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Typology and Ideology: Moisei Ginzburg Revisited

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Abstract

The typological theories articulated by Moisei Ginzburg and the architects of his circle guided the development of Soviet architecture and remain influential in Russia today. Re-visiting these ideas highlights their relationships to the concepts and theoretical principles that were elaborated by the academic schools, which were grounded in the traditions of the past. Recent historical studies have revealed this intimate connection between the academic tradition and the modernism that was born to negate it, emphasizing continuity in the historical path of architecture. Applied to the history of Soviet architecture, this insight does not raise questions about the nuances in stylistic or

theoretical similarities or differences between Soviet constructivism and modernism, but rather between those ideological links that form two branches of one integral current in the evolution of twentieth-century architecture.

KEYWORDS: Architectural tradition, constructivism, Moisei Ginzburg, house of work, the machine, the primitive hut, workers' housing, typology, ideology, modernism

Introduction by *Igor Dukhan* (Belorusian State University)

Victor Carpov belongs to that rare breed of contemporary scholars who have preserved the "pure principles" of such Russian art theorists as Alexander Gabrichevskii, Vassilii Zubov and Aleksandr Rappaport and linked them with the Western methodology of architectural typology, drawn from the work of Joseph Rykwert, Giulio Carlo Argan and others. He is a senior fellow of the Institute for the Theory and History of Architecture and Urban Planning in Moscow and one of the leading architectural thinkers in Russia today.

The paper "Typology and Ideology: Moisei Ginzburg Revisited" was published in 2013 in the magazine Academia. Arkhitektura i Stroitelstvo [*Academia. Architecture and Construction*] *and was based on a lecture, first presented at the conference "Style and Epoch," which was organized by the Aleksei Shchusev State Museum of Architecture in cooperation with the Institute for the Theory and History of Architecture and Urban Planning, and dedicated to the centenary of Moisei Ginzburg's birth. This paper is closely connected with Victor Carpov's entire research into the evolution of architectural typology, which celebrated an important step in contemporary post-Heideggerian architectural theory.*

Already in his dissertation of 1992, the author considered the history of typological thinking in architecture from Vitruvius to the late twentieth-century architects and theorists (Saverio Muratori, Giulio Carlo Argan, Aldo Rossi, Joseph Rykwert, Rob and Léon Krier and others). Later, an interest in typological (that is, ontological and pre-linguistic) thinking in architecture—which might be called architectonic thinking per se—led him to Alberti and other heroes of typological thinking in architecture in essays including "Tip–antitip: k arkhitekturnoi germenevtike" [Type–Antitype: Towards Architectural Hermeneutics] of 1991 (revised in 2012).

Developing traditional methods of outlining the typological basics of architecture (like a primitive hut or the Temple of Solomon), Victor Carpov recovers the prototypal, typological elements of architecture in Alberti. They are: locality (regio), area (area), division into parts (partitio), wall (paries), roof (tectum) and apertures (apertio). These six basic

elements of architecture, in their constructive and ontological interpenetration, with the ground and the heavens, enable us to differentiate it from non-architecture. The destiny of these fundamental elements, discovered by Alberti and gradually developed in architecture, is studied in Victor Carpov's recent publications, which include the essay "Uprazhniaia dobrodetel v ontologii: Germenevtika priroda u Alberti" [Exercising Virtue in Ontology: The Hermeneutics of Nature in Alberti] of 2009, and others.

The present paper on Moisei Ginzburg examines the typological architectural thinking at the core of constructivist method. The "revolutionary" sense of this study lies in attributing to Ginzburg and Russian constructivism a dominant role in the typological movement of modernism—a movement toward the basic elements of architecture as such. These aspects of Ginzburg and constructivism were just briefly outlined in the studies of Selim Khan-Magomedov, Christina Lodder and other distinguished scholars of constructivsm. The present paper relates to Carpov's recent contribution to the theme of typological strategies of the avant-garde, including essays such as "Mifologiia istorii: 'Arbor mundi' versus Dvorets Sovetov" [The Mythology of History: 'Arbor Mundi' versus the Palace of Soviets] of 1994.

In the present paper, the figure of Moisei Ginzburg appears as the founder of an avant-garde architectural typology that removes constructivist theory and practice from its specific social and artistic context and elevates it to a new architectural typology of modernism. This search for typology reflects the intentions that Ginzburg shared with such avant-garde trends as the Suprematist of the "architecture of the World surface" or Velimir Khlebnikov's use of archetypal language to structure the architecture of "Budetlyans" [Futurians or Futurists] in his poetical imagination. Moisei Ginzburg represents the most architectonic and constructive manifestation of this avant-garde topological/typological trend.

Typology and Ideology: Moisei Ginzburg Revisited

Victor Carpov

"I have visited again …" Alexander Pushkin[1]

Rationally or paradoxically, when events crucial for the existence and development of architecture (as a socially significant or more modestly individual phenomenon) historically coincide and become strangely connected, they can determine, on an existential plane, not only the fate and viability of professional architectural organizations or the destiny

Figure 1
M.Ia. Ginzburg, A. Grinberg. Palace of Labor, Moscow. Competition Project, 1923.

of an individual person within these institutions, but also, through their agency—the destiny of architecture itself. In this respect, it is worth examining the fate of Moisei Iakovlevich Ginzburg (1892–1946) as a professional figure in the context of this paradoxical historical perspective.

In 1992, on the centenary of the architect's birth, it was hard to imagine the nature of the historical changes in society and architecture that would occur within the space of twenty years. Within the expan-

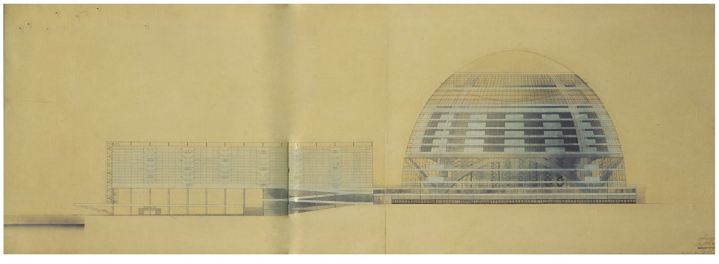
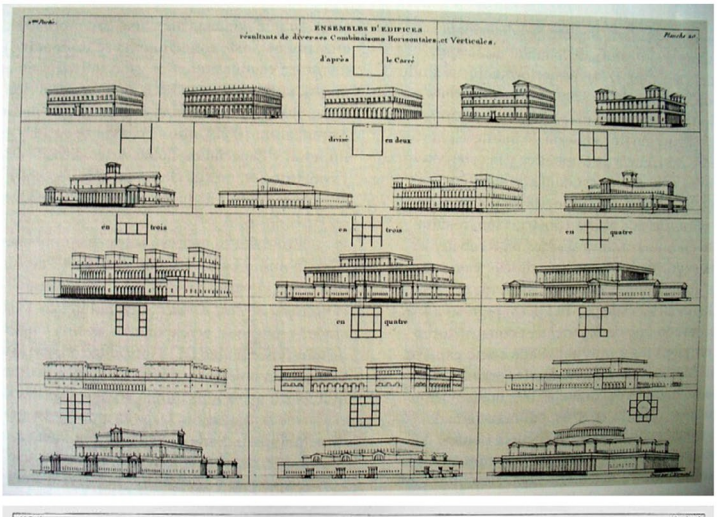


Figure 2
M.Ia. Ginzburg, G. Hassenpflug, S. A. Lisagor, Palace of the Soviets. Competition project, 1932. Façade.



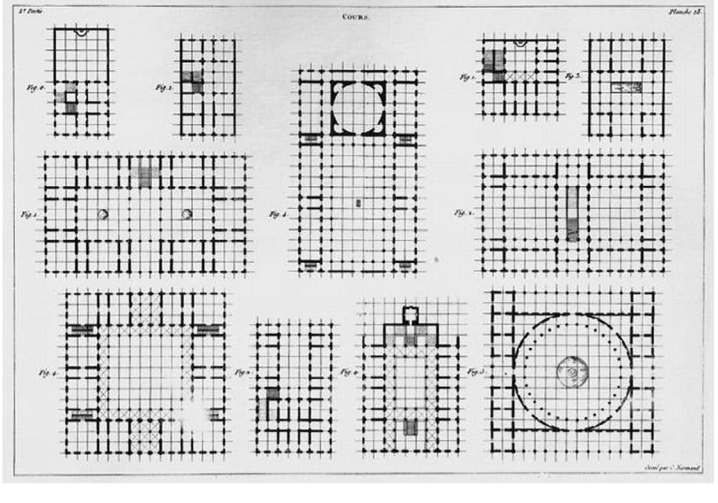


Figure 3
(a) J.-N.-L. Durand. *Précis des leçons d'Architecture données à l'École royale polytechnique*, Volume 1, 1813, Second Part, Plate 20.
(b) J.-N.-L. Durand. *Précis des leçons d'Architecture données à l'École royale polytechnique,* Volume 1, 1802-5, Second Part, Plate 16.

sion of professional activity and the implacable struggle and inevitable alliance with academic traditions, the elementary problem of style and its relationship to the epoch continued to be a problem for Ginzburg,

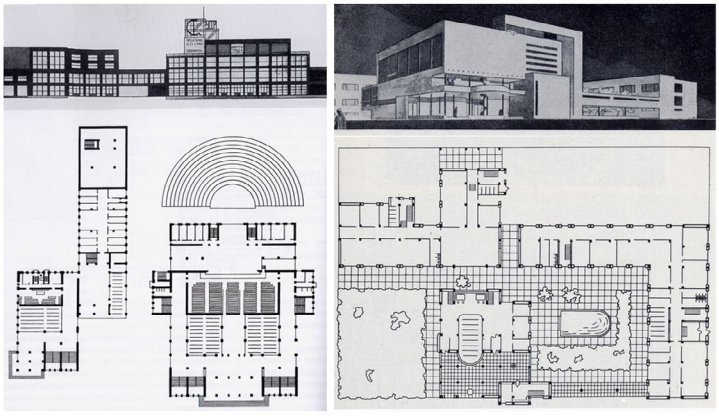


Figure 4
(a, top and bottom left) M.Ia. Ginzburg. Palace of Labor in Ekaterinoslav. With B. Korshunov). Competition project. 1926. Façade and plan. (b, top and bottom right) Government House in Alma-Ata. (With I.F. Milinis). 1928–31. Perspective and plan.

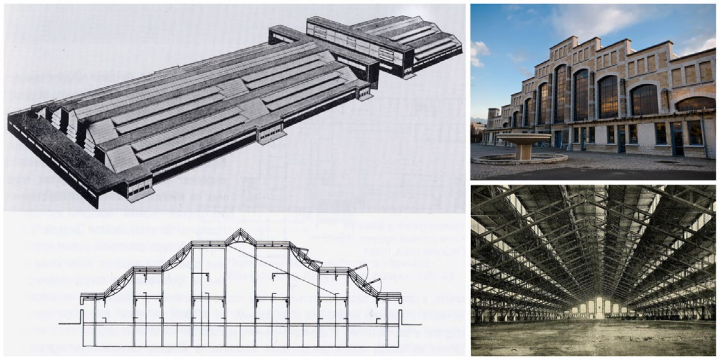


Figure 5
(a, top and bottom left) M.Ia. Ginzburg. Covered Market in Moscow. Competition project. 1926. Perspective and section. (b, top and bottom right) Tony Garnier, Covered Market and Cattle Hall (Halle Tony Garnier since 1975), Lyon. 1905.

who was correct to question the nature of style in its relation to the modern epoch. Pertaining consistently to the history of architecture and coming, from time to time, to the present, the rhythm of his returns commensurate with centenaries, Ginzburg would be right to pose anew a question of the "style of the epoch" that today is often simplistically defined by mathematical terminology as digital. Ginzburg was deeply concerned, in a profound ontological sense, with the problem of the "style of the epoch," and this problem once again returns to architecture, having never left it, while architecture refers to Ginzburg and lingers there. In its turn, the contemporary body of professionals—for Ginzburg, "the young and unknown tribe"—emphatically turns to his legacy and that of the architects of his circle and generation, just as they once turned (sometimes unwittingly and unconsciously) to the practice of their predecessors.[2]

To a certain extent, any search for a style in architecture, art and life resembles a continual attempt to define the essential meaning of style. The correlation—simultaneously between scholarly and creative

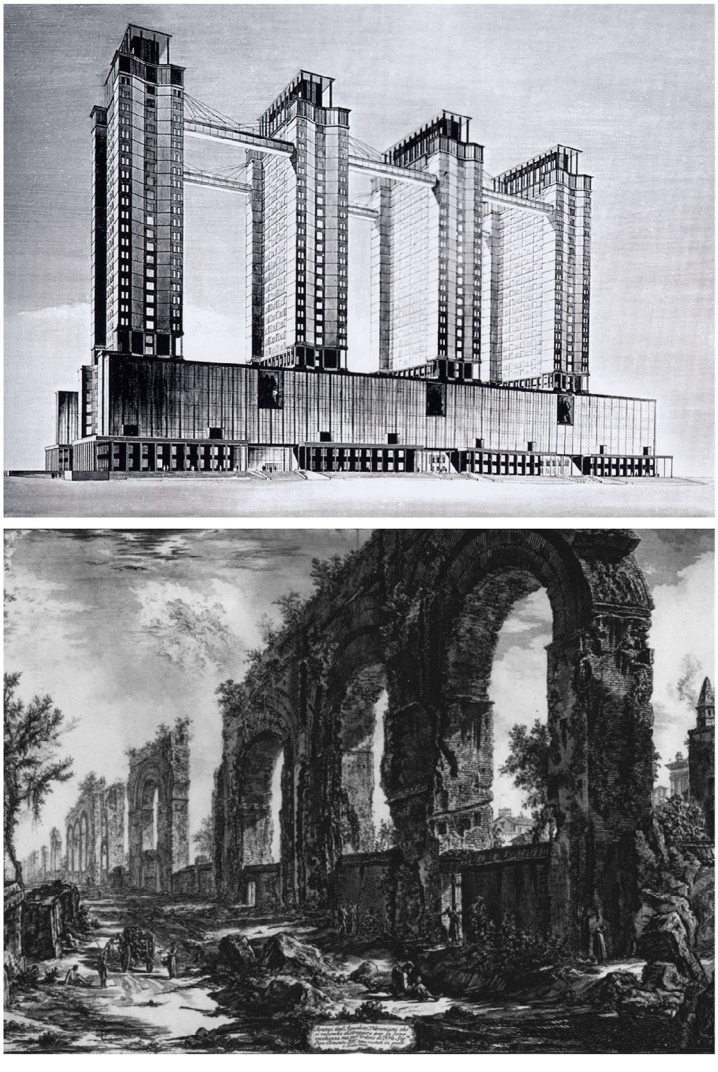


Figure 6
(a) M.Ia. Ginzburg, S.A. Lisagor. Narkomtiazhprom Headquarters in Moscow. Competition project. 1934. Perspective and plan. (b) G.B. Piranesi. Remains of the Aqueduct of Nero. ca. 1778.

processes and interests, creative activity and cultural and historical interpretation—are evident in the architectural legacy of Moisei Ginzburg. Actually, in practical, artistic and stylistic experimentation, as in attempts at historical, critical and theoretical perceptions and explanations of the problems of style, the artist–architect and researcher–interpreter more or less skillfully, and often unconsciously, operate and are manipulated by generally accepted and relatively persistent historical–cultural, philosophical–metaphysical, and formal–artistic conventions, motives and clichés, such as *style* and the *epoch*—words used in the title of a book and an exhibition of its author's work, which took place

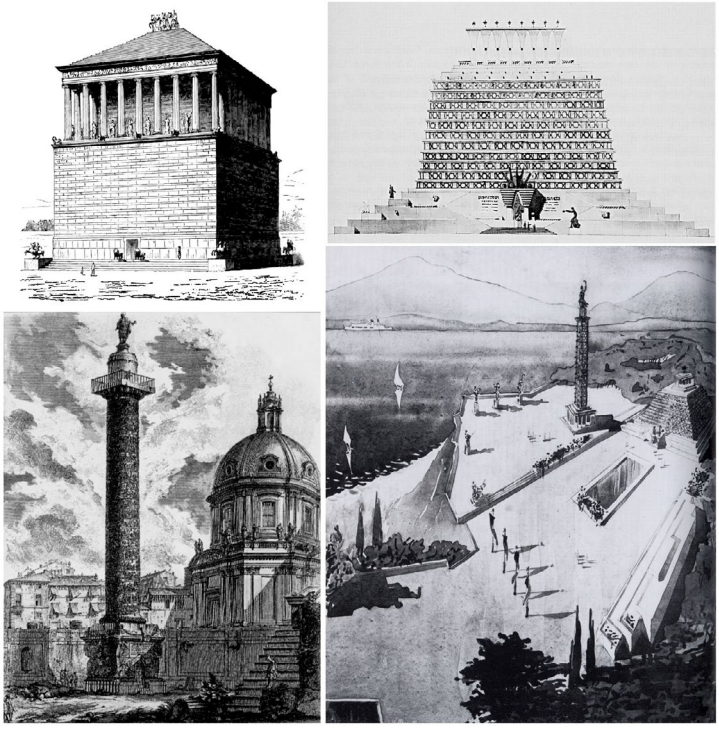


Figure 7
(a, top left) Mausoleum of Halicarnassus. Mid-fourth century BC. Reconstruction. (b, bottom left) G. B. Piranesi. Trajan's Column in Rome. 1758. (c, top and bottom right) M.Ia. Ginzburg. Building for the Panorama "The Defense of Sebastopol." 1943. Façade and Perspective.

at the Shchusev Museum of Architecture in Moscow in 1993. Similarly, *Sovremennaia arkhitektura*—Contemporary Architecture or Modern Architecture—is the title of the journal published by the Association of Contemporary Architects as well as the term denoting a broader international movement in twentieth-century architecture. Soviet constructivism, that was born, according to Ginzburg, in "an epoch which is doubly constructive (on the basis of the socialist revolution … and on the basis of the unprecedented growth of technology)" can be considered, despite some reservations, as an integral part of this movement (Figures 1 and 2).

Paradoxically in today's post- and simultaneously neo-modernist epoch, the earlier purely idealistic question of an "ignoramus," presented in 1926 before young materialist architects, still sounds perfectly relevant—although, as before, idealistic: "To what extent is the cultural conception of the epoch embodied in contemporary architecture?" Iuda Grossman-Roshchin, the author of "Notes of an Ignoramus" on the pages of Contemporary Architecture, demonstrating enviable knowledge, discussed the question:

> In a not very happy and not very distant time, we were taught in the solid words of architectural teachers and in the language of architecturally literate people the following: "Every building,

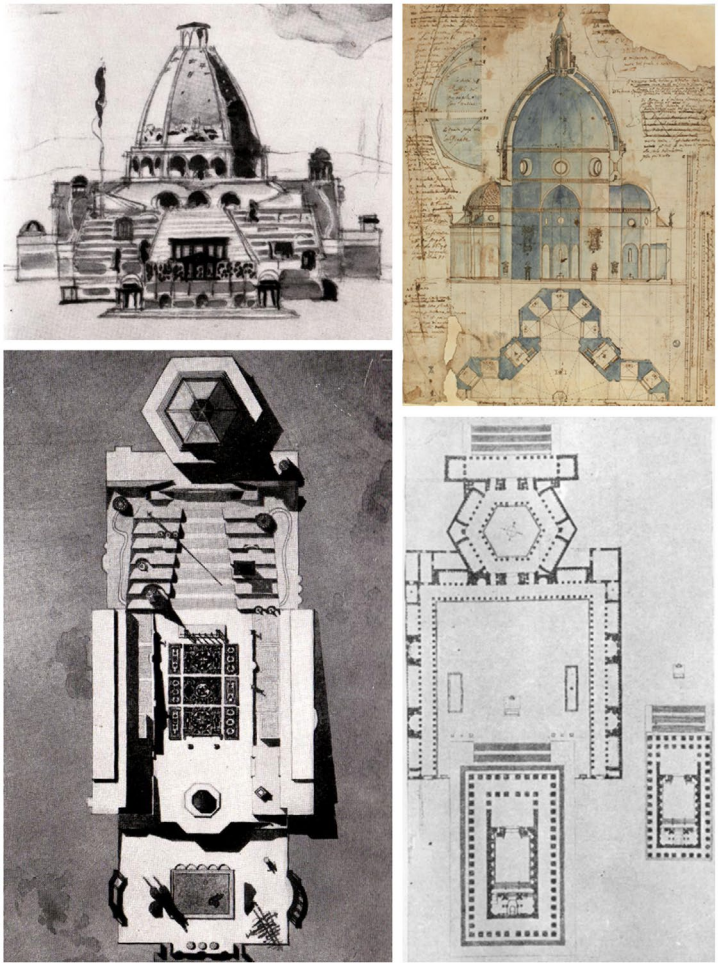


Figure 8
(a, top and bottom left) M.Ia. Ginzburg, I.I. Leonidov, L. Bogdanov. M. Chalyi. "Artek" Pioneer Camp. 1937. Façade and general plan. (b, top right) Lodovico Cardi da Cigoli. Plan and Section of the Dome of Santa Maria del Fiore. Florence. Late sixteenth–early seventeenth century. (c, bottom right) Temple complex at Baalbek. Lebanon. Late first century BC-fourth century AD.

> whatever its destined purpose, has the aim of fulfilling our requirements; these requirements, thanks to the material and spiritual nature of man, are of two types: material requirements and moral requirements." And further "There is even one kind of building, that fulfils no material requirements, but is erected exclusively by virtue of the spiritual demands of the human species." I think that I am not mistaken when I say that modern architecture struggles with this duality, that contemporary architecture fundamentally splits the idealistic aspect into utilitarian and aesthetic elements.[3]

To some extent, Ginzburg's article "The international front of contemporary architecture" provided an answer to this question:

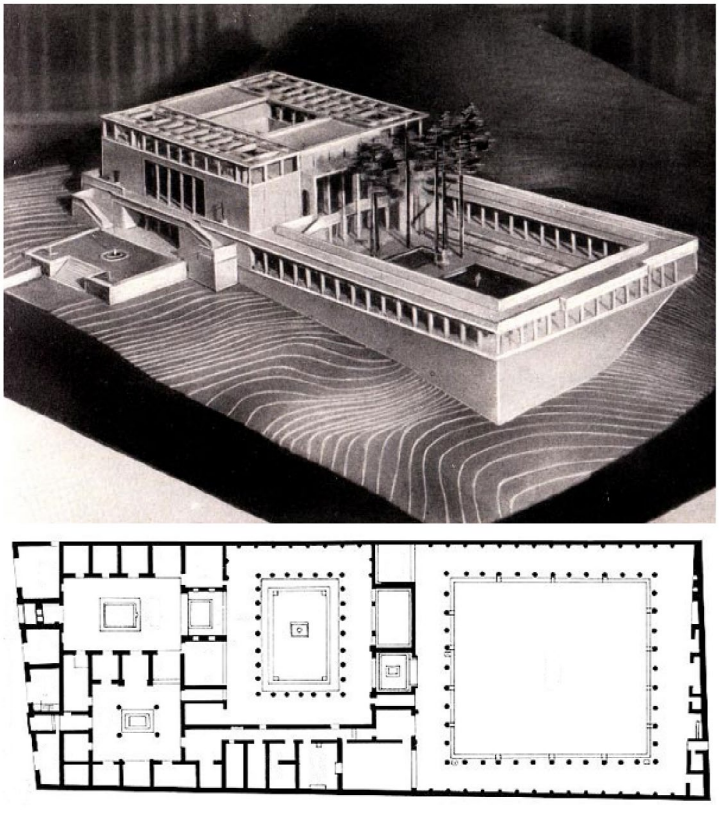


Figure 9
(a) M.Ia. Ginzburg. Sanatorium in Kislovodsk, "Commissar's Dacha." Model. (b) House of the Faun, Pompeii. Second century BC. Reconstructed plan.

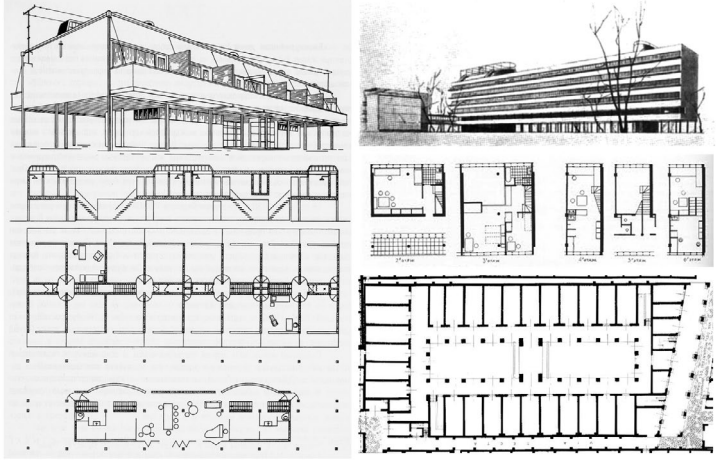


Figure 10
(a) M.Ia. Ginzburg and the Section for Socialist Settlement of Gosplan of the RSFSR. Sixteen-room dormitory. 1929. Perspective, section, and plan. (b) Narkomfin Building. Mosocw (with I.F. Milinis) 1928–1930. Perspective and plans of apartments. (c) Roman insula block. Ostia. Plan of ground floor with commercial and storage spaces.

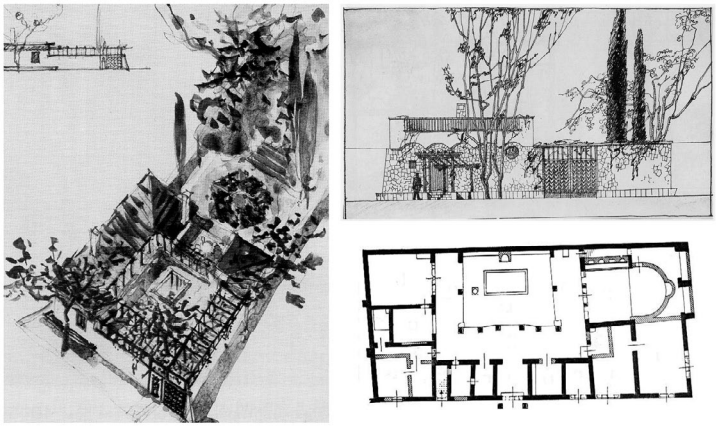


Figure 11
(a) M.Ia. Ginzburg. Courtyard House. 1937. Façade, perspective. (b) Roman house. Ostia. Plan.

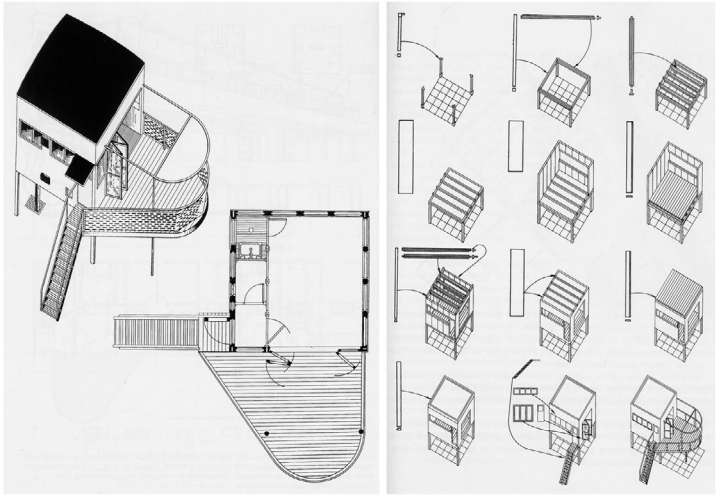


Figure 12
(a) M.Ia. Ginzburg. One-room residential cell. 1929. Axonometric and plan. (b) Construction schema for residential cell.

Figure 13
(a) Alexandre de Batz. Temple and Cabin of Natchez Chieftans. 1732. (b) Gondola of Stratostat SSSR-1. 1933. (c) Plan of a typical one-room apartment. Second half of the 1950s.

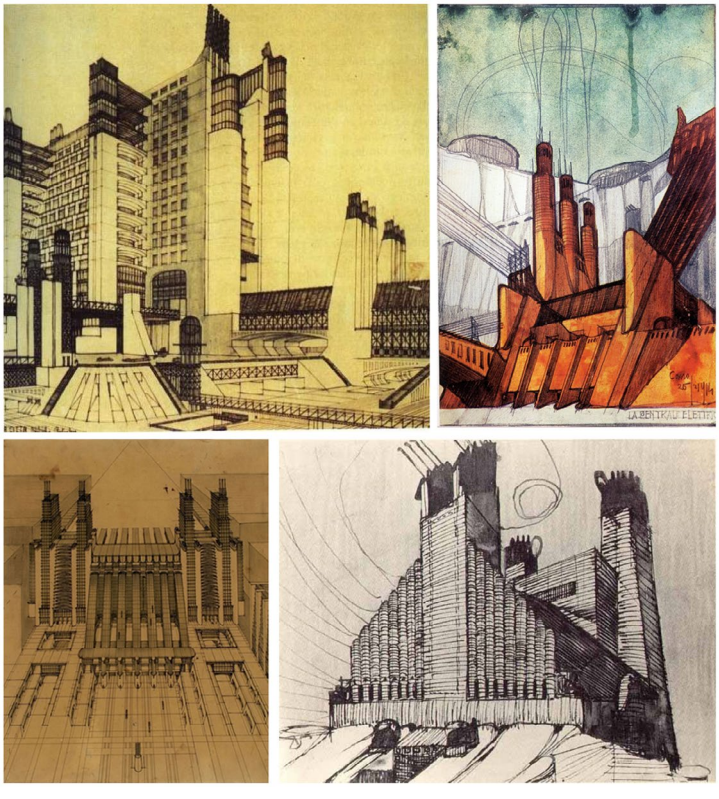


Figure 14
(a) Antonia Sant'Elia, *La Città Nuova.* 1914. (top left) Building with external lifts and systems of communication at various levels. (b, top right) Electrical Station. (c, bottom left) Airport and Trainstation with funiculars and lifts on three levels (d, bottom right) Church.

> Contemporary Soviet architecture, or at least that associated with our journal, is above all based on a precise materialist method … Our front of contemporary architecture is based on the principle that a completed work of architecture, just like any other contemporary object, is not a house or an object to which some kind of aesthetic addition has been applied, but a rationally and systematically organized concrete task, possessing, in the very method of its organization, the maximum potential for its expression.[4]

But the author of "Notes" did not find this to be a conclusive answer to his question:

> It would be interesting to know precisely how the element of planning is manifested in buildings or projects of contemporary architecture. Least satisfying of all is the ideological emphasis on strictly utilitarian design. It might be the tasteless resurgence of duality: a building plus a soviet-ideological annex. No. I am interested in something else. How is the character of the epoch organically "manifest" in an actual, concrete materialization of

> an architectural conception? Please note, that in my character of an ignoramus, I am not criticizing anything, but merely posing questions. Perhaps this question is intrinsically unreasonable. I do not know. The validity of the formulation is partly justified by comrade Ginzburg.[5]

This act of ideological profanation of the doctrine of constructivism in modern architecture, aspiring to a universal and international status on the eve of world revolution, deals with typology, but also with ideology, and generally—with the style of the epoch and with architecture. Typology and ideology, as the fundamental constituent elements of Ginzburg's architectural theory, do not merely justify the reason for posing the question. Here typology and ideology, as philosophical and methodological conventions and clichés, can be used to the maximum, so to speak, against themselves, in the typological and ideological (conceptual) analysis of constructivism's functional method, the nature of the operation and manipulation, transformation and deformation of traditional architectural ideas, methods and types, forms and concepts, which to a significant degree determined modern architecture's and constructivist architecture's searches for style.

Today, the answer to another revered question of the post- or hyper-modernist period—"When did the modern movement in architecture begin?"—seems to be losing its former meaning and chronological significance as an exactly fixed historical fact. Are the sources of this idea to be found in the distant, apparently stylistically and ideologically unified nineteenth century, beginning with the ideas of William Morris and the arts and crafts movement, or even earlier—in the rationality of neo-classicism or in renaissance humanism? Should two centuries of modern architectural development (1750–1950) be regarded as a single historical epoch, or is its viability limited by the parameters of the scientific, technical, social and artistic revolutions? The fundamental ideas, postulates and statements of the modern movement, as well as its philosophical, social, ideological and utopian explanations, are probably rooted in the same historical and cultural context in which the treatise of Vitruvius and, more profoundly, the philosophical systems of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle could be considered modern.

Without rejecting the idea of the general progress of human history, despite the evident present crisis of the evolutionary view of the world, one can agree with Peter Collins that during the period 1750–1950, new ideas and conceptions not only followed each other in an evolutionary succession of natural-historical development and selection, but constantly appeared in various relationships and different combinations with the old.[6] Acknowledging the influence of economic, social and political factors on the objective changes in twentieth-century architecture, it is important to focus on the wider and more profound sources of contemporary architectural theories. Hence it would be help-

ful to consider the changes in architectural ideas lying behind the real transformations of form, the sources of which were rather philosophical (that same economic determinism that was probably, to a large degree, indebted to the philosophical revolutions in England and Germany) and arose above all from a new notion of history.

The essence of the new perception of history is its interpretation as an evolutionary process in which various systems of cultural meaning were of only relative value. In architecture, the concept of evolution, perceived in parallel with the idea of historical relativism, produced a new concept of history, which destroyed a centuries-old, unwavering belief in absolute and immutable values, based on the doctrines of classical architecture. Alan Colquhoun, therefore, in his *Essays in Architectural Criticism: Modern Architecture and Historical Change*, observes:

> Together with the revival of past styles, a feeling began to develop that, if Gothic was the characteristic style of the age of faith, if neo-classicism was the characteristic style of the Enlightenment, then the present age should have its own style, rooted in the technical progress that was its own characteristic sign. This growing feeling was the corollary of the fact that relativity was only one aspect of post-Hegelian epistemology. The other aspect was that history was seen as process. History progressed dialectically by transcending itself, each successive period absorbing the previous one and producing a new synthesis. Whether, as in Hegel, this process was seen as teleological – a movement toward the future incarnation of the Ideal that existed outside time – or, as in Marx, it was seen as dialectically working itself out in the class struggle seen according to the Darwinian model, need not concern us. What is important is the idea of history as an intelligible process with a predictable future.[7]

However, Balzac's romantic aphorism "One does not have to go far to prove that the present is superior to the past; it is still necessary to encourage anticipation of a future, which is better than our present" takes on, starting with a mystical prelude (a ghost wandering throughout Europe) and concluding with an outright revolutionary exhortation in what Reyner Banham considers to be the first futurist manifesto—*The Communist Manifesto*, written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848—the character of a concrete plan of action for attaining the future.

As Banham explains in *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age*, there are three strands to the structure of artistic manifestoes at the beginning of the twentieth century which embody the paradigmatic nature of these type of programmatic announcements: the past—"we reject"; the present—is the spirit of the time or the epoch; the future—"we affirm."[6] In this historical–linguistic structure, the medium element, the

spirit of the times—the Zeitgeist—has an important methodological significance for understanding the sources of modern architecture. Heinrich Wölfflin's assertion that "style is an expression of the epoch" suggested the possibility that architecture as well as art contains within itself the symptom or trace of a definite stage or period of historical development. The spirit of the times or the style of the modern epoch demanded an absolutely new architecture.

But what is particularly important for the present discussion is the idea that "the spirit of the times" acquired an objective existence, was affirmed as a law of natural evolution, and as a purposeful change in reality, in accordance with natural-scientific or social-economic theory. This idea, reinforced by the scientific and experimental approach of positivism and given the veracity of objective fact and the epistemological force of objective truth, was expressed in the philosophical–ideological understanding of objective reality as a material reality that included material objects and their properties; space; time; movement; laws; social, industrial and economic relationships; the state; culture, etc.—that is, in practice the whole of everyday life, which in this interpretation defines consciousness.

The "spirit of the times," as a symptom and symbol of the changes of the epoch in every aspect of life, was manifest in art and architecture at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth in two parallel, but relatively independent, trends. One was related to the artistic elite's rejection of bourgeois culture, usurping artistic politics and associated with eclecticism and academic traditions in architecture. Nevertheless, this rejection did not include any direct social or political criticism. On the other hand, utopian socialism, and Marxist dialectical and historical materialism, assisted the emergence and development of a social-functional theory of architecture. Yet even before this, just as these theories were emerging, and at the same time as the development of their ethical and aesthetic premises in the teachings of William Morris and followers of this new direction in aesthetics, art and architecture, there developed "a functional method" for architecture within the heart of the academic tradition itself. This had developed on the basis of the proto-functionalism of Carlo Lodoli, Marc-Antoine Laugier, Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, Henri Labrouste, Augustus Pugin, Auguste Choisy, Gottfried Semper and Julien Gaudet. It paved the way for abstract art and its aesthetic foundations.

Modern architecture, combining the abstract formalism of the avant-garde and the productive scientific and technical potential of the new industrial epoch, developed forms and methods, intended not only to reflect, symbolize or imitate the functioning of a developing society, but also themselves to actively promote material and functional changes in objective reality and everyday life.

On the one hand, architecture looked to the rational logic of functionalism and technological progress. On the other, it remained an inde-

pendent artistic discipline, subject to the laws of aesthetics in which the authority of new perceptual and psychological theories confirmed the value of the ancient category of *beauty*. This contradiction, understood as the dominance of the new over the old, is reflected in a type of architectural concept that treats the functional and constructive element as a material object, as a technical and social norm or standard, but unconsciously and intuitively experiences it as an aesthetic, ethical and ideological imperative, as an idea and a convention.

As regards typology, at the same time as the essential classification of buildings according to their purpose, the logical and rational analysis and ordering of the parts or elements of the architectonic system, there takes place the structuring and development of a "program" for each individual type. The isolation, investigation, classification and ordering of the separate functions of a building are accompanied by a striving toward their discrete design, in accordance with the requirements of the cause-and-effect connection between function and form. On the one hand, this leads to the separation of the functional volumes or spaces and their flexible and functional organization into a single whole. On the other, it leads to the idea of a single universal space, the external design of which does not depend on the quantity or inner organization of the parts or functions. In this way, the abstract categories of function and space become the fundamental elements and typological attributes of architecture.

All these words and categories—type, species or genre, program or building, plan, part and element, function and form—relate the new method of Modern Architecture back to the famous rational, structural and typological method of composition, formulated at the beginning of the nineteenth century by Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand at the Ecole Polytechnique,[9] and developed in the middle of the same century by Gottfried Semper in his "practical aesthetic," with reference to Frédéric Cuvier, Durand and a real "Caribbean hut"—the primordial type of all architecture—exhibited at The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations, in 1851 at the Crystal Palace, London.[10] Even before these ideas almost literally were being borrowed and developed at the beginning of the twentieth century by the German Werkbund and the Bauhaus, a structural–typological method of composition had been perfected in the work of Julien Gaudet, a professor at the Ecole des Beaux Arts.[11] His student Tony Garnier (another famous student was Auguste Perret—also a precursor of the modern movement) translated this method in 1904–1918 from the scale of a single building to the urban scale in his project *Une cité industrielle*, which followed Alberti's precept that a city should be regarded as a large building. This method of composing formal, constructive, functional and spatial elements was employed by the *ancients* as well as by the *moderns*, only with different levels of understanding its mechanism. The constructive and functional parts of a building (i.e. the *architectural elements*, according to Durand

and Gaudet) formed the functional and spatial volumes, so that the *composition elements*, in Durand's terminology, represented the building itself or its parts. To arrange, in a literal or figurative sense, meant to compose, assemble and build. It is precisely in this meaning of "the assembly of house-building" that the academic method of composition was transferred to modern architecture, as Banham correctly observed: Ginzburg's "functional method," with all its social and ideological connotations, was fundamentally as instrumental as the method of Durand and Gaudet. The adaptation of this new and simultaneously old design method and tool to the new industrial and technological possibilities and social and economic requirements of contemporary society predictably demanded the implementation of economic and technical processes of effective rationalization in the form of procedures of typification, standardization, and integration of all the listed elements at the scale of both a building – a traditional typological category – and a city (Figures 3 and 4).

Ginzburg's role in developing new types of building is generally recognized and is constantly mentioned by scholars of his work. One only has to refer to the fairly detailed analysis of his work by S.O. Khan-Magomedov in his monograph *M.Ia. Ginzburg*.[12] The theoretical and practical value of these studies can be amplified by exploring several artistic, philosophical and ideological aspects of Ginzburg's typological conceptions, mainly presented in his book *Style and Epoch* and in some journal articles.[13]

Considering style as a faithful reflection of the epoch, Ginzburg proposes not only a method "of historical evaluation … in relationship to the environment that created it," but also a "genetic method … defining the value of a phenomenon from the point of view of its relationship to the further development of style and the general evolutionary process."[14] Actually returning to the idea of the primordial type and citing the hut or dolmen, Ginzburg repeats the idea of stylistic typology developed by Antoine-Chrysostóme Quatremère de Quincy at the turn of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century in his encyclopedic dictionary, where in the architectural section he proposes on the bases of a typology of style a singular typology of primordial forms and types, each of which corresponds to a different geographical or climatic condition, and also to the nature of the fundamental activity of the respective nationality.[15] For instance, the cave as the hunter's shelter is the primordial type of Egyptian architecture, the tent as the dwelling of the nomadic herder of cattle is the type for Chinese architecture, and finally the hut as the house for a tiller of the soil is the type for Greek architecture. For Quatremère de Quincy, each of these types not only explains the genesis and evolution of the corresponding style, but also helps to determine the predominance of one style over another. Since the type contains the potential for its future development, the *cave* as a primordial type for the heavy, massive, dark Egyptian temple did not possess the potential

for further evolution, like the light, mobile and temporary structure of the *tent*—the type of Chinese architecture. In contrast, the wooden construction of the *hut*, translated into stone, demonstrated the potential for evolution and progress. Simultaneously light, bright and durable, this construction as a primordial type was endowed with the meaning and significance of the ethical and aesthetic ideal and the immutable and fundamental truths for the development of architecture from its primitive condition to the classical perfection of the Greek order and temples. For his part, Ginzburg wrote:

> It is possible to distinguish genetic styles of a lesser or greater value in so far as they possess to a lesser or greater degree, features and potential possibilities for the creation of the new … Each historical epoch, or rather each vital creative force is characterized by certain artistic organisms: so each epoch in the plastic arts had its favorite type, which is intrinsic to it … It is precisely the same in architecture: hence the temple with its typical features was most characteristic of Greece, the church and cathedral of the Middle Ages, and the palace of the Renaissance.[14]

For Ginzburg, the genetic and historical evaluation is not always related to "the quality of an artwork's formal elements," although he recognized their transference to the structures of one or another epoch, but above all to their functional purpose.[17]
For Quatremère de Quincy, the character and value of each primordial type—*cave*, *tent* or *hut*—was determined by the national and ethnographic criteria of man's activities. For Ginzburg, the abstract category of *work*, with all its Marxist connotations, became the general criterion—the essential prerequisite for the detachment of man from the animal world, his physical existence, his perfection and the emergence of society, class identity, social and economic relationships, and the free and multi-faceted development of the individual as a condition for the free and multi-faceted development of everyone: "The element of life, moved into primary position in the new active social environment of contemporary reality – by the working class – is work, because it is the main content of the life of this social class and its unifying characteristic."[18]

This peculiar replacement of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's "natural man" with socialized "working man" resulted in "the primitive hut" being replaced by "workers' housing," and the class-ideological, sociological problematic being introduced into architecture. On the one hand, this was in total agreement with the functionalist approach toward the genetic basis of type, as an element of the new social and economic organization of society, existence and everyday life (i.e. with the functional purpose of the object being like that of any other item of everyday life or element of objective reality). On the other hand, the emergence and

introduction into architecture of yet another new type, directly connected with that very same category of work as the functional process—the type of the *house of labor*, factory or mill—socially and ideologically justified the formal and artistic language of futurist architecture. "In this way," states Ginzburg,

> it becomes the first priority, as the fundamental problem confronting contemporary reality, to develop solutions for all those architectural organisms that are associated with the concept of work: *workers' housing* and the *house of labor* and the endless quantity of tasks related to them.[19]

Though Ginzburg viewed the problem of the "formal and typical expression" of *workers' housing* as a task demanding a future solution, a paradigm and key for the resolution of this task was provided by the objectivity and materiality of European and American industrial buildings or *houses of labor* ("where the most acutely penetrating key to modernity provided solutions astonishing in their purely formal perfection, undoubtedly predicting the future").[20]

Emphasis on active work or human labor—the element of society's *productive power*, defined by Marxist philosophy as a determinant factor in the historical process—systematically led Ginzburg to another category of historical materialism—*the means of production*—which allowed him to go from the house of work to the machine and technology as sources of inspiration for the creation of the new architecture, now justified from the point of view of historical materialism:

> Just as we defined the relationship between the machine and industrial structures, we must define the analogous relationship between the industrial structure and the architecture of workers' housing. … industrial architecture, being close to the sources of a contemporary understanding of form, must influence even the most traditional and conservative housing. *From industrial architecture rather than from anywhere else, we can expect a real indication of what, how, and in what way this can be done.* We are talking about adding the final architectural element – adequate living and social buildings – to an already existing modern environment – the machine, engineering and industrial structures.[21]

It is precisely toward the solution of this task that the search for new types of building and means of organizing and forming "the new everyday life of modern man" had been directed:

> In the conditions of the building of socialism that we are experiencing today, every new solution of the architect—workers' house, club or factory—is considered by us to be the invention of

> a modern type, answering its tasks and suitable for reproducing in any quantity, in accordance with government requirements.[22]

Economic determinism and rationalization, realized poetically in technical forms, allowed the examination of dwelling and social functions as indispensable supplements to the production process, while housing and social buildings—the complementary elements of the industrial environment—were "the final architectural components." The evolutionary view of history as a process of development from lower to higher forms reduced the meaning of the architectural type as a primordial principle, rule and idea—society living together around the fire, a primitive hut or the temple—to the significance of a completed product, an ultimate result, a material object and perfected standard.

Returning in 1934 to the problem of "the critical mastering of the entire heritage of the past, from the primitive savage's hut to the flight of a stratostat," Ginzburg did not appeal to what would have been natural, to one of the defined historical and traditional types, as for example to that from which he began to consider the architectural heritage. Instead, he tried to re-define it: "What is a type? A type is the result of work on comprehending new social tasks."[23] From this definition, followed a criticism of the condition of standardization and typification at that time, and also a proposal for their improvement, that clearly, although unwittingly, revealed the inner contradiction between the social task and the structure in respect to function and planned organization of the design and building process. According to the thinking of the author, however, it "radically changes the character of the work of the modern architect," who in turn "considers his activity not as the fulfilment of specific tasks, but as the establishment of architectural standards… as a constant perfection of those standards."[24]

Numerous designs for communal housing, housing of a transitional type, blocks of residences and hostels with cells, flats and houses with one, two, three, 3.5 and 5.5 rooms, workers' clubs, palaces of culture and service buildings, which had to "in advance lead the architect's attention away from seeking individual solutions towards the perfection of a standard and towards the elaboration and the maximum typification of all its details," on the whole, represent more or less ideal models and standards.[25] But the programmatic exclusion of individuality and originality (except for engineering) implied an unambiguous answer to that question, which is familiar to modern architecture and was formulated by Hermann Muthesius in 1911 for the German Werkbund—"Type or individuality?"—in favor of the type, in its deformed realization as an industrial prototype and standard.

On the matter of mastering the historical tradition, Ginzburg in 1924, had already declared:

> In this way, every principle of our classical heritage must change, at least quantitatively, in order to be suitable for the present day. But this quantitative change is a new architectural quality, because it entails the replacement of old methods by new, and the attachment of new inventions to what is still viable.[26]

It was proposed (if not a play on words) to use philosophical categories of qualitative change at the expense of a reverse, a qualitative change with a minus sign, i.e. a deduction, reduction and exclusion from architecture of the classical heritage, but a quantitative change with a plus sign or multiplying a thousand-fold, in the words of Henry Van de Velde, an increase once the perfect standard that has been attained has not directly led to the desired quality. This stopped pleasing Ginzburg himself:

> With us, the type has turned into a pattern, a series of criteria, which the architect must use without fail … the type has turned into simple mechanical blinkers, restricting the architect's thinking and forcing him to follow the line of least resistance.[27]

At the same time, "understanding the problem of the type correctly" continued to be considered "one of the most interesting social and architectural tasks, the solution of which can lead us closest to the form of the new proletarian architecture."[26]

After the period of "mastering the classical heritage," the succeeding stage of standardization and typification in Soviet architecture followed once-prescribed trends of constantly perfecting standards. Endless investigations into the economically effective functional and constructional solutions for a particular type of building and within the limits of "construction norms and regulations" moved toward simplification and the acceptance of a single optimum variant. In this process of "propagation" and simultaneous reduction, the type, via an industrial and typological model and standard, acquired the properties of a normative prototype and, as a result of the logical completion of this sequence of typological operations, manipulation, transformation and deformation, turned into a stereotype and cliché.

For Ginzburg and the architects of his circle and generation, it seemed that architecture as a faithful follower of history ought to develop according to the laws of dialectics as applied to social development. The struggle and the unity of opposites (with the emphasis on the struggle), repudiation for the sake of repudiation, and the strategy of increasing the quantity in order to achieve a new quality in architecture perfectly agreed with the dominant philosophical and ideological tendencies of the times. But in architecture, as in society, the situation that architectural style should have reflected, so apparent in pure theory and method, was destroyed by history itself (Figures 5–13).

Examining Soviet constructivism and the architecture of the Soviet period within the general context of the modern movement, the international style or functionalism demonstrates both the autonomy and interdependence of these trends.

Undoubtedly, Ginzburg was right when he declared that new trends and influences (including typology and ideology) came to architecture from the north. But he was only half or a quarter right if one takes into account the four corners of the world, for the greatest influences, that he experienced himself, like many before and at the same time, circulated and invisibly roamed and whirled throughout Europe and America and then returned from the south, from Italy and Milan where, in 1914, Ginzburg received his first official architectural training. In Milan, in 1912–1914, Antonio Sant'Elia created his architectural fantasies and published his ideas of city planning, embodied in the projects for the *Città Nuova* and *Milano 2000*. In Milan in May 1914, the exhibition *Nuove Tendenze* opened, the catalogue for which contained Sant'Elia's declaration (*Messagio*). Repeating the *Messagio*, "The Manifesto of Futurist Architecture" was written and published on June 11, 1914 (most canonical futurist manifestos were dated the eleventh day of the month). It was also the topography of Milan that was described in the prologue to "The Founding Manifesto" of Futurism, initially written in French by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, a graduate of the Sorbonne, and published in the Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro* in February 1909.

The final paragraph of Marinetti's manifesto is not merely distinctive for its revolutionary mood and new metaphors. In a poetic form, it establishes an indissoluble connection between technology and art, between the machine and architecture, with its new typology of industrial and engineering structures:

> We will sing of the stirring of great crowds-workers, pleasure-seekers, rioters – and the confused sea of color and sound as revolution sweeps through a modern metropolis. We will sing the midnight fervor of arsenals and shipyards blazing with electric moons; insatiable stations swallowing the smoking serpents of their trains; factories hung from the clouds by the twisted threads of their smoke; bridges flashing like knives in the sun; giant gymnasts that leap over rivers; adventurous steamers that scent the horizon; deep-chested locomotives that paw the ground with their wheels, like stallions harnessed with steel tubing; the easy flight of airplanes, their propellers beating the wind like banners, with a sound like the applause of a mighty crowd.[29]

In the "spirit of the times," Sant'Elia went no further than summarizing and defining the role of architecture in a period of technical revolution, while Ginzburg and the architects of his circle and generation had to objectify, implement and materialize these ideas in the conditions of a

real social revolution and the construction of a new way of life (Figure 14). Geography, as well as regional and cultural influences, it seems, played a secondary role in this process, insofar as these ideas were integral to and embodied in technology itself, which was both cause and effect. Ginzburg was profoundly convinced that "local and national features in the present context are too insignificant in comparison with the levelling power of contemporary technology and economy."[30] Today, this sounds like an ironic, and yet at the same time an optimistic or ominous, prediction.

Ginzburg's typological concepts, which formed the basis for the development of the orthodox functional and industrial typological theories in architecture of the Soviet period, allow us to examine these theories within the general context of modern architecture, but only within the limits of general ideology. In its revolutionary specificity, its political, social, economic and historical context, Soviet constructivism remains a relatively autonomous phenomenon, thanks to its special ideological foundation, and complex relationship to the general philosophical and artistic doctrine of modernism. Examining the relationship between typology and ideology in Ginzburg's architectural legacy would seem to permit a more accurate delineation of these boundaries.

Notes

1. Alexander Pushkin, "…Vnov' ia posetil…," in A.S. Pushkin, *Sochineniya v trekh tomakh*, (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaya Literature, 1986), 1:574; English translation, "I have visited again," by D.M. Thomas. http://www.nexuslearning.net/books/elements_of_lit_course6/The_%20Romantic_Period/collection%208/I%20Have%20Visited%20Again.htm
2. Ginzburg's return (almost spiritualist in a metaphorical sense) in response to these constant and persistent references—from the point of view of historiographic interest or in historical and theoretical research, conducted critically or in a poetic and romantic manner—is a kind of self-consistent and persuasive reminder. The historical memory of one of the patriarchs of Soviet architecture, represented by his designs, building, essays and precepts, could probably be brought together with the Nietzschean idea of eternal return as a poetic, an almost sacred or mystical, embodiment of several moments of everyday life, imprinted with or personifying the historical memory in symbolic forms, signs, figures, events and actions, which could help to preserve the evident, but difficult to explain, connection between the past, the present and the future. Despite the profound philosophical meaning of this phenomenon, a physical, speculative or any other type of return possesses several nostalgic aspects, associated with individual experiences of the

historical period, moments that can be poetically communicated by means of metaphors. In this sense, Ginzburg's *eternal return* recalls Alexander Pushkin's famous return to the hamlet of Mikhailovskoe after ten years away:

…Where a road, scarred by many rainfalls, climbs
The hill, three pine trees stand – one by itself,
The others close together. When I rode
On horseback past them in the moonlit night,
The friendly rustling murmur of their crowns
Would welcome me. Now, I have ridden out
Upon that road, and seen those trees again.
They have remained the same, make the same murmur –
But round their aging roots, where all before
was barren and naked, a thicket of young pines
Has sprouted; like green children around the shadows
of the two neighbouring pines. But in the distance
Their solitary comrade stands, morose,
Like some old bachelor, and round its root,
All is barren as before.
I greet you, young
and unknown tribe of pine trees! I'll not see
your mighty upward thrust of years to come
When you will overtop these friends of mine
And shield their ancient summits from the gaze
Of passersby. But may my grandson hear
Your welcome murmur when, returning home
From lively company, and filled with gay
And pleasant thoughts, he passes you in the night,
And thinks perhaps of me….

Pushkin, "…Vnov' ia posetil…", 1:574; English translation, "I have visited again", by D. M. Thomas.

3. I.S. Grossman-Roshchin, "Zametki profana" ["Notes of an Ignoramus"], *Sovremennaia arkhitektura* [Contemporary Architecture] 2 (1926):77–8.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. P. Collins, *Changing Ideals in Modern Architecture 1750–1950* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965).
7. Alan Colquhoun, "Historicism and the Limits of Semiology," in *Essays in Architectural Criticism: Modern Architecture and Historical Change* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 133.
8. Reyner Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (London: Architectural Press, 1960).
9. Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand, *Recueil et parallèle des edifices de tout genre anciens et modernes, remarquables par leur beauté, par leur*

grandeur ou par leur singularité, et dessinés sur une meme échelle (Paris: De l'imprimerie de Gille fils, 1801).

10. Gottfried Semper, *Der Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten oder praktische Ästhetik: ein Handbuch für Techniker, Künstler und Kunstfreunde (Band 2): Keramik, Tektonik, Stereotomie, Metallotechnik für sich betrachtet und in Beziehung zur Baukunst* (Munich: Friedrich Bruckmann's Verlag, 1863).
11. J. Gaudet, *Eléménts et théorie de l'architecture, cours professé à l'école nationale et special des beaux-arts* (Paris: Librarie de la construction modern, 1900).
12. S.O. Khan-Magomedov, *M.Ia. Ginzburg* (Moscow: Stroiizdat, 1972).
13. M.Ia. Ginzburg, *Stil' i epokha. Problemy sovremennoi arkhitektury* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1924); English translation, Moisei Ginzburg, *Style and Epoch*, trans. Anatole Senkevitch, intr. Kenneth Frampton (Cambridge, MA, and London: MIT Press, 1982). See also M.Ia. Ginzburg, "Novye metody arkhitekturnogo myshleniia," *Sovremennaia arkhitektura* 1 (1926): 1–4; M.Ia. Ginzburg, "Mezhdunarodnyi front sovremennoi arkhitektury," *Sovremennaia arkhitektura* 2 (1926): 41–46; M.Ia. Ginzburg, V.A. Vesnin and A.A. Vesnin, "Tvorcheskaia tribuna. Problemy sovremennoi arkhitektury," *Arkhitektura SSSR* 2 (1934): 63–69.
14. Ginzburg, *Stil' i epokha,* 24.
15. A. [Antoine-Chrysostóme] Quatremère de Quincy, *Encyclopédie méthodique, tome 3, Architecture* (Paris: Agasse, 1825).
16. Ginzburg, *Stil' i epokha,* 79.
17. Idem.
18. Ibid, 79–80.
19. Ibid, 80.
20. Idem.
21. Ibid, 134.
22. Ginzburg, "Novye metody arkhitekturnogo myshleniia," 2.
23. Ginzburg, Vesnin and Vesnin, "Tvorcheskaia tribuna. Problemy sovremennoi arkhitektury," 66.
24. Ginzburg, "Novye metody arkhitekturnogo myshleniia," 2.
25. Ibid.
26. Ginzburg, *Stil' i epokha*, 145.
27. Ginzburg, Vesnin and Vesnin,"Tvorcheskaia tribuna. Problemy sovremennoi arkhitektury," 67.
28. Ibid.
29. Banham, *Theory and Design*, 104.
30. Ginzburg, *Stil' i epokha,* 89.