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The architectural and historic research of planned cities may be the most neglected section of our history of architecture, our city planning and our urban design. This may be due to the fact that as inseparable the settlement or neighborhood is from the community, from the residents and from the sociological environment determined by the culture, as extensive is the research area. This concerns especially the settlements which were organized and planned in one period and where the function is fixed and the original society of the settlement is defined. Moreover, even the settling and the circumstances of the population show a special peculiarity. The organization of the supplies has also its own history. The social development and the transformation of demands is also an unknown originator worthy of research that effected significantly the metamorphosis of these neighborhoods and cities. The previously connected professional fields were separated due to the specialization but some determinative questions were ignored by the researchers. We usually neglected the workers' neighborhoods and workers' cities not recognizing their cultural importance. Beyond that, the interdisciplinary of the subject may estrange the intense researcher of some specialty. This deficiency was recognized by the Alps-Adriatic Project Group. This organized and exemplary fellowship was created under the direction of Johann Schwertner with the active cooperation of Georg Kanhäuser, Paolo Tomasella, Željko Trstenjak, Paulus Wall, Gábor Winkler and Domen Zupančič. It is singular that only the Hungarian participant, Gábor Winkler is not connected to any named region. Unfortunately the county he deputized left the project but he continued to work as author of the program from Hungary. All the edition, the syllabus and the comprehensive analysis – even if written anonymously – was born thanks to him. These professional bases and clear logic of the initiation give weight and meaning to the volume. The researchers undertook an important and interesting task of history of architecture; namely the study of the workers' neighborhoods and workers' cities, and finally adapting them to the main lines of our history of architecture. The researchers are all professionals of great authority from the Alps-Adriatic region. Their main aim was to attract attention through common research to these values and to the related questions of the protection of monuments that are to be solved on an urban level in these both geographically and culturally connected regions. In the book a thorough analysis throws light upon the fact that the researchers of urban history are recognizing the importance of the planned cities only nowadays. And it is still only the architecture of the garden suburbs that is mostly written about. The planned workers' neighborhoods and workers' cities are one of the most momentous antecedents; however, this source still has not been processed, their research was entirely overlooked. We did not reckon these sites as they represented any particular value. They rather worked as a source for sociologists who naturally restricted the possibilities to their own specialty. A further peculiarity of the planned workers' neighborhoods is that they are more related to the industrializing and to its specialties than to the local facilities. The volume emphasizes unambiguously how they represent the characteristics of the history of industrialism and the new streams of the development and transformation of the society. Exploring profusely their antecedents and their facilities it is visible that all the complexes bear the characteristics typical for the era; moreover, the peculiarities of the local architecture appear giving local character to these sites. There were no previous similar researches whereof the methodology could have been borrowed. It is an entirely undiscovered world that we can get acquainted with in the book that undertook the first steps researching a yet unprocessed enormous field of science. The historic summary presents the development history of the workers' neighborhoods: their evolution, their special architectural world and their programs. This part is illustrated primarily with examples that are geographically connected but not directly related to the specific regions of the project group. The apparent intention was to reflect on sites of local importance or on places with further influence in order to visualize their historic and architectural attachments compared to the general streams. The structure of the book is also a point of interest; therefor it is difficult to define its genre. A collection of data, a book of monographs, but at the same time a comprehensive work that is organizing the development history of this interesting specialty. A significant value of the book is that it is substantially more than a prosaic collection of data. With the very mentality is this enormous edited material able to become a scientific source in six languages (Croatian, English, German, Hungarian, Italian and Slovenian). The general development history is followed by an regional inventory of site presentations. The system and the syllabus were composed based on the examples of the analyzed regions together with the requirements for the contents. Accordingly this book created the opportunity for the congenial and similarly systematized processing of the sites outside the region. The project group was joined by regional researchers to complete the material of the volume. The coworking of the regions resulted in the opportunity that the most prominent professional authorities could study the
construction, the development and the possibilities of preserving of the workers' cities in Baranya, Carinthia, Croatia, Friuli Venezia-Giulia, Upper Austria and Slovenia. Usually the aim of publishing the research results and studies is the cognition and familiarization, as the basis. However, this book substantially exceeds this as it is written by specialists who are experienced not only in the field of research but also in the practice of urbanism and of the protection of monuments. Accordingly they were able to overview the research results from a practical point of view. Besides the interpretation of the architectural and historic significance of the workers' neighborhoods and workers' cities the book concerns questions of national monuments as well. In this case beyond the traditional approach of protection of monuments – because of the scale and the context – the preservations have to be done according to an entirely new system of requirements. This has no elaborated routine yet, we can recline only upon general international charters and principles. The volume is actually referring to the related international agreements. Accurately estimating the local facilities – based on the conservation principles of the ICOMOS – the book is even defining a conceptual preservation program. It presents the requirements of preservation in a general order that after being completed with the local peculiarities can become a program of renewal of the regions. Apparently the workers’ cities are the proofs of an era. The book is confirming – following the definition of the Venice Charter – that not only those are national monuments that were declared to be one. We can read it from the authors of “The International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites” from 1964 that “the concept of a historic monument embraces not only the single architectural work but also the urban or rural setting in which is found the evidence of a particular civilization, a significant development or a historic event. This applies not only to great works of art but also to more modest works of the past which have acquired cultural significance with the passing of time.” Already the first studies showed that the definitions of the Venice Charter fit to the workers’ neighborhoods of the Alps-Adriatic region: so it is not redundant to deeply engage in this subject. This modest but committed starting point led the project group to this volume that opens up the possibilities to an entirely new research field. It needs to be continued because whoever outside the discussed regions reviews the work will realize that there are similar complexes in his neighborhood that were ignored before. At most sites drastic transformations rush the workers’ cities into danger. Beyond the presentation of the architectural and historic significance the volume is destined to attract attention to the necessity of their protection and preservation. With the help of the book of the Alps-Adriatic Project Group a new opportunity is opened up for the research of further workers' neighborhoods and workers' cities because it gives the possibility of continuing and joining the project.

Slika 1: Maribor. Železničarska kolonija (EŠD 448), Kurilniška, Koreso, Preradovičeva, Komenskega ulica, Južne železnice, 1863-1873. Figure 1: Maribor. Railway colony, South railway company * Südbahnof, 1863-1873. [photo D. Zupančič].

Slika 2: Maribor. Železničarska kolonija (EŠD 448), Kurilniška, Koreso, Preradovičeva, Komenskega ulica, Južne železnice, 1863-1873. Primer vhodnih vrat. Figure 2: Maribor. Railway colony, South railway company * Südbahnof, 1863-1873. Entrance sample. [photo D. Zupančič].