

El papel de la arquitectura dentro de nuestra sociedad contemporánea.

Cuando recogí la Medalla de Oro tenía en la cabeza que detrás de cada pueblo desfigurado hay un arquitecto cómplice, pero lo formulé en positivo; "no olvidemos nuestra responsabilidad, creed en la arquitectura, ¡pensad qué mundo estamos haciendo!"

Hay un sector de la arquitectura, pocos y poco reconocidos, que trabajamos con el corazón, nos dejamos la piel. Ya lo decía Oriol Bohigas, es solo un pequeño porcentaje de los arquitectos. La especulación despiadada no solo ha sido consentida, también ha sido dibujada primero por los urbanistas y luego por los arquitectos con el pretexto de que si no lo hago yo lo hace otro. No olvidemos que el arquitecto tiene una inmensa responsabilidad hacia la sociedad.

Otra cosa contra la que me rebelo es la deriva de este mundo neoliberal y competitivo que fomentaron Reagan y Thatcher. Nos han puesto a todos los arquitectos unos contra otros en una competición cuantitativa, a volumen y metros, no a calidad, y con currículums que caducan. He hecho dos paseos marítimos y no puedo entrar en los concursos porque ha pasado un tiempo que ha decidido un pliego. No se valora el pensamiento.

Y existe también un problema de ética, porque el arquitecto siempre está al lado del poder...

Pero esto también ocurría con Le Corbusier...

Es distinto, fíjate que Le Corbusier se situaba próximo al poder porque él trabajaba para la arquitectura de la sociedad. Es importante el contexto, se salía de una guerra con enormes problemas, había que dar vivienda a mucha gente, afrontar edificios públicos de gran magnitud, todo estaba por hacer después de una guerra... Le Corbusier quería vender su producto, a quien fuera, y los franceses no se lo han perdonado nunca. La arquitectura siempre está al lado del poder, por eso hemos de tener claro quién es nuestro cliente, que siempre es la sociedad, e ir más allá de quién realiza el encargo.

Hoy en día, en el marco de la sociedad neoliberal en la que estamos inmersos, una carta de Atenas o un manifiesto de los CIAM serían imposibles, no hay voluntad para hacerlas.

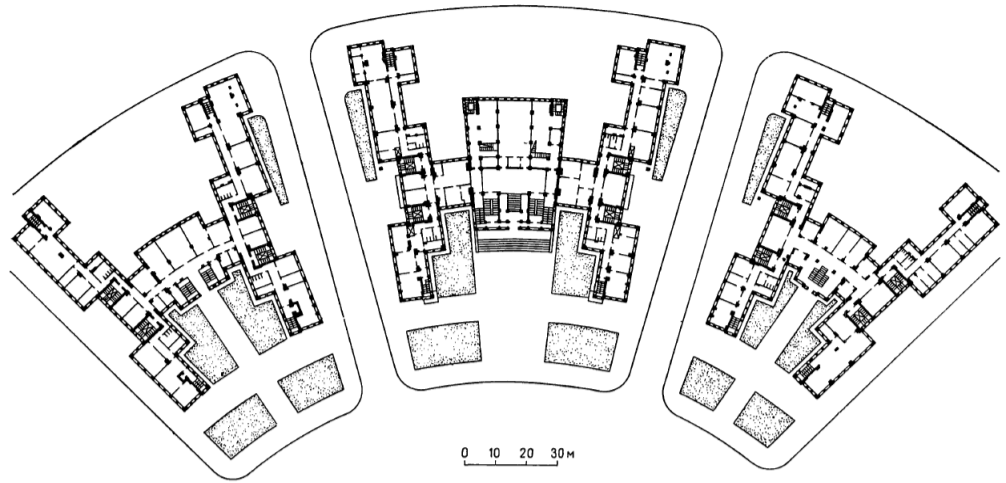
¿Y qué hemos de hacer?

Hemos de batallar y nos hemos de unir. Recientemente en un jurado de un concurso tuve la suerte de coincidir con Ramón Sanabria. El concurso estaba mal planteado y entre los dos pudimos reorientar el debate.

Un cierto "retour à l'ordre".

No me cansaré de repetirlo, honestidad, conservar la esencia, responsabilidad...

ALBERTO PEÑÍN es Doctor Arquitecto por la UPC y catedrático del departamento de Proyectos Arquitectónicos de la ETS Arquitectura de Barcelona.



▲ FIG. 1. The planning scheme of Derzhprom at the level of the first floor, 1925

Historical and morphological role of the Derzhprom Building in Kharkiv, Ukraine

Martin Duplantier, Andrii Shtendera

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DOI: 10.5821/palimpsesto.24.11887
Persona de contacto: martinduplantier@gmail.com
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9451-4333>

ABSTRACT

The Derzhprom building was the first office building built in the Constructivist style. In addition, Derzhprom is endowed with unique architectural properties, which in many ways influenced the image of Soviet modernist architecture. Moreover, considering the number of workers on the construction site, which was more than 5,000, the entire enterprises created for the construction of Derzhprom, its role in the development of the region is also difficult to overestimate.

A whole series of adopted scaling decisions, on the one hand, create a coherent composition of Derzhprom itself and emphasize the building as the central element in Freedom Square, and it treats the buildings around them tolerantly, despite all the "otherness" of the architectural language, on the other.

The building has undergone several internal and external transformations, and even changed its silhouette, by adding new elements. Despite this, Derzhprom is still arguably the most significant architectural object in the identity and cultural heritage of the city for the vast majority of Kharkiv residents.

KEY WORDS: Derzhprom building; Kharkiv; Ukraine; constructivism.

The Derzhprom building in Kharkiv, at the time of its design, construction and completion, became not only a symbol of Kharkiv or the USSR but more - a personification of future architecture in the first quarter of the 20th century. The architectural language of the building, which deliberately expressed the reinforced concrete frame, the absence of facade decoration and the majestic scale, emphasized the machine aesthetics of the era of industrialization. In the beginning of the 20th century, there were still many clay one-storey houses with thatched roofs, typical of Ukraine and Kharkiv of that time, which after becoming the capital of the Ukrainian SSR in 1917, has increased its population by almost three times in 10 years. Therefore, the appearance of such a large-scale, new building became an extraordinary event for the citizens and an architectural example of the Soviet Union's new values within the country and beyond.

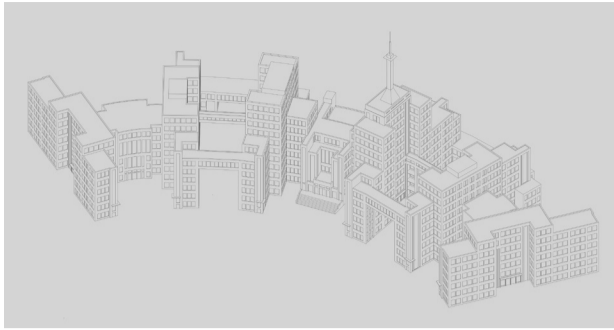
1. The situation in Kharkiv before the start of construction

In the mid-20s, many different institutions and organizations had their headquarters in Kharkiv. Having become the capital of Soviet Ukraine, the city began to expand immensely, and active industrialization turned the city into an industrial giant. Dozens of plants and factories were opened, which required hundreds of managers. The old buildings of the provincial administration, financial and other institutions were barely enough to accommodate local authorities, which led organizations of the Ukrainian SSR to occupy residential buildings. Thus, in the 1920s, a vast majority of the trusts were located on Sumska Street in the former apartment building of the Salamander Insurance Company. More than 1,500 employees worked here in cramped conditions.

Therefore, it was decided to construct a building to accommodate various public institutions. To this end, they organized the State Shared Partnership, whose members were public trusts, Prombank, Zovnishtorg and Derzhtorg. The shareholders agreed to finance the construction. The competition program set the urban planning parameters of the building, such as the presence of an expressive silhouette and presumable viewpoints (Zvonitskiy E., Leybfreyd A., 1992).

The commission considered several options for locating the building: at the end of Sumska Street, near the current Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure, on the square near the Palace of Labour, on the Railway Station Square and others. But they decided to build Derzhprom (State Industry Building) on the site near the projected round square of the new north-western region.

The territory, where an enormous square appeared more than a hundred years ago, belonged to



▲ FIG. 2. Axonometric view of Derzhprom building.
By Andrii Shtendera

> FIG. 3. Competition project "Uninvited Guest" under the leadership of S. S. Serafimov, 1925



Kharkiv University in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Clinics and educational buildings of the medical faculty were located here, followed by wastelands and ravines. Before 1917, only a small square named after the Veterinary Institute at Kharkiv Imperial University was located in this part of the city. After the approval of Kharkiv as the new capital of Ukraine, the city planners of that time decided to create a new city centre of a metropolitan level on the place of wastelands and tiny houses (Hrebenyuk O., 2020).

The new public centre of Kharkiv was created at the junction of the old and new city and was supposed to become the focus of the political, economic and social life of the new capital of Ukraine. In 1923, a closed competition was held for a preliminary design for the layout of the former university lands to locate a new residential area and a public and business centre of the capital of Soviet Ukraine on this site (Bondarev A., 2016).

For implementation, the contest commission adopted the project of the architect V. K. Trotsenko, the idea of which was to organize a round square adjoining the city park along Veterynarna Street (now Svoboda Square).

Dzerzhinsky Square was immediately designed not only as the main public space of the capital but also as a key for future residential quarters outside the administrative centre, which in the future will be called Zaderzhprom'ya (Behind Derzhprom). The system of concentric circles diverging from the shifted axis of the square became the form factor for a large part of the city. Radial and longitudinal streets arose here, which by the way, in the 1930s, were called the 1st radial and 2nd radial. And only much later they got their names. And today, these streets are known as Nauka Avenue, Romain Rolland Street, Independence Avenue, Chichibabin, Danilevsky, and Culture streets.

Mostly, this district hosted residential buildings that were all in the same style of constructivism. Moreover, each building had a name that reflected its residents' activity field and was constructed by the corresponding cooperative. The first on the territory of Zaderzhprom'ya, a block of row buildings "New Life" (1926-1930, architect M. F. Pokorny) emerged, limited by Danilevsky and Culture streets and Lenin Avenue. In 1928, the construction of the houses of departmental affiliation began, such as "Tabachnik" - Tobacco Industry (1931, architects A.Z. Kogan, P.I. Frolov), "Red Industrialist" (1928-1930, architect S.M. Kravets); "Khimik" - Chemist (1931, architect Yu.V. Ignatovsky); "Word" (1926, architect M.I. Dashkevych), "Pechatnik" - Printer (1930).

Over time, new tenants began to move into the houses behind Derzhprom and violated the department principle. Gradually, the buildings lost their names, and today few Kharkiv residents will say that they live in Khimik or Pechatnik (Marshala O., 2019).

2. Conducting a tender for the Derzhprom building. Origins of constructivism in the architecture of the USSR

On March 1, 1925, the Supreme Council of the National Economy announced a competition for the project. The competition program already set the city-planning significance of Derzhprom and turned out to be a theoretical and style-forming part of the design: it was conceived as the core of the future administrative centre of Kharkiv and its main dominant structure. The

constructed building determined the unique character of the square - a dynamic space saturated with traffic and human flows.

In the conditions of the competition, the technical and artistic requirements for the future building and its composition were set out, which corresponded to the idea of innovative modern (Shvydenko O., 2009(1)).

The result of the contest was a pursuit of a new style for Soviet architecture in addition to the creation of a new city's symbol. Architecture of Derzhprom corresponds to fundamental composition principles of Constructivism (also known in the world as Functionalism), which were later (1926) brought together by Le Corbusier into the famous Five Points of Architecture: support-pillars, flat roof, free plan, free facade, horizontal windows. The authors of Derzhprom used Avant-garde means of architectural expression, which destroyed the centuries-old tradition, with extraordinary inspiration and courage (Abyzov V., Markovskiy A., 2015 (1)). Even though at the time of the held competition there were no constructed constructivist public buildings, the principles of the concept of constructivism were already set (1922 - the book of Oleksiy Gan "Constructivism", where the term of the same name was officially used for the first time). In architecture, the main theses of constructivism were formed in the theoretical works of Moses Ginzburg "Rhythm in Architecture" (1923) and "Style and Era" (1924) and in the projects of the Vesnny brothers (competition project of the Palace of Labor (1923)) and Vladimir Tatlin (the project of the III Communist International Monument (1920)).

What is more, there are visible parallels with Italian futurists' works from the end of the 19th century to the beginning of the 20th century in the presented projects. For example, the architectural exhibition project "Citta Nuova" by A. Sant'Elia and Mario Chiattone in 1914 in Milan, which consisted of preliminary sketches, draws the outlines of the futuristic architecture of the city of the future. The Citta Nuova project rejects decorations and proposes to build multi-storey cities with elevators and escalators, using new materials for construction. A. Sant'Elia, Mario Chiattone, and F. Marinetti outlined their vision in Manifesto dell'architettura. These ideas find reflection in the design principles of the projects - imitation of machine-production aesthetics, large glazing surfaces, a significant scale, as well as functional filling - a combination of public functions, not only administrative and service but also providing for everyday life and leisure.

The implementation success of the Derzhprom building greatly influenced the establishment of the constructivism as one of the key directions in the late 20s - early 30s of the 20th-century architecture on the territory of the USSR. The functionality of the plans, the use of reinforced concrete and emphasizing its texture in aesthetics were manifested not only in the construction of public buildings (Government Houses in Minsk, Belarus (1934, arch. I. Langbard), Zuev Workers' Club in Moscow, Russia (1929, arch. I. Golosov), Cinema Zhovten, Kyiv, Ukraine (1931, architects N. Trotsky and V. Rykov)), as well as in the industrial (Dnipro HPP, Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine (1932, architects V. Vesnin and N. Koll), Kushelovsky bread factory, St. Petersburg, Russia (1932, arch. G. Marsakov)) and residential construction (Narkomfin building, Moscow, Russia (1930, architects M. Ginzburg and I. Milinis), Uraloblsovnarkhoz residential building, Ekaterinburg, Russia (1933, arch. M. Ginzburg, A. Pasternak, S. Prokhorov), Narkomyust residential building, Kyiv, Ukraine (1932-1933, arch. S. Tsarev)) throughout the territory of the Soviet Union.

Moreover, the construction of large objects in this period became a cultural event for the whole Soviet Ukraine. The same thing happened with Derzhprom, where hundreds of workers worked, and local newspapers reported on each stage of construction and even talked about the technical details of construction (Mozheyko I., 2018). During the construction of the object, a chronicle was also filmed. In the same way, the lighting of the building process of the Dnipro HPP in Zaporizhzhia took place, where, in addition to media coverage, one of the cinema's gems of the first half of the 20th century was filmed - "The Eleventh Year" by Dziga Vertov. Massive construction media coverage marked new public values in Soviet Ukraine then. It was vastly used for propaganda, turning Derzhprom and Dnipro HPP into symbols for the USSR government.

3. Features of S. Serafimov's project and solutions for adapting the building to the environment: the building embracing the city

Despite the often-similar stylistic solutions, the competing projects often did not solve the urban tasks set by the competition program, rather demarcating the newly created square and the planned residential quarters with the building, as it was necessary to ensure connections between different departments. The project of S. Serafimov, which eventually became the winner, solved this issue with the help of a system of transitions on the 3rd, 5th and 6th floors, without blocking pedestrian and traffic flows of neighbouring urban structures. Many of the presented objects played with the reinforced concrete frame on the facades, but it is the bridges-transitions between the buildings of the implemented project that demonstrate the possibilities of the framework made of reinforced concrete spatial frames. Transitions on the 6th and 5th floors (more than 20 and 28 meters long, respectively) were made without additional columns. Only the bridges on the 3rd floor needed additional supports, the distance between which in the narrowest part is an impressive 18 meters for a building almost a century old.

Moreover, the additional axes formed by the central parts of each building became visual landmarks for the future of the Zaderzhprom'ya residential complex, which resulted in the volumetric and spatial solutions of individual buildings.

The architects of the 1920s used flat roofing as part of the new architecture. The authors of the winning project use it as the principal expressive element, along with aesthetically meaningful utilitarian means of communication and engineering. The project awarded by the jury represented a complex spatial form. The volumetric composition proposed by S. S. Serafimov was notable for its complexity and efficiency (Shvydenko O., 2009(2)).

When completed, this was the largest building in Europe by floor area - 10,760 m² (State Industry Building Data, 2012). The building divides into three parts, in the plan of each, there are interpretations of the classical typology of public and administrative buildings. Barely noticeable deviations from symmetry in Derzhprom, enriching the image of the building, at the same time separating it from historical prototypes. Among these, the researchers highlight that Derzhprom adapted the shape of a Ukrainian letter "Ж" in a plan proposed by A. Kahn in 1919 on the grounds of insulation and health and freely assembled buildings (UNESCO, 2017). Four large and sixteen small cour d'honneur shape an original "interior under open-skies". External space of the city plugged directly in the composition of the building. The building targeted as the place for central public, administrative and economic institutions. Two halls (for 1000 and 250 seats), technical library of 250 thousand volumes with a reading-room, canteen for 200 seats, were provided for general usage. The corridor system is the basis of the planning structure. (Abyzov V., Markovskiy A., 2015 (2)). The radially placed side corridors end with service stairs, and at the points of branching from the main internal flow, the main nodes elevator and stair nodes are located.

Bridges-transitions between buildings have become not only connecting elements between parts of the building but also expressive elements of the image of Derzhprom. At the same time, those located near Zaderzhprom'ya are on the 3rd floor, gradually rising as they approach Svobody Square. The compositional solution of the bridges creates the effect of recursion, which emphasizes the main town-planning axes of the site while not obstructing the view through.

In the planning structure, bridges on each level form a single system between all building parts, thus ensuring seamless movement between departments and agencies. Today, the transitions are closed, as the building houses the offices of various companies, for which there is no longer a need for permanent access.

A feature of the design is the presence of different types of spaces: internal open spaces or almost closed by transitions; complex multi-level spaces of the grand staircase, which, thanks to full glazing and balconies, become partially street-facing; the interior space of the large hall, which dissolves in the environment through glazing on both sides of the building and a skylight.

Authors claimed that the building had to represent a huge factory, converted into an industry palace. The building meets the spirit and direction of the era - its revolutionary romanticism (Linda S., Mykhaylyshyn O., 2017) Derzhprom is decorated with a few laconic details: ribbons of windows in stairwells and canopies over entrances, which give the image a striking difference and a striking difference in architectural features.

During the design and construction of Derzhprom, there were only low-rise buildings and buildings of three or four floors from Sumska Street, and the authors perfectly adapted the 65-meter skyscraper to such an environment. The architectural composition is dynamic, built on a zigzag rhythmic increase of masses with a decrease in contrast in the centre, and due to the successive lowering of the level of the bridges over the driveways sharpens the perspective of the structure, giving it a more significant scale. The symmetrical structure of the composition regarding the volumes of the central and lateral buildings is also observed. The parts directed to the square appear higher, and those located closer to the residential formations are lower, on the contrary, the buildings from this side are set on a more humane scale. Thus, with the enormous area and height, the Derzhprom is very large-scale compared to its surroundings - both existing and future.

4. Changes in the environment and the building itself

Work on the other buildings that were supposed to complete the image of the square and complement its function as a centre of public life began immediately after the completion of the Derzhprom building. Therefore, in 1932 the House of Projects appeared (now it is Kharkiv State University), and also designed by the architect S. Serafimov. House of projects is built in a style similar to Derzhprom, however, it did not repeat its compositional solutions, except for the growth of the building from the lateral parts to the centre and horizontal stripes of windows. The 14-story central part is made in the form of a blade and separated from the side buildings by transparent transitions, with the corner balconies emphasizing the dynamics of the composition. During World War II, it was partially destroyed and restored with elements of the Stalinist empire in the early 1950s.

The cooperative building, now the northern building of KhNU, the construction of which began in 1929. According to the idea of the authors of the original project, Munts O.R., and Dmitriev O.I., the building was supposed to be a combination of two 6-7-story brick buildings with a central 17-story tower building uniting the entire composition (Grigor'ev A., 2021). Meeting halls, a library, a hotel and a post and telegraph station were designed in the Cooperative Building. In the early 1930s, the building was put on hold. Later in 1934, it was transferred to the Ministry of Defence to construct the Military Economic Academy. The first part of the building was put into operation in 1941, and the tower was completed only in 1954. After numerous alterations, the building partially lost its original constructivist design, combining elements of Art Deco and the Stalinist empire, and its highest part became five floors lower than the project of 1927.

During the retreat, the German troops tried to blow up the Derzhprom building, but they failed, not least because the building was built entirely of monolithic reinforced concrete, but most of the windows and doors were destroyed by the blast wave. The restoration of Derzhprom from damage during World War II lasted from 1943 to 1947. Since 1949, the building housed a television centre, for the operation of which a 45-meter-high television antenna tower appeared in 1955. Thanks to the antenna, the total height of the building reached 108 meters.



▲ FIG. 4. Derzhprom aerial photo. By O.Malyon, 2021

Cumulative models of the surrounding buildings Derzhprom were created based on 3-D models created using city maps from the 1920s-1930s, German aerial photography from 1942, and data from Google Earth Pro for 2021. Due to analysis of the cumulative models, a significant increase in the development adjacent to the building was observed, primarily due to the ones built at the beginning of the 21st century. It threatens the disappearance of Derzhprom's role as a spatial dominant not only in the context of the city but also within the district. The importance of establishing a security zone around Svobody Square and Derzhprom is described in the work of K. Cherkasova, 2014.

From 2001 to 2010, the building underwent a large-scale restoration that saw the plaster replaced, now free of the mica impurities that gave the building its shine, windows replaced, and rooms renovated. Despite that, only five authentic elevators out of 12 have been restored in the Derzhprom building up to this day. According to the primary plans, the Derzhprom did not have meridian-oriented partitions, so that the eastern sun shines through the building, but the layout of the premises also changed, occasioning the disappearance of this effect.

Since 2017, Derzhprom has been included in the UNESCO Tentative List, due to its uniqueness and the importance of the building's role in the development of the modernist architecture of the first half of the 20th century. However, if other buildings of this period are on the main list, Derzhprom is still waiting for its decision due to major changes and deviations that appeared during numerous restorations and repairs. In 2021, the Kharkiv authorities announced that they would carry out research and draw up an estimate for new restoration works to restore the building's lost elements (Skakun O., 2021). However, the war in Ukraine and the great destruction in Kharkiv are changing the priorities of the allocation of city and state budgets. Moreover, Kharkiv has been under constant shelling since February 2022, and many historic buildings around Derzhprom have already been partially damaged or destroyed, but the building itself is lucky to have survived, at least for now.

5. Conclusions

The Derzhprom building was the first office building built in the Constructivist style. In addition, Derzhprom is endowed with unique architectural properties, which in many ways influenced the image of Soviet modernist architecture. Moreover, considering the number of workers on the construction site, which was more than 5,000, the entire enterprises created for the construction of Derzhprom, its role in the development of the region is also difficult to overestimate.

A whole series of adopted scaling decisions, on the one hand, create a coherent composition of Derzhprom itself and emphasize the building as the central element in Freedom Square, and it treats the buildings around them tolerantly, despite all the "otherness" of the architectural language, on the other. In the structure of the new district, which appeared on the site of the former suburb, Derzhprom became the legislator not only of the stylistic decisions of Zaderzhprom'ya but also influenced the formation of additional compositional axes in the residential area.

Since its construction, the building has undergone several internal and external transformations, and even

changed its silhouette, by adding new elements. Despite this, Derzhprom is still arguably the most significant architectural object in the identity and cultural heritage of the city for the vast majority of Kharkiv residents.

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MARTIN DUPLANTIER es Arquitecto y Master por el Institut d'Urbanisme de Bordeaux.
ANDRII SHTENDERA es Arquitecto.