

## **Abstract**

### **Gdańsk's architecture after 1989. Identity and politics in Gdańsk's architecture and urban planning in the time of a long transition**

The dissertation aims to present a preliminary analysis of Gdańsk's architecture after 1989 and constitutes an attempt to answer a question of what phenomena shaped the local architecture and space in the time in question. A factor that influenced the contemporary image of the city was the attitude towards the socialist heritage of the past decades coupled with the influence of Western civilization, filtered through the technological and economic conditions of the time. Another key issue was the political transition, which resulted in a change of the state's administrative model, shifting power from the centralized national government to the newly created local governments. The new administrative units had to operate in a difficult economic circumstances and many of them, similarly to Gdańsk, implemented unsuccessful urban planning policy. Furthermore, an important factor that has strongly influenced (and still affects Gdańsk) was the quest for the mythical *genius loci* and the reinterpretation of the local identity by the next generation of Gdańsk citizens who tried to locate their presence in the city in the context of the difficult past.

The time frame for the dissertation is defined by the year 1989 - the moment when the political system of the Polish People's Republic ended and by year 2018 - the opening of the Forum Gdańsk shopping center, which is the high point of a policy of shaping the city space with a disregard for the local context. These dates are selected arbitrarily and do not impose strict rules on the work's content.

The thesis has been divided into the three main chapters. The first chapter is intended to be an introduction to the dissertation's main questions. The starting point for the research was the postmodern architecture that existed worldwide and in Poland before 1989, as well as Gdańsk's architecture in this period. Three subchapters of the chapter are devoted to these issues. The second chapter's extensive structure constitutes the thesis' main body. It starts with an introductory section aiming to describe the discussion that took place in the 1990s about potential directions of Gdańsk's architectural development. The remaining subsections examine the most important points of the city's architectural scene: shopping centers; office architecture; hotel architecture in the Main Town; architecture for culture, science and sport; religious architecture and housing. The third chapter is a final summary and an attempt to synthesize the aspects discussed in the dissertation. In effect, two factors have been identified as having, in my opinion, the greatest impact on shaping Gdańsk's architecture of the last 30 years. These factors are: the quest for city's identity and its urban policy in the free-market economy.