themes of the New Frankfurt, and a view into the deep political rifts over which Weimar culture was able to provide only a thin gloss of political accord.

Silesia in 1920

Silesia was an agricultural province where the sandy soil, inhospitable climate, and a preponderance of large estates held the farm workers in a state of virtual serfdom.[17] Its richest resource was the ore of Upper Silesia. It was also strategically important as a borderland, and its history before and since has been colored by its precarious position as an embattled corner of the fatherland.

Following Silesia's absorption into Prussia in 1742, Frederick the Great initiated a program he dubbed "interior colonization," intended to stabilize the border and the population.[18] In the first of many efforts at rural settlement, he built some seventy colonies for miners and over 200 for

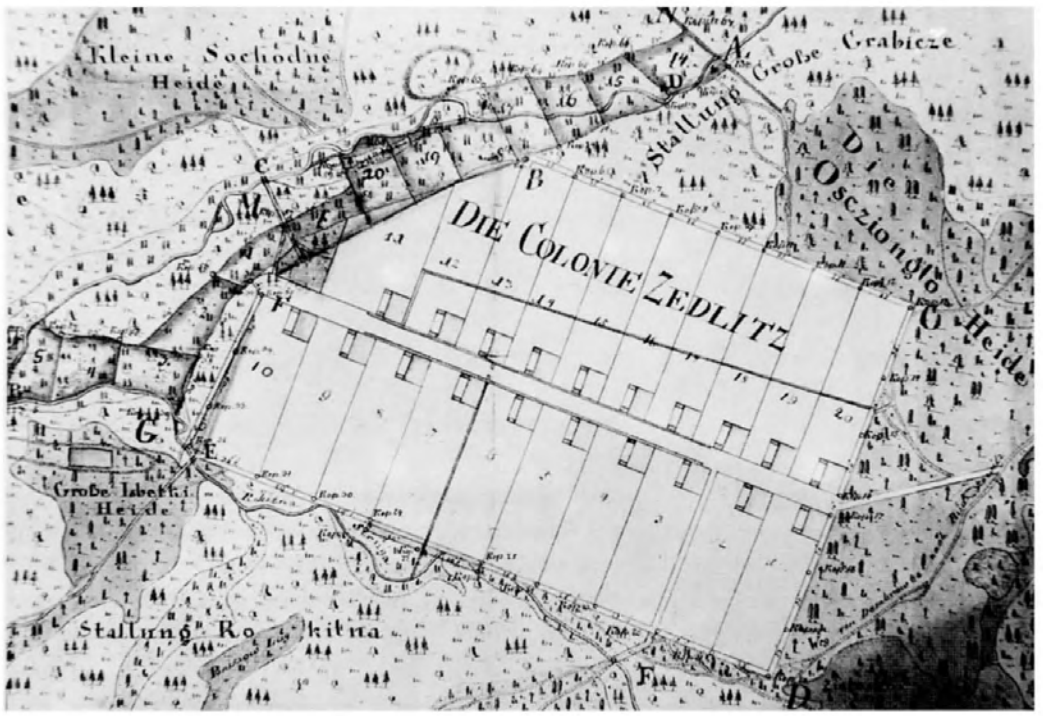

Figure 2 Colony Zedlitz, Silesia, 1773, one of Frederick the Great's settlements, from Hans-Joachim Helmigk, *Oberschlesische Landbaukunst um 1800* (Berlin, 1937)

farmers. The latter were some of the first planned agricultural settlements in Germany (Figure 2).[19] When agriculture declined in the nineteenth century, interior colonization resurfaced, both as policy and as a nationalist and racial polemic. For centuries Silesia had been populated by both Germans and Poles. Now began a prolonged campaign to Germanize the population, one that continued late into the century. In the 1870s Polish schools were banned. In the 1890s the Reich bought up estates where there were large Polish populations and turned them into homesteads for German peasants and laborers.

In the early twentieth century, Silesia remained both politically sensitive and economically important, second only to the occupied Ruhr in industry and coal production. Under Weimar the province stood aloof from the democratic federal and state governments and was fraught with its own internal struggles. In the early 1920s it witnessed two full-blown uprisings between ethnic Poles and Germans, continual strikes in the mining sector, food shortages, and, in 1921, the intrusion of 20,000 French troops in anticipation of the border plebiscite. As a result, Silesian partition in 1922 was one the most spectacular and contested among the several instigated by the Treaty of Versailles. The controversial plebiscites, followed by cession of half Upper Silesia to Poland, fixed Silesia in the popular imagination as a symbol of the hostility and humiliation the nation had suffered at the hands of its conquerors.[20]

Depopulation also persisted. Despite much fanfare, a prewar colonization initiative had not proved successful. By 1912 only 2,000 workers were resettled. Many others had left, tired of local resentment and disappointed in the inferior soil. The next year a report on the hinterland of Breslau found that severely substandard housing persisted even among those lucky enough to have their own dwellings. Indeed, most Silesian farmhands slept in barns or attics or in primitive rental barracks built near landed estates.[21] Silesia had also been hit by devastating food shortages that only worsened at the war's end. Herbert Hoover's Children's Relief workers estimated that thousands lacked food and medical care. These debilitating conditions presented serious public health problems reflected in high child mortality and tuberculosis rates.[22] With partition looming, resettlement was once again viewed as critical.

Silesian farmers and miners were especially beleaguered in the postwar years, victims of modernization, partition, and, in the case of the farmers, a history of oppression. Along with the refugees, the farmers and the miners would become the target of specific Weimar housing legislation, with proscribed funding mechanisms and new building codes intended to solidify their social identity in all its particularity and indigenous aspects. The case of the refugees, cut off from their work and their homes, was more problematic. While the hope was to reintegrate them into Silesian life, their lack of an economic foothold in the province suggested something more akin to the uprooted masses of the cities. Together, the histories of these three

constituencies present a paradigm of political and cultural aspirations in the early years of the Weimar Republic, and their sudden transformation with the stabilization of the mark in 1925.

The Rationalized Vernacular—Farmworker Housing

> In our fathers' time the great rural estates and peasant holdings were the bearers of a vigorous building tradition. This has changed in the last fifty years, as one frequently observes in the abundant tastelessness of pretentious renovations and new construction in the countryside. We hope and believe . . . that the task of building appropriate rural housing for the laborer will lead us back to an honest and vital building tradition in the hinterland.[23]
>
> Ernst May, 1921

In 1919 the federal government initiated a new interior colonization program and with it revived the nationalistic and racial polemics that played on the nostalgic sympathies of the German public. The major effort was toward establishing new rural homesteads, both individual and aggregated into settlements. Like those before it, the plan forecast populating wastelands and estates with German workers from the west. State propaganda appealed to the settlers to return to the soil, to independence and self-sufficiency. The political aim was to solidify the German vote in the upcoming plebiscite. With great fanfare, the interior minister announced in 1921 that two parcels of land in the coal districts of Pless and Rybnik, sites of a Polish uprising in 1919, were to be distributed to German colonists. May would build a number settlements there.[24] Meanwhile, the state distributed seed, equipment, and food through organizations like the Upper Silesian Emergency Provision *(Oberschlesische Notstandversorgung)*, the unions, and the cooperatives.[25]

The colonization campaign coincided with federal programs to modernize agricultural practices. New national boards absorbed local agricultural chambers of commerce, and cooperative societies promoted technical and managerial rationalization. The state built model and cooperative farms; by 1929 there were over 748 in Prussia alone. New aid packages encouraged individual farmers to implement modern management techniques and equipment, while farm workers updated their skills by attending vocational courses where they mastered such modern arts as tractor driving.[26] New housing was a major part of this drive. The Farm Worker Housing Law of 1921 raised minimum housing standards and allocated 200,000,000 marks to build homesteads.[27]

Two contradictory axioms—the authenticity of vernacular and traditional cultures, and the positive impact of rationalization on the quality of life—characterized rural housing programs and reforms in the early Weimar period. The Farmworker Housing Law, for example, encouraged the construction of vernacular farmhouses with large, multipurpose rooms and attics for boarding maids and farmhands, a strategy aimed at preserving the ideal of rural life envisioned by conservationists and propagandized by the state (Figure 3). It was also regressive in directly involving the employer as the builder. While postwar legislation required that publicly funded housing programs be fiscally separate from employers, the Farmworker Housing Law perpetuated the dependence of farmer on overlord, and of housing on employment. This was particularly alarming in the Silesian context, in which aristocratic power in the countryside remained virtually unchallenged. Thus, the charge to build farmworker housing had inherent contradictions, with the pressure to rationalize planning and construction counterposed by an obligation to maintain tradition.

The situation of political power in the province further determined these conflicting mandates. Isolated in the countryside, with a legal status inferior to that of the urban worker and little sense of class identity, the Silesian farmworkers proved a problematic constituency in prewar efforts to unionize the industry.[28] As a result, the farmworkers' collective power was virtually nil.[29] Impelled by the need for new settlement, the state advocated on their behalf through the new law, which addressed issues such as land redistribution that might have otherwise been included in union platforms. At the same time, to gain leverage toward land redistribution and wanting to avoid massive expropriation, the federal government had to build ties with the provincial aristocracy, ties built on concessions like the continued link of housing to employer.

As head of the *Schlesische Heimstätte*, May reconfigured this dilemma through the corporative lens. To increase productivity, he mustered a panoply of resource and rationalization strategies; to stabilize the region, he sought an imagery and a character that was at once Germanic and Silesian. Thus his "vernacular" cottage was part political and cultural device and part practical solution, what can be termed a rationalized vernacular.

While rationalization as a fixture of modernization was already deeply imbedded in the nation's new economic and administrative structures, the locus of cultural identity proved more contentious. May proposed that the vernacular embodied not only a nascent rationalism, but also the essence of regional culture. The construction traditions

Figure 3 Advertisement for interest-free loans for farmworkers willing to build homes under the auspices of the Silesian Rural Settlement Authority, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1923)

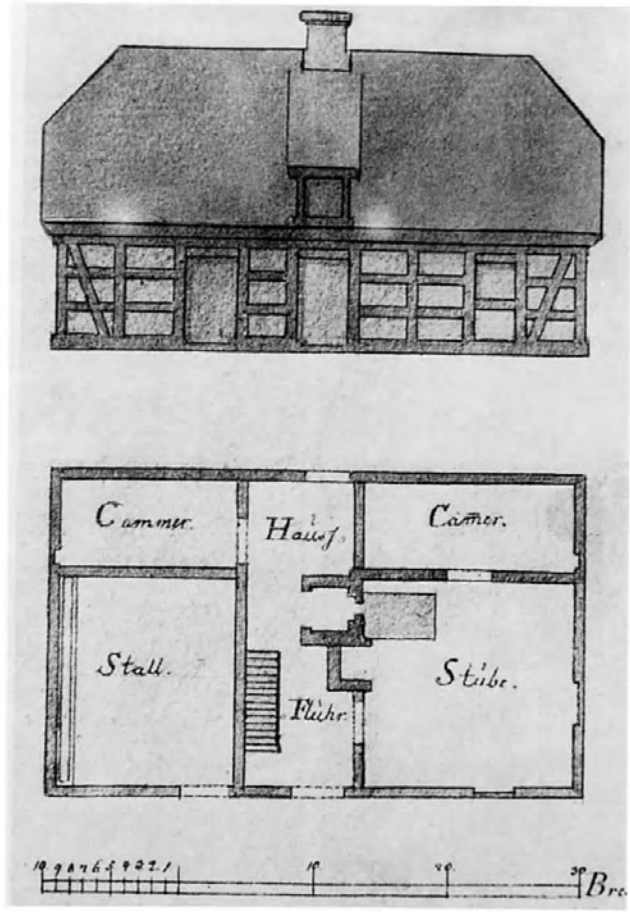

Figure 4 David Gilly, farmhouse for a Silesian settlement, c. 1775, from Helmigk, *Oberschlesische Landbaukunst um 1800*

constituted a "natural" or intuitive standardization, while they mirrored and identified the locale.[30] Beginning in 1920, May conducted detailed studies of Silesian farmhouses to develop modern types that retained their regional character but were also conducive to rationalized production techniques.[31] His approach suggested a kinship between the contemporary and some generalized idea of the authentic tradition, the same relationship that corporatism supposed existed more broadly between the contemporary condition and the past.[32] Meanwhile, his research drew from similar studies made by David Gilly (1748–1808), Frederick II's principal architect for his Silesian settlements (Figure 4). May saw a natural lineage here, too, between the scientific approach practiced by Gilly during the Enlightenment and the pragmatism of the vernacular. Indeed, he viewed the vernacular and its reprisal in Gilly's innovations as precociously modern phenomena. Rationalization was its contemporary incarnation.[33] The coincidence between the eighteenth century and the contemporary colonization programs also made for a strong rhetorical parallel that seemed to further validate May's interpretation. For advocates of modernization, the analogy of standardized housing to vernacular building conferred legitimacy on this work: like the vernacular, standardized units were the best solution in a modest sphere. Design professionals, quintessential outsiders in the rural context, could claim for their standard types a kinship with the vernacular as it had evolved through centuries of collective experience and knowledge, as well as with the venerable scientific tradition of the Enlightenment.

The prototypical Silesian farmhouse was a long, rectangular structure covered by a single gable. Its tripartite plan contained living quarters at one end of the building and a barn at the other (Figure 4).[34] In between, and extending from the front of the house to the back courtyard, was a combined vestibule and sheltered work area *(Flur)* that functioned as a covered courtyard for household and farm-related chores. It was considered the characteristic feature of the Silesian farmhouse. Other rooms included the multipurpose *Stube* and *Kammer*. The central *Wohnküche* served as the hub of the household, at once the kitchen, a major work area, and the parents' sleeping quarters. The attic provided more sleeping chambers, storage, and work space.[35]

May's array of tidy new versions were twice the size of his typical suburban *Kleinwohnung* and housed from nine to twelve people, supporting the large families that presumably would colonize the countryside (Figure 5). He maintained the tradition of the multipurpose *Wohnküche* at the center of the house. With its large, undefined floor area, the *Wohnküche* was a commodious 25 square meters that suited

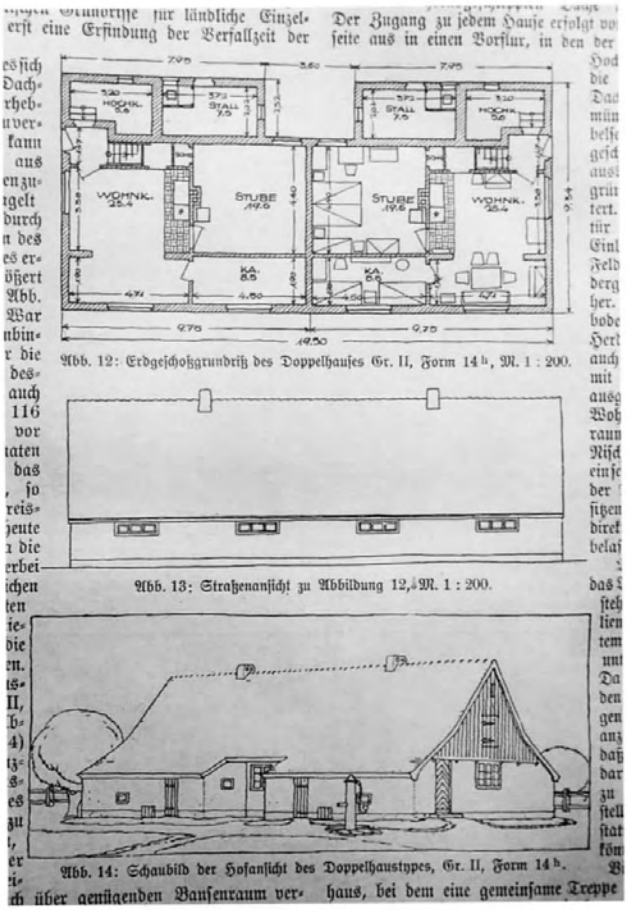

Figure 5 Ernst May, farmworker house, type "Double house Group II, Form 14h," from *Schlesisches Heim* (1921)

the many activities that occupied farm life: equipment repair in winter, processing garden crops for market in summer, or any of the many other tasks performed in a farming household (Figure 6). He assigned it these customary roles as well as those of the workroom, barn, and shed, items the tight state budget precluded. Responding to the legal stipulation of a reform moral code that required separate sleeping areas for generations, servants, boarders, brothers, and sisters, some models included accommodations for maids and farmhands, and all had separate sleeping areas for children. On the ground floor, a *Stube* now served as the parents' room, but it could sleep as many as five.[36] There was space for more beds in alcoves beneath the sweeping gables and in rooms on the second floor.

On the exterior, the traditional Silesian farmhouse had a heavy wooden structure, a thatch roof, and distinctive decoration of chevron-patterned slats in the upper gables and on the doors and shutters (Figure 7). May maintained and even exaggerated these features to maximize their primary function while simplifying their form (see Figure 12). The gable roof was the most dramatic feature of the Silesian vernacular, and May produced a lavish and dramatic variety. He studied its logic and shortcomings and designed rationalized versions that maximized the usable space inside the house while minimizing the structural complexity for ease of construction. For example, his deep gable enveloped the

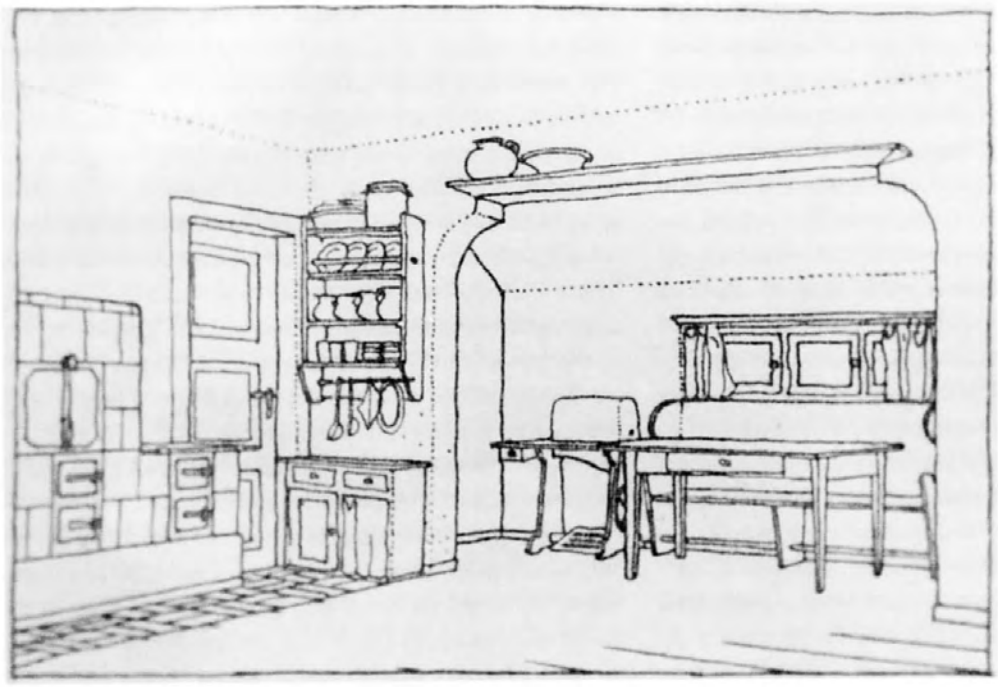

Figure 6 Ernst May, farmworker house, *Wohnküche* alcove, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1921)

Figure 7 Silesian farmhouse, Freystadt, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1920)

Figure 8 Ernst May, Siedlung Oltaschin, Silesia, 1921, double house with house sign on gable end, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1922)

attic, the second floor, and part of the first, thus eliminating most exterior walls and saving construction costs while also protecting the house against the trials of winter in the open countryside. This model, which he used at Oltaschin, accommodated two families on the ground floor and two rent-paying boarders in the attic (Figure 8). On the other hand, his splayed saddle gable, with its low-sweeping profile, rendered a spacious ground floor but eliminated attic quarters (Figure 5).[37] It was through such experiments and an evolutionary approach that May would ultimately endorse the flat roof as the most logical solution, producing his first version in a weekend house in 1925 (see Figure 22).[38] Through his research he soon generated a raft of articles—on thatch-roof construction and fireproofing, roof truss simplification, mud-brick manufacture and its applications—that filled the pages of *Schlesisches Heim*.[39] For the settlers' use, he published pamphlets on simple home building and reprinted Gilly's work, such as the instructions for building a thatch roof (Figure 9).[40]

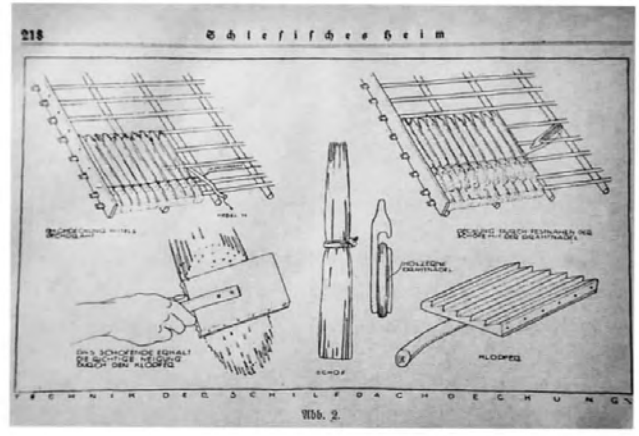

Figure 9 David Gilly, instructions on making a thatch roof, from *Handbuch der Landbaukunst* (1798), reprinted in in *Schlesisches Heim* (1922)

While May reformed the farmhouse in the context of Silesian tradition, he often interpreted community in a political context. Up through 1922 the authority's settlements were built almost exclusively in Lower Silesia, particularly in a north-south band centered around Breslau. Relatively free of the turmoil besetting Upper Silesia, this was also the center of the colonization effort. At the rural settlement of Oltaschin, in a powerfully *völkisch* and pastoral scheme, May produced a cultural and aesthetic model of interior colonization.[41] Ten broad and easy double houses flanked the road to the central green. Their wide, flared eaves and red-tiled wagon roofs had picturesque eyebrow dormers outlined with a broad line of ultramarine (see Figure 8). May adapted the mud-block walls, with their smooth stucco and black tar bases, from the vernacular, and he hired a Berlin artist named Lotte Hartmann to design traditional house signs for each gable end. Her themes included deer and geese, factories and mill wheels—symbols of local trade and industry (Figure 10).[42] A profusion of lush plantings, including a hedge wall and orchards that enveloped the seven-acre site and its large market gardens, answered the deep profiles of the roofs and heightened the image of rural hominess (Figure 11).

Oltaschin was built using self-help labor. The farmers helped build the houses in exchange for a reduction in the mortgage.[43] In the years between 1918 and 1924, architects and housing authorities, mostly working with small clubs,

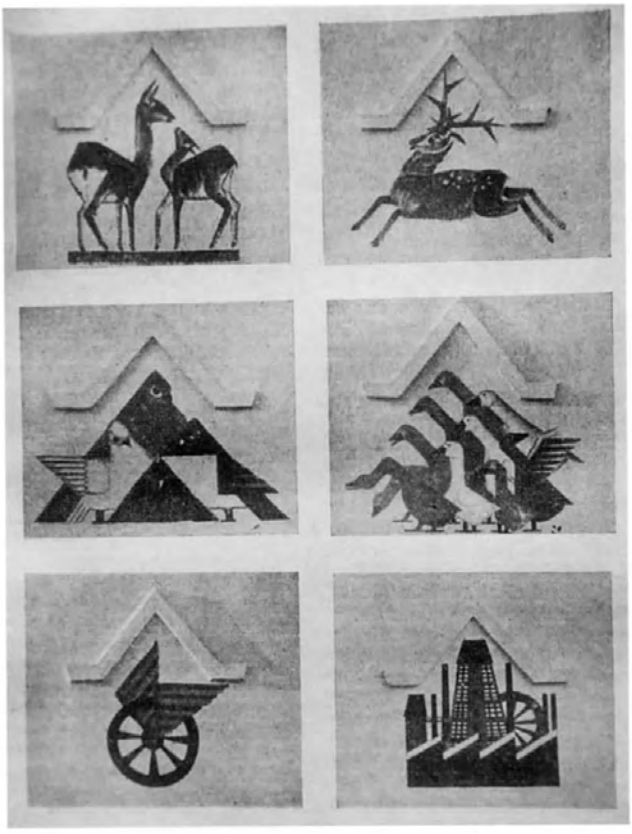

Figure 10 Lotte Hartmann, house signs for Siedlung Oltaschin, 1921, inspired by local fauna and regional industries, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1922)

produced scores of self-build schemes. Primitivist strategies demanded from the settler a self-reliance and "back-to-the-land" attitude that appealed to those in dread of Germany's increasingly urban population, and offered potential release from obligations to society's "least well-off," a return to the prewar state of laissez-faire capitalism. Self-help construction sustained broad-based if equivocal support; for professionals who publicly celebrated the self-help spirit, there was scant hope for the actual outcome. May's cottages were a product of these conflicting hopes and ideas, and the *völkisch* houses at Oltaschin reflected a national mindset bent equally on self-reliant frugality and a romantic ideal of the homestead.

May also credited Oltaschin as a political success, one that demonstrated the potential of a corporative polity. The sponsors represented a cross-class spectrum: the nobility, in the person of the Baron von Richthofen, donated the land; the state bureaucracy and the social welfare agencies facilitated the project; the builders, the *Soziale Bauhütte* of Breslau, represented the construction trades; and the working poor, the farmworkers, provided unskilled labor. The fiscal plan combined aid from the contending political parties situated within federal, provincial, and district bureaus. Indeed, when displayed at the Breslau building fair in 1922, Oltaschin was lauded as representing the positive essence of Weimar reform, a triumph of cooperative effort.[44] At the same fair, a speech delivered by the Prussian prime minister, Otto Braun, caused a sensation when he called upon Silesians to give up their separatist claims and rejoin a unified Prussia.[45]

Figure 11 Siedlung Oltaschin, Silesia, 1921, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1922)

Figure 12 Ernst May, Siedlung Neustadt, Silesia, typical double house, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1925)

Figure 13 Ernst May, Siedlung Neustadt, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1923)

Further illustrating the complexities of the Silesian situation are May's settlements for new police officers, a minor chapter in the instance of special constituencies.[46] In 1921 the Social Democratic leadership founded the *Schutzpolizei*, or *Schupo*, a demilitarized, republican police force. The creation of the *Schupo* was intended to allay the Allies' fears of the heavily armed Prussian police force, the *Sicherheitspolizei*, or *Sipo*, while creating a dependable new civil order.[47] While in Upper Silesia the dismantling of the *Sipo* in 1920 was blamed for the victimization of the Germans at the hands of the Poles, the Poles viewed the new force as a paramilitary invasion by the Germans. The *Schupo*'s tenuous position was only compounded by the ongoing state of civil unrest and political turmoil in the province. May's bureau built two *Schupo* settlements, one in Oppeln, the other in the border town of Neustadt. Here the "By One's Own Hand Building Club 'Camaraderie'" built a settlement of *völkisch* farmhouses for thirty policemen and their families.[48] The large double houses had billowing roofs of deep thatch, limed roof ridges, battened woodwork, and gable ends painted in brilliant colors (Figure 12). As at Oltaschin, this highly romanticized interpretation of the Silesian vernacular negotiated a place for the *Schupo* as a member of the community and reinforced the group's cohesion, indeed its camaraderie (Figure13).

In all, May produced some 450 individual units of farmworker housing and more than a dozen settlements between 1919 and 1924.[49] Better housing and modern

reforms, May promised, would improve the morals, health, and sanitary conditions of rural life, while encouraging Silesian traditions would foster the spiritual bond of the homesteader to the soil—altogether, a strategy combining "the greatest economy with quiet, rural form."[50]

Silesian Miner Settlements

The mountains of Upper Silesia held some of the richest mines in Europe, and were the most densely populated part of the province. In the course of the nineteenth century, the population had risen by a factor of six, largely through the immigration of Polish mine workers. The cities of Gleiwitz, Beuthen, and Kattowitz were the heart of the industry and formed Silesia's so-called Iron Triangle. Upper Silesia provided 23 percent of Germany's coal, 80 percent of its zinc, and 75 percent of its iron.[51]

In the years before partition, Upper Silesia was the scene of continual strikes and violent clashes between the Poles and the Germans, much of it under the noses of the occupying allied troops. Then, in 1922, the loss of the Silesian mines to Poland created a crisis in the construction industry, which was left bereft of coal to fire bricks and glass. Experts scurried to revive vernacular materials, giving rise to the so-called *Ersatzbauweisen* effort.[52] The new, ill-conceived border with Poland sliced through the "Iron Triangle" and destroyed other industrial ensembles as well, with pits, cokeries, blast furnaces, and steel mills located on opposite sides of the border. The remaining infrastructure was nevertheless vital to German recovery. When the federal government enacted special housing legislation to secure the industry, the miners became May's second major constituency.

The miners of Upper Silesia lived on remote, rugged terrain riddled with old excavations. They saved the few fertile tracts for gardens, and built towns with irregular street patterns and a density that rivaled major German cities. Town life was the hub of the miner world, and its cohesiveness and isolation fostered a quasi-feudal, ritual-laden culture that survived into the twentieth century. The isolation of the region was such that discrete Polish and German dialects further distanced both groups from their national roots and strengthened the internal bonds of Catholicism, mining tradition, and political conservatism. Again it was Frederick the Great who, attempting to Germanize the work force, founded the first miner settlements. In the eighteenth century, the ores were vital to the production of precious and weaponry metals and as fuel for industry. Frederick built forty-two smelter townships adjunct to the royal munitions works and twenty-one forestry settlements to provide fuel to the smelters. Even though the land in the mining regions was poor, every settler received a small garden plot of about 50 square meters with a loft and an animal stall attached to the house.[53]

In contrast to the farmworkers, the miners, both Polish and German, had strong unions that focused their bargaining power. In the early 1920s, housing officials and reformers established a new partnership with the miners, who had proved worthy advocates the previous year by impelling the National Coal Board to raise coal prices to produce funds for new housing. The following year, the state enacted the Miner Housing Ordinance (January 1920), guaranteeing aid to the mining districts.[54] Provincial miner-housing authorities oversaw the distribution of subsidies within regional enclaves and coordinated the construction of new settlements with local housing offices and larger entities such as the *Schlesische Heimstätte*.[55] Miner housing was one of the few programs that offered a clear chance for success in 1920. While most construction was immobilized by the soaring inflation, mining companies owned their own brick factories and forests, and labor could be allocated from the existing, and currently underutilized, pool.[56]

If self-reliance was the theme of farmworker housing, miner housing concerned the communal traditions of town life. Social stability in the mining towns depended on extended family networks that welcomed relatives and boarders in search of employment.[57] Indeed, boarding was common, as workers migrated from one district to another in search of work, and provided a short-term solution for housing shortages and unemployment.[58] The premium on land also encouraged density, and the apartment flat was the dominant dwelling type. For the miners, May produced multifamily dwellings, with room for boarding, and designated the apartment flat as the prototypical dwelling.[59]

May's multistory units came in two principal versions, one comprised of traditional rooms and a *Wohnküche* and scullery. For the other, the *flurlose* (vestibule-less) type, he introduced the kitchen niche and his first rationalized plan, an important first attempt to curb costs through the narrow definition of plan elements (Figure 14).[60] Performing the kind of study that would lead to the *Existenzminimum* later in the decade, May submitted the traditional miner flat to "scientific analysis," essentially using Taylorizing methods to quantify spatial efficiency. As a result and in a "dramatic innovation," he eliminated the customary vestibule. While this ran counter to the ideal of reviving vernacular forms, May argued that, after living with the cramped halls of company and speculator housing, workers had forgotten the tradition of the old Silesian *Flur*. It was an argument May would deploy on a number of occasions as he worked to

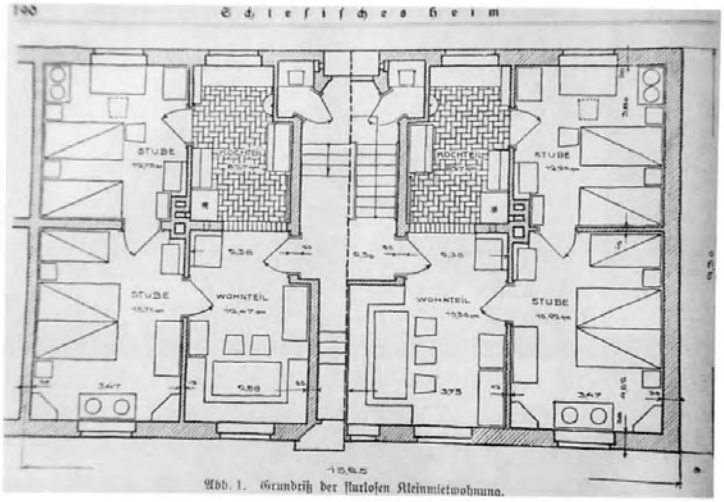

Figure 14 Ernst May, house type "Flurlose," floor plan, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1921)

Figure 15 Ernst May, Siedlung Klettendorf, house type "Gustav Freytag," kitchen niche, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1921)

evolve more strictly rationalized types. The dimensions, room heights, arrangement, and equipping of the *flurlose* apartment were determined by the miner housing law: each household measured under 70 square meters, and each floor gave access to two units from a landing. In order to maximize usable space, May looked to excise any area dedicated to circulation, exclusive of the public hall. The result was a square divided into four quadrants, with doors opening directly from one room into the next. From the public stair one moved straight into the kitchen, and from there into the bedrooms. He equipped the rooms with built-in sinks and closets that effectively delimited their use as bedrooms. In an unfortunate echo of the housing barracks, he removed the toilet to the hall, where it obviated the 1 square meter needed for the door swing inside the apartment, and allowed boarders to use it without entering the lessor's home. In providing quarters for boarders, May made a significant exception to state housing policy in recognizing a vital local practice. His compromise was to remove the rental quarters to the attic, where they were accessible from the public stair and secure from the familial domain.

In a more dramatic alteration, May replaced the *Wohnküche* with a kitchen niche and separate eating area (Figure 15). It was his first version of the kitchen as both a niche and a specialized tool, a precursor to the Frankfurt Kitchen.[61] In explanation, he cited the principles of scientific management: "Every corner is used in the most sparing way, so that an appropriate manipulation of the kitchen and scullery will be guaranteed according to a thought-out definition of the Taylor system."[62] To make the tightly configured space work, May installed built-in furnishings: a combination cupboard and work table, a buffet, and a fireside seat. Hooks near the entry door served for the missing wardrobe. The adjacent family area had a fixed bench and table and built-in cupboards. In a further space saving, the point of division between the kitchen and nook doubled as the entry. This accommodation of the tight space with built-in furnishings was to become his standard practice in the small apartments in Frankfurt.

May exhibited a *flurlose* prototype at an exhibition called *Colony of the Silesian Coal and Coke Factories*, where miners' representatives could examine it for recommendation to their membership. Subsequently, slightly altered versions were built at several settlements. One of these was in the town of Klettendorf.

The history of the Klettendorf settlement is a study in the complex, sometimes contradictory issues imbedded in settlement projects. Like many others built in the early postwar period, it stood alone in its town as evidence of the promised dividends of the new welfare state. It was a project literally built on concessions made by the sponsors, the municipality, and the local social service office. To encour-

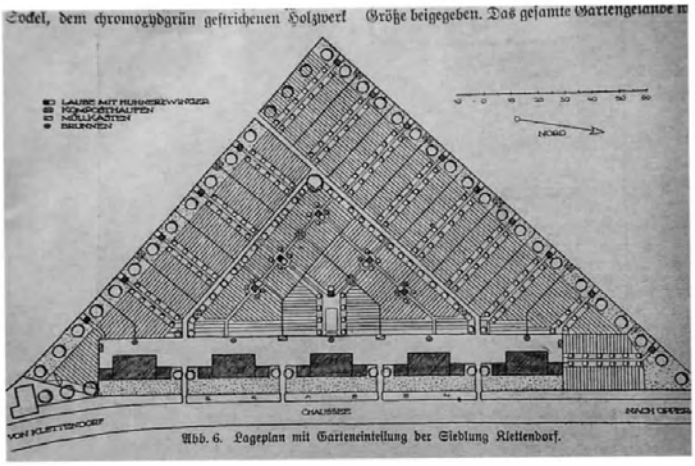

Figure 16 Ernst May, Siedlung Klettendorf, Breslau environs, site plan, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1922)

Figure 17 Ludwig Gies, foundation plaque, Siedlung Klettendorf, 1922, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1922)

age a permanent tenancy, for example, the city took the unusual step of designating the units homestead freeholds. Under these terms, the settlement administration retained a supervisory role and ultimate ownership of the property, but the settlers secured the right to bequeath their leases to descendants. This rare opportunity to pass on rental properties was offered in hopes of more "dependable" and long-term settlers, while the tenants were rewarded with, if not the ideal homestead, at least a modified version of it, replete with extensive garden plots.

In May's hands, solidarity and self-reliance, cooperation and steadfastness, national and communal themes assumed a heroic resonance in a language both celebratory and *völkisch*.[63] The five four-family houses, in a version May designated "Gustav Freytag" after the novelist of Silesian rural life, created a bulwark against a busy town highway; the houses' great arched portals led into the garden enclosure and to house entries on the interior side (Figure 16).[64] The houses themselves evoked a humble regionalism. The steeply pitched roofs, black-tarred foundation walls, green woodwork under the eaves and on the window frames and doors were all elements of a familiar rural vocabulary. May described the deep red of the plaster walls as "kräftig" (robust). Lotte Hartmann's bright enamel wall plaques again embellished the doorways with homely themes like "Mother Love," which depicted a woman in peasant garb sheltering a group of children under her voluminous cape. Over the main entrance, a plaque read "The Community of Klettendorf built this in 1922 in the hour of Germany's greatest need."[65] It was illustrated by a group of roughly modeled figures, their faces averted, raising a beam on their shoulders (Figure 17).

Like the grand portals into the courtyard, the formal garden scheme behind created an elevated setting for the everyday activities of the community. Humble and functional rather than beautifying elements filled the symmetrical plan and its hierarchically disposed courts. In the center, the children's play area was surrounded by a work space equipped with water pumps and garbage bins. Garden huts, hen coops, and compost heaps formed secondary squares, while a border of trees and garden sheds shielded the gardens from neighboring streets. May had rationalized the individual garden plans, like the *flurlose* units inside, in order to exert control over the tenant toward optimizing productivity. Each allotment had beds suited for basic plant crops, with borders of bush fruit and trellis plants, and the settlers were obliged to submit to the supervision of a gardener assigned by the *Schlesische Heimstätte* in their everyday tasks and in the construction of their garden sheds to "guarantee visual unity and avoid blunders."[66] Only beyond these elaborate constraints was it true, as May claimed, that "the individual resident had a free hand to create his own garden."[67] Modernization indeed implied control and reacculturation, and May was already occupied with the question of reeducating the working classes in the ways of a modern *Wohnkultur*. Shortly before the completion of Klettendorf, and in cooperation with the city, he displayed a unit with standardized furnishings so that future tenants and interested parties could be tutored in the efficient use of space.

At the groundbreaking ceremony on 8 June 1921, guests at Klettendorf included the Silesian governor and the district administrator. Banners decorated the building site, and the mayor gave a speech praising the diligence and persistence of the German people. He read from the statement subsequently buried in the cornerstone:

. . . A block of stone costing before the war two Pfennigs today costs 1.5 marks; one cubic meter of cut wood, once thirty-five marks is today 2,000 marks. In spite of this we build!

We want later generations to know that even in this time of trouble we did not loose faith in the fatherland![68]

May reiterated these sentiments in his articles in professional journals. Klettendorf became his example of how even the most minor achievement represented a major victory in the dark, early postwar years. He described its completion with an air of disbelief, likening it to the happy farmer "who, before a drenching rain . . . has luckily brought in his hoe."[69] He praised the society of Klettendorf for taking the initiative and for its dogged resolution to complete construction of the settlement in a short period. It was the kind of triumphant tale that was being retold all over the country during these difficult years, and may indeed have helped the spirit of Weimar reform survive until the stabilization of the mark in 1924.

Refugee Housing

The protracted negotiations over the border between Germany and Poland have prevented almost any building in the province. The housing shortage rages here as everywhere, but even more so since the Polish Terror has caused thousands of families to lose their homes in the alienated zones. As a result, with the end of the occupation the Reich resolved to found the Central Office for the Silesian Refugees' Welfare, and the Provincial Governor Philipp granted it extensive powers to guarantee the unimpeded execution of the appointed task.[70]

Ernst May, 1924

The great flood of Silesian refugees irrupted in 1921 on the heels of the second Polish uprising and the partition of Upper Silesia. In 1921 some 350,000 Germans, mostly skilled mine workers and industrial laborers, found themselves in the new Polish zone. As they streamed across the border, public opinion was roused by reports of attacks on German Silesians, dubbed the "Polish Terror."[71] Within Silesia the situation was more complex, and refugees were often greeted with suspicion and fear. Although the state moved to provide emergency shelter in public schools and vacant barracks, thousands were left homeless. By the summer of 1922, 5,000 families, a total number of more than 20,000 refugees, were living in unacceptable conditions. The state assessed the situation to be dangerous to the "health, order, and morals" of the region.[72]

In many ways, the refugees were well suited to the ministrations of the emerging welfare infrastructure of Weimar: bereft and cut off from their towns, they lacked the local ties or political leverage that was key to Silesian identity and a cornerstone of the corporative model. In 1922 the refugees became yet another special constituency, but one that would be ministered to with a more purely modern set of solutions. Marrying emergency and rationalization strategies, the federal government and the Prussian state created the Central Office for Silesian Refugees' Welfare, a temporary agency delegated to provide emergency housing and services for the refugees, after which it was charged to disband. Walter Rathenau had produced the first example of this unique institution during the war. The purpose of his War Office was to control and coordinate private enterprise and the flow of war matériel. Through its great efficiency it was believed to have changed the course of the war.[73] Publicity making this favorable parallel declared that the Central Office for Refugees would similarly reverse a crisis at a critical juncture.

In 1922 May assumed the head of the Central Office's architecture division along with his other duties at the Housing Authority. Accorded considerable powers in this role, he could bypass all other bureaucracies, at the same time enlisting the aid of local institutions to expand productivity. The office operated from September 1922 to December 1923. Within that time it produced 1,264 new units and housed over 5,000 refugees.[74] A belt of refugee settlements soon stretched along the new Polish border, from the southern town of Ratibor north to Beuthen (Figure 18).[75]

The Central Office was allotted unusual resources that further detached it from local control. The Treaty of Versailles required that Germany dismantle its military infrastructure. Now the state allocated these defunct federal properties, a cache of land and buildings, to May's office. Military factories, hospitals, barracks, and airports became the raw material of the refugee settlements.[76] Not only did these properties make May more independent of local government, but as an example of standardization they proved a key influence on May's modernization strategies, and resulted in his distancing from the vernacular traditions that characterized his other settlement work.

Speed had been vital to the buildup on the eve of war, and the military had adopted standardization and mass production techniques in construction. The army mass-produced wood frames using standardized parts for barracks as early as 1911. Keeping the bases intact, it was a simple matter for May to convert the standard barracks to housing by dividing them into a series of two-room units. Small additions to the side or back housed the toilets and coal bins (Figure 19). Families shared the attic and the basement as storage and laundry space. The typical two-room unit

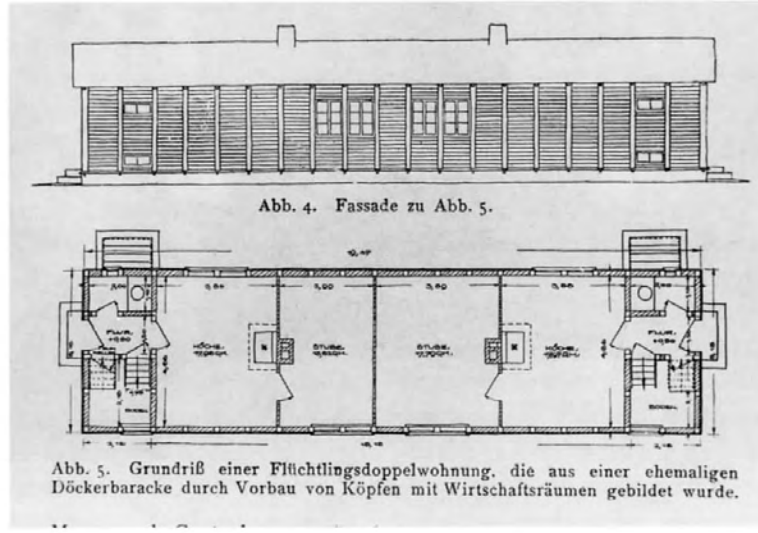
Abb. 4. Fassade zu Abb. 5.

Abb. 5. Grundriß einer Flüchtlingsdoppelwohnung, die aus einer ehemaligen Döckerbaracke durch Vorbau von Köpfen mit Wirtschaftsräumen gebildet wurde.

Figure 18 Map of postpartition Upper Silesia, plotting refugee settlements built by the Central Office along the new border, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1923)

Figure 19 Ernst May, small barracks converted into a two-family house, from *Das Zentralblatt für Bauverwaltung* (1924)

totaled 35 to 40 square meters and had a garden allotment at the back.[77] Variety was minimal and depended on the barracks type: troop, hospital, and prison barracks each had particular dimensions. From the smallest, measuring 5 x 15 meters, May developed a two-family house, while the larger hospital barracks accommodated three families. With the addition of a number of special elements, a bay shop window, for example, May evolved a set of standardized components that systematized renovation. The barracks were generally left unadorned, but in some cases one can see May still working toward a Silesian solution to the alien forms. At the refugee settlement Beuthen II he attempted to rehabilitate a group of barracks by establishing an order of bays with siding held in place by vertical posts, and by grafting Silesian ornament onto the surface.[78] New houses added to the site also displayed the intricate bay system, with house signs and small triangular gables taken from Silesian models in the narrow bays (Figure 20).

To build with speed and frugality, May omitted most standard amenities like animal stalls, built-in furnishings, running water, and the kitchen niche. He eliminated special equipping or shaping of rooms and reverted instead to multipurpose rooms. Since the units were small, he provided for upgrading and expansion: two two-room units would ideally be combined later to create one four-room house.[79] Meanwhile, he used gardens to compensate for the lack of the other features; in answer to the constitutional promise of a house and land for every citizen, he declared

> . . . the refugees should not only be sheltered, but sheltered so that at least for most of the year they can extend their small, sheltered living quarters through resort to a garden area. In this way they can also provide some of their own food. This . . . is of even greater importance since the majority of refugees belong to the miner class . . . and therefore the compensation of a healthy activity in the open air requires special consideration.[80]

But of greater importance were the experiments suggested by the example of the barracks themselves. May discovered that by inserting an insulating brick shell inside, essentially building inside out, he could work through the winter season when converting the barracks. Nearly all the refugee housing was built in the winter of 1922/23, usually idle months for construction workers but critical ones in the current emergency. He also systematized production: workers assembled the wood frames during the summer months, built the interior masonry shell of blocks or concrete planks and finished it with a rough coat of lime plaster or cement in winter.[81] He then adapted the technique to the construction of a row house type, which he called *Zephil*, to supplement the barracks housing. It was a lesson he would apply in Frankfurt in the second half of the decade, when his prefabricated parts were assembled under the shelter of a factory roof rather than on site (see Figure 20).

Prior to his work with barracks buildings, May's experience with wood was limited to the self-help model house that he designed for the Breslau Technology Fair of 1922

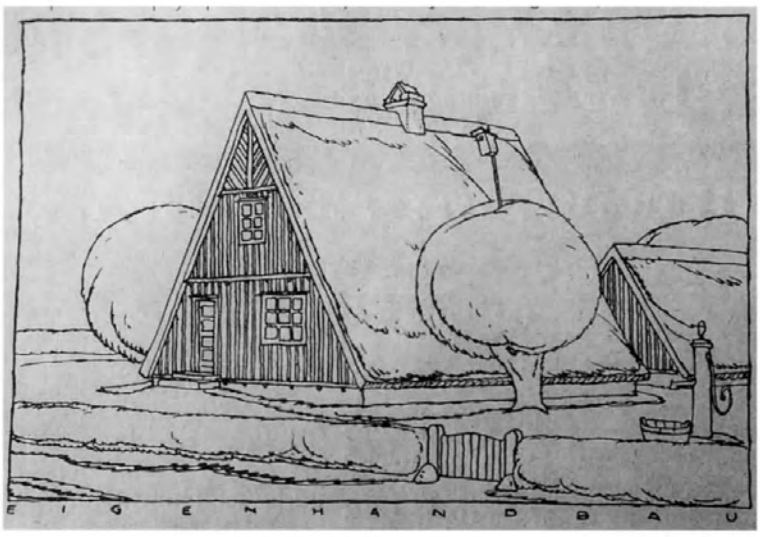

Figure 20 Ernst May, row of type "Zephil" double houses built from wood at the refugee settlement Beuthen II, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1923)

Figure 21 Ernst May, Silesian Housing Authority self-help house exhibited at the Breslau Technology Fair, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1922)

(Figure 21).[82] The wood structure supported a thick thatch roof over an A-frame set in a stone foundation. This simple scheme allowed unskilled laborers to cut and assemble the parts and obviated the construction of a truss, a complex structural element that posed a significant challenge in a self-help project, while maintaining the comforting gable profile.[83] In 1924, however—possibly influenced by a recent trip to America, possibly by his visit to Adolf Loos's Siedlung am Heuburg in Vienna—May further explored the potentialities of wood and mass production and produced a design for a wood frame house, not for the poor, but for the middle class. His "House for the Middle-Class Family," shown at the annual Breslau Spring Fair, was made entirely from standardized, mass-produced wooden elements (Figures 22, 23).[84] Built in the shelter of a factory, the stud frame, enclosed by wood shuttering inside and out, eliminated crafted detailing and limited site work to assembly. The whole house, including built-in furnishings, could be constructed in under three weeks. In a startling development, the problem of the truss was avoided by the introduction of a flat roof. It was May's first suggestion that the mass-produced house was something more than the solution to an emergency shortage.

Marred by strikes and ethnic conflict, the city of Gleiwitz was the site of some of the most violent postwar turmoil.[85] After partition, Gleiwitz and Beuthen, the other Iron Triangle town remaining on the German side of the border, were sites of several refugee settlements. May's most dramatic experiment was to build row houses from prefabricated concrete panels gleaned in disassembling the airplane hangar at the former Gleiwitz air base.[86] There was only limited experimentation in precast concrete panel systems for housing in the first decade of the century. While in England, May probably knew of the system devised by J. A. Brodie in 1905, but systems that more closely prefigured those used in Europe during the later 1920s appeared only about 1923, the year of Gleiwitz's construction. In 1909, for example, the American architect Grosvenor Atterbury developed a system of hollow, precast panels that were lifted into place by crane. But only in 1923 was a version implemented at Forest Hills Gardens in Queens.[87] In Germany, prefabrication experiments were hampered by the poor economic climate persisting through 1924. Thus, the chance availability of concrete panels at Gleiwitz gave May a unique opportunity, one that, in part, explains his early and successful production of prefabricated housing in Frankfurt.

May built 220 new units from the roof plates of the old hangar. Each plate, measuring 1.88 meters wide and approximately 2.5 meters high, could be lifted into place easily by two-man teams. Cross-sectioned, prestressed posts created a frame for the plates; two vertical plates comprised a two-story wall segment. May used the plates for three sides of each unit and brick for the façade to enable the insertion of windows (Figure 24). A coat of stucco, alternating between green, red, white, and blue, concealed the brick and rendered an abstract quality to the house rows

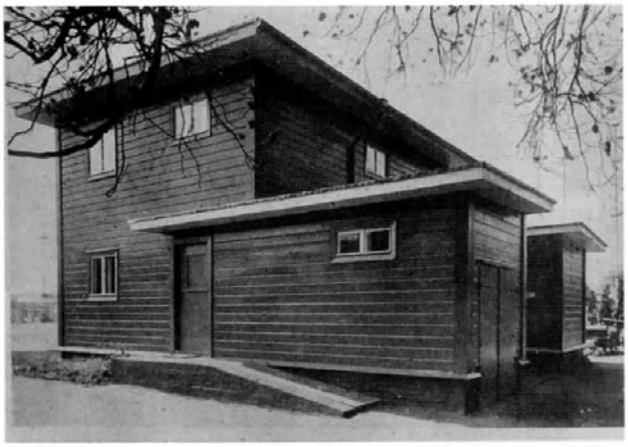

Figure 22 Ernst May, House for a Middle-Class Family, exhibited at the Breslau Spring Fair, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1924)

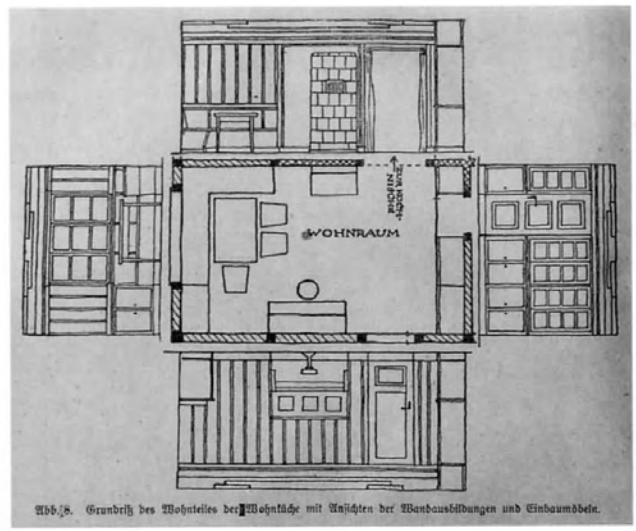

Figure 23 Ernst May, House for a Middle-Class Family, exhibited at the Breslau Spring Fair, plan and interior elevations of the central living room, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1924)

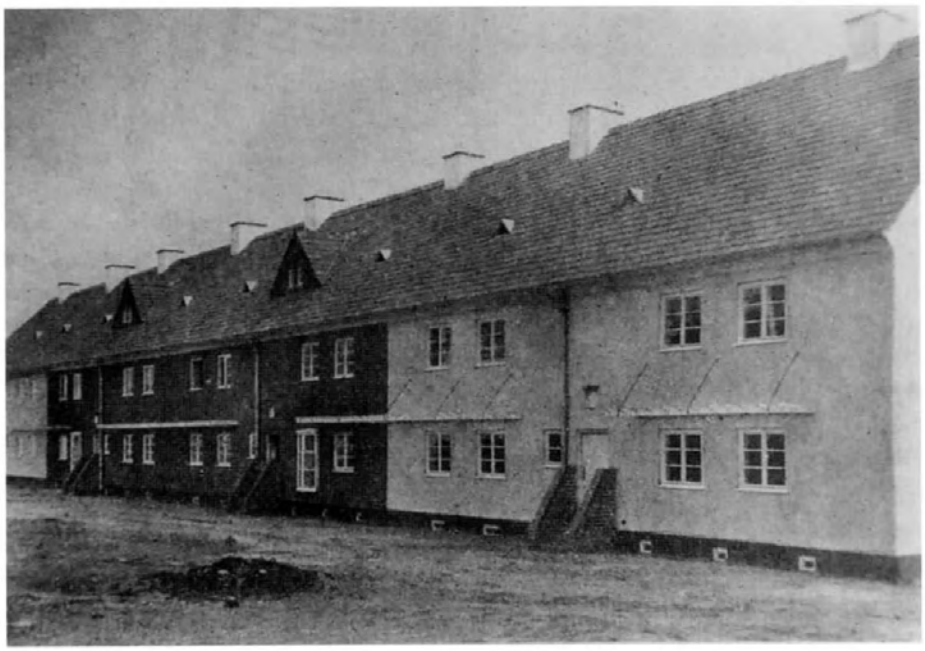

Figure 24 Ernst May, type "Zephil" double house as built at the refugee settlement Gleiwitz, from *Das Zentralblatt für Bauverwaltung* (1924)

that recalled Bruno Taut's Siedlung "Am Falkenburg" of 1913, and again prefigured May's later work.[88]

Indeed, by 1923 May had joined the campaign for color proclaimed by Taut in his 1919 manifesto "Der Regenbogen."[89] Earlier, he had argued that anything but the traditional approach to color was jarring in the rural context. Yet when faced with the refugee problem, he embraced Taut's proposal to embody the spirit of rebirth and self-reliance in a brilliant palette. He also maintained that the strong, polychromatic rhythms that defined planes and enhanced natural daylight conditions would confer an identity on the new communities and allay their monotony, as it erased the stigma of the barracks.

> But the grouping [of the housing] alone did not do enough to distinguish the refugee settlements amid the gray and disso-

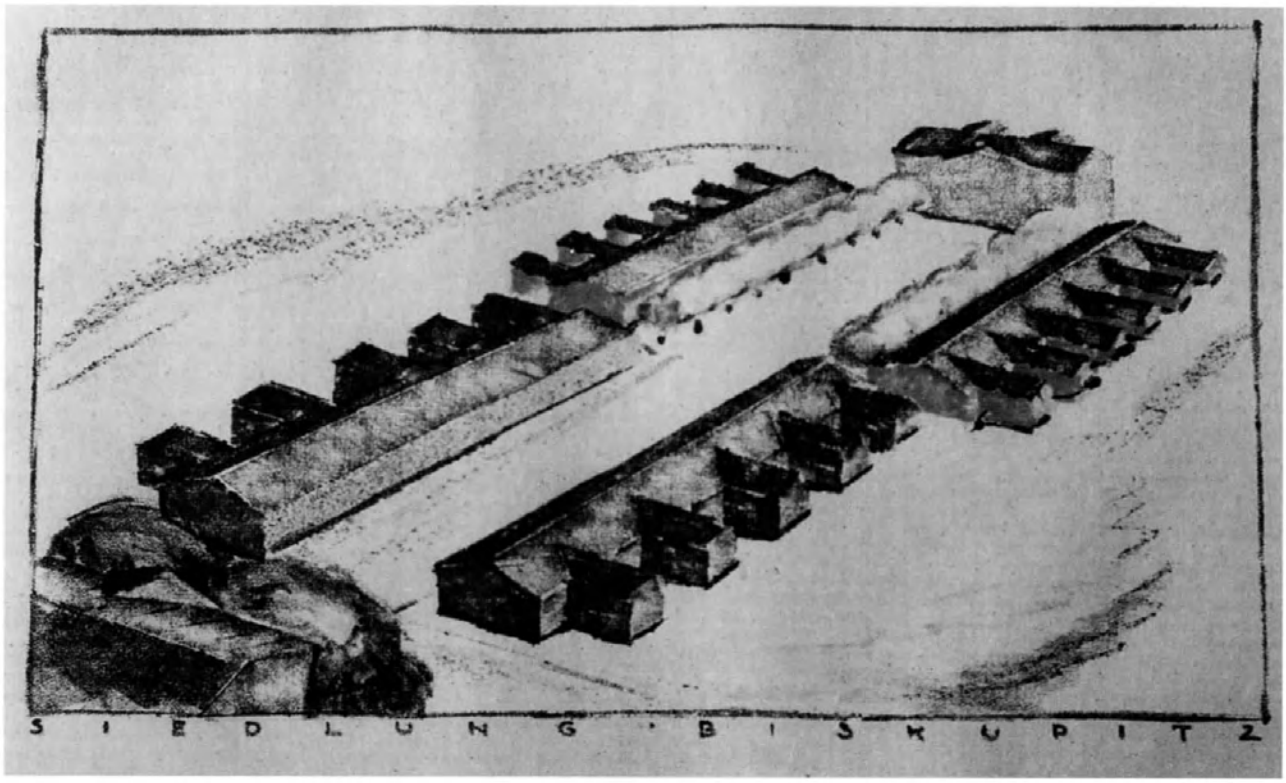

Figure 25 Siedlung Biskupitz, rendering, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1925)

nant structures strewn across the countryside, or from the chaotic and grimy constructions that surrounded them on all sides. . . . Then the Central Office called color to the rescue, light green, yellow, red, and blue, and soon the sallow barracks garb became bright and gay, like the tidily arranged beds in the residents' gardens.[90]

Still wanting a vernacular precedent, he compared his brilliant hues with those of Silesian women's traditional costumes, which he declared the first and most direct expression of domesticity.[91] But the obvious departure from discreet touches of color in traditional building led to the only major controversy May encountered during his Silesian tenure.[92] He characterized the public outcry as "enormous" and responded by publishing an entire issue of *Schlesisches Heim* devoted to color. He rallied the experts in a series of articles by turns polemical and scientific, and concluded by remarking that ultimately color was a purely joyful embellishment: only color could return the *Gemütlichkeit* of the preacademy era to the otherwise forlorn barracks, and unite the community through an expressive bond.[93]

May applied brilliant color in all the refugee settlements. At the former army base of Beuthen II, yellow-orange on the south and east façades contrasted with a cool green on the north and west; red window frames, red and yellow-orange striated vertical bays and white window mullions emphasized the detailing.[94] At another such settlement at Biskupitz, he painted the head buildings red and the groups of flanking row houses in green or blue (Figure 25). Aside from Bruno Taut, May was apparently the only other architect to employ this strategy in housing settlements in the years prior to 1924. May also published an innovative color plan that defined color relationships, dark to light and primary contrasts, and joined color to the more familiar elements in the Sittesque device of the *Bebauungsplan*,which coordinated the heights and massings of buildings. In his plan for the Silesian town of Neumarkt he concentrated the brilliant colors in the commercial center and white along the periphery, with cooler colors mediating in between (Figure 26).[95]

In many ways, Gleiwitz exemplifies how unique circumstances configured May's refugee housing. Here the chance availability of unusual materials encouraged innovation in construction and form. A corollary factor was that the resulting housing lacked any obvious reference that could be appropriated on behalf of the refugee constituency: the barracks bore little relation to the Silesian vernacular that had otherwise provided May's architectural syntax; in

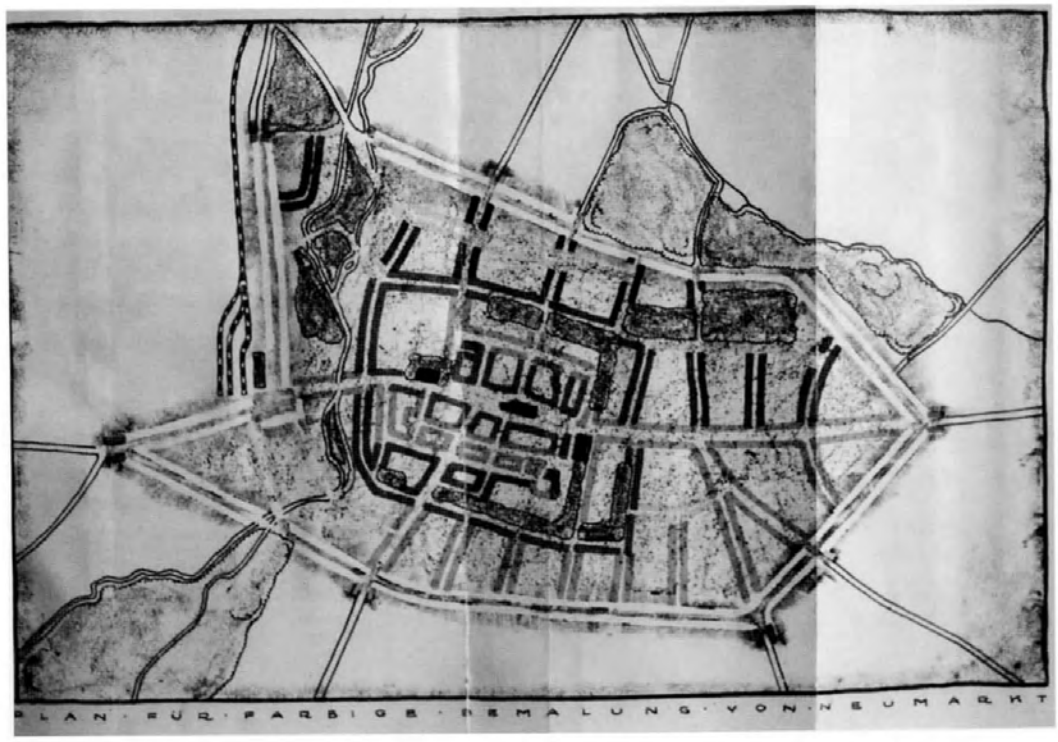

Figure 26 Neumarkt, color plan, from *Schlesisches Heim* (1925)

their regimentation they were thought to be the antithesis of an organic regionalism. This presented a substantial problem. Official propaganda aimed to unify the refugees with the local population and celebrate their reabsorption into the community as a common cause. But the refugee housing remained distinct from the familiar, if new, farm laborer and miner settlements.

As a result, the refugee housing, with its relative anonymity, became the first major departure from the cultural specificity of May's Silesian undertaking. In a significant leap, he forged an identity for the refugee settlements that largely abandoned the corporative model. His new models were inspired by the suggestion of his raw materials. All this took place amid the shifting political ground of early Weimar when, following the restoration of the mark and the failure of the first Great Coalition, modernization policies displaced the corporative model. Thus, in both production and imagery, the refugee housing emerges from the regional model into a limbo somewhere between the radicalism of expressionism and the pure functionality of *Neue Sachlichkeit*. Lacking identification with either a locale or with labor, the refugees were more akin to the urban populace than to their rural counterparts. In this unique circumstance, the refugee settlements created a bridge to May's work in Frankfurt in the second half of the decade, where he addressed a theoretically homogeneous population.

Conclusion

We have experienced the triumphant accession of the standardized building. (The Silesian Homestead Authority erected 80% of its buildings based on its own types.) We will soon see the first steps toward mechanizing house construction and, with it, an extensive schematization of a major consumer article, the house.[96]

Ernst May, 1925

May's experiments in polychromy and concrete prefabrication typify the intensity with which he undertook his reform agenda and the comprehensivity of his approach, impelled by his belief in rationalization. In the early postwar years his investigations touched on all aspects of building and proceeded from the aesthetic to the technical, from the psychological to the mundanely economic. From his rural outpost, May merged scientific studies with a political and cultural model of a conservative cast in support of the view that modern rationalization was an extension of vernacular culture.[97] Indeed, his farmworker and miner housing demonstrates the degree to which state-built housing before 1925 reinforced class and trade distinctions. Across the country, rural programs nourished romantic notions about a society composed of self-sufficient craftsmen and farmers. May himself took ideological refuge under this aegis as he fostered rural reform. The settlements at Neustadt,

Oltaschin, and Klettendorf exemplified this tendency. While the architectural and polemical rhetoric supporting such projects echoed the radical messianism characterized by expressionism in early postwar Germany and presaged the heroic language of the great urban projects of the later 1920s, they also reflected the ambivalence with which often even enthusiastic proponents of rationalization approached modernity.

In fact, as in the poltical arena, the corporative basis of May's work began to evaporate even as he created it. As rationalization expanded within the state bureaucracy, the systematization of difference broke down. In the elimination of boarders from miner households, in the design of the *flurlose* apartment reflecting a nascent *Existenzminimum*, and in the eradication of the traditional work-space vestibule from the farmworker's home, May redirected custom toward reforming notions of propriety and a more particularized use of space that ultimately negated the very traditions he was trying to preserve. With the restoration of economic stability in 1924/25, May's work shows an abrupt impulse toward modernity. A simple happenstance, the irruption of the homeless refugees, gave May the opportunity to move beyond the confines of his "rationalized" vernacular toward the flat-roofed house for the middle class. The significance of the refugee settlements for his later work can be gauged by the number of major innovations found here: his experiments in mass production, prefabrication, and polychromy.

May's early allegiance to *völkisch* culture and the corporative model would fade almost totally in the urban environment of Frankfurt in 1926. In their place would be a heroic vision of the *Volk*, one based not on distinct identities but on an urban and homogeneous population joined by a single, triumphant, and international culture. In the great settlements of Frankfurt it would be nature, not tradition, that served as the mediating element, an alternative ideal to soften the blow of modernity's advance.

Notes

1. "An unsere Leser!

"Der vierte Jahrgang unserer Monatschrift beginnt in einer Zeit, in der die Zukunft des Kleinwohnungsbaues undurchsichtiger erscheint als je zuvor. Mit nahezu der gleichen Geschwindigkeit, mit der sich die Franzosen im Herbste 1914 vor dem bewaffneten Deutschland rückwärts bewegten, drangen sie nun, wo sie einem wehrlosen Volke gegenüberstanden, in das Herz unserer Industrie vor. Trotzdem, wenn unser Volk jetzt fest und einig bleibt, kann dieser Raubzug für unser Land der Wendepunkt zum kommenden Wiederaufstiege sein.

"Je schwerer das Schicksal auf uns lastet, um so klarer kommen wir zu der Erkenntnis, welche Bedeutung planmäßiger, unermüdlicher Kleinwohnungsfürsorge und Siedlungstätigkeit zukommt. . . . Leider wird aber die Wirtschaftsnot unserer Zeit eine umfangreiche Bautätigkeit im kommenden Jahre verhindern"; "An unsere Leser!" *Schlesisches Heim* (January 1923): 9. All translations by author.

2. Christoph Mohr and Michael Müller, *Funktionalität und Moderne. Das Neue Frankfurt und seine Bauten 1925–1933* (Cologne, 1984); Heike Risse, *Frühe Moderne in Frankfurt am Main, 1920–1933 Architektur der zwanziger Jahre in Frankfurt a. M. Traditionalismus—Expressionismus—Neue Sachlichkeit* (Frankfurt am Main, 1984); Rosemarie Höpfner and Volker Fischer, eds., *Ernst May und Das Neue Frankfurt, 1925–1933* (Frankfurt, 1986); and Susan R. Henderson, "The Work of Ernst May, 1919–1930" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1990), pt. 2.

3. On Ernst May's early career, see Susan R. Henderson, "The Work of Ernst May, 1919–1930," pt. 1.

4. Steven B. Webb, *Hyperinflation and Stabilization in Weimar Germany* (New York, 1989); Niall Ferguson, *Paper and Iron* (Cambridge, 1995); Gerald D. Feldman, *The Great Disorder: Politics Economics and Society in the German Inflation, 1914–1924* (New York, 1993); Bernd Widdig, *Culture and Inflation in Weimar Germany* (Berkeley, 2001).

5. This is the SDP's well-known "compromise," which transformed a revolutionary agenda into a reform campaign more congenial to the traditional power elites and largely based on prewar reform agendas. See E. Kolb, "Rätewirklichkeit und Räteideologie in der deutschen Revolution von 1918–19," in E. Kolb, ed., *Vom Kaiserreich zur Weimarer Republik* (Cologne, 1972), 165–184; A. J. Ryder, *The German Revolution of 1918. A Study of German Socialism in War and Revolt* (Cambridge, 1967). On social politics, see Michael N. Dobkowski and Isidor Wallimann, eds., *Towards the Holocaust: The Social and Economic Collapse of the Weimar Republic* (London, 1983); Ludwig Preller, *Sozialpolitik in der Weimarer Republik* (Kronberg, 1978); and Susanne Miller and Heinrich Potthoff, *A History of German Social Democracy. From 1848 to the Present* (New York, 1983), 64–81.

6. For the substance of the law, see Frederick F. Blachly and Miriam E. Oatman, *The Government and Administration of Germany* (Baltimore, 1928), 604–605.

7. On the history of prewar housing, see Nicholas Bullock and James Read, *The Movement for Housing Reform in Germany and France. 1840–1914* (Cambridge, 1985), 71–109.

8. All three provincial agencies employed strategies of standardization, self-help, and the revival of traditional construction materials and methods. See, for example "Die Ausstellung für Wohnungsbau in Dresden 1919," *Das Zentralblatt für Bauverwaltung* 39 (1919): 426; and "Sächsisches Heim," *Wohnen und Bauen* 3 (1931): 66–71.

9. G. Langen, "Die internationale Städtebau- und Siedlungs- Ausstellung in Gotenburg," *Das Zentralblatt für Bauverwaltung* 42 (1922): 415–418.

10. In the language of settlement, corporative rhetoric had ties to the conservative idealism propounded by the garden city movement.

11. The ideology of corporatism as generally conceived was broader and more vague than its Weimar counterpart. In particular, it should be distinguished from its common association with fascism. On the Weimar variant, see R. H. Bowen, *German Theories of the Corporative State* (New York, 1947), 160–209; F. Stern, *The Politics of Cultural Despair. A Study in the Rise of the Germanic Ideology* (Berkeley, 1953), 234ff.

12. Stern articulates the wide-ranging appeal of the Rathenau-Moellendorff plan, which drew interest from "anti-liberal, anti-Marxian economists like Schmoller and Sombart, . . . to the jurists of the *Genossenschaft* school, conservative nationalist philosophers like Spengler, to certain 'neo-revisionist' Social Democrats, to a number of Catholic 'Solidarists' and to a sympathetic group within the German Democratic Party." It could potentially

attract federalists and appease separationists as well; Bowen, *German Theories of the Corporative State*, 162–163. See also Charles S. Maier, *Recasting Bourgeois Europe. Stabilization in France, Germany and Italy in the Decade after World War I* (Princeton, 1975); Heinrich A. Winkler, *Von der Revolution zur Stabilisierung. Arbeiter und Arbeiterbewegung in der Weimarer Republik 1918 bis 1924* (Berlin, 1984), 359–364, 632–636.

13. Dietrich Orlow, *Weimar Prussia, 1918–1925. The Unlikely Rock of Democracy* (Pittsburgh, 1986), 15–20, 29.

14. Prussia's territorial integrity was threatened by separatist agitation in several of its borderlands. In Silesia, the movement was reacting to the possibility of a split among Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia; ibid., 101–103.

15. For the Unwin years, see Justus Buekschmitt, *Ernst May* (Stuttgart, 1963), 19–20.

16. Susan R. Henderson, "A Setting for Mass Culture: Life and Leisure in the Nidda Valley," *Planning Perspectives* 10 (1995): 199–222.

17. For a description of these conditions, see Frieda Wunderlich, *Farm Labor in Germany 1810–1945* (Princeton, 1961); Gertrud Dyhrenfurth, *Ein schlesisches Dorf und Rittergut. Geschichte und soziale Verfassung* (Leipzig, 1906); Walter Kuhn, *Siedlingsgeschichte Oberschlesiens* (Würzburg, 1954). For a discussion of "eastern backwardness," see Frank B. Tipton, Jr., *Regional Variations in the Economic Development of Germany During the Nineteenth Century* (Middletown, Conn., 1976), 112–122.

18. Kuhn, *Siedlingsgeschichte Oberschlesiens*, 202ff.

19. Frederick's program of interior colonization was abandoned in 1818 shortly after the Stein-Hardenbergschen Reforms released the peasantry from the bonds of serfdom; ibid., 204.

20. T. Hunt Tooley, *National Identity and Weimar Germany. Upper Silesia and the Eastern Border, 1918–1922* (Lincoln, Neb., 1997), 53–79.

21. "Viele Wohnungen sind minderwertig, liegen in Kellern oder in nicht unterkellerten erdgeschoß und entbehren auskömmlicher Besonnung und Lüftung"; "Bericht für 1913 die Wohnungsverhältniße im Bezirk Breslau-Land," quoted by Körner, "Landarbeiterwohungen," *Handwörterbuch des Wohnungswesens*, G. Albrecht et al., eds. (Jena, 1930), 473. As late as 1927, 50 percent of the working class and farming families in the Waldenburger area (as opposed to 17 percent for urban Breslau) lived in one room; Ludwig Landsberg, "Schlesiens Dörfer: Eine Studie der gesellschaften Verhaltniße, insbesondere der Lebensverhältniße der Landarbeiter," *Material Sammlung der Agrarsozialen Gesellschafte*, vol. 5 (Göttingen, 1966), 17; Wunderlich, *Farm Labor in Germany*, 20–26.

22. If the plight of urban workers was generally recognized, the situation in rural areas was often worse. From 1885 through 1913 the urban mortality rate decreased as it worsened in the countryside. By 1925 the urban rate stood at 15 percent, the rural at 23 percent; Körner, "Landarbeiterwohungen," 473–474. On food relief, see Tooley, *National Identity and Weimar Germany*, 87–88.

23. "In unserer Väter Zeiten waren Großgrundbesitz und Bauernstand die Träger gesunder ländlicher Bautradition. In den letzten 50 Jahren ist es leider anders geworden, wie die oft vor Geschmacklosigkeit strotzenden, gelegentlich auch noch anspruchsvoll auftretenden Erweiterungs- und Neubauten auf dem Lande beweisen. Es ist zu hoffen und muß gefordert werden . . . daß die zur Errichtung gelangenden Landarbeiterwohnungen die Rückkehr zu einem ehrlichen kraftvollen Bauhandwerk auf dem Lande einleiten"; Ernst May, "Typen für Landarbeiterwohnungen," *Schlesisches Heim* (August 1921): 234.

24. For example, see Ernst May, "Eine Bergarbeitersiedlung für Waldenburg," *Schlesisches Heim* (April 1920), 3–4.

25. Tooley, *National Identity and Weimar Germany*, 119–220, 169–170.

26. Robert Brady, *The Rationalization Movement in German Industry* (New York, 1974), 275–280.

27. "Amtliche Mitteilungen," *Das Zentralblatt für Bauverwaltung* 41 (1921): 123.

28. The major farmworkers' union, the *Deutschen Landarbeiterverband*, was founded in 1927; Körner, "Landarbeiterwohnungen," 473.

29. As an example, see "Mitteilungen der Landwirtschaftskammer für die Provinz Schlesien," *Schlesisches Heim* (July 1921): 203.

30. To encourage rationalization in industrial production, the federal government instituted the *Normenausschuß für Deutsche Industrie* (NDI), or Bureau of Standards, in 1917. The NDI defined *Typisierung* as an assemblage of standardized elements. Automobiles and houses were considered appropriate objects of *Typisierung*. In theory, the typification of houses, i.e., the creation of house types, would eliminate much expensive and time-consuming labor and ensure practical room arrangements, good hygiene, and quality design. In practice, "typification" rarely extended beyond the single settlement or, at best, the individual housing agency. On the NDI and housing, see Karl Sander, "Normung im Hochbau," *Handwörterbuch des Wohnungswesens*, 564. Much of the professional debate on *Typisierung* took place within the ranks of the Werkbund; see Joan Campbell, *The German Werkbund. The Politics of Reform in the Applied Arts* (Princeton, 1978), 57–81; Frederic J. Schwartz, *The Werkbund. Design Theory & Mass Culture before the First World War* (New Haven, 1996), 121–146. Hermann Muthesius's consideration of *Typisierung* is in Hermann Muthesius, *Kleinhaus und Kleinsiedlung* (Munich, 1918), 315–338.

Among those committed to a conservative, ruralizing approach, *Typisierung* was a difficult concept. The constant vascillation between support for and rejection of rationalization is evidenced in the pages of *Die Volkswohnung*; see, for example, De Fries, "Wider den Typ," *Die Volkswohnung* 4 (1920), a special issue on the subject. Also of interest in the Silesian context is Gustav Wolf, "Vom Weg der Bautypen, *Die Form* 1 (1925/26); 157–166; Wolf illustrated his article with May's model house types, although they are unattributed in the text. Also Gerlach, "Die Bedeutung der Typisierung in der Wohnungswirtschaft, *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Ausschußes für wirtschaftliches Bauen* 5 (July 1924), reprinted in *Schlesisches Heim* (July 1924): 227–234; the latter concerns a special conference session held in Breslau in 1924.

31. Ernst May, "Ersatzbauweisen," *Schlesisches Heim* (February 1920): 20–25; May, "Typen für Landarbeiterwohnungen," 228–234.

32. Ernst May, "Das Schilfdach," *Schlesisches Heim* (August 1922): 217–219.

33. See, for example, Ernst May, "Kleinwohnungstypen," *Schlesisches Heim* (January 1920): 16–17; Ernst May, "Die Wohnlaube," *Schlesisches Heim* (June 1920): 8–9.

34. W. Bernard, *Das Waldenhufendorf in Schlesien* (Breslau, 1931): 82–92.

35. On the role of the *Wohnküche*, see Gerhard Wilke and Kurt Wagner, "Family and Household: Social Structures in a German Village between the Two World Wars," in Richard J. Evans and W. R. Lee, eds., *The German Family. Essays on the Social History of the Family in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Germany* (London, 1981), 135–136.

36. While this removed beds from daytime activity rooms, it also allowed the possibility of parents and children sleeping in the same room. Here economic considerations supported by tradition won out.

37. Ernst May, "Wie weit kann das Wohnfläche eingeschränkt werden?" *Schlesisches Heim* (February 1921): 38–42; Ernst May, "Die Drempel im Kleinwohnungsbau," *Schlesisches Heim* (October 1920): 1–7.

38. Ernst May, "Das Mittelstandshaus mit Einmöbeln der Schlesischen Heimstätte," *Schlesisches Heim* (May 1924): 143–149.

39. A sampling of articles from 1920 include May, "Ersatzbauweisen," 20–25; Ernst May, "Das Spliesdach," *Schlesisches Heim* (May 1920): 12–13; "Ausbildung im Lehmbau, *Schlesisches Heim* (May 1920): 21–22; W. Lüb-

bert, "Eine billige Bauweise," *Schlesisches Heim* (June 1920): 2–4; "Der Lehmbau," *Schlesisches Heim* (June 1920): 12–13; Ernst May, "Der Drempel im Kleinwohnungsbau," *Schlesisches Heim* (October 1920): 1–7; "Zur Frage des Lehmschindeldaches, *Schlesisches Heim* (October 1920): 13–14.

40. For excerpts from David Gilly's *Handbuch der Landbaukunst* (1798), see Ernst May, "Die Wohnlaube," *Schlesisches Heim* (June 1920), 9; Ernst May "Das Schilfdach," *Schlesisches Heim* (September 1922): 218. May reprinted a section of Gilly's 1775 article "Über Lehmstein- und Lehmpatzenbauweise," in *Schlesisches Heim* (December 1920): 7–10.

41. Ernst May, "Die Siedlung Oltaschin," *Schlesisches Heim* (August 1922): 187–192.

42. May proposed that house signs helped new settlements establish an identity. He employed Lotte Hartmann at several settlements including the large Goldschmieden outside Breslau; Ernst May, "Hauszeichen an Typenhäusern," *Schlesisches Heim* (August 1921): 263–265.

43. The specifics of self-help labor at Oltaschin are lacking.

44. Dr. Ing. Grotte, "Breslauer Baumeße 1922," *Das Zentralblatt für Bauverwaltung* 42 (1922): 350.

45. Orlow, *Weimar Prussia, 1918–1925*, 240–241 (see n. 13).

46. Tooley, *National Identity and Weimar Germany*, 182–184 (see n. 2).

47. Paul Bookbinder, *Weimar Germany. The Republic of the Reasonable* (Manchester, 1996), 84–100; Orlow, *Weimar Prussia, 1918–1925*, 142ff.

48. Ernst May, "Die Siedlung Neustadt, OS.," *Schlesisches Heim* (July 1923), 151–153.

49. This is an estimate based on the works documented in *Schlesisches Heim* between 1920 and 1925.

50. ". . . der Befriedigung der Wohnbedurfnisse einer Berufsklasse homogenster Art"; Ernst May, "Typen für Landarbeiterwohnungen," 228 (see n. 23).

51. Brady, *Rationalization Movement in Germany*, xiv-xxx (see no. 26); Tooley, *National Identity and Weimar Germany*, 10–14.

52. May, "Ersatzbauweisen," 20 (see n. 31); "1914–1920," *Schlesisches Heim* (May 1920): 1. For a discussion of self-help labor and *Ersatzbauweisen* in May's Silesian housing effort and his adaptation of a factory model at the Neustadt construction site, see Susan R. Henderson, "Self-Help Housing in the Weimar Republic: The Work of Ernst May," *Housing Studies* 14, no. 3 (1999), 315–317, 322–324. At Neustadt, May introduced mass-production techniques and a Taylorized work routine, the latter set in motion during the height of the hyperinflation period. He succeeded in these strategies when he combined them with the most primitive substitute materials, techniques, and self-help labor.

53. Hans-Joachim Helmigk, *Oberschlesische Landbaukunst um 1800* (Berlin, 1937), 181–184.

54. For the text of the ordinance, see "Gesetze und Verordnungen," *Schlesisches Heim* (February 1920): 26–27; on the law, see W. F. Bruck, *Social and Economic History of Germany from William II to Hitler* (New York, 1962), 158–159.

55. Ernst May, "Typen für mehrgeschoßigen Kleinwohnungsbauten," *Schlesisches Heim* (April 1920): 11.

56. Bernard, *Das Waldenhufendorf in Schlesien*, 92 (see n. 34).

57. Franz J. Brüggemeier and Lutz Niethammer, "Schlafgänger, Schnapskasinos und schwerindustrielle Kolonie. Aspekte der Arbeiterwohnungsfrage im Ruhrgebiet vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg," in Jürgen Reulecke and Wolfhard Weber, eds., *Fabrik, Familie, Feierabend. Beiträge zur Sozialgeschichte des Alltags im Industriezeitalter* (Wuppertal, 1978), 154–155; May, "Typen für mehrgeschoßige Kleinwohnungsbauten," 12.

58. Where workers viewed crowding as a necessary accommodation to low wages and high rents, social reformers saw a willful disregard for the basic rules of hygiene and propriety. In the same vein, state authorities saw migration as a symptom of an intractable and protorevolutionary proletariat. Wilhelm Riehl was a principal proponent of the notion that the unrooted, migratory worker was the greatest threat to the nation and the *Volk*, thus his enthusiasm for settling the workers in the hinterland; see G. Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology* (New York, 1981), 22–23.

59. See May, "Typen für mehrgeschoßige Kleinwohnungsbauten," 9–12.

60. Ernst May, "Die flurlose Kleinmietwohnung," *Schlesisches Heim* (July 1921): 189–191. In larger multifamily units the elimination of substantial hall space also meant that it did not require lighting and ventilation from exterior walls. See Ernst May, "Zweigeschoßige Vier- und Sechs-familienhäuser," *Schlesisches Heim* (March 1922): 57.

61. May would hire Grete Lihotzky, designer of the Frankfurt Kitchen (1926), in 1925; however, he knew of her innovations in kitchen design and her several versions of the kitchen niche as early as 1920. He published articles by Lihotzky in *Schlesisches Heim* in 1921; see Grete Lihotzky, "Einiges über die Einrichtung Österreichischer Häuser unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Siedlungsbauten," *Schlesisches Heim* (August 1921): 217–222. That same year saw the publication of Irene Witte's translation of Christine Frederick's *Household Engineering: Scientific Management in the Home* (1919) as *Die rationelle Haushaltsführung. Betriebswissenschaftliche Studien* (Berlin, 1921).

62. "Jeder Winkel ist auf das sparsamste ausgenützt, sodaß eingedenk der Bedeutung des Taylorsystems bei aller Bescheidenheit der Ausmaße ein sachgemäßes Hantieren beim Kochen und Spülen gewährleistet wird"; May, "Die flurlose Kleinmietwohnung," 189.

63. Ernst May, "Siedlung Klettendorf," *Schlesisches Heim* (October 1922): 235–239; Ernst May, "Die Siedlung Klettendorf bei Breslau," *Die Volkswohnung* 23 (December 1922): 319–321.

64. The plan of "Gustav Freytag" is reproduced in Ernst May, "Die Grundtypen der Schlesischen Heimstätte mit Finanzierungstabelle," *Schlesisches Heim* (April 1924): 114.

65. "Die Gemeinde Klettendorf erbaute uns im Jahre 1922 in Deutschlands tiefster Not"; May, "Siedlung Klettendorf," 237.

66. ". . . das einheitliche Bild der Siedlung gewahrt wird, und Mißgriffe Einzelner verhindert werden"; ibid., 238.

67. ". . . dem einzelnen Siedlungsbewohner in der sonstigen Ausgestaltung seines Gartens freie Hand gelassen ist"; ibid. These were his first standardized garden plans, undoubtedly influenced by the garden designer Leberecht Migge whose journal *Siedlungs Wirtschaft* would be appended to *Schlesisches Heim* beginning in 1924; May, "Siedlung Klettendorf," 237; May, "Zweigeschoßige Vier- und Sechs-familienhäuser," 58; May, "Die flurlose Kleinmietwohnung," 189–191.

68. "Ein Mauerstein kostete vor dem Kriege 2 Pfennig, heute 1.50 Mark, 1 cbm Schnittholz, 35 Mark, heute 200 Mark. Trotzdem bauen wir!

"Möge Optimismus späteren Generationen den Beweise dafür erbringen, daß wir auch in Zeiten schwerster Wiederaufsteig nicht verloren!"; Ernst May, "Grundsteinlegung der Siedlung Klettendorf," *Schlesisches Heim* (April 1924): 69.

69. ". . . der vor einem Dauerregen . . . sein Heu glücklich hereingebracht hat"; May, "Siedlung Klettendorf," 235.

70. "Die verzögerte Entscheidung über die Grenzziehung zwischen Deutschland und Polen verhinderte zunächst fast jede Bautätigkeit diesem Lande. Die Wohnungsnot wütete auch hier, aber noch in verstärkstem Maße, denn unter dem polnischen Terror verließen Tausende von Familien ihre Wohnungen in den heute abgetretenen Gebieten. So beschloß das Reich nach Abzug der Besatzung die Gründung der Zentralstelle für die schlesische Flüchtlingsfürsorge, und Oberpräsident z. D. Philipp stattete sie mit umfassenden Vollmachten aus, um eine möglichst hemmungslose Durchführung der vorliegenden Aufgaben zu gewährleisten"; Ernst May,

"Flüchtlingswohnungen in Oberschlesien," *Die Volkswohnung* (1924): 69.

71. "The Problem of Upper Silesia and the Reconstruction of Europe's Economy" (Breslau: Chamber of Commerce Report, June 1921) describes the "Polish Terror," or Korfanty's Rebellion, from the German point of view. The pamphlet characterizes the rebellion as indiscriminate attacks by irrational Bolshevists waged against a civilized and benevolent society. Although outrages were committed on both sides, the German population did suffer at the hands of an armed Polish militia numbering some 80,000 men, and from the kidnapping and murder of those local authorities blamed for prejudicial attitudes, primarily state officials and schoolteachers. On the uprising, see Tooley, *National Identity and Weimar Germany*, 182–199 (see n. 20).

72. Ernst May, "Flüchtlingswohnungen in Oberschlesien," *Die Volkswohnung* (1924), 69.

73. Although criticized by business for stifling commerce, central offices like the Central Purchasing Corporation *(Zentral Einkaufsgesellschaft)* had lives beyond the war, the new government using them to control the distribution of goods—imported food, in the case of the ZEG—in the turbulent years of shortage; Ferguson, *Paper and Iron*, 107–108, 143–144 (see n. 3).

Rathenau's entire staff consisted of only five managers, but with extensive coordination powers, the War Office proved a powerful tool and a model of managerial reform. In his success with the War Office, Rathenau was credited with orchestrating the country's first "economic wonder"; Bowen, *German Theories of the Corporative State*, 170–172; Bruck, *Social and Economic History of Germany from William II to Hitler*, 157–159.

74. May, "Flüchtlingswohnungen in Oberschlesien," 70.

75. Ernst May, "Die Bautätigkeit der Zentralstelle für die Schlesische Flüchtlingsfürsorge Oberpräsident z.D. Philipp," *Schlesisches Heim* (May 1923), 99–111.

76. Even so, the state had to relax the minimal dwelling standards in refugee housing to achieve a sufficient number of units. In a drastic move, equaled only by the elevation of the garden cabin to a legal habitation in 1922, the state abandoned some standard criteria required for new housing in the case of refugees. Among these was the stipulation of separate accommodations for brothers and sisters, the cornerstone of postwar reform housing legislation; M. Krieger, "Die Wohnungsbauten der Zentralstelle für die schlesische Flüchtlingsfürsorge, Oberpräsident z.d. Philipp, in Breslau," *Das Zentralblatt für Bauverwaltung* (November 1924), 399.

77. May, "Flüchtlingswohnungen in Oberschlesien," 70.

78. May, "Die Bautätigkeit der Zentralstelle," 104–106.

79. May first introduced this idea in 1920 with the invention of the *Notheim*, or emergency house, a halved version of his standard *Kleinwohnung*. As the economy worsened, May reworked his entire house series into *Notheime* and suggested that settlers expand into the original floor plans when better economic times returned. As far as I can ascertain, this concept was unique to May. In 1923 a similar program based on the concept of the *Kernhaus* was introduced in Vienna. Again, the figure linking the two programs was Grete Lihotzky. See Henderson, "The Work of Ernst May," 143–149 (see n. 3); and Eve Blau, *The Architecture of Red Vienna, 1919–1934* (Cambridge, Mass., 1998), 119–120.

80. ". . . die Flüchtlinge sollten nicht nur untergebracht, sondern auch so untergebracht werden, daß sie wenigstens für den größeren Teil des Jahres in der Lage waren, die beschränkte Wohnfläche unter dem Dache durch hinzuziehung einer Gartenwohnfläche zu erweitern. Hierbei sollten sie gleichzeitig wenigstens einen Teil ihres Gemüsebedarfes selbst decken. Dieses Ziel war . . . von um so größerer Bedeutung, als die meisten Flüchtlinge dem Bergarbeiterstande angehörten . . . und daher des Ausgleiches einer gesunden Betätigung im Freien in besonderem Maße bedurften"; May, "Die Bautätigkeit der Zentralstelle," 99–100.

81. The coats of lime plaster and concrete were intended to prevent pest infestations; May, "Flüchtlingswohnungen in Oberschlesien," 72; Krieger, "Die Wohnungsbauten der Zentralstelle," 400.

82. Wood construction attracted German interest as an answer to the postwar brick shortage, while wooden barracks and the American stud frame proved its mass-production potential. The German timber industry did its part to nurture this interest, and romanticized wooden buildings as part of Germany's heritage. The best-known campaign was that of lumber baron Adolf Sommerfeld, which produced the Sommerfeld Haus and other buildings constructed by the Bauhaus community between 1920 and 1922. A special segment of *Die Deutsche Bauzeitung* called "Der Holzbau" went into publication in 1920 with several issues devoted to Sommerfeld's industrialized wood system. Still, in the end, wood was judged an impracticable material for mass housing, and by 1923 the wood construction of urban housing estates had ended; Gilbert Herbert, *The Dream of the Factory-Made House* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 78–79.

83. Ernst May, "Das Ausstellungshaus der Schlesischen Heimstätte auf der Breslauer Technischen Meße," *Schlesisches Heim* (May 1922): 109–112.

84. May, "Das Mittelstandshaus," 143–149 (see n. 38).

85. Tooley, *National Identity and Weimar Germany*, 65–67, 187–188 (see n. 20).

86. "Siedlungstätigkeit der Oberschlesien Siedlungs- und Wohnungsfürsorgegesellschaft," *Schlesisches Heim* (January 1924): 22.

87. Herbert, *Dream of the Factory-Made House*, 10–38. In the Netherlands, at the settlement of Betondorp, built between 1923 and 1927, architects experimented with nine different systems of concrete construction; see Helen Searing's article, "Betondorp: Amsterdam's Concrete Garden Suburb," *Assemblage* 3: 109–143.

88. May, "Flüchtlingswohnungen in Oberschlesien," 72. On Taut, see Eckhard Herrel, "Farbe in der Architektur der Moderne," in Vittorio Lampugnani and Romana Schneider, eds., *Moderne Architektur in Deutschland 1900 bis 1950. Expressionismus und Neue Sachlichkeit* (Stuttgart, 1994), 99–100. Taut's prewar settlements of Falkenburg and the self-help "Reform" were important sources for May's own experiments in polychromy; see Hans Jörg Rieger, "Die farbige Stadt" (Ph.D. diss., University of Zurich, 1976), 21–38.

89. First published in *Der Bauwelt* in the fall of 1919, Bruno Taut's "Der Regenbogen" was reprinted in *Frühlicht*, no. 1 (Fall 1921), 97.

90. "Aber die Gruppierung allein hätte die Note der Flüchtlingssiedlungen noch nicht genügend bestimmt; denn die grausamen Dissonanzen planlos im Gelände verstreuter, schmutziger Baulichkeiten aller Art kreischen von allen Seiten. . . . Da rief die Zentralstelle die Farben zu Hilfe, leuchtendes Grün, Gelb, Rot und Blau, und schon wurden die fahlen Barackenkleider heiter und lustig, wie die sauber bestellten Beete in den Gärten ihrer Insassen"; May, "Die Bautätigkeit der Zentralstelle," 108.

91. The argument recalls Semper's concept that *Bekleidung* gave rise to architectural cladding. "Red and blue are almost the most primitive of known color combinations, one that can be identified already in the religious paintings of the early Middle Ages. Dülberg has also pointed out that the 'Hessischen peasant women, who are certainly not revolutionaries' display blue and red as the dominant combination of their festival garb"; May, "Die Organisation der farbigen Gestaltung," 60.

92. The immediate cause of the controversy, Siedlung Bunzlau, was not a refugee settlement but a suburban enclave built under the auspices of the *Schlesische Heimstätte*. Why in this instance May employed his bold polychromy goes unexplained. An anonymous and lighthearted poem on the episode was published in the special issue on color: "Farbe regt die Dichtkunst an!" *Schlesisches Heim* (February 1925): 65.

93. The articles include an impassioned introduction by Taut: Bruno Taut, "Zur Farbenfrage," *Schlesisches Heim* (February 1925): 55. Other authors,

among them architects, psychologists, and paint engineers, framed reasoned arguments as to the social, moral, and practical benefits of color.

94. May, "Die Bautätigkeit der Zentralstelle," 106–109; Krieger, "Die Wohnungsbauten der Zentralstelle," 400 (see n. 76).

95. In contrast, Taut's use of color at this time focused on the articulation of individual buildings and their elements; Ernst May, "Die Organisation der Farbigen Gestaltung," *Schlesisches Heim* (February 1925): 60. Rieger documents the increasing use of the urban color plan in competitions as they appear in *Die farbige Stadt* between 1927 and 1931, when the journal began publishing color illustrations. The earliest instances he cites is one for Osnabruck published in 1927; Rieger, "Die farbige Stadt," 157.

After the stabilization of 1924, many municipalities launched color campaigns. The political motive was to generate optimism and popular support for the new government. Hamburg, under the leadership of Fritz Schumacher, promoted a new palette through municipal exhibitions and "color days." A number of independent organizations also formed to promote polychromy, such as the "Alliance for the Promotion of Color in Towns" and the "Universal Brotherhood of Color." Between the years 1925 and 1929 several books and two journals, *Die farbige Strassenbild* and *Die farbige Stadt*, were devoted to the campaign. See Wolfgang Pehnt, *Expressionist Architecture* (London, 1973), and Harald Machenow and Wolfgang Reuß, *Farbe im Stadtbild* (Berlin, 1976).

96. "Wir haben den Siegeszug des Typenbaues erlebt. (Die Schlesische Heimstätte errichtet 80% ihrer Bauten unter Zugrundelegung ihrer Typen.) Wir werden die ersten Schritte der Mechanisierung des Wohnungsbaues und damit einer noch weitergehenden Schematisierung des Massenbedarfsartikels 'Wohnung' erleben"; May, "Die Organisation der farbigen Gestaltung," 57.

97. In terms of the housing emergency, the rural housing effort cannot be deamed a success. The housing built by rural housing authorities, including the *Schlesische Heimstätte*, had little impact on landowning ratios or housing availability. A survey of 1927 revealed the housing situation in Silesia to be much the same as in 1920. The discrepancy between rural and urban housing conditions also remained the same: one-room units comprised 50 percent of the housing stock in the coal-mining district around Waldenburg, while for the city of Breslau it was only 17 percent; Wunderlich, *Farm Labor in Germany*, 10 (see n. 17).