

2022 DEFINIOWANIE PRZESTRZENI ARCHITEKTONICZNEJ  
AWANGARDY ARCHITEKTURY  
DEFINING THE ARCHITECTURAL SPACE  
AVANT-GARDE ARCHITECTURE

## DEFINING THE ARCHITECTURAL SPACE

Subject of discussion 2022: **AVANT-GARDE ARCHITECTURE**

The existence of avant-garde art in the contemporary world is not obvious. Researchers cannot fully agree on what it was and when, or, if it came to an end at all. The multitude of movements called avant-gardes and neo-avant-gardes or those ascribed to them is large. Such a state of affairs makes it difficult to classify and examine them unambiguously. Futurism and Expressionism, Dada and Surrealism or Pop Art and Hyperrealism are difficult to compare, but the aims of the artists who followed these movements have sometimes converged or at least been similar.

Historically, architecture had to be built according to the memorised canons and habits of the audience and the designers. This stemmed from the conviction that such premises were objective rather than subjective. Creators could not or were not able to (in a mental sense) detach themselves from memories and thoughts of the perfection remembered from the past.

With his actions, Marcel Duchamp contributed to the emergence of new forms in both art and architecture. His games and decomposition of the original meanings of objects developed a new approach to creating more than just artwork. Unable to build their designs, the early 20th-century architects drew them. Construction could no longer remain obvious, the shapes of buildings no longer carried the expression of their function. Expressionist sculptures appeared and there occurred a detachment from the original purpose of objects and their intellectual transformation.

Contemporary architecture no longer has problems with the unreal form of buildings. Form rather than function has become the primary goal and anything that will shock the recipient is allowed. Leon Chwistek, the theoretician of Polish Expressionism – Formism – urged artists to reject all the rules. A similar aim may guide today's architecture. The drawings and sculptures from the Expressionist era have become transformable into built architecture today.

We are living in a state of culture which is referred to as – post-modernity. The myths of civilisation and art, such as avant-garde, modernism (modernity), and belief in one universal way of global development, have lost their persuasive power. The diversity of thoughts and forms has become a hallmark of the postmodern age. Utility, durability and beauty, which were once the *sine qua non* of construction, no longer apply today.

The thought of the early 20th-century avant-garde allowed contemporary architecture to depart from the representation of the world as we remember it. As befits the heir to the great creators, the current architecture follows a similar path, but a different one, its own, striving once again to break away from the memorised signs. As we can see, though, something does not allow it to depart completely from the memorised theoretical projects of the Expressionists, Futurists or the intellectual jokes of the Surrealists.

*Tomasz Kozłowski*



PATRONI MEDIALNI:



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**DEFINING THE ARCHITECTURAL SPACE –  
AVANT-GARDE ARCHITECTURE**

**DEFINIOWANIE PRZESTRZENI ARCHITEKTONICZNEJ –  
AWANGARDY ARCHITEKTURY**

VOL. 1

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# Contents

## Spis treści

CLAUDIA BATTAINO	
<b>Paradox of the Avant-Garde</b>	
Paradoks awangardy .....	7
RENATO CAPOZZI	
<b>Form vs Anti-Forms (Shapeless)</b>	
Forma a antyformy (formy bezkształtne) .....	15
LILIIA GNATIUK	
<b>Avant-Garde in Sacral Space</b>	
Awangarda w przestrzeni sakralnej .....	25
MATEUSZ GYURKOVICH	
<b>The Death of Avant-Garde or Return to the Roots?</b>	
Śmierć awangardy czy powrót do źródeł? .....	35
YULIA IVASHKO, OLENA REMIZOVA, ANDRII DMYTRENKO	
<b>The Avant-Garde of the 1920's and the Deconstructivism of Today: The Logic of Inheritance</b>	
Awangarda lat dwudziestych i współczesny dekonstruktywizm: logika dziedzictwa .....	43
NINA JUZWA	
<b>Avant-Garde in Architecture or the Gates of Renzo Piano</b>	
Awangarda w architekturze lub bramy Renza Piano .....	57
JUSTYNA KOBYLARCZYK, OLEKSANDR IVASHKO DOMINIKA KUŚNIERZ-KRUPA, MARCIN FURTAK, ALIRZA MAMEDOV	
<b>Experiment in Experiencing the City</b>	
Eksperyment odczuwania miasta .....	65
TOMASZ KOZŁOWSKI	
<b>Non-Avant-Garde Contemporary Architecture</b>	
Nie awangarda – architektury współczesnej .....	75

OLIVIA LONGO

**The Influence of the Avant-Garde on De Carlo's Conception of Space:  
Anarchist and Situationist Humanism and the Series of Thresholds**

Wpływ awangardy na koncepcję przestrzeni De Carlego:  
anarchistyczny i sytuacjonistyczny humanizm oraz seria progów ..... 83

GINO MALACARNE

**Hypostyle Space Arrangements, a Project by Amancio Williams**

Aranżacje przestrzeni hipostylowej, projekt Amancio Williamsa ..... 95

PATRIZIO M. MARTINELLI

**Escape from the Avant-Garde. The House as a Stage of Memory**

Ucieczka od awangardy. Dom jako scena pamięci ..... 103

RAFFAELLA NERI

**The City of the Avant-Garde. The Tall Building**

Miasto awangardy. Wysoki budynek ..... 111

OLENA OLIYNYK

**Soviet Modernism in Ukraine (Comparative Analysis)**

Radziecki modernizm na Ukrainie (analiza porównawcza) ..... 121

MAREK PABICH, KAROL WYSZNACKI

**Set Designs of Early Science Fiction Movies  
as an Architectural Avant-Garde**

Scenografie wczesnych filmów fantastycznonaukowych  
jako awangarda architektoniczna ..... 141

ALBERTO PRATELLI

**Avant-Garde... Onward-To-Where?**

Awangarda... Gdzie dalej? ..... 153

FEDERICA VISCONTI

**Avant-Garde. Thinking of Architecture through Drawings**

Awangarda. Rozważania o architekturze poprzez rysunki ..... 169

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## THE CITY OF THE AVANT-GARDE. THE TALL BUILDING

### MIASTO AWANGARDY. WYSOKI BUDYNEK

#### Abstract

In architecture, the avant-garde has particular characteristics compared to other arts owing to its specific nature: a realistic, positive, collective art, which is required to interpret shared values and represent them using forms. On the other hand, it could be argued that quality architecture is almost always an avant-garde art since it interprets demands and cultural changes which it transposes into projects for the future city.

In what way have architecture, suggestions, objectives and themes of the avant-garde of the 1900s turned into principles of the construction of the city? Did the tall building, a theme explored in different ways by Expressionism, Constructivism, and Futurism, only have expressive and formal interpretations, or did it become an urban theme? We can pursue this in Mies Van Der Rohe's research in America.

*Keywords: avant-garde movements, high-rise buildings, Mies Van Der Rohe, America*

#### Streszczenie

Na tle innych sztuk awangarda w architekturze posiada szczególne cechy, ze względu na swoją specyfikę: jest to sztuka realistyczna, pozytywna i zbiorowa, od której wymaga się interpretacji wartości wspólnych i reprezentowania ich za pomocą form. Można jednak stwierdzić, że architektura wysokiej jakości jest prawie zawsze sztuką awangardową, ponieważ interpretuje wymagania i zmiany kulturowe, które następnie przekłada na projekty przyszłego miasta.

W jaki sposób architektura, propozycje, cele i tematy awangardy z początku XX w. przekształciły się w zasady dotyczące budowy miasta? Czy wysoki budynek, temat zgłębiany na różne sposoby w ekspresjonizmie, konstruktywizmie i futuryzmie, podlegał jedynie ekspresyjnym i formalnym interpretacjom, czy też stał się miejskim motywem? Tego możemy dociekać, analizując badania Miesa Van Der Rohe w Ameryce.

*Słowa kluczowe: ruchy awangardowe, wieżowce, Mies Van Der Rohe, Ameryka*

It is my belief that the avant-garde architectural movements are a chapter in themselves and have always represented a slight dilemma when it comes to including them in the categories of art history. Not all the avant-garde schools that we cite in painting, sculpture or other arts have seen a counterpart in architecture, or, if so, they may have had one in a different, more circumscribed way, which evolved independently. As always, the reasons are to be found in the specific nature of architecture, in its being a representative art, certainly, but also a practical, utilitarian act, in view of its materiality, construction methods, artisanship and available techniques, all



facts which, for a long time, excluded it from the liberal arts. But, above all, for architecture, showcasing any avant-garde expression is limited by its being a realistic art, an interpreter – by statute – of reality, and being indissolubly linked to this. And also, from being a positive, affirmative art, tasked with shaping a world corresponding to the values of a particular culture and era. In addition, architecture's primary purpose is building places, bringing meaning to spaces through compositions of volumes and buildings: it cannot build "by denial" or protest, by denunciation, nor – due to the role it plays – can it be a personal, individualistic, subjective expression, as is occasionally claimed by the avant-garde movements.

Almost always, in architecture, the avant-garde movements have focused their attention on expressive and language issues, in some cases in search of a "constructive" eloquence, to announce the exceptionality of a building through a new formal emphasis. And although expressiveness is a quality absolutely necessary for any work of architecture, it must be understood as the interpretation of a collective value, with any luck shared, that can be the bearer of general principles on which to base the construction of a city, a part of it, or of a set of buildings. Principles which are repeatable, which do not concern a single exceptional episode, but the fabric that embraces them and orders the urban whole.

However, conversely, it is noticeable that quality architecture is always a forerunner and interpreter of trends, cultural demands, and social, economic and technical changes which are reflected in the conformation of buildings and places. Architecture envisions the city and the construction of the society of the future, of the world to come; it *projects* them, anticipates them in forms adherent to the reality that will be. Arguably, generalizing a little, it could be said that all good architecture is avant-garde art, for its ability to read the changes and direct the physical transformations of reality of our cities and the world we inhabit, in accord with the changes taking place.

In a 1965 book entitled *Bilancio dell'Espressionismo*<sup>1</sup> Giulio Carlo Argan argued for the substantial continuity between the values of Expressionism, which claimed the "spirituality" of art in opposition to a purely utilitarian conception, and those of strict German Rationalism: a form of "realist" relapse of a movement born, seemingly, from rather different assumptions.

In trying to follow this line of thought, I myself wondered whether it was possible to recognize the contributions of the avant-garde movements of the 1900s to architecture, and then thought about the city, and how these demands had been addressed and realized.

One of the most recurrent themes, common to different movements, concerns reflection around the tall building and its role in the construction of the modern city. Certainly, born in Europe with avant-garde veins and accents, as a novelty and a rupture within the consolidated city, made thinkable by the technical innovations and rendered necessary by urban growth, it saw later repercussions and experiments in distant contexts, different from each other albeit with certain similarities.

Mies Van Der Rohe's iron and glass Friedrichstraße skyscraper of 1921 has been placed, rightly or wrongly, in the bedrock of Expressionism, both due to the provocative aspect of its disproportionately large volume in relation to the still diminutive fabric of the medieval city, as well as the use of new materials, iron and glass, eloquently represented in contrast with the extant in the exaltation of their intrinsic qualities: transparency, reflections, an otherwise unattainable height.

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<sup>1</sup> G.C. Argan, *L'architettura dell'espressionismo* [in:] *Bilancio dell'espressionismo*, Vallecchi, Firenze 1965, p. 103.

In these same years, the architects of Constructivism were working on similar themes: the places of the city were identified in their designs by tall buildings which defied the laws of gravity, boasting new materials and new construction techniques. Tatlin (1885–1953), Ginzburg (1882–1946), El Lissitzky (1890–1941), and Leonidov (1902–1959) entrusted the construction of the revolutionary future Soviet city to the ability to imagine extraordinary buildings.

Other avant-garde movements grappled with height, imagining new forms obtainable thanks to new materials, from Erich Mendelsohn (1887–1953) with his Einstein Tower in Potsdam (1919–1923), to Antonio Sant’Elia (1888–1916) with his Futurist works of architecture proposed for the *Città Nuova* (“New City”, 1914).

So, is it possible to transform an avant-garde idea, originally resolved in an Expressionist, Constructivist, or Futurist key, into an idea of the city, into a principle of construction for places?

How does the inevitable transition in architecture from a formal, individualistic idea, linked to particular themes, to the principle underlying the construction of the modern city take place?

By and large, architecture aside, is there also an avant-garde city?

In his migration from Europe to America, Mies van Der Rohe pursued this thought.

The tall building in iron and glass was a theme he addressed for the first time in 1921 in the ways we have mentioned, almost as a provocation, disruptive both in its architectural forms and in its urban relationships. But it was to be America, where the skyscraper was no novelty but a consolidated type that challenged height with each fresh undertaking, where cities were built with different rules, and where iron and glass had long been building materials, which provided Mies with opportunities and possibilities to transform this initial insight into works of architecture tested and realized in different contexts. Applying himself above all to a question, which was undeniably, I believe, disruptive and avant-garde.

My proposition is that it was the result of European culture which induced a new and unexpected vision in the American city: for Mies, the tall building was not an object to be studied in relation to its possibility of competing with others in being the tallest, as happened in the American “downtowns”, nor to demonstrate competence or technical audacity. The tall building, like any other piece of architecture, was a means to build places in the city through the relationship it established with other works of architecture, to define spaces which possessed value and form, to build that sense of *civitas* that has always inspired every civil community, in European culture, every grouping of people who have endowed themselves with laws and places for coexistence.

By the same token, the tall buildings of the Constructivists always had a dual value, an urban value underlying the choices of their location, the intent to build the significant places of the city, as well as a demonstration of wishing to challenge the laws of statics: the horizontal skyscrapers of El Lissitzky emphasizing the intersections between the streets penetrating the crown of the Moscow ring road, Leonidov’s towers defining monumental places and new urban squares, pitting voids and relationships against existing buildings, inventing different volumes, introducing a new territorial scale into the modern city. Likewise, Mies, even in America, the country of skyscrapers, did not design skyscrapers: he built new collective spaces for the city through compositions of tall buildings. He brought to Chicago the idea of the European public square, a place of collective being, a disruptive idea in a nation founded on individualism and regulated by private property and profit. Was this still an avant-garde idea?

Let us see how it developed.

Mies first tackled this theme in the '50s in New York, with the construction of the Seagram Building (1954–1958). This is a self-standing building, which can only be likened to its surroundings within the logic of the city block, a unit of measurement of the urban terrain, which had been built on demand, without a particular plan or an overall logic. The result was skyscrapers designed as independent objects, structurally of iron and glass, generally clad in brick to resist the frequent threat of fires, and as a result resembling masonry constructions.

Mies basically introduced two innovations: the first more obvious one concerned the formal elements, those which defined the actual building. The construction choice became both an expressive and a technical tool, it revealed itself directly in the form of the architectural elements, it became a “mother tongue”, to use an expression dear to Auguste Perret. Even though, of course, Mies had to respect the fire regulations in force in all American cities, and for this reason he drowned the metal supporting pillars in a casing of aggregates, to then encase them again, on the outside, in metal.

This construction system presented itself as an ordered set of pillars and lintels, and of smaller uprights which brought rhythm to and divided the large panes of glass. This is a construction system which Mies used in an expressively coherent way with its own nature, in a less “Expressionist” way than the Berlin skyscrapers, bringing it back to a classical principle of order.

However, in this context, the real novelty consisted in the intent to define a public square, an open, collective space, a city place that was customary in the European tradition, but practically non-existent in the American city, and, above all, never previously realized by means of tall buildings.

To obtain this space, Mies simply set the tower back from its alignment with the other buildings along Park Avenue, not unlike the recessing of so many religious buildings from the row of frontages in old cities. In this way, a void defined through a slight elevation of the ground level was generated, not really a plinth, but a distinction with respect to the road surface; the axis being emphasized through the positioning of two large symmetrical fountains, a handful of wide steps, and a canopy sheltering the building's entrance.

In fact, there had been a previous project for Chicago, the city where Mies chose to live and work. The project for the Lake Shore Drive dates back to 1948 and is based on a relationship between two tall buildings, again in iron and glass, overlooking the lake, the real protagonist of the intervention. In this case, Mies worked on the composition of the two residential buildings and arranged them in such a way as to define a communal place, a small entrance plaza, open to the lake and the city.

It would also be in Chicago that he developed a project for the first real public square, making use of his knowledge of the rules of the American city, his long collaboration with Hilberseimer, and the earlier project for the IIT campus. Experiences which allowed him to experiment with construction principles based on the relationship of autonomous buildings, just as Schinkel's Berlin had already taught him. In the IIT project, Mies subdivided the open spaces through a hierarchical arrangement of independent volumes which, in order to distinguish the character of each space, needed to be clearly identified, starting from their typological definition. This was a principle which Mies was to implement again in subsequent compositions, where the protagonists would be tall buildings intended as residences, offices or public institutions.

The theme of an urban plaza seems to be the way he interpreted the assignment for the construction of the Federal Center of Chicago, in 1959<sup>2</sup>, as a seat for the administrative offices of the State of Illinois, which included the Treasury, Defence and Justice Departments, the Court and the city's central post office.

The desire to define a place of relationship and meeting common to several public buildings is evidenced by the studies which Mies conducted before arriving at the definitive solution. The project area is located inside the *Loop*, in the heart of the commercial and tertiary downtown; the streets which identify the block are all similar to one another, without any hierarchy. The area that Mies had available lay between two city blocks, one, intact, which would become completely free only after the demolition of a pre-existing building, the other available only for the part overlooking Dearborn Street. Surrounding these, all the other blocks were built-up.

The initial programme seems to have envisaged the construction of two towers; Mies' studio developed multiple tests, sketches, and models which started off from this programme and modified it. The variants concerned definitions of the parts, their measurements and proportions but, above all, their different composition: the precision and clarity, both typological and compositional, pursued here as in any project, would end up defining the characteristics of the site.

Evidently, Mies considered that the activities housed in the government offices of the State of Illinois required the construction of a representative place; however, the problem of building a square by means of tall buildings was a far from usual theme, and not easy to solve. To work in this direction, Mies separated the post office building from the towers. In this way, the elements involved became three: two towers, whose position and scale had to be defined in compliance with the given programme, and a low, self-standing building, more fittingly allocated to the post office. This can be traced back to a well-known typology, a large undivided hall given over to a collective vocation, a familiar theme dear to Mies' heart.

This operation allowed the composition of the square by working on a double scale, indispensable for its definition: the tall buildings identified the site on an urban scale, and demarcated its limits, as if protecting a free space obtained by creating a gap between the surrounding skyscrapers. The one-storey hall, around eight metres in height, introduces a second, smaller measurement, comparable with the height of pedestrians: a less looming height, easily gauged by the eye, closer to the human scale and that of ancient public squares. Because, beyond a certain height, the sheer size of the towers would have had difficulty bringing proportion to an empty space below; seen from close to, approaching on foot within a delimited space, its conclusion would be impossible to perceive. The emptiness of the space, therefore, could not be proportionate, as in the examples of the past, to the relationship between the height of the volumes and the width of the open space between them, between the height of the buildings and their reciprocal distance: this is a proportion which the eye cannot measure. This role must be entrusted to an element of a lesser scale, perceptible in its full extension.

For this reason, the towers of the Federal Center, like the nearby skyscrapers, are divided into two parts: a lower one which borrows the height of the post office and is porticoed, with the glazed dividing wall recessed, and an upper one consisting of the bulk of the building.

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<sup>2</sup> The task was entrusted to several studios: Schmidt, Garden & Erikson, C.F. Murphy Associates, A. Epstein & Sons; the by-then elderly master Mies Van Der Rohe was the coordinator.

In this way, the site of the actual square, of its being and relationships, is measured by the relationship between the post office and the porticoed lobbies of the towers; above, their volume continues its race towards the sky, protective and endless, unknowable and majestic at the same time, to firmly lock up the space.

Basically, Mies organized these towers in a comparable way to the adjacent skyscrapers; a lobby on the lower floors, comparable in height to the existing ones, and the overlapping and repetitive masses of the building itself. The ways of architectural definition and the activities hosted changed: the full and heavy base of the lobbies here became a portico, an element of collective places which, in its transparent interior, contains the access atria and vertical distributions; above this the office spaces ordered in repeated floors that are all the same.

To testify to the process and the development stages of the project, many drawings and different models were produced by Mies' studio.

(A) Although we do not precisely know the order of these studies, we can place among the first solutions a very daring hypothesis: all the activities of the government offices and the court were to be collected in a single skyscraper 56 storeys high, aligned along Dearborn Street, in an extreme dare, similar to that of the just-completed Seagram: the attempt being to define a site through a single tall building. Also in this case, the construction at a smaller scale to determine the open space was entrusted to the post office which occupies a large part of the block beyond the street, aligned at its outer limit towards Adams Street to leave free a large, green space between the two buildings.

Perhaps the free space that resulted from this composition would have seemed to Mies too scarcely defined here, compared to its New York predecessor, in the disorder of the skyscrapers that crowded around it; or perhaps the distinction between the two institutions housed in the tower was not sufficiently clear.

(B) Another hypothesis proposed two towers arranged parallel to each other and to Dearborn Street; one restricted by the available area and aligned with the street, the other set back to leave a free space between them. The post office would have formed a sort of plinth placed beneath a tower, but independent of its perimeter, jutting out behind the building along Clark Street.

In this way, the two skyscrapers seemed to build an urban gate straddling the street, but the free space between them was impoverished, and the post office, relegated behind the tower, was excluded from the composition and deprived of its role as a scaling element.

(C) A third model, also dated 1959, foresaw the construction of a much tighter and more circumscribed square, the result of a composition of three towers of equal height, lower than the previous ones and arranged in a C shape. One still tied to Dearborn Street, the other two perpendicular to this, spaced apart in order to free up a central space where the post office was supposed to sit. In this case, the free space of the square seems to have become exceedingly small, almost suffocated by the three tall buildings enclosing it, and for the most part occupied by the post office.

(D) The final solution was in turn subject to a progressive refinement, of which we know at least two variants. The principle was defined: the tall buildings were arranged in an L-shape, the first one again aligned with Dearborn Street, the second parallel to Jackson Boulevard, at the limit of the available block. The post office closed off the other open

corner, between Adams Street and Clark Street. In front of the tower along the boulevard, parallel but in another block, is the Marquette building of Holabird and Roche, an expression of the first school in Chicago, which in this way partially participated, across the street, in defining the site.

This solution had the advantage of leaving a large area free between the buildings and seemed to want to emphasize the importance of the two streets by establishing a hierarchy with respect to the others. Between the two towers stretched a vast space.

- (E) In the subsequent refinement of the project, which corresponds to the solution actually built, the two towers differ in height: the one along Dearborn Street, which houses the offices of the Court and fifteen rooms of the court with double height, is lower, and has thirty storeys, totalling 117 metres in height.

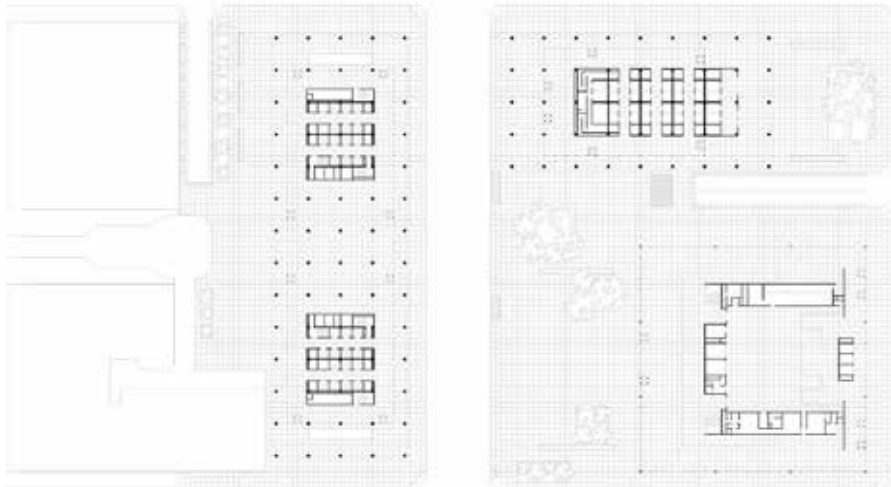
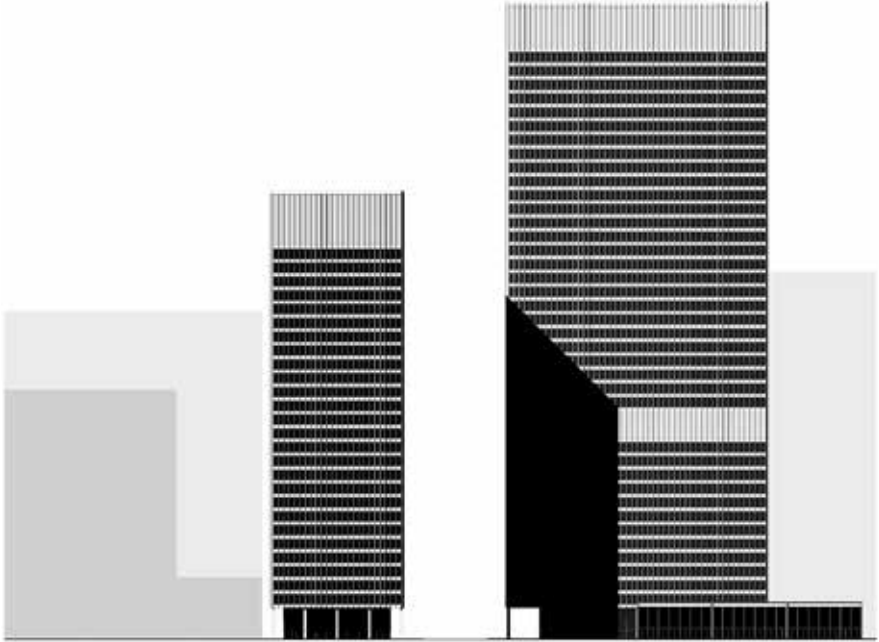
The one along Jackson Boulevard, to be built later, changed proportion and increased its height up to forty-two storeys, for a total of 166.70 metres: this makes its presence even more manifest along this street, and builds a perspective backdrop to the very long and central Dearborn Street, which crosses Chicago from north to south, parallel to the lake. In this way, it became a new urban landmark, a tower higher than the surrounding skyscrapers: Mies did not shy away from bringing recognition and distinction to the place through the architecture, both by defining the open space *between* them, and by building a hierarchy in stark contrast to the uniformity of the grid.

The post office building, a glazed hall with a square ground plan of 59.50 metres per side, eight metres high on the intrados and 9.70 on the extrados, maintained its position at the north-western corner of the block, equally accessible from Clark Street and Adams Street.

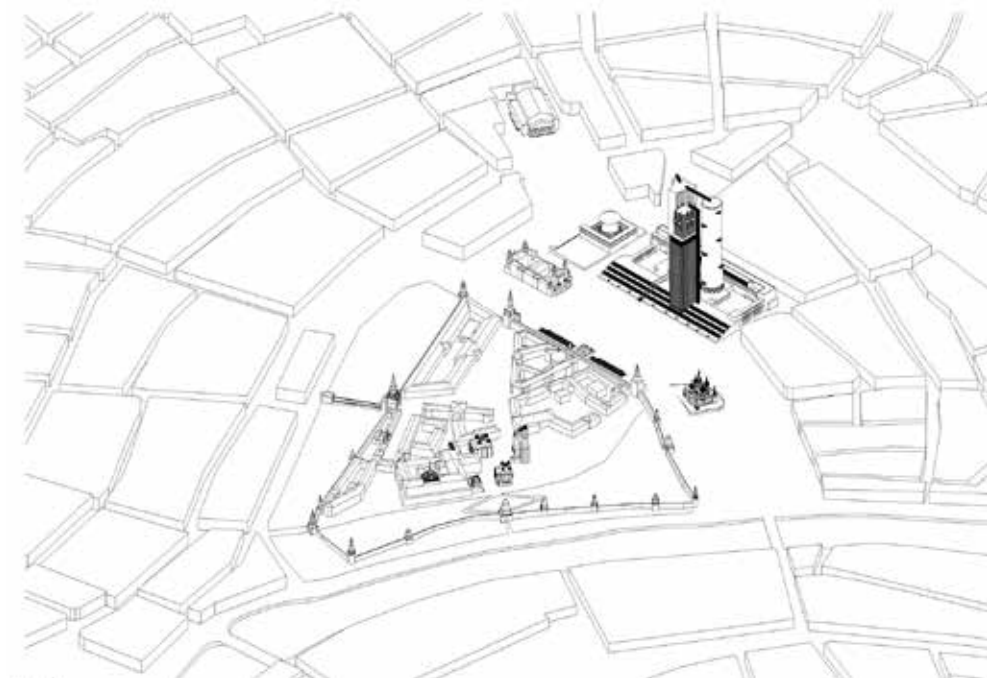
This composition of the spaces allows a definition of two places: a central, representative, roomier one, the main square, between the post office building and the two towers, where Calder's red sculpture would be erected in the '70s; and a smaller, lateral square open towards Jackson Boulevard, at the end of the tower, as if to announce the long double portico next to the volume of the post office and separated from the latter by the access ramp to the underground parking lots.

This subdivision of the places was obtained through a process which Mies frequently employed in his compositions: the buildings are never peremptorily aligned to close a regular geometric figure; short steps make it possible to obtain smaller spaces, hierarchically secondary, apparently leftovers, in reality placed in strategic positions to enrich the composition of other places and other spaces. The buildings run along the perimeter of the figures of the open spaces and seem to want to penetrate other places, opening one space in the other, in a game of mutual references.

As is the case in the IIT, in the residential units of Lafayette Park, in the subsequent complexes of Westmount Square in Montreal (1964–1967) and at the Dominion Centre in Toronto (1963–1969). The free and independent buildings which create them allow these shifts and generate the places which develop the composition, always strictly controlled by meaning, reciprocal position, and scale.



Ill. 1. Mies Van Der Rohe, Federal Center, Chicago, 1959–1974 (drawings: Silvia Binetti).



III. 2. Ivan Leonidov, Narkomtiashprom, 1934 (drawing: Silvia Binetti).

#### References:

- [1] Argan G.C., *L'architettura dell'espressionismo* [in:] *Bilancio dell'espressionismo*, Vallecchi, Firenze 1965, p. 103.

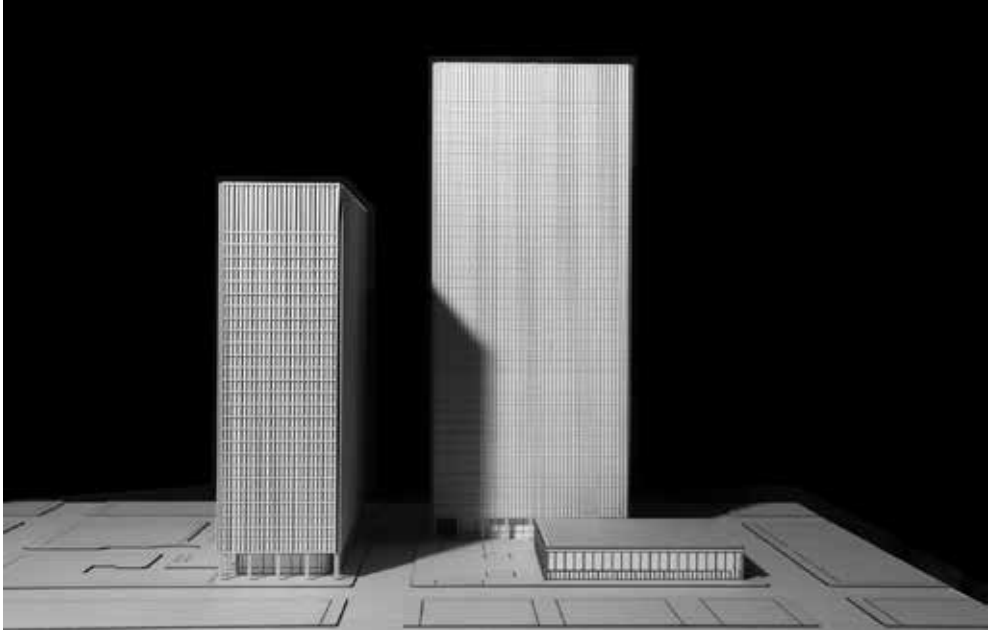
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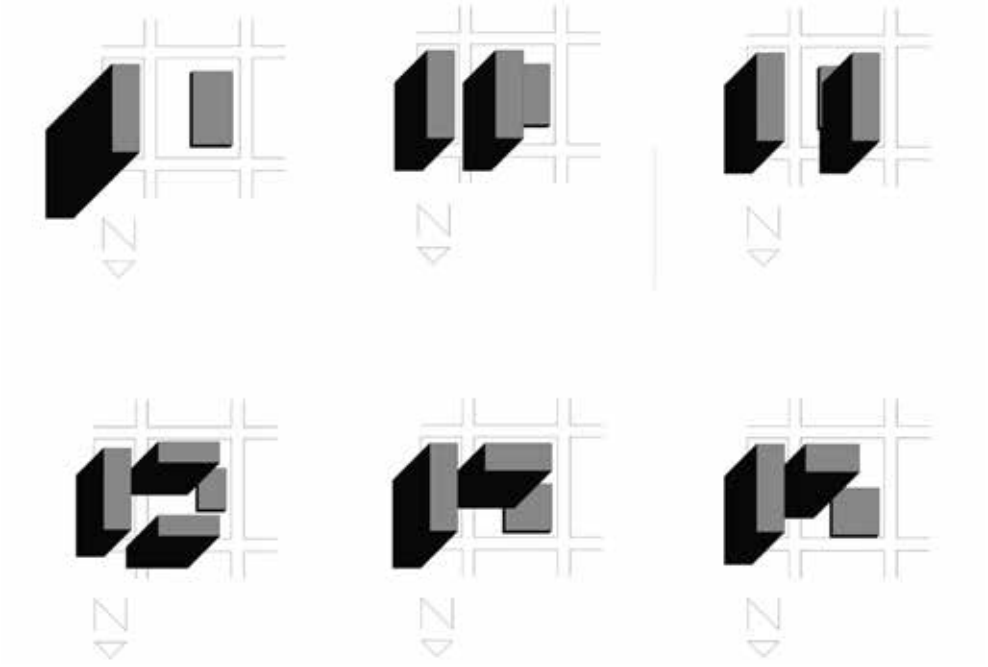
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III. 3. Mies Van Der Rohe, Federal Center, Chicago, 1959–1974, maquette (S. Binetti, P. Carones, M. Meulli, M. Mion, A. Tagliaferri, G. Militello).



III. 4. Mies Van Der Rohe, Federal Center, Chicago, 1959–1974, studies (drawings: R. Neri)

## DEFINIOWANIE PRZESTRZENI ARCHITEKTONICZNEJ

Temat do dyskusji 2022: **AWANGARDY ARCHITEKTURY**

Istnienie sztuki avant-garde w świecie współczesnym nie jest rzeczą oczywistą. Badacze nie mogą zgodzić się do końca, czym jest i czy w ogóle nastąpił jej koniec. Mnogość ruchów nazywanych awangardami i neoawangardami, lub do nich przypisywanych, jest duża. Stan taki utrudnia jednoznaczne ich zakwalifikowanie i zbadanie. Futuryzm i ekspresjonizm, dadaizm i surrealizm czy pop-art i hiperrealizm są trudne do porównania, jednak cele artystów tworzących w ich duchu bywały zbieżne lub przynajmniej podobne.

Historycznie architektura musiała być budowana według zapamiętanych kanonów, przyzwyczajęń odbiorców i projektantów. Wynikało to z przeświadczenia o obiektywności, a nie subiektywności takich przesłanek. Twórcy nie potrafili lub nie mogli (w sensie mentalnym) oderwać się od wspomnień i myśli o zapamiętanej z przeszłości doskonałości.

Marcel Duchamp swymi działaniami przyczynił się do powstania nowych form nie tylko w sztuce, lecz także w architekturze. Jego zabawy i dekomponowanie pierwotnych znaczeń przedmiotów stworzyły nowe podejście do tworzenia nie tylko dzieł sztuki. Architekci początku XX wieku, nie potrafiąc zbudować swych projektów – rysowali je. Budowanie nie mogło być już oczywiste, kształty budynków nie nosły już wyrazu ich funkcji. Pojawiły się ekspresjonistyczne rzeźby, nastąpiło oderwanie od pierwotnego przeznaczenia przedmiotów i ich intelektualna przemiana.

Architektura współczesna nie ma już problemów z nierealną formą budynków. Forma, a nie funkcja stała się celem nadrzędnym i wszystko, co zaszkodzi odbiorcy, jest dozwolone. Leon Chwistek, teoretyk polskiego ekspresjonizmu – formizmu, namawiał artystów do zerwania ze wszystkimi regułami. Podobny cel może przyświecać dzisiejszym architektom. Rysunki i rzeźby doby ekspresjonizmu stały się dziś możliwe do zamiany w zbudowaną architekturę.

Żyjemy w stanie kultury, która określana jest jako ponowoczesność. Straciły siłę przekonywania mity cywilizacji i sztuki takie, jak: awangarda, modernizm (nowoczesność) i wiara w jedną uniwersalną drogę rozwoju świata. Różnorodność myśli i form stała się cechą epoki ponowoczesnej. Użyteczność, trwałość i piękno, które były warunkiem sine qua non budowania, dziś już nie obowiązują.

Myśl awangardy z początków XX wieku pozwoliła architekturze współczesnej oderwać się od przedstawiania świata takim, jakim go pamiętaliśmy. Architektura obecna, jak na spadkobiercę wielkich twórców przystało, zmierza podobną drogą, ale już inną, swoją, dążąc kolejny raz do oderwania się od zapamiętanych znaków. Jednak – jak możemy dostrzec – coś nie pozwala jej oderwać się całkowicie od zapamiętanych teoretycznych projektów ekspresjonistów, futurystów czy od intelektualnych żartów surrealistów.

*Tomasz Kozłowski*



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