

# German social democratic architecture in municipal housing in Ústí nad Labem, 1918-1938

Ing. arch. Pavel Prouza

Supervisor: Prof. PhDr. Rostislav Švácha, CSc.

## **Abstract**

The dissertation addresses the issue of architecture in municipal housing built between the two wars in the town of Ústí nad Labem. From mid-nineteenth century the North Bohemian industrial agglomeration, populated mostly by Germans, experienced unprecedented urban and demographic growth. Thus, between 1919 and 1938, the municipality developed a comprehensive project of approximately one hundred buildings.

The thesis identifies relations and balanced proportions between a formal analysis of the individual stages of development and a study of their broader historical context. The method of art-historical analysis is applied, whereby the projects are chronologically classified and their urban, typological and chronological aspects are assayed and assessed. The thesis also focuses on the identity of the author, the architect of German origin Franz J. Arnold. The architecture of the Ústí municipal housing complex was designed as a concretization of the social democratic political programme and of the state housing policy, it carries therefore a contents of political significance. The analysis was performed based on archival studies and field research. Individual properties were assessed in the context of the interwar housing development in the Central European space with its focal point in Austria, Czechoslovakia and Germany.

The thesis concludes that the complex of interwar municipal housing architecture in Ústí nad Labem is a distinctive and well-articulated display of the development of public-assistance-type of multistory architecture in the Czech lands. Its benefit is seen in the early application of a modern town-planning approach and the unique combination of experimental town-planning forms with the gallery-dwelling typology. The thesis therefore recommends the most valuable components of the complex dating to 1927-1933, which retained to this day a remarkably authentic external aspect, to be listed as historical monuments, as their preservation for future generations might be put at stake by encroachments.