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***Prächtiges haus – festes haus:  
Notes on the “urban” and “country” architectural modus  
of the house of Wrocław patricians in the Early Modern Period***

***Introduction***

For at least several decades there has been an observable shift in priorities in mainstream research on historical architecture<sup>1</sup>. A building's style, authorship, genesis and artistic value, its functional-spatial layout and similar traditional research subjects slowly cease to be the objective and essential matter of studies and analyses. The societal sense of a work of architecture comes to the fore; its operation in social space, communicating messages and meanings, its place in a developer's plans and strategies. Determinants and contexts – including landscape, settlement, sociotopographic, socioeconomic and other contexts – cease to act as a “background”. They become an essential part of a narrative, they serve to interpret a building's function and content. They allow us to view a work of architecture from the perspective of people from a past age and not that of a contemporary observer who lives in a world of research problems and criteria such as “stylistic development”, “innovation”, and “artistic qualities”.

In line with contemporary methodological assumptions, the social environment of a given time and place is to be a starting point for studies of architecture. By asking questions about the social functions of art, one can more effectively notice links between architecture and other “means of media expression”, as well as dependencies between architectural themes that are typically seen as separate. For instance, noble manors from the early modern period and

churches founded by nobles are, from the standpoint of traditional arts history, two typologically distinct groups of buildings. However, they formed a functional whole, an “infrastructure” that satisfied housing and spiritual needs, and was used to engage in politics and developing careers. This is why it is justified to study them together, within the broad framework of “artistic sponsorship”, or a narrower one, that encompasses architecture and the landscape – the physical and symbolic living space of the nobility.

The contemporary research paradigm suggests looking at urban housing architecture also through the prism of it being a social setting. From this perspective, a “townhouse” should not be treated as a homogeneous phenomenon, as houses of patricians – a group of burghers that governed a city – and houses of the plebs were distinctive housing spaces. In cases that there were any architectural similarities between them, they primarily stemmed from common determinants such as the parcellation structure of an “internal city”, municipal construction regulations, and the monopoly of local masons' guilds on construction work in the city. The prime distinction was the utilitarian program of a patrician house and the manner it was lived in, in addition to the use of “second houses” located outside cities by patricians. This last circumstance means that it is justified to analyze the architecture of patrician townhouses – or its functional aspect, strictly speaking – in conjunction with rural residences.

Piotr Korduba's book *Patrycjuszowski dom gdański w czasach nowożytnych* [Gdańsk Patrician House in Early Modern Era] [1] is a model example of this approach. Korduba first characterized the developer: career paths, intellect and cultural horizons, the means used to build and manifest high social status. The essential content of the monograph concerns the architecture of the houses, ideological programs of façade and interior decoration, and

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<sup>1</sup> The contemporary research paradigm mentioned in the introduction has often been discussed at length, which is why references on this matter have been confined to a minimum.

modes of inhabiting, yet it essentially aimed to demonstrate links between a house's architecture and the societal condition of the patriciate, and the users' model of living and needs. Knowledge of housing and the role of architecture in the lives of the members of Gdańsk's patrician class was complemented with studies of suburban residences: manors and villas in country estates – buildings that, in a traditional, mono-disciplinary view, are seen as a separate research subject.

Korduba's work can be seen as a methodological model for conducting research on residential architecture of cities that, like Gdańsk, acted as capitals of regions and were economic and cultural centers of supra-regional significance. Certainly, this methodology is advised in the case of Wrocław. The historical capital of Silesia is a close analogy to Gdańsk, for instance due to their patricians' similar goals and deeds, as they strove to bolster their respective city's political power and autonomy and to strengthen the socioeconomic position of their own families. The Speymanns, Bahrs and Schachmans of Gdańsk and the Rehdingers, Hanniwalds and Hornigs of Wrocław built their social position in similar ways, working towards obtaining noble status and landed estates, and ultimately – aspired to an aristocratic lifestyle. Urban houses and houses in country estates were used to achieve lifetime goals in both communities.

### *Wrocław patricians' houses as an object of research*

The academic paper as a form does not allow for a comprehensive presentation of early modern residences of Wrocław's patricians while accounting for their entire sociocultural context. The very subject of the origins of patrician families, their careers and cultural horizons deserves a monograph no smaller than the five-volume study by Oskar Pusch with short biographies of all families that governed Wrocław prior to 1741 [2]. This is why this study focuses on just one aspect of the "Wrocław patrician house": the distinctiveness of the language of architectural forms of urban and country residences. In this paper, the author will merely signal the role of landed estates in the process of the aristocratization of the burgher elites of Wrocław, the forms of demonstrating social status and the architectural program of a patrician townhouse and country residence. At the current stage of presenting findings, the main focus was placed on the distinct architectural features of these residences, interpreted in terms of communicating messages and meanings.

The temporal scope used in the study is defined by two significant points in the history of Wrocław and the entirety of Silesia: the cessation of many years of wars for Bohemian succession in 1479 and the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648. These dates also mostly correspond to the periodization of artistic phenomena in Wrocław: in the 1480s the language of art of the elite was extended to include decorative and compositional motifs that had originated in Graeco-Roman ancient history (in the decoration of the town hall), while in the 1760s a new modus now called the early Baroque entered into use.

The findings and hypotheses concerning townhouses presented in this paper are an attempt to summarize and reinterpret the current state of the art on their architecture, which expanded significantly over the past quarter century by way of architectural studies and formal analyses. In the case of country residences, the basis for interpretation was formed by original in situ studies, an analysis of iconographic and cartographic sources, and the content of genealogical lexicons, heritage site inventories and documentary studies<sup>2</sup>.

In this paper, the author formulated and developed the following hypothesis: during the early modern period, the townhouse and country house of a Wrocław patrician differed fundamentally, and the essence of this difference lay in their ideological programs and the language of architectural forms used to communicate them.

The relations between a patrician's "first" and "second" homes on the plane of architecture have not been analyzed in reference to Wrocław or other Silesian cities before. Historians who studied the history of Wrocław's patrician class noted the activity of the burgher elite in purchasing landed estates [6], [2], but mostly ignored the matter of how these estates were occupied. This theme appeared in detailed studies, such as in discussing the histories of individual families [7], localities [8] and country estates [9].

Synthetic studies of Wrocław townhouse architecture [10]–[15] ignored the matter of "second houses". Country estates were laconically noted in monographs on the artistic sponsorship engaged in by prominent burghers [16], [17]. In cases where a patrician's country estate's architecture was analyzed, it was done in separation from its urban counterpart<sup>3</sup>.

Similarly as in the case of research into the architecture of feudal residences in Silesia: the phenomena of the "burgher castle" and "patrician manor" were observed, but functional and formal relationships between these buildings and burgher townhouses were not explored [19], [20]. However, works in which Wrocław patrician country residences were isolated as a subject of research and analyzed in terms of the social context and their sense and scale as a phenomenon do deserve a mention. Mieczysław Zlat in a paper on artistic forms of manifesting "knighthood" by burghers in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries noted five suburban castles located near Wrocław and their "villa function" and "knightly costume", in addition to the sense of drawing on "building types traditionally associated with knightly forms and forms commonly understood as attributes of a knight's castle" [21]. The study by Hanna Górka [22] was an attempt at synthetically presenting the typology

<sup>2</sup> Such documents include O. Pusch's monograph [2] (it lists data on patrician families and their properties), H. Lutsch's heritage site inventories [3] and those by K. Degen [4], the various issues of the New Series of the monumental multi-author *Katalog zabytków sztuki w Polsce* [Art Monuments Catalog in Poland] (Vol. 4, b. 1–7 on the Lower Silesian Voivodeship), referenced collectively as [5].

<sup>3</sup> For instance, M. Pierzchała [18], in analyzing the artistic foundations of Andreas Hertwig, extensively discussed the residence in Wojnowice (pp. 354–356), but mentioned Hertwig's townhouse at Rynek 6 with only one sentence (pp. 353, 354).

and transformation of burgher country estates between the 15<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The lack of comparative studies on the architecture of townhouses and country houses of Wrocław’s patrician class of the early modern period stems mostly from the specificity of the research material. Our knowledge of early modern architecture of urban residences is fragmentary and relatively modest: only a precious few buildings have survived to the present time with façades from before the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, with around a dozen others known only from iconographic accounts, with most having undergone substantial remodeling or demolition. Likewise, in the case of country residences, it would be difficult to reconstruct their early modern appearance without familiarity with historical drawings, graphics, and photographs, as only one building – the castle in Wojnowice – has survived with its 16<sup>th</sup>-century massing, façade and spatial layout unmodified.

### *The house as an element of patrician social space*

The purchase of landed estates by burghers in Silesia began in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was a consequence of the development of the settlement network and the adoption of Western social, legal, and political models. The elite of newly established cities purchased land primarily for economic gain. Suburban estates – peasant farms and feudal estates with land tenure involving military service – were an investment and a form of increasing one’s capital and a source of income, typically from a grange and rent from fields farmed by tenants. Chancellery sources documented the existence of numerous burgher estates surrounding economically developing princely cities, such as Wrocław, Świdnica, Legnica and Brzeg.

Possessing a landed estate “by knightly law” made burghers princely or royal vassals, but it did not allow them access to knightly status. Membership in the burgher estates limited one’s potential career among knights and for intermarrying with knightly families. Likewise, links between knights and a city – with the social space of burghers, strictly speaking – were sporadic at the time and confined to real estate ownership.

In subsequent centuries, the barrier between the burgher and knightly estates functioned selectively. Each of these estates of the realm treated the other as competition, protected their own political and economic privileges, and fought to maintain influence. However, both communities interwove at a personal level. Many burghers, thanks to favor with their feudal superiors, obtained coats of arms and noble titles, in addition to political rights afforded to nobility and stemmed from possessing a rural estate “by knightly law”. Meanwhile, certain noble owners of plots in a city adopted municipal laws, profited from trade, and were members of municipal governing bodies. This interweaving entrenched itself by means of familial ties between nobles and burghers [11], [2].

The process of inter-estate migration greatly intensified in Wrocław and the Wrocław principality in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. A number of circumstances led to it, such as:

- the takeover of the principality’s governance by Wrocław’s patrician class, namely the procurement of a royal privilege that allowed the town council to act in place of the office of starost (temporarily in 1359, 1360–1369, 1403, continually between 1424 and 1636), which meant administering the principality in the name of all members of estates who inhabited its territory [23];

- the economic, political and military might of the city, which was a major player on the political stage of the monarchy during the period of wars for Bohemian succession (between 1437 and 1479) [24];

- the vast career opportunities available to ambitious and industrious individuals, ranging from municipal offices to positions and titles at the imperial court or in the central administration [2];

- the oligarchic character of the town council, which consisted of representatives of the wealthiest merchant houses that had typically been active in a town’s public life for generations and was further fueled by families with blood ties to these houses – membership in this group of power brokers aided the development of an individual’s career on the municipal, princely and royal stage, for instance by providing cultural capital that aided in social advancement [23], [2].

Specific “infrastructures” and attributes were used to demonstrate one’s social status:

- ownership of real estate in the city, including a townhouse – typically sited on a plot near the Market Square and the Merchant’s Quarter, which included the area of Solny Square [25], [26];

- a burial chapel alongside one of two of the city’s parish churches – the Church of St. Elizabeth or St. Mary Magdalene – along with having funded equipment and furnishing, such as an altar or pews;

- tomb statues that commemorated members of one’s family – displayed in the space of a church;

- displays of one’s family’s coat of arms in urban space – on the façade of one’s house, on tombstones, on the vault or wall of a church’s side chapel, and in unique cases – “pseudo-heraldic” motifs (images sourced from a coat of arms) in façade ornamentation [27];

- a country estate, especially one based on knightly laws, including grange buildings and a country residence – a castle or manor;

- a country church with the right of patronage that was either wholly or partially owned by a patrician family, along with elements of liturgical equipment and furnishings (an altar, an ambo, a baptism font, a patron’s bench, etc.);

- tomb statues commemorating family members – displayed within the space of a country church (provided that the body of a patrician was not interred in a church in the city);

- the display of a family’s coat of arms on the façades of a country residence, on the façades of a church, or on tombstones.

A country estate with a residence, a privatized religious or sepulchral space, a tomb statue and their heraldic and inscriptive complement are a set of media means used both in the city and in the country, but that took on a different form depending on the place-based context. It is difficult

to notice these differences in the architecture of religious and sepulchral buildings as up to the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century traditional (Gothic) forms were distinctive features of a religious use, and medieval massings and façades of chapels or churches still had semantic value. In the case of tomb statues, there was a clear differentiation of means of expression. In the burghers' space, a wall epitaph or its more monumental versions predominated [13], [21]. In space inhabited by the nobility and its subjects, the same was true for graves with full-figure representations of the deceased along with the attributes of knightly status (a sword, tournament armor and a misericord), which was a statue common among Silesian landed nobles between the end of the Middle Ages and the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. Likewise, in lay buildings the language of forms derived from the place-based context.

### *The townhouse*

The abovementioned deficiency in knowledge on patrician urban residences means that it is difficult to point to a model case of massing, façade, or hall design. The market townhouses located at numbers 6 (property of the Boner family, later Uthmann, Röbers), number 7 (Bockwitz, Henscher) and number 8 (Uthmann) that stood out in Wrocław's social space – were interconnected by passages and used during homage visits of Bohemian kings as a royal residence [28] – a range of spectacular interior decoration elements survived, but none of the key architectural components from the period (apart from a heraldic cartouche of the Bockwitz family, probably from the façade of house number 7) [29]–[31]. The architecture of Wrocław's elite is best depicted by the house at 2 Rynek, called *Unter den Greifen* (remodeled in 1587–1589), which is exceptional in terms of form and content, but was not the house of a patrician, but Konrad Költzsch, a wealthy trader originally from Bruges (?) who intermarried with the noble von Tarnau family from the village of Święta Katarzyna near Wrocław [27].

Elements of "Renaissance" buildings along the Market Square that have either survived or are known from iconography allow us to identify the three fundamental features of a patrician townhouse from the years 1520–1650:

- Its massing and floor plan layout were almost always the result of an adaptation, modernization and extension of an older frontal building, without major changes to a spatial layout and without exceeding the wall height set in a given street or square frontage;

- the façade was designed based on the principles of composition, the forms of detail and decorative motifs referenced ancient architecture; a regular layout of window axis was standard; the ground floor and gable were highlighted by inter-story cornices; gate portals and gables had an articulation and architectural decoration that typically followed the prevalent formal mode of the period (e.g. Rynek numbers 2, 3, 9, 11, 16, 31); medieval portals were undisturbed in unexposed areas, while gables – from the front, sporadically so (Rynek numbers 14, 58, perhaps also 5) [32], [33];

- hallways that acted as the reception section of a house were covered with groin vaults with ornamental decora-

tion that followed contemporaneous patterns (e.g., Rynek numbers 7, 19).

The feature that set patrician houses apart from other townhouses that followed the scheme above – with a gabled façade – appeared to be the artistic quality and formal sophistication of the gable, gate portal and interior decoration.

A different scheme, applied in three Wrocław buildings, was also used to demonstrate one's social status: a building with a horizontal façade top and mass. The three-story building at 29 Rynek called *zur Goldenen Krone* (from the years 1521–1528) which belonged to Johann Holtz was, from the side of Oławska Street and the market square, topped with semi- and quarter-circular crenelles and abuted traditional steep roofs [34] (Fig. 1a). The house of Heinrich Rybisch at 2 Ofiar Oświęcimskich Street (from the years 1526–1531) consisted of three two-story buildings separated by two courts; the frontal building had a flat roof with a turret (a belvedere?) and a largely undetermined horizontal façade termination; a flat roof and horizontal termination were also present on the posterior building [36]. The house of Andreas Rehdiger at 16 Solny Square (probably from the 1560s) was given an attic story topped with ornamental "crenelles" and either a flat or butterfly roof that supported a turret [15] (Fig. 1b). The common feature of these houses was not only their horizontal façade termination, but also sophisticated classical architectural detail (hypothetical in the last case).

It is difficult to determine which of the potential architectural and ideological patterns was more significant: the palatial wings of the castle in Ząbkowice Śląskie with its arched gables and a belvedere that topped the gatehouse tower, which belonged to Karol Podiebrady, prince of Ziębice and Oleśnica, descriptions of classical Roman palaces such as those from Alberti's treatise (known in this part of Europe already towards the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century) or contemporaneous depictions of the Palace of Solomon in Jerusalem, which was presented on the pages of Martin Luther's Bible of 1534 as a building with a cuboid mass topped with gables with semicircular and quartercircular motifs [38, p. CVIv]. However, regardless of the genesis of Wrocław's houses with crenelles and/or belvederes, such buildings should be interpreted as "urban palaces"<sup>4</sup>. Possessing attributes of royal or princely residences, they strikingly expressed their owners' and developers' social status and ambitions.

The city elite also used another element distinctive of palatial architecture that was common in 16<sup>th</sup>-century residential architecture – terminating the top of an elongated façade with a series of ornamental dormer gables<sup>5</sup>. In Wrocław, this motif was first applied probably around 1580 in the municipal St. Elizabeth's gymnasium building (its palatial character was strengthened by a turret placed on its façade's axis; Fig. 1c). The massing of the house at

<sup>4</sup> The term "urban palace" was previously used only to describe Rybisch's house [13, pp. 201, 202], [25, p. 43].

<sup>5</sup> The genesis and use of this motif as an attribute of palatial architecture was discussed by, among others, S. Hoppe [39] and M.M. Müller [40].



Fig. 1. “Urban palace” in Wrocław from around 1520–1620:

- a) house at 29 Rynek called zur Goldenen Krone (not preserved), 1521–1528, the residence of Johann Holtz; photo from before 1902 (source: [35], p. 138, Abb. 156),
- b) houses at Solny Square – number 14: 1560s, residence of Andreas Rehdiger, number 16: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century (?), residence of Anton Hertwig; drawing by F.B. Werner from ca. 1750 (source: [37, p. 357]),
- c) building of the gymnasium of St. Elizabeth in Wrocław, built ca. 1560; drawing by F.B. Werner from ca. 1750 (source: [37, p. 333]),
- d) house at 52 Rynek called *Zum goldenen Anker*, remodeled in the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as seen ca. 1800 (drawing by A. Kwaśniewski based on a reconstruction drawing by R. Stein, [35], plate XVII; articulation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> story from the 18<sup>th</sup> century – simplified presentation)

II. 1. „Pałac miejski” we Wrocławiu, z lat 1520–1620:

- a) dom Rynek nr 29 zwany Pod Złotą Koroną (niezachowany), 1521–1528, siedziba Johanna Holtza; fot. sprzed 1902 (źródło: [35], Abb. 156),
- b) domy przy pl. Solnym – nr 14: lata 50. XVI w., siedziba Andreea Rehdigera, nr 16: 3. ćwierć XVI w. (?), siedziba Antona Hertwiga; rys. F.B. Wernera z ok. 1750 (źródło: [37], s. 357)),
- c) gmach gimnazjum św. Elżbiety we Wrocławiu, zbudowanego ok. 1560; rys. F.B. Wernera z ok. 1750 (źródło: [37, s. 333]),
- d) dom Rynek 52 zwany Pod Złotą Kotwicą, przebudowany w początku XVI w., stan z ok. 1800 (oprac. A. Kwaśniewski na podst. rysunku rekonstrukcyjnego R. Steina [35, tabl. XVII], artykulacja 2. i 3. kondygnacji – z XVIII w. przedstawiona w uproszczeniu)

52 Rynek (remodeled in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century; Fig. 1d) was accentuated with a rhythm of dormer gables, as was the Bockwitz residence at 6 Rynek (this was suggested by G. Hayer’s visual plan of Wrocław from 1591).

The owner of the property at 14 Solny Square, patrician Anton Hertwig, used a solution that was a fusion of both of these façade crowning types, most probably in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In light of a drawing from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, the façade was topped with a quasi-attic wall that obscured the building’s dormers and was crenellated (Fig. 1b).

### Country house

While attempting to characterize the rural residence, one should note three essential circumstances<sup>6</sup>:

1. Located in a landed estate, a residential building, especially one in that fitted the castle formula (with a defensive ring, an enclosed layout, and elements of *archi-*

<sup>6</sup> Most of the factography concerning rural residences discussed in this chapter are included in the works referenced in footnote 3.

*tectura militaris*), was a manifestation of the “knightly” legal status of the estate. It was of key significance to its owner, as it provided them with economic privileges (the services and labor of serfs) and political rights (the right to vote at an assembly of the principality, eligibility for holding estate office, being part of a noble court of law). In the case of purchasing an estate “under military law” on the territory of the prince of Oleśnica, Brzeg, Legnica and Grodków, the ennobled patrician gained the opportunity to pursue a career not only in burgher governing bodies, but also at a prince’s or bishop’s court.

2. It is difficult to interpret the residences of Wrocław’s patricians as suburban villas, namely as a counterpart to the Italian *villa suburbana*. They were probably a space for social and family life and provided contact with nature, but we have no historical sources that would indicate how essential these functions were. Thus, we should view the purchase of landed estates primarily as a form of capital investment and the necessary means to obtaining knightly status and its associated privileges.

3. One of the ways that the aristocratization of Wrocław’s elite manifested itself during the early modern period was investment in education and culture: participating in the Grand Tour, exploring European countries, especially Italy, France and the Netherlands, studying at a university, artistic patronage, and sometimes a passion for collecting. These experiences should have theoretically made themselves evident in the architecture of patrician country residences, but it is difficult to point to innovations that were “artistic imports”. No landed estates near Wrocław were found to feature the architectural model of the Italian villa. None of the Italicized designs of outstanding architect Valentin von Saebisch (1577–1657) [41] who had ties with Wrocław, could be linked with the residences of Wrocław’s patricians.

In light of the state of the art, all country residences in landed estates that belonged to patrician families were, in architectural and ideological terms, either castles (separated from their grange setting) or manors (integrated with the grange’s building complex). When one studies the drawings by Friedrich Bernard Werner from the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century [37], the topographic maps called *Urmessstshblätter von Preussen* from the years 1825–1830 [42] and contemporary digital terrain models based on aerial scans, it can be seen just how numerous landed estates with water-filled moats were in the territory of the former Wrocław principality. Such moats were the basic attributes of a castle structure. We can identify the following layout variants among them:

- a moat surrounded an earthen mound with a residential building at its center (e.g., Gniechowice, Popowice)
- the entire layout forms a residential motte-type complex that is medieval in origin, or is its early modern modification (with an extensive platform instead of a mound supporting a residential tower);
- a moat that surrounded an extensive bailey with a courtyard in the center and detached buildings along its periphery: a house and service buildings (e.g., Stabłowice);
- a moat that surrounded a three- or four-wing structure with a small courtyard in the center, that was a fully-

fledged castle; its development covered practically the entire square (Komorowice) or “emerged” from a water surface presenting itself as a *Wasserschloss* (Wojnowice; Fig. 2a).

A traditional moat – either singular or double (as seen in Wojnowice) – was fully sufficient as an attribute of status and a potential defense against intruders. In cases where it was replaced with fortifications, they had a spectacular form. For instance, at the start of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the castle of Heinrich von Hornig in Leśnica was given an internal ring of bastion-type fortifications that corresponded to corner towers, as well as extensive external bastion fortifications (Fig. 2c). While interpreting the sense behind this project, it should be noted that between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries Leśnica was a stop along the travel route of Bohemian kings who traveled to Wrocław to receive the homage of the Silesian princes and estates of the realm; in 1611, with Matthias Habsburg, Holy Roman Emperor, staying there probably shortly after the project’s completion. In the case of Żórawina, the property of Adam von Hanniwald, the castle was developed around 1600 on an old village square via the incastellation of a privatized church area (Fig. 2d). It took on the form of an earthen platform framed by embankments, half-bastions, and a moat, and featured a modest house and a lavishly decorated church. The goal of this project was fully achieved in 1608, when Hanniwald obtained town rights for the village, and the status of “a free castle fief” (*freie Burglehn*).

The development of the plan and massings of Silesian castles during the early modern period, including patrician country residences, was based on two fundamental principles:

- structures were preserved, remodeled, wings and towers were added, forming an irregular layout of masses (in the terminology of German scholars: *additive Konglomerat von Bauten*), which allowed for reflecting the process of the “layering” of buildings, and thus to display the old pedigree of a residence (Wojnowice, Figs. 2a, 3; Smolec, Fig. 2b);
- regularly-shaped complexes were designed, with wings that had unified heights and tower accents that highlighted the layout’s regularity (Dobroszyce).

The tower is an archetypical attribute of power. An old tower is also a manifestation of a residence’s great age. If it did not conflict with an owner’s needs – any medieval residential towers were preserved and highlighted (e.g., in Gniechowice, as reported in an inventory document from 1582), or underscored in a newly-designed building square complex (Ślęza, Biestrzyków). The necessity of a tower accent in a patrician castle is attested by cases of extensions during which the medieval walls of a residential tower became a part of a castle wing. In Wojnowice, a tower building was “incorporated” into the northern wing, but a slender corner turret was added into its frontal façade, ignoring technical difficulties (it was necessary to demolish a significant part of the wall and to support the turret via cantilevers; Fig. 3c–e)<sup>7</sup>. In Smolec, the incorporation of a former donjon into the side wing

<sup>7</sup> An interpretation based on original, unpublished research.

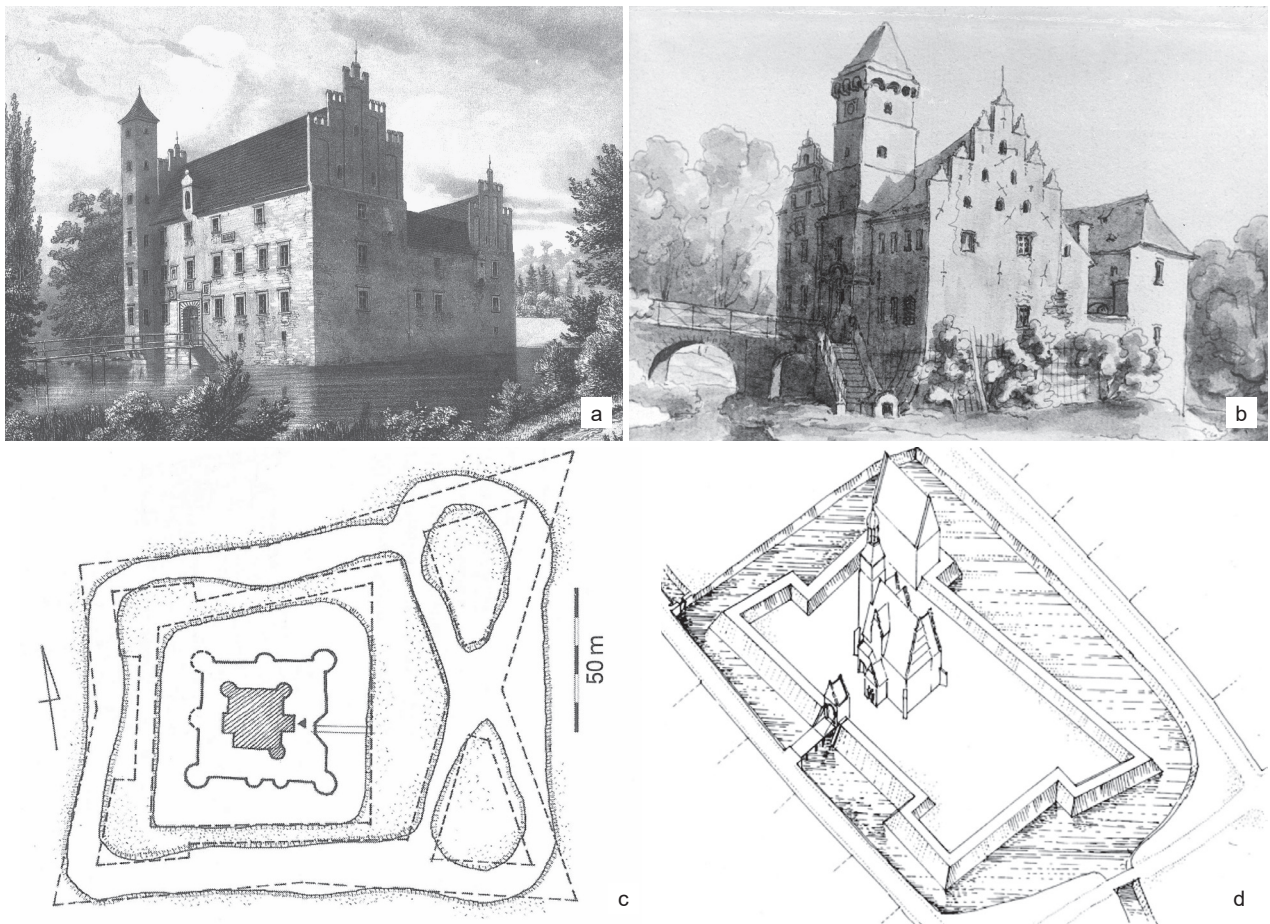


Fig. 2. Cases of castle residences of Wrocław's patricians, located in country estates:

- a) Wojnowice – the residence of the Schewitz, Boner/Huber, Hertwig and other families, constructed between 1513 and ca. 1560, steel engraving by K.U. Huber, from a drawing by R. Drescher (source: [43, after p. 168]),
- b) Smolec – residence of the Uthman von Schmolz family, extended in 1523, end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century; drawing by L. Dorst, pre-1851 (in the collection of Herder-Institut, Marburg, Bildarchiv, Inv.-Nr. 77315),
- c) Leśnica – reconstruction of the castle's layout after its remodeling and extension to include rings of basties and bastion fortifications by Heinrich von Hornig, pre-1611 (by A. Kwaśniewski),
- d) Żórawina – reconstruction of the castle field layout as delineated ca. 1600 by Adam Hanniwald von Ecksdorf (by A. Kwaśniewski)

#### II. 2. Przykłady zamkowych siedzib wrocławskich patrycjuszów w majątkach wiejskich:

- a) Wojnowice – siedziba rodzin Schewitz, Boner/Huber, Hertwig i innych, zbudowana między 1513 a ok. 1560, staloryt K.U. Hubera wg rys. R. Dreschera (źródło: [43, po s. 168]),
- b) Smolec – siedziba rodu Uthmann von Schmolz, rozbudowana 1523, koniec XVI w., rys. L. Dorst, przed 1851 (źródło: Herder-Institut, Marburg, Bildarchiv, sygn. 77315),
- c) Leśnica – rekonstrukcja rozplanowania zamku po przebudowie i rozbudowie o pierścienie fortyfikacji bastiejowych i bastionowych przez Heinricha von Hornig, przed 1611 (oprac. A. Kwaśniewski),
- d) Żórawina – rekonstrukcja rozplanowania arealów zamkowych urządzonych ok. 1600 przez Adama Hanniwalda von Ecksdorf (oprac. A. Kwaśniewski)

was compensated in the frontal part of the castle, where a five-story gatehouse was topped with a quasi-defensive masonry machicolated cornice – clearly a reminiscence of old castle towers (Fig. 2b).

The castle in Wojnowice, which survived without major modifications, allows us to formulate a range of hypotheses concerning the language of architectural forms used in castle structures.

1. The peripheral buildings of a courtyard consisted typically of single-bay buildings – both in castles with compact development that surrounded an internal courtyard, and in those where a masonry house occupied only a part of the earth platform (e.g., Strzeszów – the property of Heinrich Rybisch, that passed to the Rehdigers in

1559). Outliers here include the castle of Melchior Hirsch von Kaltenbrunn in Komorowice, built in 1529 with three wings and a two-bay western wing, highlighted both in the plan and massing. This wing not only contributed to the *additive Konglomerat von Bauten* effect, but also presented itself as a palatial building, a castle-like *corps de logis*. If indeed all three wings date back to the same construction phase, then Hirsch's project could be considered precursory in all of Silesia.

2. It is difficult to determine how common the cases of exposing brick and unplastered façades were. In Wojnowice, external walls had never been plastered (with the exception of blends in gables), and the Gothic brick wall pattern of its residential tower (1513) was repeated

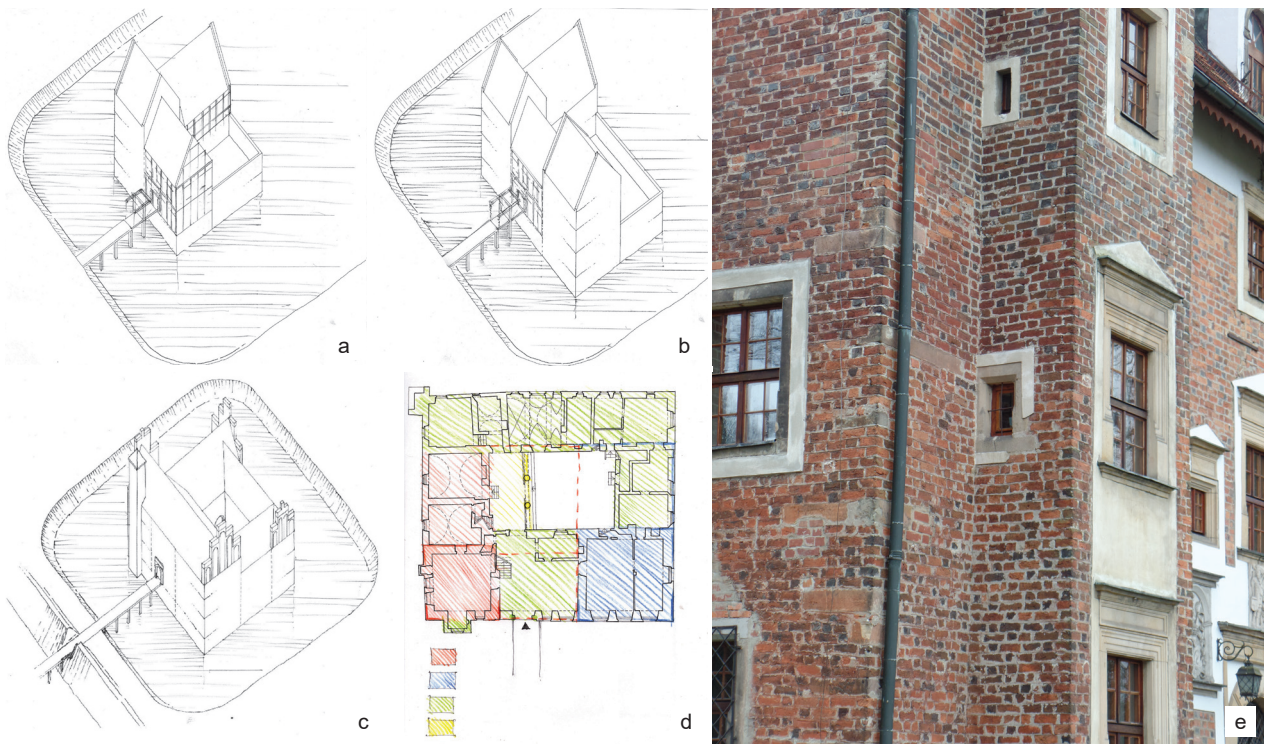


Fig. 3. Castle in Wojnowice – reconstruction of construction development phases:

- a) phase I (1513, Niclas Schewitz) – platform with a masonry residential tower and masonry and wooden side wings,
- b) phase II (post 1525, Niclas Schewitz) – extension of the platform from the west, addition of a masonry tower segment to the north wing,
- c) phase III (after 1437–1546, Lucretia Huber and her husband Jacob I Boner) – extension of the platform from the south, replacement of wooden building sections with masonry ones (formation of the present northern and eastern wings), addition of a turret, construction of the western and southern wing,
- d) ground floor plan with phases I (red), II (blue), III (green), IV (post 1557, Andreas Hertwig – yellow) marked, d) turret (phase III) added to the former residential tower (phase I) while preserving the brick wall face (drawings and photos by A. Kwaśniewski)

#### II. 3. Zamek w Wojnowicach – rekonstrukcja faz rozwoju budowlanego:

- a) faza I (1513, Niclas Schewitz) – majdan z murowaną wieżą mieszkalną oraz murowano-drewnianymi skrzydłami bocznymi,
- b) faza II (po 1525, Niclas Schewitz) – powiększenie majdanu od zachodu, dostawienie murowanego wieżowego segmentu skrzydła północnego,
- c) faza III (po 1437–1546, Lukrecja Huber i jej mąż Jacob I Boner) – powiększenie majdanu od południa, wymiana drewnianych partii zabudowy na murowane (ukształtowanie obecnych skrzydeł: północnego i wschodniego), dostawienie wieżyczki, budowa skrzydła zachodniego i południowego,
- d) rzut kondygnacji parteru z oznaczeniem faz rozwoju: I (czerwony), II (niebieski), III (zielony), IV (po 1557, Andreas Hertwig – kolor żółty),
- e) wieżyczka (faza III) dostawiona do byłej wieży mieszkalnej (faza I) z zachowaniem ceglano-głazowego lica muru (oprac., fot. A. Kwaśniewski)

during each extension (after 1525, after 1537–1546, after 1557) [3, pp. 491–493] (Fig. 2a). Furthermore, the aforementioned turret was constructed so that the point of contact between the older and newer wall faces would be invisible<sup>8</sup> (Fig. 3e). The late medieval façades of country churches (e.g., in Sośnica Jaskotle, Brzezinka, and Bielany Wrocławskie), was treated with equal attention during this time, which allows us to assume that a brick wall face was perceived as an attribute of a building's old age.

3. At least since the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, the wings of patrician castles were topped with traditional stepped gables (Wojnowice, Smolec, Leśnica), which were fashionable in Wrocław during this period (the “stepped” contour of the quasi-attic of the house at 14 Solny Square that can be dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century appears to be an exception).

4. The “Renaissance” gate portals of castles from around Wrocław – in Wojnowice, Gałów and Ślęza – fully correspond with the castle formula of a residence: their rusticated frameworks clearly displayed a fortified image. Especially as they were preceded by a bridge with one of its spans acting as a drawbridge, and which sometimes was located right beside the portal and was used to close the gate aperture – to this end, the portal jamb had a recess or niche intended for the setting in of the raised drawbridge (such as in Wojnowice, Fig. 4a; in Gałów). Around 1600, a rusticated, “fortress” portal became an element of the decoration of houses of Wrocław's burgher elite (Rynek numbers 5, 52, 58, 12 Solny Square / 6 Szajnoch Street, Fig. 4b) and canon residences on Ostrów Tumski (Katedralna Street numbers 5, 7 and 9), but in a form enhanced with ornamental motifs, pilasters, and cornices.

5. Bringing to mind associations with the past was achieved perhaps not only by using brick wall faces, but also wooden post-and-beam structures exposed in resi-

<sup>8</sup> As above.





Fig. 4. Representative cases of “castle-like” gate portals in suburban and urban residences of Wrocław’s patricians:  
 a) Wojnowice, castle – gate portal, ca. 1545, post 1557 (photo and descriptions by A. Kwaśniewski),  
 b) Wrocław, patrician house at 12 Solny Square / 6 Szajnochy Street, called Riembergshof – gate portal to a posterior house (not preserved) from 1619, in a photo by E. v. Delden from ca. 1900 (source: [44], descriptions by A. Kwaśniewski)

II. 4. Reprezentatywne przykłady „zamkowych” portali bramnych w podmiejskich i miejskich rezydencjach patrycjuszki wrocławskich:

- a) Wojnowice, zamek – portal bramny (fot. i oprac. A. Kwaśniewski),
- b) Wrocław, dom patrycjuszowski przy pl. Solnym 12 / ul. Szajnochy nr 6 zwany Riembergshof – portal bramny domu tylnego (niezachowany) z 1619 r. (źródło: [44], oprac. A. Kwaśniewski)

dential buildings (and not covered in plaster). Certainly, its use was not solely motivated by practical considerations. An analysis of the structural elements of the castle in Wojnowice led to the conclusion that the central part of the frontal wing – located between the tower building (1513) in the north-eastern corner of the castle and the brick segment in the north-western corner (post 1525) had a timber frame structure, which functioned for at least two decades, exposing the entrance to the castle and was replaced with a masonry wall only during a modernization around 1545<sup>9</sup> (Fig. 3a–d). In the case of the castle in Bielany Wrocławskie, only the cellar and a single-story segment in the south-western corner were built using masonry – the remaining elements of the two-story frontal wing were built using timber frames.

Period iconographic accounts are a crucial source for studying the semantics of timber framing “in the Renaissance period”. A painting from 1549 depicting a bust portrait of patrician Niklas II Rehdiger (?) against a background of a landed estate deserves a special mention [13], [45], [22] (Fig. 5). It shows a hunting scene and the buildings of a country residence with an extensive timber frame building with a wooden fence around the courtyard, along with some form of external ring resembling a post-and-beam wall. Regardless of whether the painting actually depicts Niklas II and his residence in the estate of



Fig. 5. Fragment of a portrait of Niclas II Rehdiger (?), 1549, previously in the collection of the Schlesisches Museum für Kunstgewerbe und Altertümer, missing after 1945) with a depiction of the buildings of a landed estate (in Stary Śleszów?), including a manor with a half-timbered structure (photo: Niclas II Rehdiger (?), [in:] *Katalog Strat Wojennych*, Wydział Restytucji Dóbr Kultury, nr/no 11104, <http://www.dzielautracone.gov.pl/katalog-strat-wojennych/obiekt/?obid=11104> [accessed: 12.02.2022], descriptions by A. Kwaśniewski)

- II. 5. Fragment portretu Niclasa II Rehdigera (?), 1549, dawniej w zbiorach Schlesisches Museum für Kunstgewerbe und Altertümer, po 1945 zaginiony) z przedstawieniem zabudowy majątku ziemskiego (w Starym Śleszowie ?), w tym dworu o konstrukcji fachwerkowej (fot. Niclas II Rehdiger (?), [w:] *Katalog Strat Wojennych*, Wydział Restytucji Dóbr Kultury, nr 11104, <http://www.dzielautracone.gov.pl/katalog-strat-wojennych/obiekt/?obid=11104> [data dostępu: 12.02.2022], oprac. A. Kwaśniewski)

<sup>9</sup> As above.



Fig. 6. Examples of vault decorations in the formal spaces of urban and country patrician residences:

a) vault in the hall of the house at 5 Rynek in Wrocław, the urban residence of Hieronymus Uthmann von Rathen, 1574, on a photo by E. v. Delden before 1920 (source: [10, p. 13]),

b) vault of a ground-floor chamber in the castle in Dobroszyce, the country residence of Andreas von Heugel, 1598–1601 (photo by A. Kwaśniewski)

Il. 6. Przykłady dekoracji sklepień w reprezentacyjnych pomieszczeniach siedzib patrycjuszowskich miejskich i wiejskich:

a) sklepienie sieni domu Rynek 5 we Wrocławiu, siedziby miejskiej Hieronymusa Uthmanna von Rathen, 1574 (fot. E. v. Delden, przed 1920, źródło: [10, s. 13]),

b) sklepienie izby parteru zamku w Dobroszycach, siedzibie wiejskiej Andreego von Heugela, 1598–1601 (fot. A. Kwaśniewski)

Stary Śleszów (where a manor on a square surrounded by a moat had existed as late as in 1824 [42, Blatt 2955]), this depiction proves that in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century wood was a fully acceptable material for use in a patrician's country house; and perhaps even a desirable one.

Depictions of estates of landowners on the previously mentioned drawings by Werner are proof that even in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century timber framing was still exhibited on the façades of noble manors around Wrocław (e.g., in the estates of Żerniki Małe, Bledzów, Skarszyn, Maślice Małe, Popowice). A telling case here is the manor in Prusowice, which had a timber frame structure from the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, erected by a descendant of an ennobled patrician family, Georg Dietrich von Gartz, and has retained its original façades to this day, as they were apparently approved of by successive generations of owners between the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The sgraffito façade articulation in the form of framed divisions used in Silesia in ca. 1590–1620 by representatives of the noble elite could have been an artful variation on the theme of post-and-beam structures [46]. It was first used in around 1595 in Siestrzechowice, in the castle of Andreas von Jerin (the nephew of Andreas, bishop of Wrocław), and was repeated in around 1600 in the façades of the “castle” church in Żórawina by Adam von Hanniwald (a bishop's councilman who probably was personally familiar with the Siestrzechowice residence) and on the façades of the castle of Andreas von Heugel in Dobroszyce, from the years 1598–1601). It is worth noting that the descendants of Wrocław's patrician families were the first to copy this solution.

Architectural solutions that clearly distinguished patrician urban houses from country ones included the articulation of vaults in formal spaces: hallways and chambers. In country residences – e.g., in the castles in Dobroszyce, Komorowice and Śleza – the vaults were not covered in richly

ornamented molding as in urban residences (Fig. 6a) but with plaster ribs that formed reticulated vaults (Fig. 6b). This form of articulation, based on mimicking traditional (late medieval) ribbed vaults was widely used in Silesia and Kłodzko Land towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In noble residences, the use of this modus should be tied with the desire to demonstrate the house's age – either actual (Śleza) or mimicked using an architectural language (Dobroszyce) – and thus the age of the castle lord's nobility.

## Conclusions

The country residences of Wrocław's patricians were not “second houses”, but functional extensions of urban residences. They were living spaces with autonomy in relation to the house in the city, associated with a patrician's membership in the noble community. They were a manifestation of this membership and a form of legitimizing one's “knightly” status. The architectural forms of the house in the city and the house in the country – the “resplendent” (*prächtigt*) and “fortified” (*feste*) moduses – were messages directed to two different audiences, two different social communities in which a patrician functioned. In other words, the urban house and the country house illustrate the dual estate membership of a patrician: as belonging to the burghers, due to having town rights, and the nobles, due to having an estate based on knightly law, a noble title, and a coat of arms. A status's attributes did not transfer. Country castles and manors of Wrocław's patricians were practically devoid of burgher or princely signs of “resplendence”. In urban palaces, the castle language of architecture was used, but in a “resplendent” form, drawn from princely or aristocratic residences.

Future research can allow us to trace how the process of the “incorporation” of patrician families into the no-

ble community and the “erasure” of their burgher origins altered the rank of each house and its form of use. The Rehdigers can serve as a model example here – they were a family with links to Wrocław dated back to as early as 1512, that was ennobled in 1544, and whose members abandoned trading and banking in favor of profits from landed estates already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, having sold the urban palace at Solny Square and relocating to country castles and manors. They furthered their careers by holding state and court offices as members of the nobility.

The interpretative proposals featured in this paper can be useful in conducting architectural, archaeological and conservation studies. The presence of a large number of non-original old bricks in walls from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries (e.g., in the southern wall of the eastern wing of the Rehdiger family castle in Strzeszów<sup>10</sup>) can be in-

terpreted as the remains of the nogging of post-and-beam walls. The argument concerning the “old-fashioned character” of patrician country estates should be taken into account while analyzing façade plaster stratigraphies: such analyses should be conducted while bearing in mind that the exposure of the brick pattern of a wall (the lack of plaster) was a programmatic element. All visualizations of the appearance of country residences from the early modern period should include the historical components of a “castle” or “manor” program: a moat, the placement of grange buildings, and the possible extent of the residence’s fields.

Studies on early modern patrician residences allow us to note that the social environment is the *raison d’être* of architecture, and familiarity of environmental determinants and contexts is the basis for all interpretation.

Translated by  
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<sup>10</sup> As above.

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### Abstract

#### *Prächtiges haus – festes haus: Notes on the "urban" and "country" architectural modus of the house of Wrocław patricians in the Early Modern Period*

In contemporary studies of historical architecture, the social sense and context of a work of architecture increasingly often becomes a crucial matter. From this standpoint, it is justified to define the field of study and to analyze phenomena from the perspective of the community that used the given architecture and not following the traditional approach of "architectural theme", or "artistic genesis". The author of this paper explores the phenomenon of residential architecture in the community of Wrocław's patrician class during the early modern period and postulates that the relations between the urban and country patrician houses should be made a subject of study. This paper focuses on the distinctive architectural elements of these residences, as interpreted from the perspective of the messages and meanings they conveyed. The author briefly characterizes the features of urban residences (distinguishing a group of houses that embodied the formula of the "urban palace") and country residences (pointing to the prevalence of the castle formula). The author analyzed the language of forms of the urban and country house and pointed to significant differences stemming from ideological functions that they performed: they were splendour, artfulness, and innovation on the one hand, while on the other: flaunting a fortress-like appearance, a deliberate austerity, and an accentuation of "oldness". The paper's conclusions include, among others, postulates concerning the future of architectural studies that should be conducted with an awareness of the retrospective program of early modern patrician residences from around Wrocław.

**Key words:** history of architecture, Silesia, the early modern period, Wrocław, the patriciate

### Streszczenie

#### *Prächtiges Haus – festes Haus. Uwagi o „miejskim” i „wiejskim” modusie domu w środowisku patrycjatu Wrocławia w początkach epoki nowożytnej*

We współczesnych badaniach nad architekturą dawną coraz częściej kwestią pierwszoplanową staje się społeczny sens i kontekst dzieła architektonicznego. W takim ujęciu zasadne jest definiowanie obszaru badań i analizowanie zjawisk z perspektywy środowiska społecznego, które posługiwało się architekturą, a nie według tradycyjnego klucza „tematu architektonicznego”, „genezy artystycznej” itp. Autor artykułu zwraca uwagę na zjawisko architektury rezydencjonalnej w kręgu patrycjatu Wrocławia w okresie wczesnonowożytnym i postuluje, aby przedmiotem badań uczynić relacje zachodzące w sferze architektury między miejskim i wiejskim domem patrycjuszowskim. Treść artykułu stanowią architektoniczne wyróżniki tych siedzib, interpretowane pod kątem komunikowanych treści i znaczeń. Autor w skróty charakteryzuje cechy siedzib miejskich (wyróżniając grupę domów realizujących formułę „pałacu miejskiego”) oraz siedzib wiejskich (wskazując na powszechność formuły zamkowej). Analizując język form domu miejskiego i wiejskiego, wskazuje istotne różnice wynikające z funkcji ideowych, jakie każda z siedzib realizowała: z jednej strony wytworność, kunsztowność, nowatorstwo, z drugiej – epatowanie warownością, rozmyślna surowość, akcentowanie „dawności”. W konkluzjach zostały m.in. zawarte postulaty dotyczące przyszłych badań architektonicznych, które powinny być prowadzone ze świadomością retrospektywnego programu podwrocławskich siedzib patrycjuszowskich doby wczesnonowożytnej.

**Słowa kluczowe:** historia architektury, Śląsk, epoka nowożytna, Wrocław, patrycjat