



# Style and Epoch

## Issues in Modern Architecture

Moisei Ginzburg

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- The most important original text on Constructivism
- Published as facsimile edition in partnership with Ginzburg Architects, now involved in the restoration of Narkomfin (1929, Moscow) - one of the most famous Constructivist buildings that has had a great influence on the development of contemporary architecture
- Follows on from the 2017 publication of *Dwelling* by Ginzburg Design with Fontanka which was well received

*Style and Epoch* by Moisei Ginzburg, first published in 1924, was the architect's key work; it became the philosophical basis for the Constructivist group of architects. Ginzburg defined the new style in architecture that signified a break from traditional styles. After two industrial revolutions, architects were faced with new challenges by society. The response was an innovative approach to architecture that put people - their needs and functions - at its center. The author's understanding of global economic and cultural processes is evident in his description of the development of a style that came to define the nature of architecture in the twentieth century, which today we call modernism. The significance of this book in terms of an understanding of culture, the avant-garde and the subsequent development of modernist architecture is hard to overestimate. Contents: 1. Style. The elements of architectural style. Continuity and independence in the succession of styles; 2. The Greco-Italian 'classical' system of thought and its modern legacy; 3. The preconditions for the new style; 4. The machine. The influence of the static and dynamic characteristics of the machine on modern art; 5. Load-bearing structure and form in architecture. Constructivism; 6. Industrial and engineering organisms; 7. Characteristic traits of the new style.

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Moisei Ginzburg was an architect, theorist, teacher, and a leader of the Constructivist group in Soviet avant-garde architecture. Born in Minsk in 1896 into an architect's family, he went abroad to Italy and France for his architectural training. He settled in Moscow, where he taught architectural history and theory at the Moscow High Technical School and in the architecture faculty at the Vkhutemas Art School. An influential young pedagogue, Ginzburg published discerning critiques of modern architecture. His magnum opus, *Style and Epoch* (1924), emphasized the civilizing role of the machine and its capacity to rationalize new building types consistent with the needs of the working class. Asserting that the revolution had engendered a new constructive phase of architectural development, Ginzburg's treatise was essentially a manifesto of Constructivism as the architectural style of the new Soviet era.