

*Moderno e contemporaneo nel linguaggio dell'architetto*

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ABSTRACT

Determining the origin of Modernity entails, especially in architecture, a preliminary choice as to which field is of greatest interest. Accepting the conventional date (1492), which marks the end of late Middle Ages and the discovery of America, would have little meaning because the transition to Modernity took place much later, in the eighteenth century, when buildings became independent of style. The Enlightenment revolutionary architecture, which rejected historicist ornamentation and highlighted the functional value of architecture, made a clean break from the Old. Since then the façade has been no longer the primary distinguishing feature: the plan has been prevalent; orders have given primacy to the system distribution and architecture has focused on the quality of the space. Le Corbusier wrote in 1923 “plan is the basis. Without a plan there is neither grandeur of intention and expression nor rhythm, nor volume, nor coherence”(1986: 48). Starting from the First World War Le Corbusier, Gropius, Wright, Mies van der Rohe – the four great masters – characterized twentieth-century architecture. As primary interpreters of the Modern Movement, they produced distinctive and recognizable works and described in-depth research, supported by their architectural practice, which was almost always experimental, and which would create schools and many followers.