



# The Lost Vanguard

**RUSSIAN**

**MODERNIST**

**ARCHITECTURE**

**1922-1932**

**Richard Pare**

ESSAY BY

**Jean-Louis Cohen**

**THE MONACELLI PRESS**



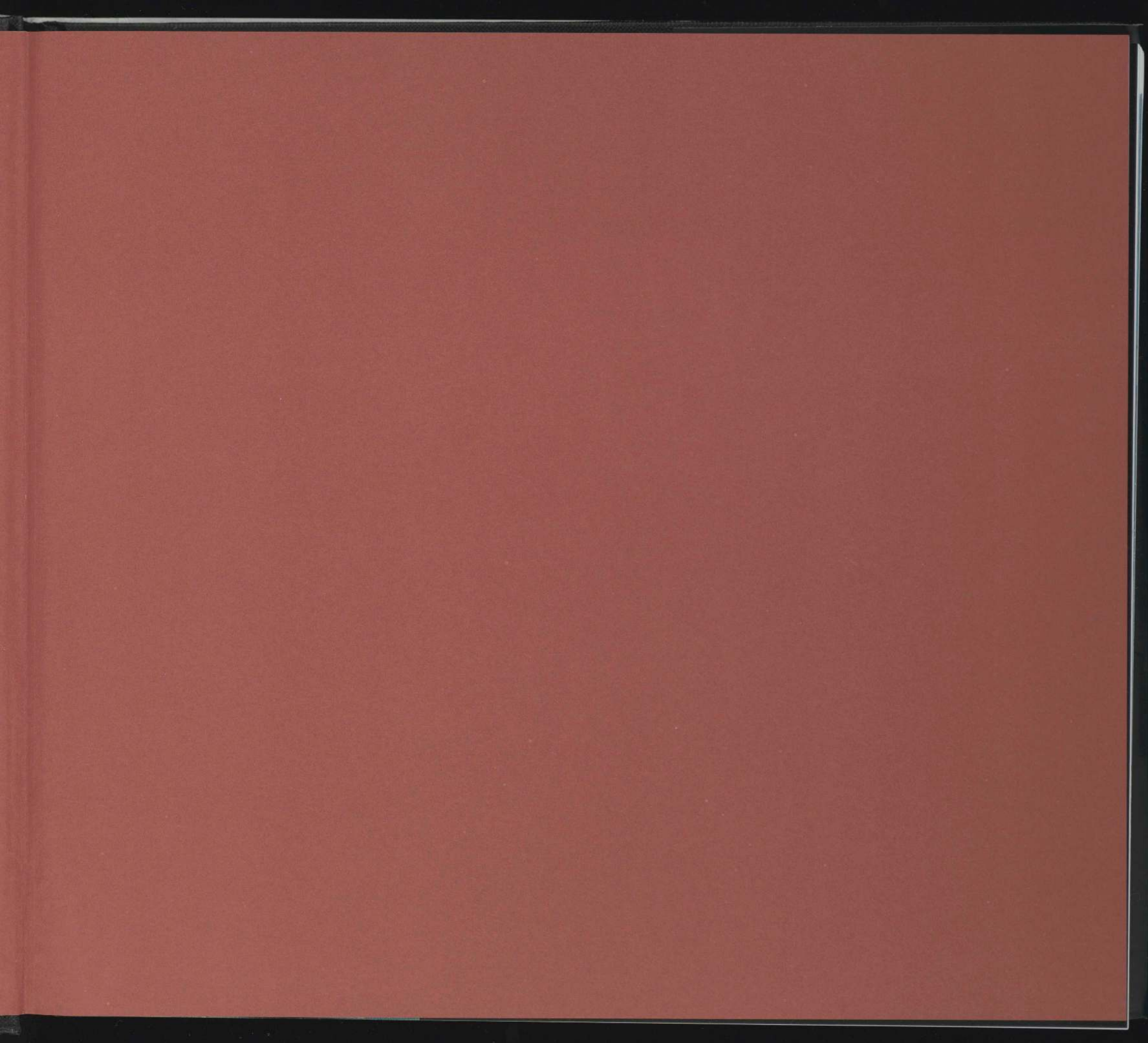
*The Lost Vanguard* documents the work of modernist architects in the Soviet Union during the years following the 1917 revolution and subsequent civil war. In little more than a decade, some of the most radical buildings of the twentieth century were completed by a small group of architects who developed a new architectural language in support of new social goals of communal life. Rarely published and virtually inaccessible until the collapse of the Soviet regime, these important buildings have remained unknown and unappreciated.

The book includes seventy-three structures, starting with the Shabolovka Radio Tower in Moscow and concluding with the Lenin Mausoleum. In between are buildings from all over Moscow (where the greatest concentration of modernist buildings still remains), St. Petersburg, Ivanovo, Ekaterinburg, Kiev, Kharkov, Zaporozhe, Nizhi Navgorod, Sochi, and Baku. The buildings range from grand projects such as Gosprom in Kharkov to a modest bus shelter in Sochi, a rare survivor by an unknown architect.

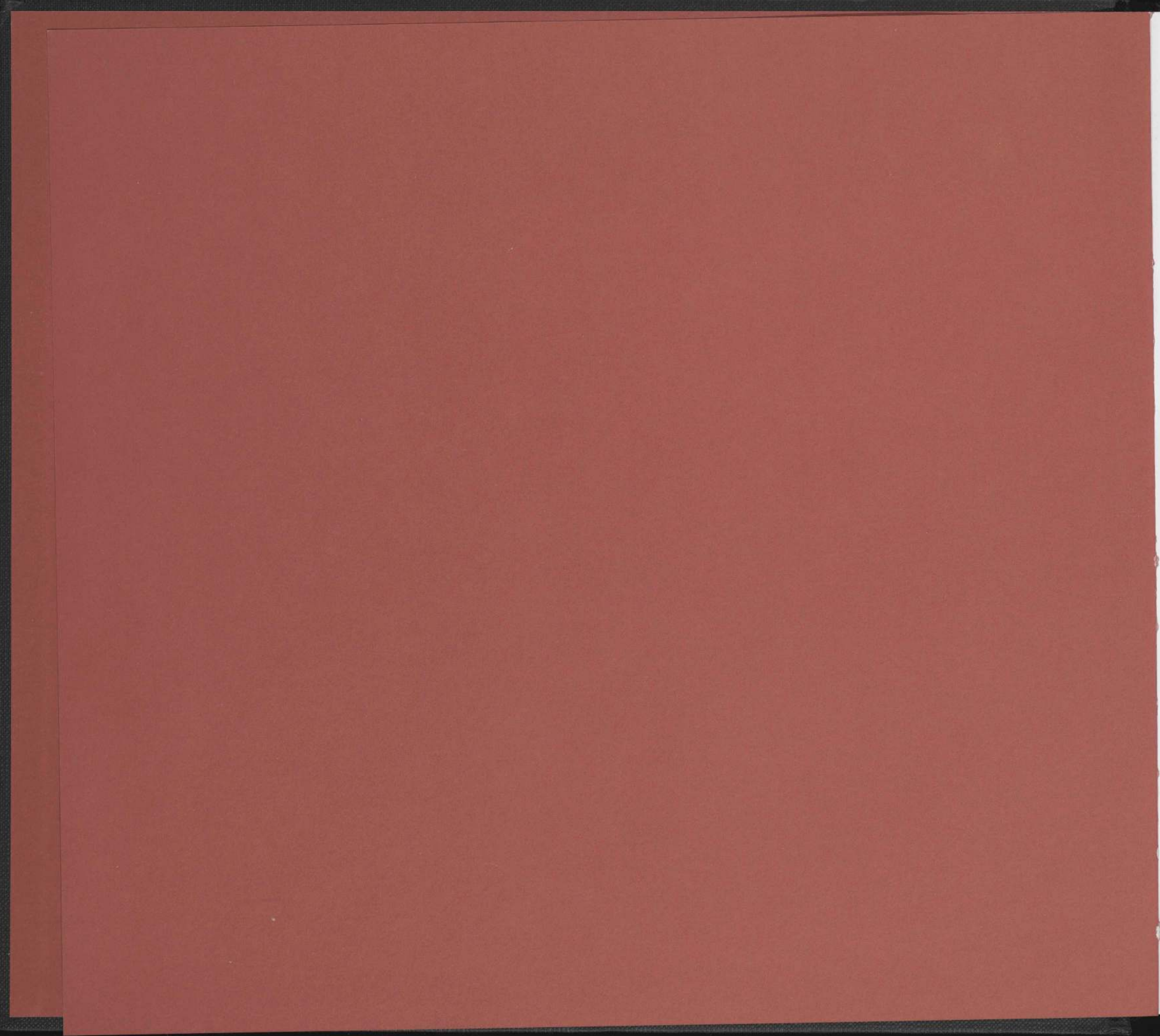
Richard Pare's photographs reveal the powerful forms of these structures, some still in use but many now abandoned and decayed. Massive industrial complexes like the Dnieper River Dam and MoGES, which supplies electricity to the city of Moscow, vast communal houses for workers, including Ginzburg's Narcomfin, commercial buildings and government offices, and smaller clubs and theaters were all built in this brief period. Of particular interest is the collection of buildings by Konstantin Melnikov, which features his famous house, now threatened with demolition.

In an incisive essay, architectural historian Jean-Louis Cohen surveys the history of the period, providing a context for the emergence of this startling new architecture in parallel to contemporary experiments in Europe.









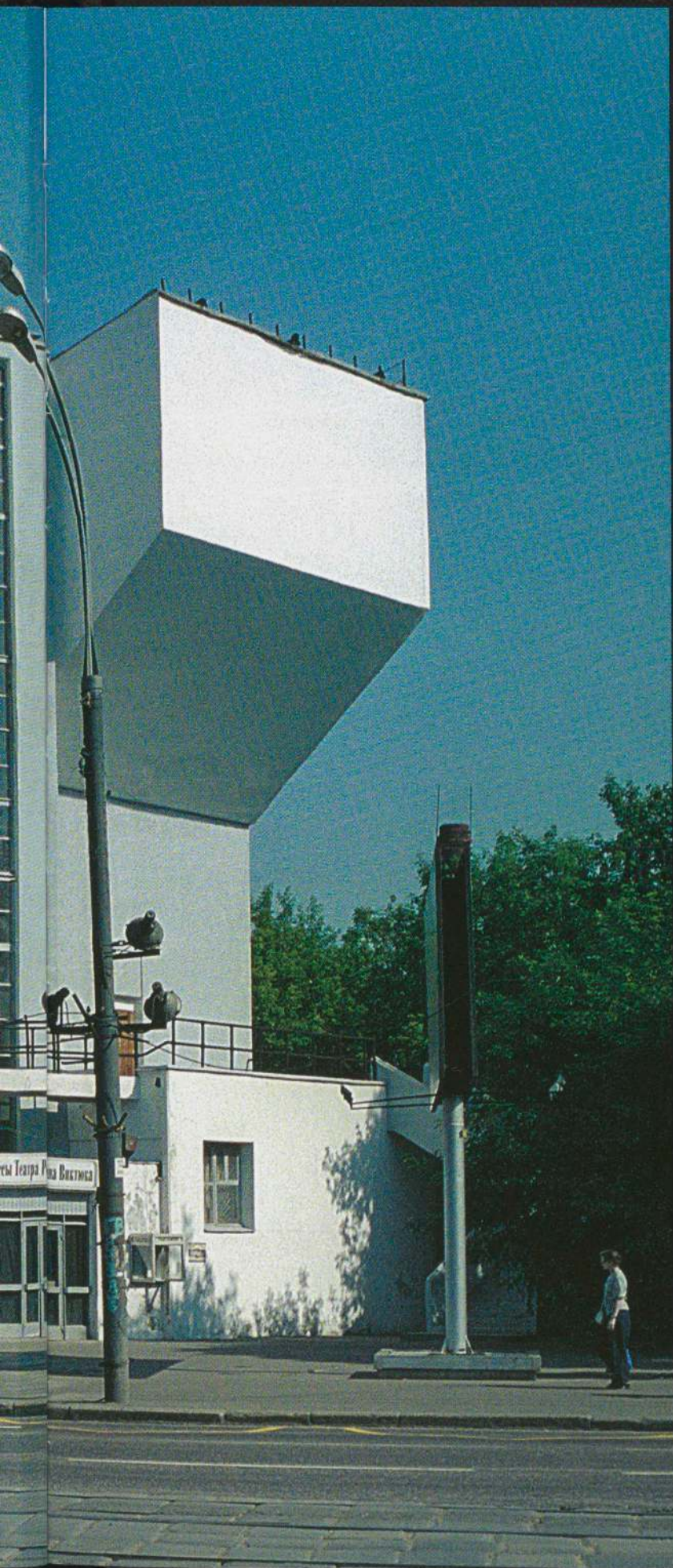


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**Foreword by Phyllis Lambert**

**Essay by Jean-Louis Cohen**

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**For Gaile Sarma**

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**Note on Russian transliteration and city names**

The transliteration of Russian places and names mentioned in the book follows the system established by the Library of Congress, with some simplifications. Some names such as El Lissitzky or Eisenstein have been spelled according to accepted usage. City names have changed several times in recent Russian history. St. Petersburg was called Petrograd between 1914 and 1924 and Leningrad until 1991. Ekaterinburg was renamed Sverdlovsk between 1924 and 1991, after Bolshevik leader Iakov Sverdlov. The historical points made in the book refer to the name of the cities at the time of the buildings' design or construction, whereas present-day photographs refer to the post-1991 denominations.

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# Contents

6 **Foreword**

PHYLLIS LAMBERT

9 **Radical Relics: Architecture and the Politics of Modernization in Soviet Russia**

JEAN-LOUIS COHEN

25 **Looking for the Modernists**

RICHARD PARE

33 **The Lost Vanguard**

336 **Architect Biographies**

344 **Acknowledgments**

346 **Index of Architects and Buildings**



# Foreword

PHYLLIS LAMBERT

At long last we have access to a corpus of images of architecture developed in the fervour of experimentation following the Russian Revolution. This volume presents an informed view of the brief period when the modernist vanguard projected a "new Russia." Over the last decade, Richard Pare has located and photographed many of the buildings that are still standing today, in some cases discovering formerly unknown structures. Jean-Louis Cohen initially identified these works, and his essay situates them in their historical context. Both photographer and historian make us aware of the perilous condition of the buildings due to disregard and neglect and alert us to the threat posed by the economic boom (a phenomenon that is never kind to architecture of the past) currently taking hold in many parts of the former Soviet Union.

Following World War II, the dynamic and inventive work of artists and architects such as El Lissitzky, Malevich, Tatlin, and Rodchenko (known chiefly from exhibition catalogues and European journals of the 1920s) inspired a generation of young architects around the world. As Cohen notes, rediscovery of the Russian avant-garde led to studies in Western Europe beginning in the 1960s. In the 1970s, a spate of exhibitions and publications in the United States, Canada, and England focused largely on Soviet constructivism coincided with preparations for the bicentennial celebration of the anniversary of the American Revolution—an event that raised questions about the symbolism and vitality of architecture produced following political revolutions and prompted comparisons with the U.S.S.R.

Richard Pare and I were working at the time on *Court House: A Photographic Document* (1978), a project I conceived and commissioned for the bicentennial to document a third of the three thousand county court houses erected as American settlements spread from the original thirteen states westward across the continent. These court houses had been fundamental in ordering a new territory: as archives, they housed and protected the property records that have always been of greatest concern, along with other legal documents and records; equally important, as houses of justice, they mediated the activities of daily life. The architectural expression of these important buildings, which were the embodiment of democracy in America, evolved over time. As Henry

Russell-Hitchcock explained in *Court House*: "The question of what was appropriate for American public architecture, an architecture of democracy, remained very much an issue until the arrival of the Greek Revival, when the image of a Classical temple on a hill became strongly appealing since it seemed singularly appropriate historically, and closed the doors on the past."

The design language of the Soviet Union after the Revolution proposed a radically new syntax. The images that filled our eyes in the early 1970s were the drawings and models of fantastic monuments of the early 1920s: El Lissitzky's Lenin Tribune, Tatlin's Monument to the Third International, Melnikov's projects and pavilions, the constructions of the Sternbergs and Klutis, Chernikov's architectural fantasies, and the vigorous theater sets by Popova and the Vesnins. Many of these proposals remained on paper and those that were constructed could not equal the power conveyed by their designers. This is patently evident, for example, in the contrast between Erich Mendelsohn's drawing for "Gostorg" and the as-built photograph published in his *Russland, Europa, Amerika* of 1929.

The buildings Pare tracked down and photographed in the former Soviet Union, like the American county court houses, were noteworthy manifestations of new public functions central to a new society. The revolutionary poet Vladimir Maiakovski considered socialist artists to be "organizers of life," Aleksandr Vesnin called for architecture to march in step with the builders of the new life, and for Moisei Ginzburg, architecture was to be transformed in the image of the socio-economic revolution. Factories, housing, and clubs for workers, together with palaces of culture and the necessary industrial infrastructure, predominated. Workers clubs provided spaces for education and entertainment near the workplace, and large communal housing projects were organized by trade. The workers settlement was not intended to be merely an appendage of the factory: the factory was to be the focus of communal life and would ensure the well-being of the settlement. Factories were conceived as part of the urban fabric along riverbanks in Moscow, and at Kharkov, the State House for Industry gives a powerful focus to the new town plan.

With the refined intelligence and sensitivity that he brings to



making images of the built world, Richard Pare has documented the buildings, choosing strategic points of view, capturing the urban setting, the telling detail, and when possible, the interior. Moisei Ginzburg's Narkomfin Communal House is a poignant example of Pare's approach. The first view ironically reveals in the distance one of the trademark Stalinist housing ziggurats seen through the skeletal remains of the penthouse of Ginzburg's rationalist masterpiece. After establishing the formal language of the building's exterior, Pare brings us to an expansive and cool (even if pinkish) view of the modernist interior of one abandoned apartment, followed by numerous smaller photographs evoking the warmth (even if it is painted blue) of a still-inhabited one. The various views accentuate, by capturing the arrangements of framed images on the walls and tchachkas on the sideboard, the sense of a distinctly Russian decor residing within the language of avant-garde internationalism. The last images of Narkomfin include details and views of an interior street that Le Corbusier, seduced by the revolutionary organization of access to the apartments, referred to as "the street in the air."

Pare's curiosity and persistence led him up the steps of the now-empty concrete water tower in Ekaterinburg to explore its interior and to find the astoundingly progressive private face on the inner courtyard of MoGES, a striking contrast to its traditionally articulated facade stretching along the river, where the factory becomes part of the city. In a photograph of the Shabolovka Radio Tower, Pare's stance evokes the structure's supreme elegance and lightness by placing the roughly stuccoed enclosure wall in direct confrontation with it. In another instance, he emphasizes the fragility of the building in winter by capturing the somber quality of the light that shrouds the Chekist Communal House in Nizhni Novgorod (made even sadder by being abandoned).

While Pare uses the panorama format to vividly establish the expanse of certain buildings bordering the Moskva River or the complexity of groupings within the city, the panoramas of interiors are breathtaking. The photograph of the spiral priming tunnel of the bakery in Khodynskaia Street in Moscow conveys Pare's admiration for what he calls "one of the most remarkable and enduring industrial structures of the constructivist period." The tension of the

hexagonal windows that pierce the circular wall of Melnikov's studio is captured in the collision of Pare's two-frame panorama, only to be overcome by the serenity of the light that suffuses the room. The photograph is a love-poem from Richard Pare to Konstantin Melnikov, whose son he knew and whose house is a place he has worried over for years, at times raising modest amounts of money privately to secure the roof.

Pare conceived the project presented in this book as an outgrowth of his interest in the photography of the Russian avant-garde. With the support of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, whose unequalled collection he formed as curator of photographs, Pare undertook preliminary research and made an initial exploratory trip to Moscow in 1993. During several visits over the next decade, he photographed in Moscow and St. Petersburg. In 1999, Pare worked in the Ukraine: Kiev, Kharkov, and Zaporozhe in the spring; then back to St. Petersburg and Moscow and onward to Ivanovo and Ekaterinburg, all in Russia, in the fall. In 2000, he was photographing in Baku in Azerbaijan, in the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi, and in the Crimean peninsula in the Ukraine. These campaigns resulted in an archive of 10,000 negatives from which he prepared the digital images published in this volume.

We are immensely grateful to Richard Pare for this extraordinary publication, which opens windows onto the substantially unknown architectural manifestations of a period characterized by unprecedented artistic, social, and cultural flights of imagination.







# Radical Relics: Architecture and the Politics of Modernization in Soviet Russia

JEAN-LOUIS COHEN

In the landscape of towns of what was, until 1991, the Soviet Union, it is now difficult to detect with the naked eye the traces of what was one of the most intense epics in modern architecture. To speak only of the capital of the commonwealth of independent states that partially replaced the U.S.S.R., the buildings completed in the fifteen years after the revolution of October 1917 have become almost invisible, so great has been the development of Moscow since the disappearance of the communist regime in 1991. In a capital intoxicated by income from petroleum and gas and in which real estate activity is intense, the public has remained largely unmoved by the messages of advocates for the preservation of a fragile inheritance, despite the efforts of some intellectuals and organizations such as the Moscow Architectural Preservation Society, founded in 2006. In ten years, nearly a quarter of the buildings that were supposedly protected have been razed or disfigured, to the point where certain classical palaces that had survived the catastrophic fire of 1812 succumbed to the appetite of the developers of the third millennium. And fires such as the less than spontaneous one of the neoclassical hall of the Manege in 2004 or the one that, in January 2006, ravaged the Pravda Building, designed by Panteleimon Golosov, have proved somewhat providential in this highly speculative context. At the same time, changes in public opinion—for example, the response in March 2006 to threats on the Konstantin Melnikov House in the Arbat district—find only a weak echo in a press tightly controlled by the government.

Captured by the lens of Richard Pare in their condition during the last decade of the twentieth century, the architectural achievements of what was commonly known after 1917 as the “new Russia” testify to the wounds inflicted by time even before these recent and sometimes disastrous threats. Although these buildings were inscribed in the landscape of the great modern cities of Russia, Ukraine, and Caucasia, one immediately thinks of the remarks made in 1907 by the German philosopher and sociologist Georg Simmel in his essay on ancient vestiges, “Die Ruine.” The ruin is, in his eyes, the expression of a struggle between the forces of the mind and those of nature. In this permanent confrontation, the action of nature goes against the “whole

history of mankind,” which is the “a gradual rise of the spirit to mastery over the nature.” Simmel writes: “What has led the building upward is human will; what gives it its present appearance is the brute, downward-dragging, corroding, crumbling power of nature.”<sup>1</sup> In the case of the vestiges of Soviet architecture, the mechanical force now at work is that of real estate speculation, whose strength is of an almost geological order, and which has conducted the methodical repression of this remarkable manifestation of the spirit of invention that characterized the projects of the 1920s.

The flamboyant age of Soviet modernity, inaugurated by the revolutions of 1917, hardly had the time to be noticed in the West by even the most attentive observers before it had already ended. By the mid-1930s, political and academic reaction had succeeded in interrupting the last buildings, then under construction, of inventive and iconoclastic architects working since the previous decade. The length of this season, scarcely a dozen years, is similar the cycle of the “neues Bauen” in Weimar Germany, which is at the center of the major histories of modern architecture, such as those by Nikolaus Pevsner, Sigfried Giedion, or Bruno Zevi.<sup>2</sup> But the architecture of the Soviet modernists finds only a marginal place in these narratives, and that of their Russian predecessors before 1914 has none at all. The first historians to reintegrate it in an overall vision of the twentieth century were Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co in their volume *Architettura contemporanea*, published in 1976, before Kenneth Frampton gave it a place in his *Critical History* of 1980.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, a lot of water has flowed under the bridge. The collection of buildings constructed according to the principles advocated by the radical groups, or built by individuals such as Konstantin Melnikov, remained relatively small in the built work of Soviet Russia between the two world wars—work that was itself limited by the priority allocation of technological and financial resources to industrial construction. It was nevertheless widely disseminated in technical publications, cultural journals, major newspapers, and even in films from the U.S.S.R. It contributed to the image that the new Russia projected of itself in Europe—at the



1924 Biennale in Venice, the 1925 Exposition des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris, and the 1928 Pressa exposition in Cologne. In the U.S.S.R., the new architecture appeared in memorable films by Dziga Vertov such as *The Man with the Movie Camera* and in those of Sergei Eisenstein such as *The General Line*. The former shows the agitation of the garages built by Melnikov in Moscow for the Leyland bus company; the latter turns the Gosprom Building in Kharkov into the symbol of "red" bureaucracy while part of the action of the film takes place in a setting conceived by Andrei Burov based on the images of villas by Le Corbusier and of American grain silos.

### Time Frame

The time frame in which this body of work was designed and built is fairly clear. The end point corresponds to the reorganization of professional unions and the implementation of the politics of "socialist" realism, between 1932 and 1934. The initial limit is just as identifiable. In fact, during the years of War Communism, which coincided with the civil war (1918–20), architectural production was nil, or reduced to installations of "monumental propaganda," set up on squares during the celebrations of May 1 or the commemorations of the revolution; very few of these pieces have survived. Nevertheless, the imagination was already on display in theoretical projects by architects, painters, and sculptors working in the "synthesis of the arts" according to the principles of the German expressionists. With the New Economic Policy (NEP), launched in 1920, the profession, drained by the voluntary or compulsory exile of thousands of architects and engineers, grew busy once again in response to commissions from industrial companies; from companies doing business with the West, which were very prosperous at the time; and from local soviets, new municipalities established by the revolution.

The milestones of this reorganization of the profession were institutional projects, buildings, and monuments. Thus the Society of Moscow Architects, or MAO, was reborn in 1922 under the leadership of Aleksei Shchusev, and the Society of Leningrad (formerly of St. Petersburg) Architects, or LAO, was re-created in 1924. New groups appeared with the 1923 founding of the

Association of New Architects, or ASNOVA, led by Nikolai Ladovski and reassembling so-called rationalist architects, notably those who had begun to teach, as well as the Union of Contemporary Architects (OSA), founded in 1925 by Aleksandr Vesnin and Moisei Ginzburg to bring the constructivists back together again.<sup>4</sup>

In this phase, actual construction was quite limited. Essentially it involved electric power stations and factories linked to the GOELRO plan launched by Lenin in 1920 (the name is the acronym for the State Commission for the Electrification of Russia). It was within the context of this plan, with which the poet Vladimir Maiakovski would see "America reach the village," that the MoGES (Moscow City Electric Power Station) was built by Ivan Zholtovski, a leading figure of neo-Palladianism before 1914 and after 1932. The first building projects were also launched in industrial centers such as Ivanovo or Baku, thanks to money from oil drilling. In the area of housing, the main protagonists were also companies and several cooperatives, such as the Muscovite one in Sokol, which began as an important garden city.

Scarcely ten years passed between the timid appearance of the new initiatives and their condemnation. According to the military metaphor on which the idea of the avant-garde was founded (it traces its roots to the utopian socialist Claude Henri de Saint-Simon, who was well known to Russian revolutionaries<sup>5</sup>): not only would most of the troops have refused to follow the detachment in the lead, but that detachment would have been discredited and harshly rejected by the government and part of the profession. It appears that three main dynamics worked together during the fertile decade to produce buildings whose condition seventy years later is captured by the arresting images of Richard Pare.

### The Dynamic of Commissions

The first dynamic is that of the architectural commission and of urbanism. A new system replaced that of the pre-1917 capitalist Russia, although certain continuities can be noted, for example, in the role played by manufacturing companies, which had not expected to be brought under state control, in the construction of housing and facilities for their workers—a reflection of what



British, French, and German industrialists had undertaken in the West starting in the mid-nineteenth century. The degree of their involvement changed radically, however, in the 1920s, and they became crucial protagonists in the layout of peripheral areas of Moscow, of Leningrad, and even more of industrial cities such as Ivanovo and Sverdlovsk. The architects affiliated with the new groups designed all the buildings financed by these companies, factories with workers clubs. Thus, in a way, the city of emancipated work was formed.<sup>6</sup>

Another continuation of pre-Revolutionary practices: the commercial firms set up to manage exchanges abroad (for example, ARCOS, the Anglo-Russian Commercial Society, which specialized in exchanges with England, or the Gostorg—for State Commerce) and insurance companies launched new programs. But it was the emergence of municipalities that was the striking phenomenon in the first decade of Bolshevik rule. Marginal and ineffective, despite their consecutive rise in the revolution of 1905, they were, for the most part, incapable of controlling urban development before 1914, and in any case lacking the means to build the network of schools and public amenities necessary for a rapidly growing population, not to mention housing, an area in which the municipalities did not involve themselves.<sup>7</sup> The powerful movement for communal autonomy and the urban reform had prepared, through its meetings and its publications, the policy followed after 1920, which would find its models in the West and notably in Germany. From that time on, the local Soviets became active protagonists, capable of launching programs on a scale comparable to those in the metropolises of Western Europe, whose management was, moreover, very closely watched.

The programs undertaken by these various protagonists were by no means original or specific to the U.S.S.R., but some of them incontestably had revolutionary repercussions, and these ranged from the most practical built work to the grand reproduction of the regime through symbolic buildings such as Lenin's mausoleum. The programmatic inventiveness, largely serving the "reconstruction of daily life" or the "cultural revolution," varied according to building category. It was limited when it came to built works. The MoGES power station by Zholtovski houses the necessary genera-

tors behind a glass facade that is the only new architectural element of a compact building that could be compared to the contemporaneous structures by Piero Portaluppi in northern Italy.<sup>8</sup> The power station on the Dniepr River is much more inventive in its very configuration. Whereas its architectural design was the work of the Vesnin brothers and of Nikolai Kolli (the latter was associated with Le Corbusier on the Centrosoyuz Building in Moscow), the technical project was developed by German and American teams under the direction of Colonel Hugh C. Cooper.<sup>9</sup> Following an industrial policy based on very large companies, Soviet Russia began a number of big building projects in the 1920s, and several architects specialized in industrial construction, such as Viktor Vesnin. In that area as well, the call for Western specialists came early. Basking in the success of the factory at Luckenwalde, Erich Mendelsohn built the Red Banner Textile Factory (Krasnoe Znamia) in St. Petersburg before Albert Kahn Associates in Detroit, basking in its buildings designed for Ford and General Motors, was entrusted, in the late 1920s, with hundreds of projects.<sup>10</sup>

But the most visible programs carried out after the revolution were those of the big department stores and administration buildings for the new state. The nationalization and the municipalization of business led to the transformation of the large shopping arcade bordering Red Square into GUM, a state-run store. And new buildings appeared, such as the Mostorg by the Vesnin brothers in the Presnia section of town, with—a first for Moscow—its immense plate-glass wall, or the Mosselprom, decorated by Aleksandr Rodchenko and poet Vladimir Maiakovski; the two collaborated using "supergraphics" *ante litteram*, with the former giving shape to the slogans of the latter, such as "There's no place like Mosselprom!" Remarkably, Mendelsohn could observe, in this building of 1924, a response to that one by the Vesnins, which had a stronger glass facade, when he wrote: "The practicing reality has this knowledge and draws from the younger generation the practical consequences of the normal window. A departure from the glassy paper projects."<sup>11</sup>

A formidable symbol of the "red" bureaucratic fortresses, the Gosprom in Kharkov is an astonishing attempt to create with



a single program the impression of an American skyline in the industrial capital of Ukraine.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the ensemble by Samuil Kravets, Mark Felger, and Sergei Serafimov was shown with pride to foreign guests, and by the French writer Henri Barbusse, the "traveling companion" of the communists, to the Fascist art critic Pietro Maria Bardi.<sup>13</sup> The Gosprom's various buildings in concrete and glass are linked by skyways, resembling those in scenes of American cities of the future that the Russian journals had published starting in 1914. When seen from the circular piazza around which they are installed, the skyways at the Gosprom create the image of a metropolitan landscape that sprang up all at once.

In terms of housing, the programs run the gamut from the most conventional to the most experimental. They were set up by the new forms of work management that were the cooperatives, as in the garden city at Sokol; the ministries, the municipalities, and the companies acted directly to house their personnel. The group of workers houses inspired by the German research of Henrich Tessenow and others, and the modest buildings constructed in the mid-1920s, such as the one by Moisei Ginzburg for the state insurance office Gosstrakh, were replaced by groups on an entirely different scale. The VTsIK complex built by Boris Iofan on the bank of the Moskva is the residential equivalent of the Gosprom. As Yuri Trifonov tells it in his novel *The House on the Embankment*, "the big house," permeated by odors coming from the river and always strictly controlled by the political police, would see many dramas during the waves of arrests at the end of the 1930s.<sup>14</sup> The history of the families that occupied it during the years of repression has also become the subject of a fascinating volume.<sup>15</sup>

Almost contemporaneous with this group of buildings that takes on the look of a fortress, the communal house built by Moisei Ginzburg and Ignati Milinis for the employees of Narkomfin (shorthand for the People's Commissariat of Finance) is one of the most striking experimental places in all of modern Europe. Linked to the so-called transition phase in the "reconstruction of daily life" policy, the buildings was commissioned by Nikolai Miliutin, who had the penthouse laid out as a duplex.<sup>16</sup> But spatial invention was not limited to the duplex; the apartments explore all forms of a spatial-

ity partially inspired by Le Corbusier; he, too, knew how to take advantage of experimental solutions, bringing back to Paris some drawings that would fuel his thinking, leading to the origin of the *Unité d'habitation*.<sup>17</sup> Of Ginzburg's building, he wrote: "The construction is solid and well executed, but the internal organization and architectural concept are so cold, so impassive—in short, so totally lacking in all the subtle or artistic intention which might have given life to the building—that one is struck with melancholy, not merely at the idea of living there oneself, but at the thought that several hundred individuals have been purely and simply deprived of the joys of architecture."<sup>18</sup> Thus he anticipated in large measure certain criticisms leveled at his own Soviet supporters in the 1930s.

The collectivization of daily life spread to other cities, and the prototype of the experimental communal house in Moscow was built in a slightly different form in Sverdlovsk by Ginzburg and Aleksandr Pasternak, who with Mikhail Barshch had researched new forms of collective housing for the Stroikom (Building Committee of the Republic of Russia).<sup>19</sup> The group of buildings at Sverdlovsk replicated the configuration of the Narkomfin, in which the housing level is linked by a skyway to a block of communal facilities. The communal-facilities policy, which is only one part of the administrative distribution of resources that replaced the market starting in 1927, led to the creation of factory kitchens, which served both the company cafeterias and the apartments. In certain ways, these kitchens can be compared with the industrialization of the food industry in the United States, described by Sigfried Giedion in *Mechanization Takes Command*. In St. Petersburg and in Baku, Richard Pare discovered the buildings containing these kitchens, whose production lines are now idle.

But Soviet Russia was also a leisure society, albeit a very supervised one. The workers clubs carried on the activities of the pre-1914 "people's houses" and became privileged locations of collective life, combining the roles of political agitation with the great initiatives of the regime, such as the elimination of illiteracy. The "cultural revolution" found its material support in the local organizations. On the ground, their presence reinforced that of the factories and administrations on which they depended and from



which they received financial support. Thus they became the focal points of the workers' neighborhoods where they were for the most part built. In fact, only a few of them, such as the Zuev Club by Iliia Golosov and the club of former political prisoners by Vesnin, were inserted in the center of Moscow. For the most part, they were built on land allocated to companies, crystallizing in a concrete way the corporative carving up of Soviet society. Thus the "palace of culture" in the Proletarsky district, by the Vesnins, became the veritable hub of an industrial area, in which it responded architecturally to the plethora of automobile factories.<sup>20</sup>

This carving up continued across the land, for example, with the sanatoria. A decree of 1919 advocated the construction of *doma otdykha*, or rest houses, in the country, notably in connection to the struggle against tuberculosis. The number of beds in these institutions went from 26,500 in 1925 to more than 100,000 by the end of the 1930s. Like the clubs in cities, the houses were built by big companies and by the government. Thus the People's Commissariat of Heavy Industry entrusted to Moisei Ginzburg the major building project for the sanatorium in Kislovodsk, where Ivan Leonidov built an outdoor stair in the shape of an amphitheater, the only built work of his brief career.<sup>21</sup> At Sochi, the People's Commissariat of Defense had Viktor and Aleksandr Vesnin build its sanatorium.

### The Dynamic of Techniques

The second dynamic at work in the cities of the 1920s is that of the construction techniques. The image of the backward techniques of pre-revolutionary Russian—held both by certain Western historians of constructivism, such as Anatole Kopp, and by Soviet ideologues—now appears like an overly convenient fiction. Without doubt, traditional building methods based on brick and wood predominated. But, as in other areas of the Russian economy, preindustrial building methods coexisted with the most innovative businesses. Iron and glass had appeared in the last third of the nineteenth century and had inspired architectural prophecies, not the least of which was the one formulated by Viollet-le-Duc in his 1879 book *L'Art russe*, produced at the request of his correspondents in Russia.<sup>22</sup>

By the end of the century, remarkable engineers were working with steel and cement construction. Without question, the most important figure was Vladimir Shukhov, both a designer and entrepreneur, who could rightly be considered the Gustave Eiffel of Russia.<sup>23</sup> The creator of cable-stayed pavilions for the Nizhni Novgorod exhibition of 1896, and especially of the commercial galleries on Red Square, the Petrovski Pasazh and the Moore & Muirless department store, Shukhov was above all the inventor of the first pipelines and the first structures in the form of hyperboloids of revolution; these advances made possible the prefabrication of water towers and reservoirs, transported by rail to all the industrial sites in Russia. These extremely resistant structures, with steel lattice that was almost diaphanous, were used by the U.S. Navy for battleship masts and were later vertically assembled to form the Shabolovka radio tower. In fact, after 1917, Shukhov refused offers from abroad and decided to remain in Russia, asserting the desire to work "independently of politics." Besides his own works, he collaborated with Konstantin Melnikov and developed the framework of the large garages of the late 1920s.

Russia was also experimental ground for reinforced-concrete construction. The French company Hennebique built a significant Russian business in the first years of the twentieth century. Even more remarkable, the Swiss engineer Robert Maillart was active in Russia—in particular, he built a bridge in St. Petersburg—before returning to his country in 1918. Several important projects used reinforced concrete, such as the headquarters of the Northern Insurance Company, built in the Kitai-Gorod section of Moscow in 1912 by Iliia Rerberg and Viacheslav Oltarzhevski. Moreover, buildings related to transportation and commerce built in Moscow and St. Petersburg used glass on a large scale.

After the revolution, the increase in building production was set off in large part by the importation of Western equipment, but research on new techniques continued. Despite the fetishization of modern construction materials, such as steel and cement, it was wooden construction systems that were the focus of research, as was the case in Germany at the same time. Thus workers housing built in Ivanovo in the early 1920s by the Vesnin brothers explored the potential of wooden frameworks.



The contrast between the ambitions of radical architects and the real state of techniques is a point on which the antimodernist reaction would focus in the 1930s. Well acquainted with European and American building sites, Erich Mendelsohn was particularly attentive to the stakes. He took a risk himself when he built the Red Banner Textile Factory, which he described thus: "The steel and concrete structure faced with brick organizes the most diverse industrial purposes: 3 dye works, 5-story buildings with staircase towers, dispatch center with administration, workshop and coal court, workshops and power plant. The utilization of space harmonizes the opposites into architectural clarity."<sup>24</sup>

In 1929 this architect from Berlin, echoing his 1926 book *Amerika, das Bilderbuch eines Architekten* and using the same unusual format, published *Russland, Europa, Amerika, ein architektonischer Querschnitt*. Learning from his recent experience, he noted that "Russia's technique is underdeveloped, almost nonexistent, dependent and therefore insecure" and that the building sites therefore took on a romantic dimension:

Technique is Russia's great problem because only its help can procure the long omitted, can provide the economic support for the idea of balancing the branches of economy; . . . . In Russia, technique is the symbol of a future, on whose success depends the value of her dreams. But as Russia's poverty painfully delays her success, the plan exaggerates the execution of the idea, its reality. Consequently, the realistic technique twists itself into a mystical future—the absolute reality is derailed into an erroneous path of romanticism.<sup>25</sup>

The gap between the projects and the conditions for their realization, already quite large by the late 1920s, was further accentuated by the absolute priority given to industrial programs of the first Quinquennial Plan. And, in contrast with the world of steel, cement, and glass that was depicted in the architects' projects, Mendelsohn could publish characteristic photographs of three workers pushing a wheelbarrow, which he described with the following caption:

The truthful picture is the Russian technique of execution.  
All by hand—concrete mixing and transportation.  
Salaries are low, Moscow is big. Russia can wait.  
Each new building an event.<sup>26</sup>

One of the victims of this change in perspective was Le Corbusier's Centrosoyuz Building, whose realization, begun in 1930, was interrupted scarcely a year later, when the client was forced to follow the directives of the Plan, which "made it absolutely necessary to mobilize all available forces and construction materials."<sup>27</sup> This interruption was hailed by Hannes Meyer, who was active in Moscow with a "brigade" of Swiss and German architects, following his dismissal as director of the Bauhaus in Dessau. Meyer gave a conference in Berlin in October of the same year and turned the Centrosoyuz into the most "characteristic" example of the new situation. He declared himself convinced that "this orgy of concrete and glass would never be finished, but that it would be abandoned, if only because of the materials."<sup>28</sup> In another conference at the Marxist Workers School, he juxtaposed the luxury of Le Corbusier's project with more everyday necessities:

We even abandon buildings that have been started and whose foundations have been finished, simply because waste of materials has to be avoided at all costs. An example of this is the building of the Centrosoyuz (designed by Le Corbusier). At the moment we lack the capability to carry out such projects. They are beyond the scope of the present Five-Year Plan. We abandon such unfinished projects, like a cake half eaten, so we can have our daily bread.<sup>29</sup>

The shortage of modern materials was so dire that it became one of the main themes of the debates among Soviet architects. Thus in 1934 the entire new Union of Architects organized what would be one of the last uninhibited debates, on the theme "Technique, Material, Style." Before the complete ritualization of exchanges between architects, Ivan Fomin, Moisei Ginzburg, Andrei Burov, and Nikolai Kolli expressed themselves without reserve, as did Ivan Leonidov and Konstantin Melnikov, although



both had already found themselves at the center of criticism since 1930. For example, Melnikov pondered the "architectural mastery of new materials," rejected the new insulation techniques, singing the virtues of cement and complaining about the poor quality of industry products.<sup>30</sup> And the writer Ilya Selvinsky participated in the discussion, prophesying the creation in Moscow of "experimental streets" that would make it possible to "think in stone, in glass, and in iron."<sup>31</sup>

### The Architectural Dynamic

The third dynamic at work, extending the first two, was that of architectural form. Here, too, Soviet and European historiography had long maintained the fiction of a complete break between architecture after 1917 and the pre-revolutionary trends. It is true that the Russian architectural scene hardly had any figures comparable to those "pioneers" such as Louis Sullivan, Otto Wagner, Peter Behrens, or Hendrik Petrus Berlage for the generation of Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier, or Mies van der Rohe. But there was nevertheless an intense agitation that appeared on the architectural scene starting at the turn of the twentieth century, and that figures such as Fiodor Shekhtel, Fiodor Lidval, Iliia Rerberg, Aleksei Shchusev, and the Vesnin brothers can be appreciated, at least in the broad outlines, in their prewar production. The break with historicism was already accomplished before 1914, despite the resurgence of a neoclassical taste and of an elegant neo-Palladianism, and a proto-rationalism already appeared clearly.

The revolutions of 1917 has a liberating effect in breaking up organizations such as the MAO and the POA, which would never recover their previous power, and in leading to the creation of new groups founded on shared ideas, rather like what went on in Germany. At first, these groups, such as the Zhivskulptarkh and the InKhuK, were appendages of the new State machinery, but between the creation of the ASNOVA in 1923 and the forced merger of the associations in 1932, the blossoming of the above-mentioned associations was remarkable.

As architects residing in Russia, their identification with the revolution was fundamental to their position. Social and political changes opened new perspectives for young architects such as

Ginzburg; because of *numerus clausus* relating to the admission of Jews to universities, he had to study in Italy, but overall it was a whole generation that adhered to the idea of reshaping cities. This generation was quickly bolstered by students of modest means recruited by the VKHUTEMAS (State Higher Art and Technical Studios) and by other architecture schools, via Rabfak, or worker universities, which led to the appearance of a new technical elite. Ivan Leonidov is a typical representative of this new corps.

In their ideals and in their organizational structure of rival factions, the architects imitated the strategy of the Bolshevik party, which defined itself as avant-garde politics. There was, therefore, an overlap between an aesthetic set of issues and a political set of issues, with the groups of architects competing in their zeal to propose "revolutionary" forms. But the shared adhesion to the new regime should not mask the profound differences that separated the leading figures of the rival factions of the architectural avant-garde.

The rationalists, regrouped around Ladovski and Krinski within the ASNOVA, after having been the driving force behind Zhivskulptarkh (an ephemeral group working toward the "synthesis" of the arts), had a great influence within the VKHUTEMAS, and for a time recruited El Lissitzky. They meant to show the dynamic nature of buildings by giving their framework a sculptural character, and their projects oscillated between expressionism and futurism. Marginalized in the architectural commissions of the 1920s, they would attempt to get their revenge by calling into question the constructivists. After 1932, teaching was their primary refuge, but they would also succeed in completing several buildings in Moscow.

The constructivists were the most active and intellectually structured group. Their strategy arose from the encounter, on the one hand, of ideas formulated in the early 1920s at the InKhuK, mainly in the field of art, by Rodchenko and the Stenberg brothers, then by the theories of Aleksei Gan, with, on the other hand, the more strictly architectural thinking of Alexander Vesnin and Moisei Ginzburg. The OSA was more oriented toward Western research, although each group attempted to create a circle of friends abroad. The OSA published many Western



projects and in particular celebrated Le Corbusier, whose "Cinq points d'une architecture nouvelle" it reproduced. With the exhibition that it organized in 1927 in Moscow, it orchestrated the meeting between the Russian avant-garde and the radical movements from the West. Contrary to what a superficial reading of the term "constructivism" might suggest, its architectural strategy was not based on the enhancement of structure, but rather on the transposition of the methods of Taylorist engineers to the realm of building. The OSA completely internalized the slogan "reconstruction of daily life" and made it the basis of its housing projects.

On the fringe of these associations, individual architects were also active, such as Iliia Golosov, Konstantin Melnikov, and Aleksei Shchusev, all three of them original in his own way: formal invention on a basis of structural rationality for Golosov, spatial experimentation and lyricism for Melnikov, and an enduring preoccupation with monumentality for Shchusev, whose authority remained absolute from 1918 to the war. Certainly, Shchusev's stance could be considered conservative and his professional attitude seemed to be a political realism bordering on cynicism. Despite the fact that he was not a member of the party, he exerted a deciding influence on Muscovite architecture until 1941. But he nonetheless created buildings with strong personalities, such as the Narkomzem, or, in a more formal register, the Moskva Hotel, built in the 1930s near Red Square and razed in 2005. In the dialectic between the avant-garde and the rearguard to which it belonged, the oppositions were sometimes less clear-cut than Western historians and Russians of the 1960s chose to see them.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, this dialectic was influenced by the strong presence of Western themes and sometimes Western professionals in Moscow. Their projects were watched in real time, as shown in Grigori Barkhin's first proposal for the Izvestia Building, directly derived from the project by Walter Gropius and Adolf Meyer for the Chicago Tribune competition. And if Le Corbusier was uncontestedly the most popular figure—to the point where, in the early 1930s, critics could identify "Corbusianism" as one of the most serious deviations—the echo of the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and Richard Neutra was more important.

### Exceptional Domiciles

Among the serial buildings mentioned above, certain structures stand out for their exceptional character. This is the case for two very different domiciles, one built by Melnikov for his own use and the other by Shchusev as the final resting place for Lenin. The almost clandestine location of the former residence, on a block in the Arbat quarter, is totally contrasted by the extreme visibility of the latter, set in the center of the most often visited, photographed, and filmed place in the city and in the country. The writer Bruce Chatwin visited the Melnikov House in 1973, shortly before the death of the architect. "The house . . . was somewhat dilapidated. There were water stains on the walls; it was not particularly warm. Yet because Melnikov, for reasons of economy as well as aesthetics, had eschewed a slick, mechanical finish, and because he had stuck to the materials of his peasant boyhood—rough-cut planks and plain paste—the effect was never shoddy but had an air of timeless vitality."<sup>33</sup>

During his brief visit, Chatwin understood perfectly the wager made by Melnikov in the context of the Soviet mode of production and noted that "his sense of autonomy had swept away all sense of caution, and the practical economies forced him to risk as much, relatively speaking, as was risked by Brunelleschi when building the dome of the Florence cathedral,"<sup>34</sup> Chatwin rightly perceived the character of refuge, of retreat, for an architect who, in several months, went from the Capitoline Hill to the Tarpeian Rock, but who miraculously escaped the purges. Chatwin notes, "The house, for all its vestiges of vitality, had become a somber and gloomy private palace—as somber as Prokofiev's 1942 sonata."<sup>35</sup>

As Melnikov finished building what would become his involuntary sepulcher, the monument receiving the remains of the founder of the U.S.S.R. found its definitive form. Moreover, Melnikov himself was involved in the process, as he designed the glass sarcophagus in which Lenin was laid out, before sharing his bed with Stalin from 1953 to 1961. Today the building seems obvious in its granite solemnity, as if it belonged more to the ground of the place than to the built environment that it reflects. The silhouettes of late-nineteenth-century buildings such as the



History Museum and the shopping arcades (ex GUM) are inscribed there.

The present building extends two previous wooden structures built by Aleksei Shchusev, the first in January 1924, immediately after the death of Lenin, and the other in August of the same year.<sup>36</sup> The final commission was entrusted to him at the end of an open competition, at which the most delirious works of *architecture parlante* were proposed by collectives of workers, announcing the policy followed during the first competition for the Palace of the Soviets in 1931. It is difficult not to notice both the relationship of the building to the Kremlin wall, from which it seems to spring, and its inscription in the geometrical aesthetic presented by the decorative arts exhibition in Paris in 1925. Playing the scale of the city against that of the isolated object, the mausoleum simultaneously looks like a pyramid and almost a trinket.

### A New Geography

Regaining its status as a capital after having been dethroned for two centuries by St. Petersburg, Moscow attracted the biggest investments, but the provincial, even rural, character of its neighborhoods changed very slowly, as noted by visitors such as Walter Benjamin, who saw there "an improvised metropolis that has fallen into place overnight" and who underlined its villagelike character: "There is probably no other city whose gigantic open spaces have such an amorphous, rural quality, as if their expanses had always been dissolved by bad weather, thawing snow, or rain."<sup>37</sup>

Large-scale projects were launched in industrial cities such as Ivanovo and Sverdlovsk, and in regional capitals such as Baku and Kharkov. This case of Leningrad was unusual: the new buildings were directly intended for industrial production or for the modernization of workers' neighborhoods outside the historical center. If the Muscovite architects were at work in the industrial centers where local resources were limited, acting either as independent consultants or from within state agencies, the local professionals were active in Leningrad, Ukraine, and Armenia.

The specific characteristics of large cities were accentuated and sometimes greatly modified in the 1920s. A prosperous commercial center on the Volga, Nizhni Novgorod had accommodated

a significant number of new buildings before World War I. With the establishment of Avtostroï, the city became the main center for the new Russian automobile industry and expanded its naval shipyard at Sormovo. There, in 1929, the French writer Henri Barbusse discovered "an absolutely new quarter, where the tramway has only run during the past two years. It has three hundred new workers' houses, each containing four flats, and an almost completed Palace of Labour, with a gigantic reinforced-concrete frontage, which our car took a considerable time to circumnavigate."<sup>38</sup> In the case of Ivanovo, the "Manchester of Russia," it was the already well-developed textile industry that was modernized.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, Sverdlovsk, increased its metallurgical production.

Two cases are especially revealing. In Baku, a cosmopolitan and productive city, the building program was directly linked to the rise in oil drilling, carried out by a new company, Azneft. In this regard, the 1932 Intourist guide confirmed, "The chief problem at present is the reorganization of the whole region on modern American lines, using American technique and machinery," and it praised the new workers cities.<sup>40</sup> The city became a destination for architects from Moscow, who discovered there the modern landscape.<sup>41</sup>

In Kharkov, the industrial capital of Ukraine, whose development was favored over that of Kiev, the building programs were linked to the rise of production in the Donbass region. Barbusse did not disguise his enthusiasm. He spoke of the "Cyclopean skeleton" of "the monstrous house" of Gosprom, under construction during his previous visit, and noticed that it was impossible to capture in a single glance, even a photographic one, a building that "looked like half a street of great gray palaces of dizzying height." He continued:

The House of Industry, with its semi-circular frontage and the symmetrical balance of its wings, which vary from seven to thirteen stories high, gives as a whole a very favorable impression. A painter could reproduce its harmony, but (unless the photograph is taken from a great distance away) photography, with its foreshortenings, its sharpened perspectives, and



its flattening and distortion of curves, does no justice to this achievement of artistic realism. You can only photograph the building effectively in sections.<sup>42</sup>

### Paper Architecture

The most intense building production was not realized in brick or cement but rather on paper. In fact, the architectural journals multiplied simultaneously with the activity of the architect associations. Whereas the LAO barely succeeded in publishing in 1923 a single issue of *Zodchii*, which before 1917 had for forty-five years been the main Russian periodical, the MAO succeeded in producing during one year in 1924 the monthly *Arkhitektura*, before closing down. In 1923 the Gosstroï (State Committee for Construction), joined with the Union of Building Workers to publish the monthly *Stroitelnaia Promyshlennost* (Construction Industry), headed by N. P. Bogdanov, an ardent promoter of Taylorism for buildings. In 1924 the Moscow soviet undertook the publication of *Stroitelstvo Moskv*, a journal devoted to the economy and to urban techniques, but also to architecture in the capital. With its photographs captioned with striking typographic compositions and its paintings, the journal was meant to appeal to the "workers of Moscow and to the Government peasants," in order to give them "the most complete picture of Moscow under construction."<sup>43</sup> *Stroitelstvo Moskv* would publish the competitions through which Muscovite architecture would slowly shift toward the position of the modernists in the middle of the decade.

The ASNOVA did not have a specific publication until 1926, and even that published only a single issue. Limited to eight pages in journal format, the *Izvestia ASNOVA* was edited by El Lissitzky and by the veritable mastermind of the organization, Ladovsky, who in its pages presented his "foundations for the construction of a theory of architecture" and boldly confirmed that "the Soviet Union has mastered the architectural problem of the skyscraper." As for Lissitzky, he published his *Volkenbügel*, usually translated as "skyhooks," but better rendered as "flatirons," cement buildings for the center of Moscow, while giving new status to the journal through his layouts. The journal was no longer a simple means of resolving an architectural problem, but rather became through its

formal structure—photomontages, tricks with the typographic lines and fonts—a plastic object showcasing the position of the organization it represented.<sup>44</sup>

It was also in 1926 that the OSA began publication of a journal that was destined to last until 1930: *Sovremennaia Arkhitektura* (Contemporary Architecture), more commonly known by its initials: SA.<sup>45</sup> Like the short-lived bulletin from the ASNOVA, but more enduring and with much greater means, SA presented itself as the crystallization of the formal strategies of a group, as it happened the most radical of the Soviet architectural movements. With great splashes of solid color and typographical compositions from layouts attributed to Aleksei Gan, who was as much a theoretician as a graphic artist, the journal presented itself like a total work of art, according to a model already proposed by *De Stijl*, *Wendingen*, *G*, and *ABC*.<sup>46</sup> Through the selection of proposed Soviet and foreign works, but also through the choice and arrangement of images, SA helped to represent the theoretical and visual culture of architectural constructivism, while at the same time allowing its main theoreticians to begin—through Ginzburg, co-editor in chief with Aleksandr Vesnin—to develop their thinking. Thus it confirmed in its first issue: "*Sovremennaia Arkhitektura* will endeavor through any means to defend the rights of the new man of unwavering genius, and with a precise understanding of the conquered ground, of its depths and of the air, to organize houses and cities with the same wholesome thinking, the same precise conviction as he organizes his affairs."<sup>47</sup>

The launch of the first Quinquennial plan in 1927 marked a threshold not only with regard to industrial policy but also with regard to construction. From then on, it was a question of constituting, in a forced march, the material framework of a modern economy, whose building production was in large part oriented toward defense. During the four years of the plan—since it was completed even before its term, as the West was crushed in the crisis starting in 1929—the construction of new cities and of vast industrial complexes was intense and mobilized mostly innovative architects, whether they were working autonomously by responding to competitions or integrated in the research departments of the State administration.



In 1930, as the OSA was transmuting into the SASS (Sector of Architects for the Construction of Socialism), its journal became defunct, while there emerged a unanimist publication, *Sovetskaia Arkhitektura* (Soviet Architecture), that was supposed to smooth over the contradictions that were putting the groups of architects into conflict.<sup>48</sup> Although Varvara Stepanova still gave it a layout based on the formal principles of constructivism, its substance came from scholarly debates between two people: Nikolai Miliutin, an ally of the constructivists and noted author of a book on the linear city, and Karo Alabian, a young Armenian architect affiliated with the anti-constructivist "proletarian" movement. At a time when the relationship between Lazar Kaganovich and the Central Committee of June 15, 1931, marked the definitive failure of the "disurbanist" theses, the journal's platform stood out for its politization. The editorial space of *Sovetskaia Arkhitektura* was strictly divided between the ASNOVA, the ARU (an avatar of the ASNOVA), the SASS, and the VOPRA (a "proletarian" organization), and the journal devoted exhaustive and very useful files to the debates on the general plan for Moscow, in 1931, and, the following year, on the Palace of the Soviets competition.

Contemporaneous with these events in the world of architecture, the best expression of the work of the modernists was given in the journal *SSSR na stroike* (U.S.S.R. in Construction), published starting in 1929 in an extraordinarily well illustrated large format.<sup>49</sup> Presented by the journalist Mikhail Koltsov, illustrated and sometimes laid out by El Lissitzky and Aleksandr Rodchenko, the journal offered an image of the U.S.S.R. as a country caught up in the momentum of the modernization and, until the mid-1930s, illustrated its issues with sets of the most advanced residences, public buildings, and factories, even as the doctrine of the regime changed.

In fact, the march toward a forced unanimity for writers, artists, and architects began on April 23, 1932, when the Central Committee of the Communist Party decreed the "reorganization of artistic and literary organizations." In July 1933 the Union of Architects, which eclipsed all the previous groups, was provided with its "organ of struggle for a socialist architecture," *Arkhitektura SSSR* (The Architecture of the U.S.S.R.). From then on, recourse to

an avant-garde artist, as it happens El Lissitzky, was limited to the layout of the magazine's cover. The tone of the review was new, since it explicitly intended to push back some of the "most harmful demonstrations of the backward nature" of Soviet architecture: "buildings of mediocre quality, taken from the same mold, and lacking anything that could resemble an architectural form," "pseudo-architectural and primitive house-boxes." The tone was set from the editorial of the first issue:

There is no doubt that this trash that constitutes of the architecture of 'boxes' is based on an erroneous conception of the needs of the economy and on disregard for construction. Nor it should not be denied that a major role was played by one particular architectural principle, a form of artistic nihilism, imposing on the design engineer the rejection of all elements of artistic expression and reducing all the problems of architecture to a sum of technical and functional conditions.<sup>50</sup>

So began a period of threats and repression. The conflicts within the profession in some ways precipitated the intervention of the Party in architectural affairs, and as Hugh Hudson Jr. has shown, this led first to the elimination of the most obviously innovative proposals in the competitions, then to the internalization of the new aesthetic by design engineers.<sup>51</sup> On the ground, the curse began to strike the first buildings of the 1930s, whose original form was distorted when they were "embellished" by multiple additions or simply by a lack of upkeep.

### **A Progressive Rediscovery**

An understanding of the buildings that went up during the first fifteen years of the regime would, for a long time, be had via an examination of the pages of these journals, so rare were the Western studies. Between 1925 and 1939 they were limited to several articles and special issues of German, French, and English journals, with most of the built work remaining inaccessible to foreign visitors.<sup>52</sup> When, after the death of Stalin, the U.S.S.R. opened up to domestic and Western tourists, it was not these buildings that were shown to them by officials. Even the architectural guides



of the Soviet period were far from prolix on the subject of structures built from 1920 to 1935. The guide to Baku by I. Bretanitski mentions in passing the modern works in this "outpost" of socialism in the Caucasus, alluding to the "romanticism" of the 1920s. The guide to Kiev by Logvin does not mention any of the buildings photographed by Richard Pare. And it is only recently that the inventories of industrial structures of St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, and Ivanovo were established.<sup>53</sup>

The rediscovery by the Russians themselves of the suppressed avant-garde made possible a new generation of studies in Western Europe and, later, in the United States. The architecture, more suppressed than "lost" or "forgotten," was studied starting in 1960 in Moscow by Selim Khan-Magomedov, then Kirill Afanasev, Vigdaria Khazanova, Anatoli Strigalev, Marina Astafeva-Dlugach, and Irina Kokinaki and, in Western Europe, by Victor Bourgeois, Vittorio De Feo, Anatole Kopp, Vieri Quilici, then by Manfredo Tafuri and his group. In the United States, Arthur Sprague published the first study, followed by Frederick Starr. But for the most part one studied the work through publications and old photographs and hardly ever through an analysis of surviving buildings.

In the December 1965 issue of *Architectural Design*, devoted to "The Heroic Period of Modern Architecture," Alison and Peter Smithson included the Lenin tribune by El Lissitzky, the Palace of Labor project by the Vesnin brothers as well as their scenery for Chesterton's play *The Man Who Was Thursday*, Melnikov's 1925 pavilion in Paris, the Gostorg by Velikovski, the post office by the Vesnins, the Lenin Institute by Leonidov, the MoGES power station by Zholtovski, the Zuev Club by Golosov, and the Rusakov Club by Melnikov, as well as Ginzburg's communal houses in Moscow and Ekaterinburg, and the Centrosoyuz Building.<sup>54</sup> All these buildings were illustrated with poor reproductions from the publications of the time, such as *L'Architecture vivante* or the images published by De Feo, who reproduced them himself from the journals.

### The Photographic Eye

The photographic traces of new buildings from the 1920s are not lacking, however. Suffice it to mention the images with which Aleksandr Rodchenko tested low-angle shots, such as the ones for

MoGES, Mosselprom, Centrosoyuz, or the Rusakov Club.<sup>55</sup> Nikolai Petrov and Arkadi Shaikhet photographed Moscow's transformed urban space while Moisei Nappelbaum worked on the Narkomfin at the request of Miliutin.<sup>56</sup>

The first photographs taken on-site by Western architects were the shots by Mendelsohn published in *Russland* in 1929. These were mainly the churches of Moscow and the palaces of St. Petersburg, but he also inserted, next to reproductions of drawings already known in the West, his photographs of some recent buildings such as the Mosselprom and the Gostorg by Velikovski, and he reproduced a shot of Ilinka Street which included the Northern Insurance Building by Rerberg and Oltarzhevski. In 1930 in Vienna, El Lissitzky published *Russland, die Rekonstruktion der Architektur in der Sowjetunion*, reproducing the garages and clubs by Melnikov as well as several office buildings and residences. But he gave no indication about the origin of these photographs, some of which seem to be from Rodchenko.<sup>57</sup>

The photographic representation of avant-garde buildings was, for more than forty years, marked by Western coverage and publications whose viewpoints were quite diverse. The gaze of architects and historians met that of photographers. Among the first to make the trip to Moscow, Anatole Kopp began in the early 1960s to take the shots published in *Ville et Révolution* in 1967. From this point of view, his book is very different from the one by De Feo, which was still entirely illustrated by mediocre shots mined from Lissitzky or *L'Architecture vivante*. Kopp presented interior and exterior shots of the workers clubs, but also the first images of the interior of the Narkomfin Building since those in Ginzburg's *Zhilishche* of 1933.

The same year, *Architectural Design* became interested in "Heroic Relics" of the "Modern Movement," endeavoring to document the real state of the buildings signaled by the two Smithsons two years earlier. Several Soviet buildings figure into this panorama. The journal took note of the impossibility of photographing MoGES, too changed, revealing that Zholtovski was in fact "a die-hard Academician," and the communal house at Ekaterinburg, unrecognizable because it was decorated for the fiftieth anniversary of the October Revolution. Comparing the photographs of Kenneth Baker



and Anna Opotchinskaya with the shots of the time, the magazine returned to the Gostorg ("little changed, though its condition is run-down"), the Centrosoyuz, the Narkomfin (which it considered "unaltered"), and the Zuev Club. With regard to the Rusakov Club, "finished and trim have been allowed to suffer, but the impact of the building is today much as it must have been when first completed."<sup>58</sup> The coverage published in 1969 by the Swiss journal *Das Werk* on the "avant-garde buildings" was also rather precocious.<sup>59</sup>

As William Klein was creating a memorable album of photographs of the Moscow's streets, train stations, and parks, but without pausing on defined architectural objects, the architecture of the 1920s drew the attention of certain photographers.<sup>60</sup> Henri Cartier-Bresson visited Melnikov, taking a melancholy portrait, which was added to those of the residents of Moscow photographed previously.<sup>61</sup> Lucien Hervé was sent by Le Corbusier to finally take the shots of the interior of the Centrosoyuz Building, which its creator had never seen completed. From that time on, the coverage of buildings by the constructivists and their rivals became more frequent, with the relative increase of trips to the U.S.S.R., which was not accompanied by better working conditions for the photographers, however. The absence of Russian buildings from periodicals such as *Global Architecture* is rather glaring. The first professional shots by Russian photographers such as Igor Palmin were taken then. In the West it was not until 1995 that an entire book was devoted to the urban landscape of modern Moscow, when the German photographer Günther Förg published several hundred shots in black and white. He documents dozens of buildings, pausing at the Melnikov House and the student dorms of the Textile Institute in Nikolaev.<sup>62</sup> Since that time, coverage has multiplied, but with hardly any systematization, and focusing mainly on the most accessible cities, such as Moscow and St. Petersburg.

### **Weathering and Erasure**

Now given their place in the historical narrative in which they had been marginalized, the buildings continue to exist under difficult conditions that are those of the entire building stock of the former republics of the U.S.S.R, where upkeep is often neglected. What

started out as vivid colors soon faded, except when they were the inalterable colors of stone, as is the case of the Lenin Mausoleum or the walls of the Centrosoyuz Building. This makes certain buildings almost invisible at first glance, as Simmel noticed when he took note of the similarity between the color of the ruins and the tone of the surrounding environment: "In a similar way, the influences of rain and sunshine, the incursion of vegetation, heat, and cold must have assimilated the building abandoned to them into the color tone of the ground which has been abandoned to the same destinies. They have reduced its once conspicuous contrast to the peaceful unity of belonging."<sup>63</sup>

If the ruin is the horizon on which many structures were inscribed, the weathering—this "continuous metamorphosis of the building itself"—is the condition shared by them all. As David Leatherbarrow and Mohsen Mostafavi observed, the "frequency of material failure due to weathering in early modern buildings" was common. More than anywhere else, the Law of Ripolin, promulgated in 1925 by Le Corbusier in *The Decorative Art of Today* (he autographed during his 1928 trip to Moscow a copy of the book for Serguei Eisenstein)<sup>64</sup> and through which he intended to recommend the primacy of the surface painted white above any other, is called into question, no doubt because the snow of the Russians winters demanded a contrast in color. In contrast to the stone projections and the sculpted surfaces of traditional buildings, in whose wrinkles the injuries of time are less visible, the great flat surfaces of modern buildings are vulnerable to stains and streaks from one corroded material on another.<sup>65</sup>

The photographic expeditions that Richard Pare led over a dozen years make it possible to measure the effect of time on places whose creators intended to break with the past. The ideas that he proposes about the sometimes halted life in these factories and public buildings show how daily existence was as trying for these buildings as for the citizens of the U.S.S.R. The obsolescence of these structures is in fact multifaceted. It was functional at the time when commerce replaced culture and luxury housing and office buildings took over the centers, starting with Moscow; it was at the same time urban, since the location of buildings no longer has the same meaning in cities that have grown and changed



drastically in fifteen years. But this obsolescence is also, it is sometimes said, constructive, when neglect sanctions the deterioration of works. Finally, it is above all symbolic, in a neo-capitalist Russia where the government intends to repress the memory of Bolshevik experiences, of which these buildings were not the bloodiest episodes. The "vertical buildings" of the Stalinist period were infinitely better treated and even acquired a cult following that led to the construction of a new tower inspired by their design at the beginning of the third millennium. As was demonstrated at a conference in the spring of 2006, however, the conservation of certain buildings of incontestable historic value has started to become a political stake. The immediate fate of Melnikov's buildings and Ginzburg's Narkomfin will be the indicator of the good intentions formulated here and there by officials.

Whatever the future of these place whose survival is indeed fragile, and whose possible restoration is without doubt a risky adventure, nevertheless, as Simmel remarked, "The ruin creates the present form of a past life, not according to the contents or remnants of that life, but according to its past as such."<sup>66</sup> The rusted steel, the scarified concrete, and the cracking paint captured by the lens of Richard Pare remain that way, beyond any melancholy, as if animated by this past life in its hopes as in its illusions.

1. Georg Simmel, "The Ruin," in *Georg Simmel, 1858-1918*, ed. Kurt H. Wolff (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1959), 259 and 261; translation of "Die Ruine" in *Philosophische Kultur*, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner: 1919), 125-33.
2. This is the case of their main general works: Nikolaus Pevsner, *Pioneers of the Modern Movement from William Morris to Walter Gropius* (London: Faber & Faber, 1936); Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press), 1941; Bruno Zevi is more open to the Russian experiments in his *Storia dell'architettura moderna* (Turin: Einaudi, 1951).
3. Manfredo Tafuri and Francesco Dal Co, *Architettura contemporanea* (Milan: Electa, 1976); translated as *Modern Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 1986); Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1980).
4. For the radical architects, the term "contemporary" was preferred to "modern." The latter had been used at the start of the twentieth century by architects of the Russian version of Art Nouveau and was therefore inapplicable in the 1920s.
5. Claude-Henri de Saint-Simon, *Opinions littéraires, philosophiques et industrielles* (Paris, 1825), cited in Donald Drew Egbert, "The Idea of 'Avant-Garde' in Art and Politics," *The American Historical Review* 73, no. 2 (December 1967): 343.
6. Robert W. Thurston, *Liberal City, Conservative City: Moscow and Russia's Urban Crisis, 1906-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987).
7. Manfredo Tafuri, "Les premières hypothèses de planification urbaine dans la Russie soviétique 1918-1925," *Archithèse* 3, no. 7 (1973): 34-41.
8. Luca Molinari, *Piero Portaluppi: Linea errante nell'architettura del Novecento* (Milan: Skira, 2003).
9. Anne D. Rassweiler, *Generation of Power: The History of Dneprostoi* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).
10. Anatole Kopp, "Foreign Architects in the Soviet Union during the First Two Five-Year Plans," in William Craft Brumfield, ed., *Reshaping Russian Architecture: Western Technology, Utopian Dreams* (Cambridge and New York: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Cambridge University Press, 1990), 176-214.
11. Erich Mendelsohn, *Russland, Europa, Amerika, ein architektonischer Querschnitt* (Berlin: R. Mosse, 1929), 178.
12. I. Sosfenov in *Arkhitektura SSSR* 2, no. 2 (February 1934): 60-62.
13. Henri Barbusse, *One Looks at Russia* (London: J. M. Dent, 1931); originally *Russie* (Paris: E. Flammarion, 1930); Pietro Maria Bardi, *Un fascista al paese dei Soviet* (Rome: Le Edizioni d'Italia, 1933).
14. Yuri Trifonov, *Another Life and The House on the Embankment*, translated from the Russian by Michael Glenny (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 211, 222.
15. Tamara Ter-Egiazaria, ed., *Oknami na Kremle: iz istori "Doma na Naberezhnoi"* (Moscow: Izd-vo Novaya Elita, 2004).
16. Victor Buchli, "Moisei Guinzbourg's Narkomfin Communal House in Moscow: Contesting the Social and Material World," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 57, no. 2 (June 1998): 160-81 and *An Archeology of Socialism* (London, New York: Berg, 1999). Jean-Louis Cohen, "Le Commissaire prend le crayon," foreword to Nikolai Milioutine, *Sotsgorod, le problème de la construction des villes socialistes* (Paris: Éditions de l'Imprimeur, 2002), 5-39.
17. Jean-Louis Cohen, *Le Corbusier and the Mystique of the USSR* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).
18. Le Corbusier, "Commentaires relatifs à Moscou et à la 'Ville Verte,'" page 14 of a typewritten manuscript dated 1930, in the collection of the Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris.
19. V. I. Velman, ed., *Tipovye proekty i konstruktsii zhilishnogo stroitelstva* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe Tekhnicheskoe Izdatelstvo, 1929).



20. On the design of the ZIL factories, see Iakov Kornfeld in *Arkhitektura SSSR* 2, no. 1 (January 1934).
21. Danilo Udovicki, "Rest Houses and Sanatoria in 20th-Century Russia," in *The Architecture of the Hospitals* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2006).
22. Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, *L'Art russe* (Paris: Veuve A. Morel, 1879).
23. Rainer Graefe, Murat Gappoev, and Ottmar Pertschi, eds., *Vladimir Suchov 1853–1939; die Kunst der sparsamen Konstruktion* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1990).
24. Erich Mendelsohn, *Russland, Europa, Amerika*, 204.
25. Mendelsohn, 114.
26. Mendelsohn, 152.
27. Centrosoyuz, letter to Le Corbusier, Moscow, July 12, 1931. Collection of the Fondation Le Corbusier, Paris.
28. "Hannes Meyer über Sowjetrußland," *Die Baugilde*, no. 30 (1931): 1602.
29. Hannes Meyer, "Bauen, Bauarbeiter und Techniker in der Sowjetunion," in *Das neue Russland*, nos. 8–9 (1931), 49. This a transcription of the lecture given at the Berlin Marxistische Arbeiterschule on October 13; the English translation appears in: Hannes Meyer, "Construction, Construction Workers and Technicians in the Soviet Union," published as an appendix to El Lissitzky, *Russia: An Architecture for World Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1970), 216. See also the report in the bulletin of the foreign section of the Union of Architects: "Über Le Corbusier," cited in *Arkhitektura SSSR* 2, no. 2 (February 1934): 73.
30. Konstantin Melnikov: "Arkhitekturnoe osvoenie novykh materialov," *Arkhitektura SSSR* 2, no. 4 (April 1934): 37.
31. Iliia Selvinsky, "Mysl' v kamne, stekle i zheleze," *Arkhitektura SSSR* 2, no. 4 (April 1934): 6–7.
32. On these polarities, see Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984) and Antoine Compagnon, *Les antimodernes de Joseph de Maistre à Roland Barthes* (Paris: Gallimard, 2005).
33. Bruce Chatwin, *What Am I Doing Here* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1989), 107.
34. Chatwin, 112.
35. Chatwin, 113.
36. A. Abramov, *Mavzolei Lenina* (Moscow: Moskovski raboch, 1969) and Marina Astafeva-Dlugach, *Rasskazy ob arkhitekture Moskvyy* (Moscow: Stroiizdat, 1997), 57–73.
37. Walter Benjamin, *Moscow Diary*, October 35 (Winter 1985), 112.
38. Henri Barbusse, *One Looks at Russia*, 54. On the modernization of Nizhni Novgorod, see Richard Cartwright Austin, *Building Utopia: Erecting Russia's First Modern City, 1930* (Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2004).
39. In a collection of articles on Ivanovo, see: Alexandr V. Snitko, *Promyslennaia arkhitektura Ivanova*, Ivanovo, Ivanovskaia Gos. Arkhitekturo-Stroitelnaia Akademia, 2000–2001.
40. L. A. Block, ed., *A Pocket Guide to the Soviet Union* (Moscow, Leningrad: Vneshtorgizdat, 1932), 551.
41. The case of Baku was studied at the time: I. Sosfenov, "Novy Baku, putevye zametki," *Arkhitektura SSSR* 2, no. 6 (June 1934): 36–45.
42. Henri Barbusse, *One Looks at Russia*, 54;
43. "Ot redaktsii," *Stroitelstvo Moskvyy* 1, no. 1 (1924).
44. El Lissitzky, Nikolai Ladovsky, *Izvestia ASNOVA* 1, no. 1 (1926). The journal was said to count among its foreign subscribers Adolf Behne, Le Corbusier, Mart Stam, and Karel Teige.
45. On the history of the OSA, see S. Frederick Starr, "OSA: The Union of Contemporary Architects," in George Gibian and H.W. Tjalsma, eds., *Russian Modernism, Culture and the Avant-Garde, 1900–1930* (Ithaca, NY, and London: Cornell University Press, 1976), 188–208.
46. Vieri Quilici, "La rivista SA, un prodotto costruttivista," *Rassegna*, no. 38 (June 1989): 10–25.
47. *Sovremennaia Arkhitektura* 1, no. 1 (1926): p. 3 of the cover.
48. The promoters of the journal recruited from among the State organizations responsible for construction and urbanism. The editorial board included, at its founding, K. S. Alabian, V. Ia. Belousov, A. Bunin, M. Ia. Ginzburg, I. V. Kelin, V. A. Lavrov, P. P. Malinovski, I. A. Matsa, N. L. Mesheriakov, N. A. Miliutin, A. G. Mordvinov et N. M. Skvortsov. The journal would cease publication with the first issue of 1934, having been a bimonthly from 1933 to 1934.
49. Erika Wolf, "When Photographs Speak, to Whom Do They Talk? The Origins and Audience of *SSSR na stroike* (USSR in Construction)," *Left History* 6, no. 2 (2000): 53–82; and "SSSR na stroike: From Constructivist Visions to Construction Sites," *USSR in Construction: An Illustrated Exhibition Magazine*, exhibition catalog (Sundsvall: Fotomuseet Sundsvall, 2006), n.p.
50. "Nashi zadachi," *Arkhitektura SSSR* 1, no. 1 (1933): 1–2. The editor in chief of the review was Karo Alabian. It was published monthly from July 1933 to June 1941.
51. Hugh D. Hudson Jr., *Blueprints and Blood, the Stalinization of Soviet Architecture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
52. The main publications were *L'Architecture vivante* and *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* in Paris, *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst* in Berlin, and *The Architectural Review* in London.
53. The work of Boris Kirikov and Margerita Shtiglits in Saint-Petersbourg stands out. See, in particular, B. M. Kirikov, M. S. Shtiglits, *Peterburg nemetskikh arkhitektorov: ot barokko do avangarda* (Saint-Petersburg: Izd-vo "Chisty list," 2002).
54. Images taken in *L'Architecture vivante*, but copied from De Feo (the Rusakov Club by Melnikov called "Tranvieri," Italian for "tramways"), in *Russland* by Lissitzky, *Russland, Europa Amerika* by Erich Mendelsohn, and *Storia dell'Architettura moderna* by Bruno Zevi; Alison et Peter Smithson, "The Heroic Period of Modern Architecture 1917–1937," *Architectural Design* 35, no. 12 (December 1965): 590–630.
55. Alexander Lavrentiev, *Alexander Rodchenko: Photography 1924–1954* (Edison, N.J.: Knickerbocker Press, 1996); Hubertus Gassner, *Rodchenko Fotografien* (Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 1982).
56. Grigori Chudakov, Rikje Draaijers, and Gert Fiolet, eds., *20 Sowjetische Photographen, 1917–1940* (Amsterdam: Fiolet & Draaijer Interphoto, 1990); for the portraits by Nappelbaum, see Ilya Rudiak, ed., *Nash vek / Moisei Nappelbaum* (Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1984).
57. El Lissitzky, *Russland: die Rekonstruktion der Architektur in der Sowjetunion* (Vienna: A. Schroll, 1930).
58. "Heroic Relics," *Architectural Design* 37, no. 12 (December 1967): 542–64.
59. Urs Graf, "Moskau 1925–1935: Bauten der Avantgarde," *Werk* 56 (September 1969): 629–40.
60. William Klein, *Moscow* (New York: Crown, 1964).
61. *The People of Moscow, Seen by Henri Cartier-Bresson* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1955).
62. Günther Förg, *Moskau* (Cologne: Snoeck, 1998).
63. Simmel, "The Ruin," 264.
64. Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1987).
65. Mostafavi and Leatherbarrow, *On Weathering*, 64.
66. Georg Simmel, "The Ruin," 265.







# Looking for the Modernists

RICHARD PARE

The idea of the otherness of Russia has been with me for most of my life. As a child in the mid-1950s, I heard echoes of the Khrushchev thaw, half heard sermons from Hewlett Johnson, known as the Red Dean, about heroic Soviet laborers and the Five Year Plan on Sunday evenings in Canterbury Cathedral. These were the outermost ripples of the waves of change in the Soviet government of those years. Then, in the early 1990s, after the Soviet collapse, it became possible to discover what had been hidden for so long.

I arrived in Russia for the first time in 1993, through the interminable lines in the half-flight at Sheremetevo Airport (still, incongruously, named after the great aristocratic family that once owned the land), with that uneasy traveler's malaise of uncertainty. Were my entry papers in order? Was the necessary invitation worded correctly and the passport stamped with the correct visa and ready for the unsmiling functionary behind the desk?

On that first visit, I went to Moscow with an idea of looking for the legacy of the modernists already in mind, knowing a little about what had been built in the 1920s and early 1930s, when it seemed possible to create a new way of life in a new society. Through the handful of references in the anthologies of twentieth-century architecture, an imbalance was always evident. The European origins of modernism had been studied and commented on exhaustively, but the parallel movement in Russia was given only glancing notice. Soviet modernism was always represented by the same handful of projects with the same illustrations reproduced again and again. Some of the proposals submitted for the major competitions were known as schemes but not as completed buildings. I went to look, found an immediate affinity, and recognized the urgency of recording the remaining works before they were lost or altered beyond redemption.

It was often night when I arrived for the long ride into the city, past the stark memorial that marks the point where the German advance ended and the army began to retreat in December 1941. There was the tension of arriving in a still-unfamiliar city, wondering what changes had occurred since the previous visit. The 1990s were also a time of upheaval. At first the city was still very dark at night, but now Moscow seems to be more brilliantly

illuminated than any city I have visited. Rapid changes occurred with the surge of capitalism. Once virtually empty roads are now congested to the point of paralysis; advertising has proliferated indiscriminately, countering the equally rapid disappearance of the signs and symbols of the Soviet era.

I remember the small but revealing details of private lives in the homes of those who welcomed me, the hospitality of strangers, the sense of pride of the survivors, people who had endured years of great hardship with dogged and good-humored determination. It is an old and long-recognized trait of the Russian character to cast sidelong glances at authority and carry on through the dark times in the hope of better things to come.

There are impressions of traveling through the old Soviet Union that remain in the mind, a pervasive sense of the vastness of the territory once caught up in the Soviet circle of influence and the indomitable spirit of those who had lived through the bitter years. Signs of the discredited legacy of what had been a dream of socialist equality are everywhere, the predicament of the elderly urban poor being the most troubling. The same images, recalled in photographs from the famine years after the revolution, are repeated down the generations: the destitute, hoping for relief, which always remains out of reach for those passed over by the new turn of the wheel of state; frail, exhausted children begging; holy beggars who, in an image recurring for centuries, have abased themselves, prostrate or kneeling and praying. There has been a resurgence of organized religion, and the disparity between the costly reconstruction and refurbishment of the churches and the urban poverty that surrounds them is unsettling.

The vastness of the country becomes comprehensible as the train crosses the steppe, passing the ruins of abandoned collectives. Along the track are small and abundant strips of vegetable gardens, indicators of the still-feudal way of life essentially unchanged for centuries. There are long halts in dark stations lit by pale electric lamps where the oppressive and featureless uniformity of the Soviet era is still omnipresent. A handful of people wait in the shadows. Muffled conversations, then the sudden lurch of the train as it moves off through the dark landscape, the bang of



a compartment door, rolling across the thrumming rails listening to the rhythms of the track until fitful sleep comes. To be awakened with a start by the blare of the speaker in the compartment, with no controls, a raucous reminder of the Soviet era, to a different accompaniment. Tea comes in glasses with a holder of cast metal decorated with reliefs of rockets and Sputnik.

There is a chasm between the oppressive heaviness of the manufactured infrastructure, from railway cars to telephones, a kind of dour uniformity, and the sharp, radical, striving for change in the works of architecture that I was seeking. I felt a palpable relief as I confronted the luminosity, the logical clarity of the modernist works, whose openness and lucid transparency is the physical manifestation of ideas that stood in direct opposition to all that had gone before and was to follow. The buildings constructed in the ten-year period that this book documents represent one of many attempts at change, born in hope only to be brought down by the same autocratic impulse in those who ascend to the seats of power. The architecture commemorated here is a tangible part of the legacy of the spirit that inspired the early post-revolutionary years.

In the years immediately after the revolution of 1917, there had been such unrest and social disintegration, accompanied by almost total financial collapse, that no major architectural projects were feasible. Expression was limited to paper architecture in which imagination was unbounded, and a multitude of dramatic inventions were proposed, culminating in 1920 with Vladimir Tatlin's visionary design for a tower to mark the occasion of the Third International. This kind of dreaming was completely impractical in the real environment. The materials were not available, nor were the technical skills of the workforce sufficient to resolve the engineering problems of wide-span structures and high-rise buildings. However, the sense of a laboratory for testing ideas remained, and those ideas were expressed in the buildings that did get constructed. The architects of the Russian avant-garde took what they needed from their Western contemporaries and gave to the elegant poise of the European modernists a kind of muscularity and energy that is significantly different and particularly Russian in

its expression. It is fitting that during the brief moment before the revolution became suborned by the legacy of Lenin's totalitarianism, when the optimism of the true revolutionaries prevailed, the small number of architects who constituted the avant garde, looking once more to the West, reinvented the language and grammar of architectural expression.

In the decade between 1922 and 1932, architects were relatively free to deploy the new architectural language, one that was driven both by the necessity of providing shelter and by the ideological concepts of Communism. Collective living was proposed in many different forms, and whole cities were constructed with utopian fervor. As there was little food in the shops, much of the urban population ate in communal kitchens erected in the major cities, close to the workplace to improve efficiency. Some of these were equipped to provide as many as fifteen thousand meals a day. They were essentially factories for feeding the masses, a manifestation of the visionary concepts of the collective in the rush to industrialization. The overriding intent was to fold the working population into an indiscriminate mass of labor and social mechanization.

In its more humane manifestations, the beauty of this functionalist approach is apparent in such buildings as the Moscow bakery by the engineer G. P. Marsakov, which is still operating with its original machinery (page 122). Here the design of the structure is entirely governed by function. A continuous mechanism through the building takes the risen dough from the top floor to the floor below to rise for the second time and down again to the next level, where it is shaped into loaves and baked in a single pass through a rotating oven. Finally, the bread reaches the ground floor to be distributed to the city. It is an elegant, energy-efficient process that requires only a small workforce.

In the immediate post-revolutionary years, a minimalist design system perfectly suited the intentions of the architects. Stripping away all but the most essential elements, they deployed a new language of architectural expression. At the same time they devised an architecture that was straightforward enough to be constructed by a seasonal and unsophisticated workforce, accustomed, at best, to traditional building techniques and more famil-



iar with farm labor than negotiating the precision required in the subtleties of architectural detail.

A handful of remarkable photographs that survive from this period suggest some of the technical difficulties that the architects confronted in construction. Unwieldy baulks of timber were used for cumbersome scaffolding and roughly erected formwork. Very few of the laborers had ever held a ruler, let alone a plasterer's float. This brings about some remarkable intersections. Now, when so many of the buildings are in the last stages of their existence, it is possible, through decay, to see revealed the techniques that were used in those days of limited materials and skills. Because steel was scarce, the truss supporting the span of the roof pavilion on the Vasileostrovski roof garden is constructed of wood with steel plates to hold the principal joints together (page 308). The vocabulary imitates steel but is fabricated in wood. The locks and barrages of the White Sea-Baltic Sea Canal, photographed during construction by Aleksandr Rodchenko, were constructed of wood for the same reason. To minimize the consumption of materials, slender pillars of concrete are spanned by simple box-beam construction. Surfaces are finished in plaster applied to a lath substrate, utilizing the same materials and methods that had been used for centuries. Now, after years of neglect, the structure is laid open, and the effective subterfuge that had been deployed to create such limpid modernist spaces stands revealed. Melnikov devised new systems of construction to reduce the mass of his buildings in a way that reduced cost and conserved scarce materials. Necessity brought about the circumstances that were ideally suited to the refinements of modernism. Within the very parameters of the work there was the seed of a working method that fit the aspirations and conditions of the time.

On my quest, the sense of discovery was always present and vivid. There were discoveries such as the small bus shelter in Sochi, encountered on a visit to the arboretum, and the catenary arc of the diving board in the Dinamo Club in Kiev. Buildings such as Merzhanov's sanatorium in Sochi that I recognized from illustrations in *USSR in Construction* appeared much richer in reality. Even looking for major works of the modernist period could lead

to the unexpected. Few except the best-known buildings were mapped accurately, and even if they were located, there was no indication of current condition. On occasion, there was nothing left. In Baku in 1999, all that remained of a dormitory by Aleksandr Ivanitski and others was the fragment of a corner and an excavated foundation. Sometimes the original concept of a building had been modified beyond recognition, the openness of modernism overlaid with the brooding heaviness and heavy-handed classical style of the Stalinist era.

In the major centers of St. Petersburg and Moscow, the information was easier to obtain, but the condition of the buildings remained unknown until I arrived at each site. There were always questions of access. Most difficult to find were interior spaces that retained a sense of the intentions of the architects. Original furnishings were almost completely lacking, and not a single light fixture seems to have survived. In ten years, I was able to locate only a handful of pieces of furniture: a small steel book cart in the library at Ivanovo, a few rows of displaced theater seats in the Rusakov Club in Moscow, the table in the boardroom at Izhvestia, a bench and two Hoffmannesque chairs in the Metallist Club in Kiev, and an imposing and improbable suite of furniture in Aleksei Shchusev's sanatorium in Sochi.

Of more permanent details, the banister rail, constructed from the simplest steel elements and most frequently crowned with a wooden rail, has generally survived intact. The problem of turning the corner and changing the angle from the horizontal landings to the pitched angle of the stair was resolved with ingenuity and elegance. A repertory of square and round section rods, plates and slender ribbons of steel, is deployed with a multitude of permutations providing a strong, distinctive, and durable solution. The generally fixed form of the stairwell is resistant to change, and it is frequently the only surviving interior element to retain any indication of the original appearance. In most cases, the rest of the interior has been subsumed into what is now a featureless vacuum of undifferentiated space. Stripped of all the original details during periods of hardship and renewal, from World War II onwards to the present, these spaces have been swept of all the remaining traces of the Soviet regime.



Sometimes I returned to places I had already visited to extend work I had already done, and I often gained access to parts of a structure that had been unavailable before. For example, on my early visits to the clubs, the auditorium was usually dark and shuttered. When I returned years later, some of these halls were open with a rehearsal in progress. Less encouraging were abandoned buildings with windows boarded up after vandals had ripped the steel frames away. As the years passed, these depredations made it possible to find a way through the surrounding barricades and gain access to the abandoned buildings, with crumbling plaster and glass crunching underfoot. By looking for remaining fragments that spoke about a building as it stood when finished, it was still possible to recover the sense of purity of expression and clarity that has returned to structures that have slipped into complete neglect. The calm rationalism of ordered, well-lit space, the ideals of efficient communal living without waste and with common spaces for congregating and cooking return once more even to the most shattered remains.

Aspects of the humanistic intentions of Moisei Ginzburg can still be seen in such details as the linear window boxes running the length of Narkomfin (page 78). These once provided growing space for flowers and herbs, easily reached through the sliding sash windows fitted with simple closures stamped from sheet steel; now iris plants still struggle for survival. The heated interior street with paired doors immediately proximate to each other, leading to the type t and type k apartments, invites social interaction among the occupants. Spacious double-height living areas with balconies overlooking the living space below ensured both privacy and an openness and conviviality of living. The most reasoned buildings still have a most congenial atmosphere: commodious without excess, bright and well ventilated, practical yet with a simple elegance.

One of the apartments in Narkomfin is filled with a wide-ranging collection of objects speaking of different eras, the kind of text of living that is characteristic of Russia, where at least three generations have inhabited the same quarters. A reproduction of Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* has pride of place. The original painting was brought to Moscow in the years immediately after World War II before being returned to Dresden, and this reproduc-

tion is perhaps a signifier of victorious Russia. To the right is a reproduction of Valeri Perov's *Hunters at Rest*, a well-known genre painting depicting the squire and two serfs sharing food and tall tales that illustrates the coexistence of the classes, an appropriate indication of socialist principles. A petit-point tapestry is held in place with two medallions depicting views of St. Petersburg. On the shelf of the couch against the wall are two of the most widely distributed Soviet-era souvenirs: the young pioneer with skis and the dancing peasant maiden. Beneath them hangs an indicator of the post-Soviet era, a diminutive banner of St. George, the newly reinstated patron saint of Moscow, commemorating the 850th anniversary of its founding. A small souvenir of a ship inscribed *Odessa* stands next to one of a pair of plastic palm trees, recollections and dreams of far-off places and warmer climes. Nearby, a small thermometer affixed to the peeling wall registers with gloomy inevitability the chill of the interior in winter. On the radio cabinet is what must be the most universally known of all Soviet era ornaments, a porcelain figure of the young Pushkin. The table is uncleared, cluttered with the remains of the previous night's supper and empty bottles of vodka.

With the passing years, Narkomfin is slipping into greater decay, with little money available for even the most basic repairs. The roughly made cinder block is being split apart by the frost, the concrete is spalling, and the reinforcement rusting and bursting through the walls. Now largely abandoned, the building continues on in a state of ever-increasing neglect. The remaining tenants continue to do their best to stave off the effects of the severe winter weather. The recent cutting of a new highway past the end of the building has removed the relative tranquility of the previous court and created a situation that threatens the structure through vibration. Without radical and effective intervention, the time will soon come when the point of no return will pass, and the building will succumb to the developers or the wrecker's ball.

I have watched the fortunes of many of these buildings since 1993. So fragile are the overall compositions that even small alterations shift the balance in radical ways, destroying the subtle balance of the facades. Great destruction has been wrought by the fitting of new double-glazing units, the thick, white vinyl frames



glaring in uncomfortable opposition to the remaining windows of the old order. The loss of the deep space between the front and back elements also affects the appearance of the building from both the inside and exterior. Too often there is no consistency in the new patterns, each installed at the whim and fancy of new owners of the apartments creating a random agglomeration of clamoring, mismatched elements and ill-assorted glazing bars. Advertisements for all kinds of products from automobiles to American cigarettes have proliferated and shout from every rooftop and well-placed wall. For a brief moment, even the roof of *Izvestia* was fitted with a billboard for Polish sausages.

The first major structure built after the revolution was Vladimir Shukhov's remarkable radio tower built in Moscow between 1919 and 1922 (page 34). With its elegant filigree, visible from all over the city, it was a fitting symbol of the utopian dream of the years immediately following the revolution, a dream of openness and spreading the news to the rest of the world. Of very different intention is the vast scheme for the government offices in Kharkov, the Gosprom Building, a futuristic conception with skywalks and flying stairways (page 204). Filled with light, this structure relies on the modification of large areas of glass to generate a dynamic and rhythmic whole. The impression of scale is further increased by the use of small glazing elements. What survives is still compelling, although the original concept of a completed circle was never achieved and one section was effectively destroyed during World War II. Enough of the scheme remains intact to give a sense of the grandeur and play of space and mass, an effective device characteristic of both the concave facade overlooking the square and the convex form of the rear elevation. This administrative center was constructed in Kharkov in a conscious attempt to move the political center of the Ukraine away from Kiev in order to more effectively impose Soviet dominance. The Kharkov Gosprom was to be the symbol of the new regime. In the expression of its architecture, however, it slipped past these domineering principles and presented a monumental but luminous complex of buildings that applied inventive solutions to the dimensional aspects of its circular plan.

Entering Erich Mendelsohn's power plant for the Red Banner factory in St. Petersburg (page 290) was as if stepping into the past. As the custodian guided me through the still and cavernous interior, the only sound was the remote striking of a hammer by an unseen hand. It seemed improbable that the plant could function any longer, and it appeared to be gradually moldering away. I returned a week later, feeling as though I should try for more time and better light; this time I was alone, free to go where I chose. The power plant was running but still apparently deserted. On that visit, I saw no one in my hours of wandering through the building. The stillness was uncanny. In the room where the switchboard was installed, the footprints of the engineer could be seen in the dust and the insulated fuse puller lay on the control panel. One red and one green light glowed in the marble panels housing the bronze switches.

Konstantin Melnikov was unique among the architects of the period. In his design for the U.S.S.R. Pavilion at the Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes in Paris in 1925, he created the architectural representation of the revolution, and yet he retained his solitary position as a visionary. He never lost the sense of his position as a creative figure standing outside the wider field of the modernist-inspired architects of the period. Melnikov's staunch individualism was best expressed in his own house, which remains the only post-revolutionary single-family dwelling of the modernist period in the city. To assert his autonomy in the era of collectivism, he took the too-bold step of announcing his name and profession in large letters across a panel set above the windows of the salon. He always stood aloof and yet somehow remained unassailable even after he was banned from the practice of his profession in 1937. He struggled to maintain the fabric of his masterpiece, his own house, eking out an existence as a painting teacher through all the dark years until his death in 1974. Most of his buildings have outlasted the regime that so swiftly stamped out his genius and the whole modernist experiment, but their future remains uncertain.

When I first visited the Melnikov House, it had reached a level of decay that threatened its future (page 158). The roof was covered by rusted scaffolding supporting corrugated sheets that



blocked out much of the light that is the magical feature of the interior. The ceilings were cracked and repairs had been suspended for lack of funds; the furniture was stacked in surreal piles wrapped in brown paper. On entering, the impression is of a modest dwelling, but after ascending the stair a more imposing scheme is revealed, modest in its materials and yet flamboyant in the almost hallucinatory quality of the light. In the salon, a brilliant unidirectional light comes from a window that takes up the whole wall facing the street and could be opened to the air in summertime; in the studio, thirty-two windows dispersed from floor to ceiling describe the structural grid and provide multidirectional illumination, giving a shadowless sensation of weightlessness. The architect's son Viktor, a painter, was compelled to tame the brilliant light with temporary panels inserted in the window embrasures. Living in the shadow of his father's genius and as the self-appointed guardian of his legacy, Viktor Melnikov had little tranquility in his custodianship through the years of official disdain. He was filled with shame at the decayed state of the structure but still imbued with pride in the genius of his father, the humble beginnings of the family held proudly aloft, providing legitimacy to the struggle of the individual against the state.

Sometimes my work seemed to be a near hopeless errand: traveling to the site of the Dnieper Dam at Zaporozhe (page 252) on the chance that I would be permitted to enter. Hours of waiting for a permit to meet the director were followed by a long wait for the director to return from a very long lunch, presumably a satisfactory one as he effectively waved us through to go where we wished. A somewhat unsteady soldier stood guard at the entry to the vast turbine hall. He was sufficiently impressed by the process of making the big negatives that he stood aside as I gathered the heavy camera onto my shoulder and passed through the great steel doors into the bright interior of the turbine hall, catching the late afternoon sun as the day moved on toward dusk. For once, delay worked in my favor.

In my travels, I found much that was unexpected. Wandering in the empty silence of the abandoned Vasilievski factory kitchen in St. Petersburg late one afternoon, in the surrounding desolation

I felt as though the structure had returned to the essence of the architect's intention; all superfluity had been torn away and what remained was the bare bones of the structure, peeling and crumbling until it revealed the ancient techniques that had been employed in its construction. Wooden framing elements squared with an adze were visible, along with strips of lath nailed on to provide a substrate for the once immaculate plaster surfaces of modernist expression. The old ice lockers had been stripped of all metal parts and broken open, showing the still-gleaming chopped straw that had been used to provide insulation, its warm sheen still shining dully. In its decay, the building expressed its originality in a way that had been long since lost with the accretions of ill-considered modifications. But these temporary partitions that had been interposed had all been stripped away and taken for other uses. Stripped back to the original structure, it once again showed the radical purity of its conception. Leaving at last, I passed a fire made of parts of the building itself, left smoldering on the floor. I had disturbed men resting from tearing scrap metal from the ruins; they disappeared as I approached, leaving only the embers. In similar circumstances, fire had already destroyed the roof pavilion.

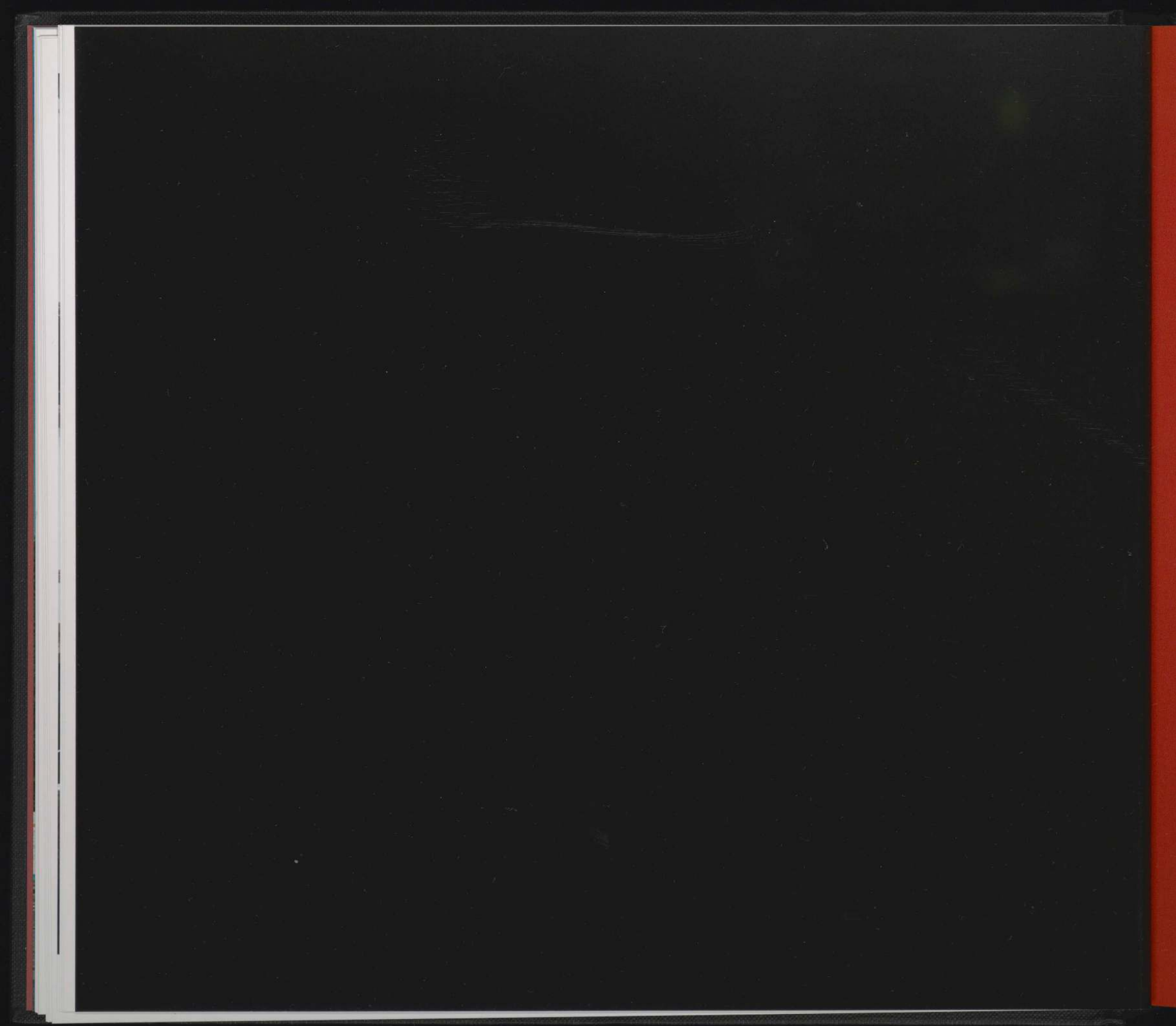
The last great statement of modernist principles is its own grave marker. The irony is inescapable in the richly sumptuous morbidity of the dark heart and signifier of the Soviet regime: the Lenin Mausoleum (page 330). This brooding masterpiece, the summit of Aleksei Shchusev's career, was the symbolic focus of the breadth of the Soviet empire. It was to be the literal and metaphoric focus and foundation of major state occasions and the rituals of the cult of Lenin.

Beyond the offices and equipment rooms is the guard room with dress uniforms hanging in the closets with military precision, prepared for inspection, mirrors to check correctness. In the antechamber the white-coated technician oversees the monitoring controls. The heavy bronze door swings open to give admission to the space in which the darkened sarcophagus stands, illuminated at first dimly, then with gathering intensity to reveal the whitened, papery skin with creases behind the ears and an oddly unconvincing beard, an unnatural ramrod attitude to the limbs, the husk of a man long dead.



In this dark cube of the tomb chamber the complexity of the effects of space are amplified by the highly polished surfaces. The effect is of a mysterious and somber magnificence. The blood-red stone mosaic of the repeating motifs of stylized red flags imposes a dynamic, flickering around the static boundary like lightning. The blue mica flakes of the crystalline structure of Ukrainian black granite glint deep in the interior of the slabs. The whole is austere, sumptuous, and oppressive, the concluding expression of the end of modernism under the Soviet regime.







# **The Lost Vanguard**



## Shabolovka Radio Tower

**Shabolovka Street  
Moscow, Russia**

**Vladimir Shukhov**

**1922**

The first major structure erected after the revolution, the Shabolovka radio tower is constructed from a series of six stacked hyperboloids. Rising to a height of 150 meters, it is the tallest tower built in this form, each section having been assembled on the ground inside the lowest and then raised into place. The original proposal was for a tower of 350 meters, but the height had to be reduced because of a shortage of steel. The first towers to take full advantage of the strength created by Shukhov's invention were water towers designed in 1896. The system uses long straight members to create what are essentially trusses and reduce the tendency toward buckling, the most common cause of failure for such structures. Still in use as a radio and television transmitter, the tower is a prominent feature of the Moscow skyline.

















## Moselprom

Kalashy Lane  
Moscow, Russia

David Kogan

1923-24

With a replica of the color  
scheme and graphics by  
Aleksandr Rodchenko

This building was developed from an existing apartment block as the headquarters of the Moscow Association of Establishments for Processing Products of the Agricultural Industry; at the time it was one of the tallest structures in Moscow. Moselprom is certainly one of the first modernist buildings in the city, although the echo of its previous form is still apparent. It became celebrated for the decorative scheme, designed by Aleksandr Rodchenko with slogans devised by Vladimir Maiakovski. The scheme was recreated in 1997 when these photographs were taken.









## Central Institute of Aerodynamics and Hydrodynamics

16 Radio Street  
Moscow, Russia

Aleksandr Kuznetsov  
with Boris Gladkov,  
Ivan Nikolaev, Gennadi  
Movchan, and Anatoli  
Fisenko

1924-28

The Institute of Aerodynamics and Hydrodynamics (TSAGI) continues to function as a research center. The structure on top of the tower was used for testing improvements in propeller design. The building is notable for the subtlety of its details and the modulation of the surfaces realized in brick. The museum attached to the complex documents the history of Soviet aviation and marine engineering and includes models and photographs of the building as it appeared in the 1920s, with images of the remarkable wind-tunnel designs.









**Central Institute of  
Aerodynamics and  
Hydrodynamics**









## MoGES

1 Osipenko Street  
Moscow, Russia

Ivan Zholtovski

1926

MoGES (Moscow City Electric Power Station) stands in the center of Moscow on the banks of the Moskva River, a short distance downriver from the Kremlin. The most celebrated component of the complex faces an interior courtyard and is not visible from outside the facility. This uncompromising modernist structure is a dramatic contrast to the long compound facade facing the river, which reflects Zholtovski's high regard for Renaissance classical form.









MoGES













ГЭС-1,  
ПРАВИЛА  
БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ!





MoGES









## Power Station

**12 Krasnopresnenskaia  
Quay  
Moscow, Russia**

**Architect unknown**

**Undated**

This small power station, on the opposite bank of the Moskva River from MoGES, in the government district and upstream from the White House, has a strong presence in the texture of the city. With its simple deployment of architectural elements, it makes a robust statement and is one of the most pleasing of Moscow's functionalist buildings. Like MoGES, it is an example of the integration of the infrastructure into the heart of the community. The building has recently been faced with vinyl siding.









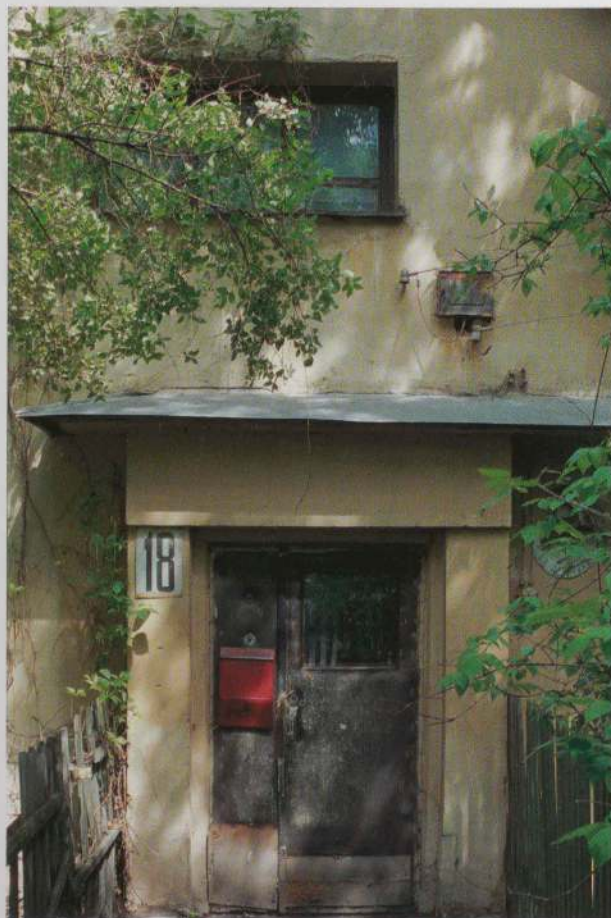
## Sokol Garden Settlement

**Alabian and  
Vrubel Streets  
Moscow, Russia**

**Nikolai Markovnikov**

**1923-30**

The Sokol Garden District housing, built as a small utopian enclave in the suburbs, is now incorporated within the city. Designed as a series of different housing types for low-density living, the units included small plots of land that gave residents the opportunity to grow their own food. To differentiate among the standard types, the basic designs were executed in log, wood frame, and brick, using efficient methods including standardized log construction and prefabricated elements. The residential sections were further distinguished from one another by the different tree species planted along each street.









## Izvestia Building

5 Pushkin Square  
Moscow, Russia

Grigori Barkhin and Mikhail Barkhin

1925-27

*Pravda* (Truth) and *Izvestia* (News) were the official newspapers of the Bolshevik Party Central Committee. The Izvestia building, the only completed project by Grigori Barkhin, is notable for its prominent location on the northwest side of Pushkin Square and the high degree of finish in its details. Although much of the interior has been modified, the stairwell and access to the roof pavilion remain unaltered; they are remarkable for their layered glazing and sense of weightlessness. With the exception of the lettering on the roof, the facade is essentially intact. The initial design was derived from Gropius and Meyer's entry for the Chicago Tribune tower competition of 1922.

















## Mostorg Department Store

2/48 Krasnaia  
Presnia Square  
Moscow, Russia

Aleksandr, Leonid,  
and Viktor Vesnin

1927-28

The Mostorg Department Store is still striking in its urban context, although the interior has now been almost completely lost. The three-story expanse of glass on the facade was originally unobstructed, allowing passersby to see the activity inside the store. The entrance canopy and ground floor details have been replaced.









## ZIL Apartment House

Velozavodskaja Street  
Moscow, Russia

1936–37

Ignati Milinis

This housing complex was built between the ZIL automobile factory and a bicycle factory, in accordance with the planning requirements that the workplace should be proximate to housing. The plan is open and airy with access to the different blocks at the entry level and via bridges on the upper floors. The design is still essentially modernist in its principles even though the project was not begun until 1936. The building was not subjected to the application of classical elements, perhaps escaping the attentions of the censor by the monumental appearance of the entry.









ZIL Apartment House









## Zuev Workers Club

18 Lesnaia Street  
Moscow, Russia

Ilia Golosov

1926

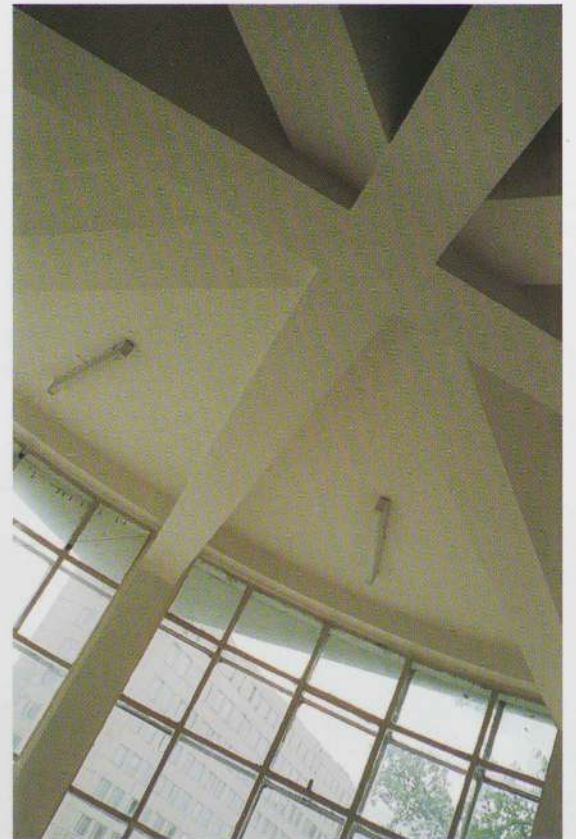
One of the most celebrated of the Soviet modernist buildings, the Zuev Club is still in use as a theater and conference center. The dramatic concept of its design, with a bold cylinder driven through the rectangular form of the corner, has successfully resisted any attempt at modification. The loss of balconies has reduced the articulation and dynamic of the lateral facade.

















## Proletariat Club for Workers of the Compressor Factory

**110 Shosse Entuziastov  
Moscow, Russia**

**Viacheslav Vladimirov**

**1927-29**

This ensemble of buildings, containing auditoriums and rehearsal and meeting rooms, reflects the strategy of constructing gathering places for education and entertainment near the place of work. Located in an otherwise unremarkable part of the city, the club is a small enclave of tranquility in a heavily industrialized area. The formal massing of the complex is well balanced. Although simple in its construction and somewhat rough in the execution of its finishes, it conveys a strongly modernist sensibility.









**Proletariat Club for  
Workers of the  
Compressor Factory**









**Dinamo Stadium**









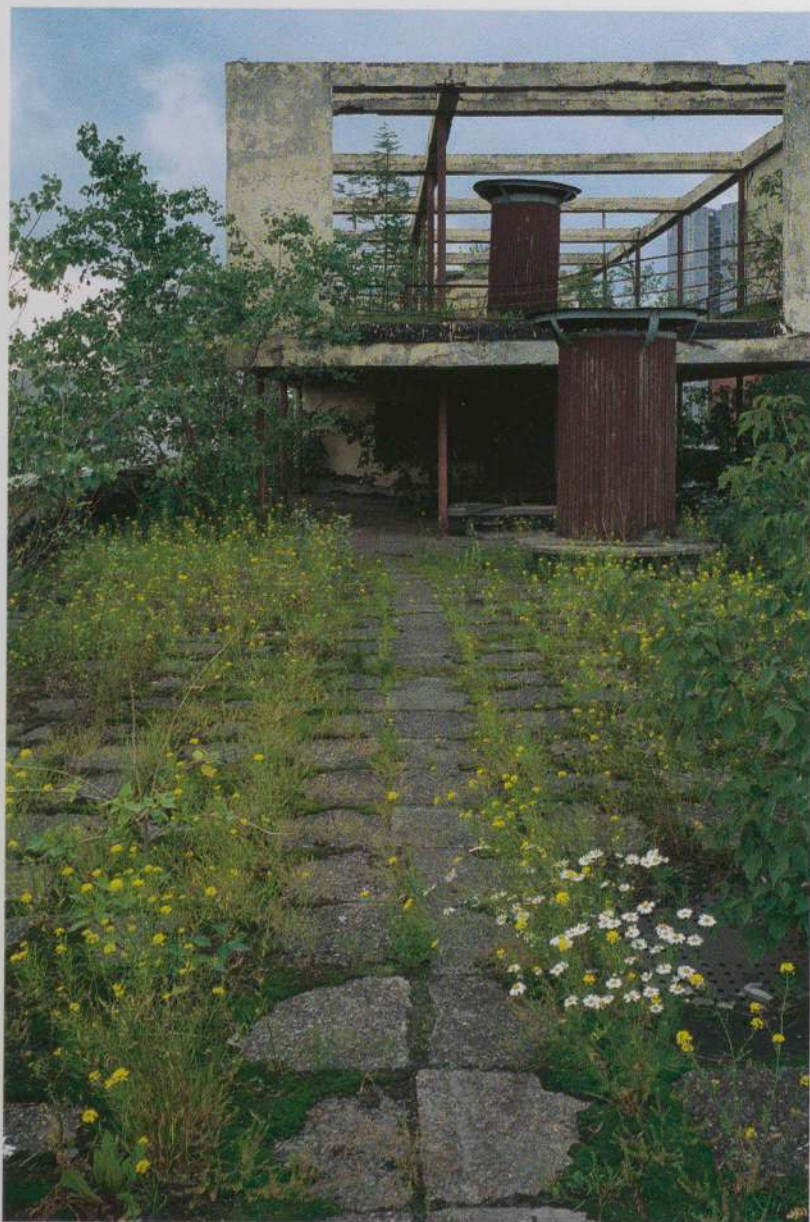
## Narkomfin Communal House

**25 Novinski Boulevard  
Moscow, Russia**

**Moisei Ginzburg and  
Ignati Milinis**

**1930**

Narkomfin, one of the most experimental of all the housing projects of the modernist period, was designed for the employees of the People's Commissariat for Finance. Nikolai Miliutin, the commissar and a friend of Ginzburg, was responsible for the commission and eventually occupied the penthouse apartment, completed to his own designs. Within the residential block, units accommodated single people and families, with and without children. The adjacent wing was equipped with a communal refectory, a gymnasium, a childcare center, a laundry, and a garage. The roof of the residential block was used as a solarium, but an intended garden was never realized.









**Narkomfin  
Communal House**

















Narkomfin Communal House









Narkomfin Communal House





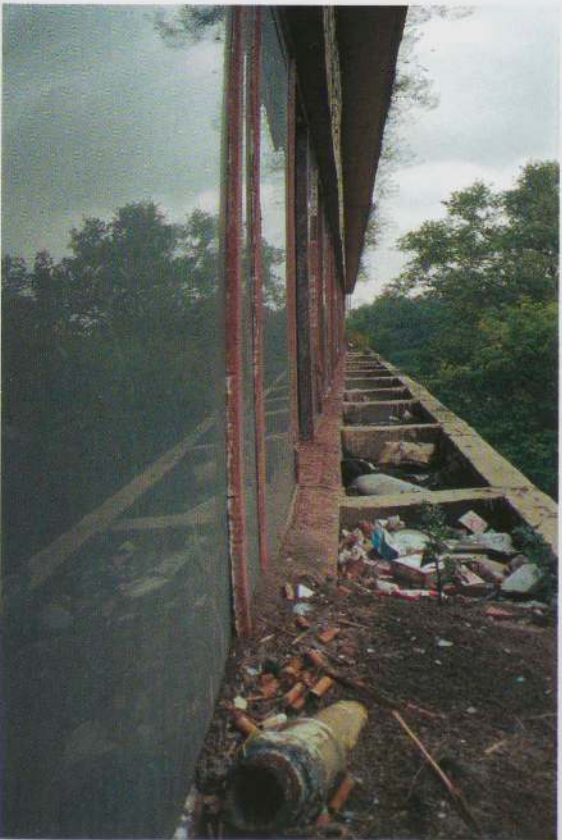




**Narkomfin Communal House**









## Narkomzem

**11 Sadovaia Spasskaia  
Moscow, Russia**

**Aleksei Shchusev**

**1933**

Narkomzem (the People's Commissariat of Agriculture), on the Sadovaia Ring, stands in an area that was part of the realignment of the city according to Shchusev's master plan. Even though the urban planning proposals were never fully executed, Narkomzem still has a dominant presence in the district. Nearby are Fomin's NKPS, and Le Corbusier's Centrosoyuz, which were in construction at the same time.

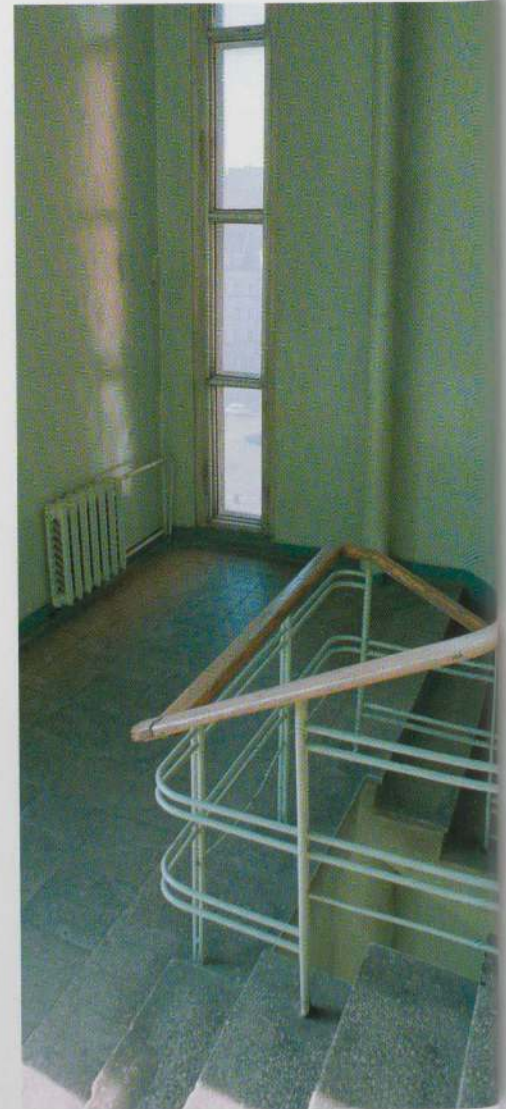








# Narkomzem









## AMO Automobile Factory

**23 Avtozavodskaja Street**  
**Moscow, Russia**

**Evgeni Popov,**  
**Sergei Muravev,**  
**Vladimir Zlatolinski,**  
**and others**

**1928-33**

Zavod Imeni Likhacheva opened in 1916 as AMO, the first automobile plant in Russia. Between 1928 and 1933, the factory was completely overhauled and renamed ZIS, Zavod Imeni Stalina. After Stalin's denunciation by Khrushchev, it became ZIL, named after Likhachev, then the director of the plant. The collapse of the Soviet regime curtailed the demand for heavy trucks and limousines; the factory subsequently diversified into other areas including bell-founding, and cast, among others, the bells for the rebuilt Church of the Savior on the banks of the Moskva River. The long street facade has a well-articulated, simple elegance with modernist and neo-Palladian classical elements coexisting in relative harmony.





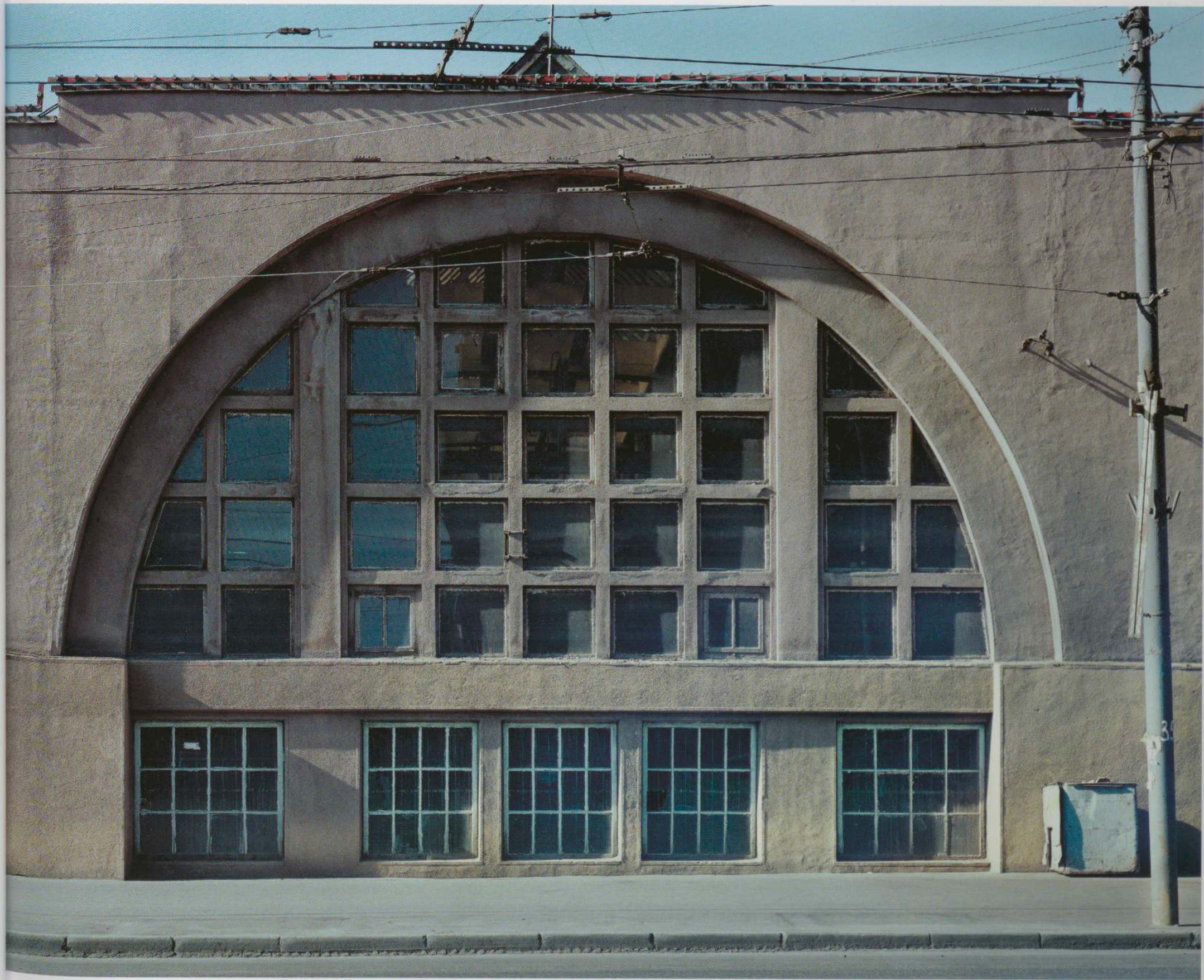




AMO Automobile Factory









## Lenin State Library

**3 Vozdvizhenka Street  
Moscow, Russia**

**Vladimir Shchuko and  
Vladimir Gelfreikh**

**1923–52**

The Lenin Library occupies a commanding site near the Kremlin. This exceptionally large project was constructed over such a long period that it became emblematic of the change in the official policy on architectural practice. Its constructivist massing now incorporates classicizing motifs that were appended later, among them the frieze over the main entrance and roundels that refer to the Baker's Tomb in Rome.

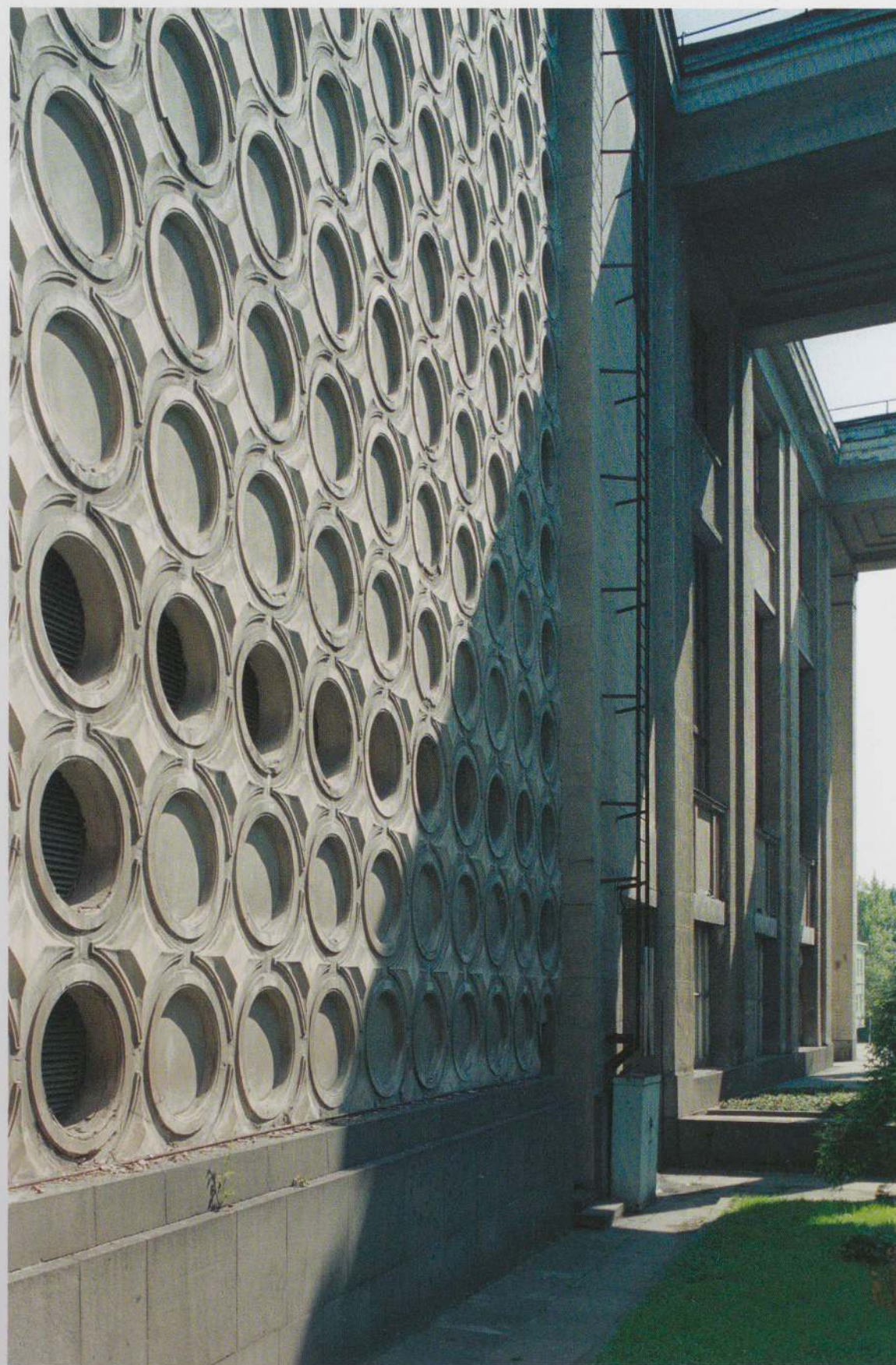








**Lenin State Library**









## Student Housing, Textile Institute

8/9 Ordzhonikidze Street  
Moscow, Russia

Ivan Nikolaev

1929-30

This large complex incorporating dormitories and classrooms, complete with refectory and large open interior spaces, is now in very deteriorated condition. The dormitory wing, the dominant part of the ensemble, was gutted and the windows removed in 2000. Since then various proposals for renovation have foundered. What remains is both reminiscent of Le Corbusier's contemporaneous works and prescient of his later projects. The most striking of the surviving elements is the triangular ramp, which ascends to each level of the link between the dormitory and the public spaces. The link provided areas for changing and bathing with wide external balconies for sunbathing. The delicate wing form marking the main entrance was brutally truncated in about 2003.



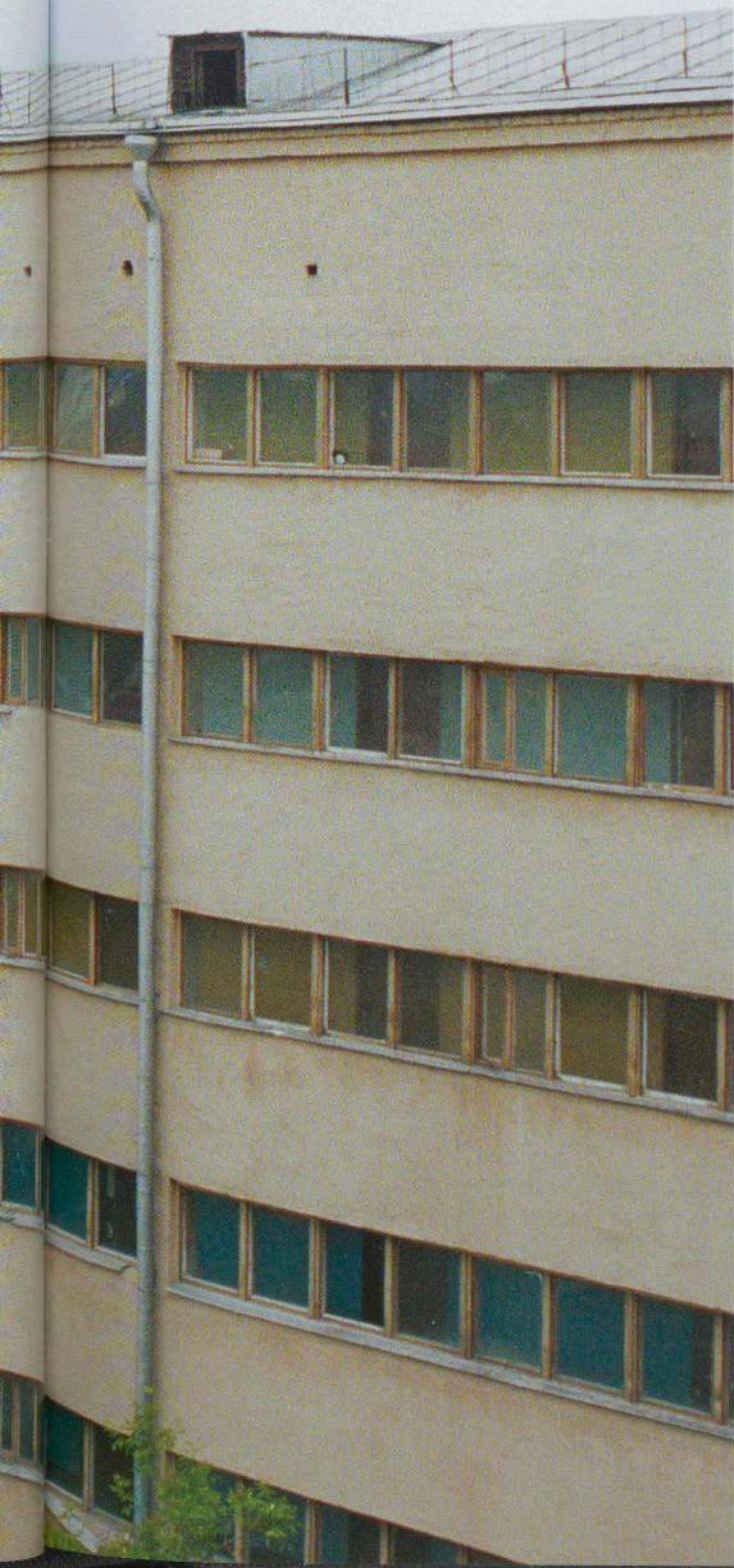














Student Housing, Textile Institute









## NKPS Building

Lermontov Square  
Moscow, Russia

Ivan Fomin

1928-31

The NKPS building (People's Commissariat of Transport and Communications) replaced the mid-eighteenth-century Zapasnoi palace that stood on the site. The result of an open competition, Fomin's most successful work is at the same time his most purely modernist in expression. The building avoids the visual confusion that manifested itself in other projects where the architect attempted to integrate a classical vocabulary into a modernist mode of expression.









## Centrosoyuz Building

**39 Miasnitskaya Street  
Moscow, Russia**

**Le Corbusier, Pierre  
Jeanneret, and  
Nikolai Kolli**

**1929-36**

Centrosoyuz, the Central Union of the Cooperatives of the Soviet Union, is the only building by Le Corbusier in Russia. Constructed over a long period with many alterations to the original drawings, the project was delayed by shortages of materials and the vagaries of political infighting. The building was originally largely open at the ground level. The plan was designed to correspond to a new street layout that was not completely carried out; this has resulted in an unresolved relationship to the site. Goskomstat, the State Statistics Committee, currently occupies the building.









**Centrosoyuz Building**





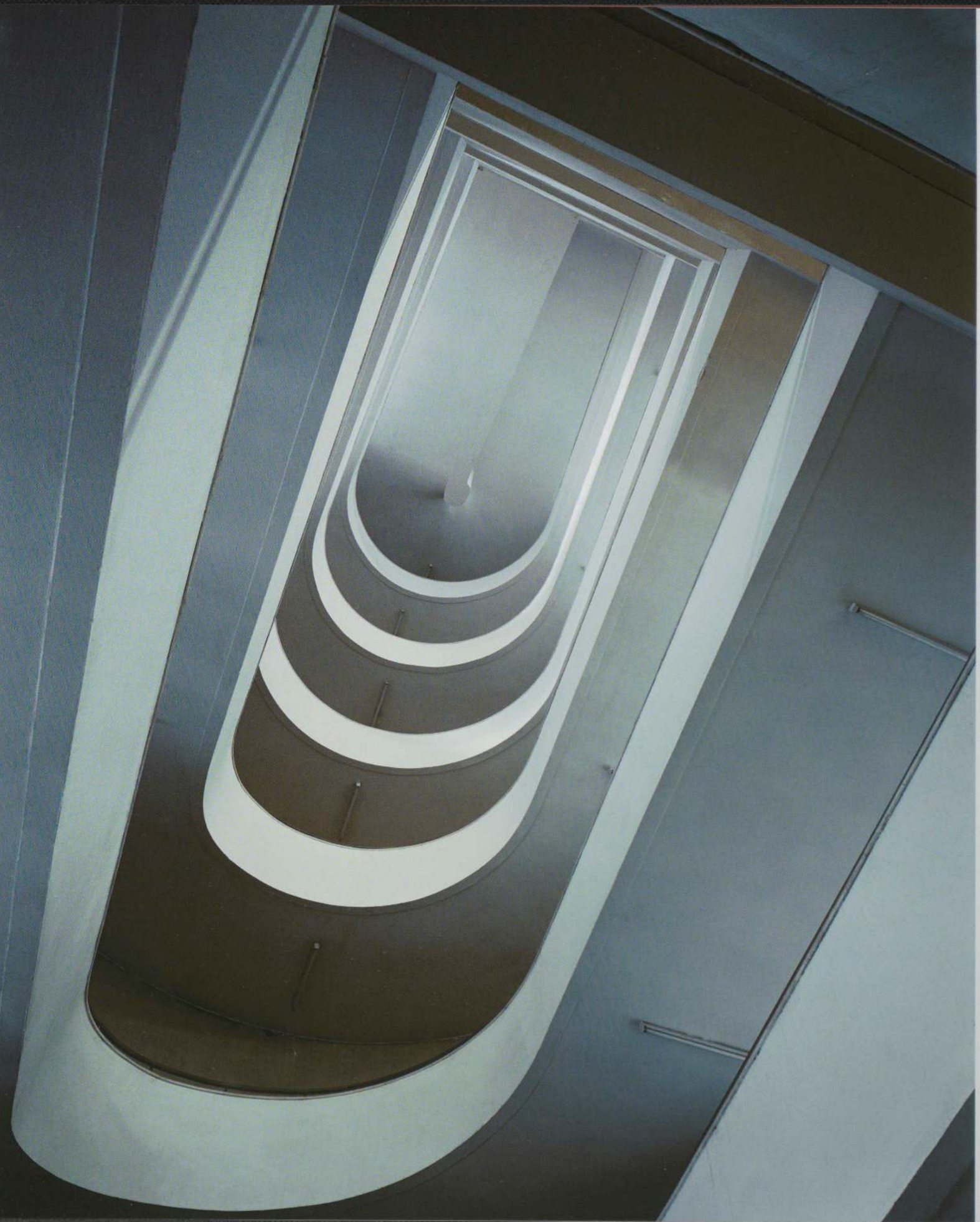




Centrosoyuz Building









## V. I. Lenin Military Political Academy

14 Bolshaia Sadovaia  
Moscow, Russia

Aleksei Shchusev and  
Georgi Iakovlev

1930-34

Originally constructed as the Institute of Mechanics and Electrical Engineering, the academy was designed by the team that produced Narkomzem. The facade facing the Sadovaia Ring has considerable presence, a rational clarity in an otherwise unremarkable urban context, standing out by its very simplicity. It is another example of a building that was designed with a different street layout in mind; a new road was intended to pass along the north facade.









## VTsIK Residential Complex

**2 Serafimovich Street  
Moscow, Russia**

**Boris Iofan**

**1928-31**

The largest and most prominent constructivist complex in Moscow, standing on the riverbank opposite the Kremlin, VTsIK was reserved for high officials of the Communist Party. More luxurious in its fittings than any other communal house, VTsIK became known as the House of Ghosts as many of its tenants disappeared during the Stalinist purges. In the early 1990s, the ground-floor exterior walls were still covered with commemorative tablets of distinguished former residents, but most of these have now been removed. The building is still sought after as a high-profile address, but it is suffering from the indiscriminate application of advertising and the replacement of the original windows. The roof of the Udamik Cinema was originally intended to roll back, creating an open-air auditorium in the warmer weather.









VTsIK Residential Complex









## Bakery

**2 Khodynka Street  
Moscow, Russia**

**Engineer: G. P. Marsakov**

**1931**

Sited at a major intersection near Belorusski Station, the bakery is one of several designed by the engineer G. P. Marsakov. It is one of the most remarkable and enduring industrial structures of the constructivist period. Operating twenty-four hours a day and highly efficient both in terms of energy use and mechanical organization, the baking process is arranged vertically in a continuous circuit on each floor. A different stage in production, from mixing dough to finished loaves, is completed with each rotation.









Bakery









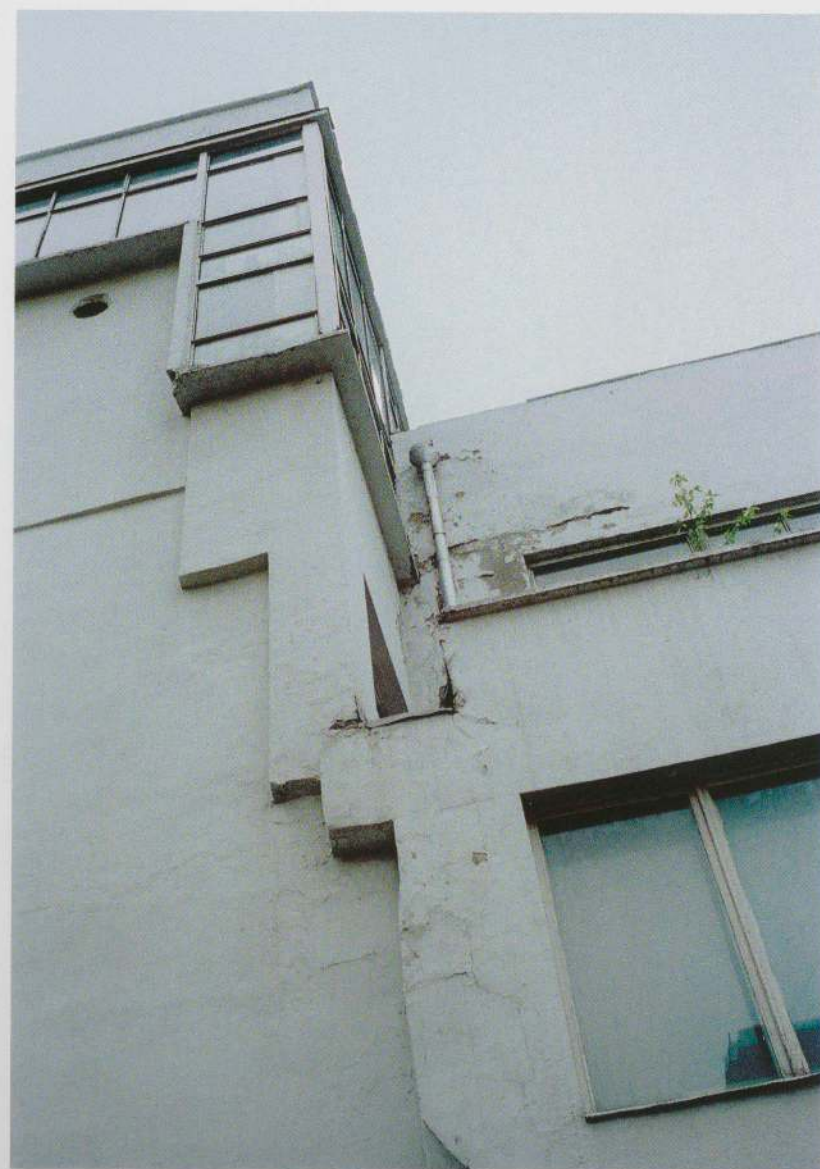
## Club of the Association of Pre-revolutionary Political Deportees

**33 Vorovski Street  
Moscow, Russia**

**Aleksandr Vesnin,  
Leonid Vesnin, and  
Viktor Vesnin**

**1931-34**

This large club is another of the major constructivist buildings on the Sadovaya Ring. Only the central portion of the original plan was completed; lateral wings were never built. The large glass windows of the upper stories were intended to enclose a winter garden connecting to a museum wing for the history of Tzarist-era Bolshevik prisoners. After the club was dissolved in 1932, the building became a cinema and animation studio and then a club for film actors. The large volume over the entrance is the stage of a small auditorium. The interiors have been much modified.









**Club of the Association  
of Pre-revolutionary  
Political Deportees**









## Pravda Building

24 Pravda Street  
Moscow, Russia

Panteleimon Golosov

1930–34

One of the most ambitious of the modernist works constructed, the Pravda building comprised editorial offices in the main block and the printing plant in a one-story structure at the rear. The rigorous symmetry of the street elevation is set aside at the rear to accommodate an observatory and a series of roof gardens and balconies. There was a cafeteria on the top floor of the main block with a wide exterior balcony for summer use. The interiors were largely obliterated even before the building was severely damaged by fire in the winter of 2005.









Pravda Building









## Palace of Culture for the Proletarian District

4 Vostochnaia Street  
Moscow, Russia

Aleksandr Vesnin, Leonid Vesnin,  
and Viktor Vesnin

1931-37

The largest and last of the constructivist workers clubs later became affiliated with the ZIL automobile factory nearby. The scheme was lavish and the first stage was executed in full, although a vast amphitheater that was to have been the centerpiece of the project remained unbuilt. Always maintained as a showplace, the building has survived in good condition and is now the Avtozavod Club. The building is used for many different activities, offering concert halls, meeting rooms, rehearsal spaces, dance studios, and a roof-top observatory approached by a beautifully executed spiral stair cast in concrete. The internal structural columns are now sheathed in marble, obscuring their original slender form.









**Palace of Culture for the Proletarian District**









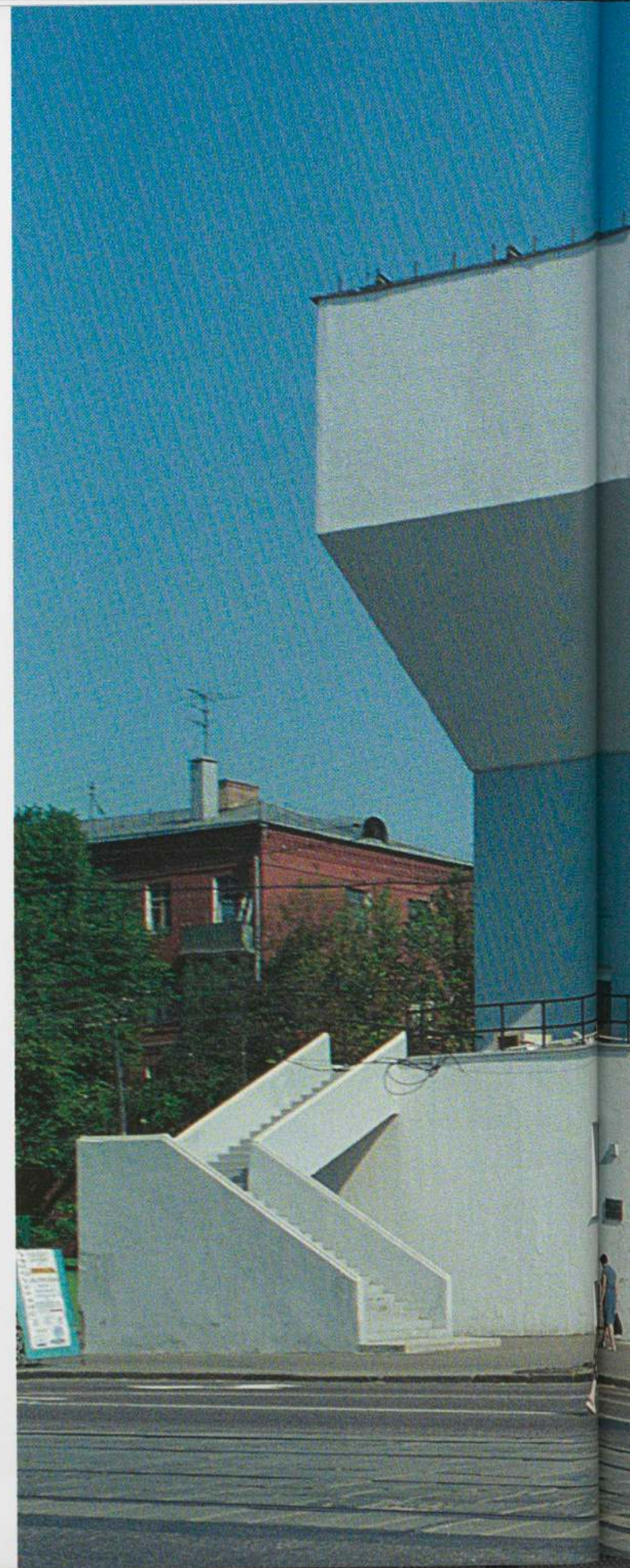
## Rusakov Workers Club

6 Stromynka Street  
Moscow, Russia

Konstantin Melnikov

1927

The bold three-dimensional geometry of the Rusakov Club gives clear expression to the internal form of the space. The convergence of the angles of the three main sections of the theater seating is literally brought to an apex in the pointed triangular porch over the door at the back of the stage, used for the movement of stage sets in and out of the building. Now in a precarious state, the building has suffered from a long and destructive history of neglect. Nevertheless, the acoustics of the theater are remarkable for their clarity and sense of presence.









**Rusakov Workers  
Club**









Rusakov Workers  
Club









## Frunze Workers Club

28 Berezkovskaia Embankment  
Moscow, Russia

Konstantin Melnikov

1927-29

The smallest of Melnikov's workers clubs is also the simplest in its scheme. Melnikov gave a mask-like simplicity to the facade expressly to remove it from any visual competition with the Novodevichy monastery on the opposite bank of the river. Since the building was completed, the original vista to the river has been obstructed, leaving the club isolated and removed from its original context. The building has been modified repeatedly with little regard for the integrity of the structure, but there are now plans to restore it and bring it closer to the original scheme.









## Kavchuk Factory Workers Club

64 Pliushchikha Street  
Moscow, Russia

Konstantin Melnikov

1927-29

This club follows the model of the Rusakov Club in which the triangular form is repeated, here with the axis running through the box office, in a direct line to the back of the stage, at the center of the arc of the circumference of the quadrant of the theater block. The circular form of the box office and stairs suggests that the segment of the building behind continues and creates the sense of the building being much bigger than it actually is. The building has been through many major and destructive alterations, including the recent addition of a temple-roof-style portico for a Chinese restaurant at the main entrance.

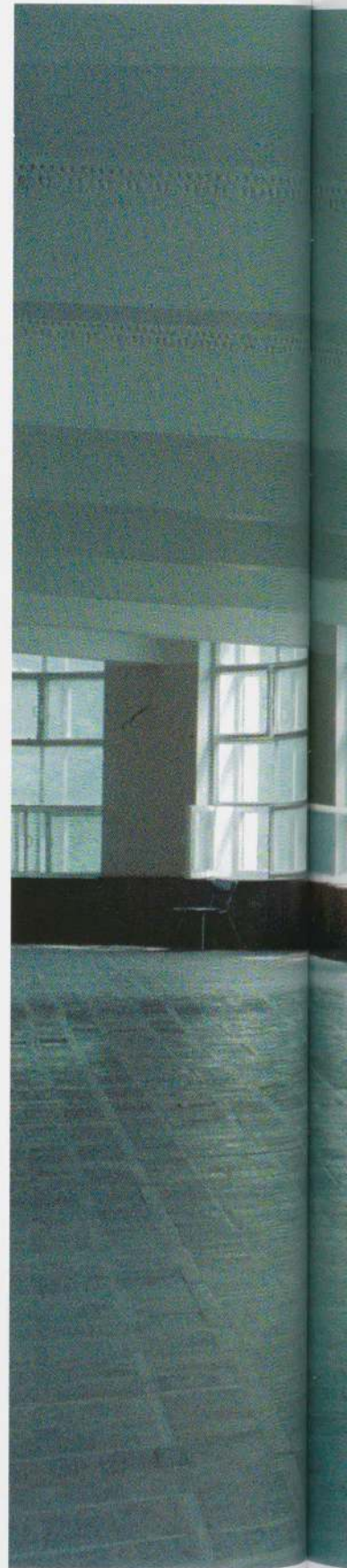








**Kavchuk Factory Workers Club**









## Burevestnik Factory Workers Club

3 Rybinkaia Street  
Moscow, Russia

Konstantin Melnikov

1928-30

Intended for the workers of the Burevestnik shoe factory, the club was commissioned by the union. Melnikov was selected for the innovative daring of his other club projects, including the Rusakov Club. The original scheme incorporated an auditorium with a swimming pool beneath that could be covered when the auditorium was required for performances. The pool was never realized because there was no water supply in the district at the time. The five-segmented tower was intended for meeting rooms with a solarium on the roof. The building has been recently converted into a fitness club.









**Burevestnik Factory Workers Club**









## Gosplan Garage

63 Aviamotornaia Street  
Moscow, Russia

Konstantin Melnikov with V.I. Kurochkin

1936

This garage, the most expressionistic and the last of Melnikov's built projects, displays mechanistic details and evokes a sense of speed. The one-story workshop leads to the circular motif, evoking a cylinder or wheel, while the tower block suggests the finned surface of a radiator. More futurist than modernist and far removed from the functional precepts of constructivism, the building is still in use as a maintenance workshop. It is now forgotten in a relative backwater of the city and rarely visited.









**Gosplan Garage**









## Melnikov House

17 Krivoarbatski Lane  
Moscow, Russia

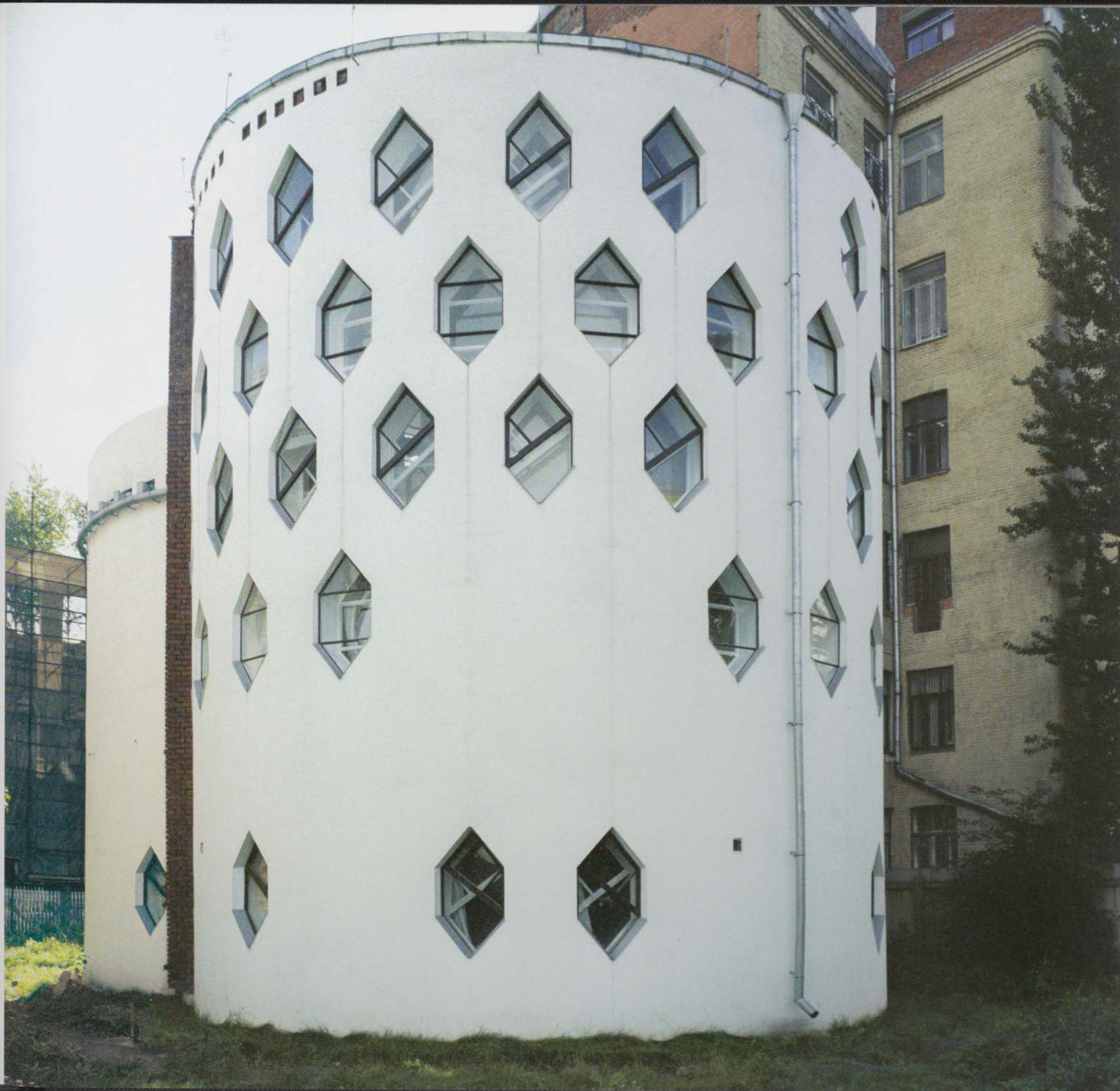
Konstantin Melnikov

1927-31

Built in an era that valued the collective over the individual, the Melnikov house is unique in the history of twentieth-century architecture. It has no precedent and no successors. As a private residence, in one of the most prominent parts of the city, it was an anomaly at the time in which it was built and in the city in which it stands. One of the most complex and symbolically charged investigations into domestic architecture, the building has had an influence far beyond its modest scale and economical construction. It is now at risk, threatened by water damage caused by poor drainage as a result of the surrounding development and by demolition as a result of the rapid escalation of land values.









Melnikov House

























## Water Tower for the Socialist City of Uralmash

1 Prospekt Kultury  
Ekaterinburg, Russia

Moisei Reisher

1929

At the time of its construction, this water tower marked the outer boundary of Uralmash, a new settlement at the outer limits of Ekaterinburg (recently renamed Sverdlovsk). Standing at the end of a long avenue laid out as one of the main arteries of the new settlement, it provided a water supply and also a panoramic vantage point for residents, a function that it still performs unofficially. Known locally as the White Tower, it has been adopted by an insurance company as its symbol. All the machinery and the metal shell of the water tank have been removed, but the tower is still in relatively good repair.

















## Communal House

**21 Malyshev Street  
Ekaterinburg, Russia**

**Moisei Ginzburg and  
Aleksandr Pasternak**

**1929-31**

Ginzburg modeled this complex on Narkomfin in Moscow, designing four blocks arranged around a courtyard. The largest block, facing Malyshev Street, was a communal house with a refectory on the top floor, originally fronted by a terrace that ran the length of the roof. The interior corridors on the third and sixth floors, visible from the exterior, provided access to the apartments on the floors above and below with alternately ascending and descending stairways. Currently undergoing extensive renovations and conversion into offices, the buildings appear to have a secure future.









Communal House









## Chekist Housing Scheme

69 Lenin Prospekt  
Ekaterinburg, Russia

Ivan Antonov, Veniamin Sokolov,  
and Arseni Tumbasov

1929-36

A communal house for officers of the Cheka (secret police), built as the result of a closed competition, stands in a prominent location on Lenin Prospekt, one of the main arteries of the city. The plan describes a hammer and sickle. The symbolism is extended by a star motif in the reinforced concrete beams at the head of the staircase of the communal block. The building incorporated shops, a kindergarten, and a clinic, with an athletic field in the interior court. It is now used as a community center.









## Chekist Housing Scheme









## House of Justice

2b Malyshev Street  
Ekaterinburg, Russia

Sergei Zakharov

1929-30

Set on a rise at the western end of the city center, the complex comprises courts with a prison nearby, a medical center, and other administrative offices. The high quality and lightness of its details sets it apart. The slim tapered edge to the form of the casting of the balconies is approached in finesse in only one other building of the period: the sculptural, incomplete arcs of the curved balconies at the sanatorium in Sochi by Merzhanov.









House of Justice









## Bus Shelter

**Arboretum**  
**Sochi, Russia**

**Architect unknown**

**Date unknown**

This modest bus shelter near the city arboretum is a rare survivor of the small street architecture of the modernist period.









## Sanatorium for Army Officers

**Matsesta**  
**Sochi, Russia**

**Aleksei Shchusev**

**1928**

Originally built for high-ranking military officers, this sanatorium is now largely vacant. Taking advantage of the temperate climate near the Black Sea, ground-floor rooms open onto terraces while those above open to balconies with perforated partitions between each unit. The public spaces still retain some of the original furniture.









**Sanatorium for  
Army Officers**









## Sanatorium for Army Officers









## Gorni Vozdukh Sanatorium

**Matsesta  
Sochi, Russia**

**Aleksandr Vesnin and  
Viktor Vesnin**

**1928**

The small "mountainous air" sanatorium has now become an army training camp and staging area for troops on their way to Chechnia. It has undergone many alterations over the years, leaving little of the original scheme visible. The left corner of the building was originally open.









## Voroshilov Sanatorium

**Matesta**  
**Sochi, Russia**

**Miron Merzhanov**

**1930-34**

Taking advantage of a spectacular hilltop site on the coast of the Black Sea at Sochi, the Voroshilov sanatorium is one of the most innovative and well executed of all the modernist works of the Soviet era. Still in good condition and little altered, the complex exudes a sense of well-being and airy transparency. Most of the guest rooms face the ocean and are provided with balconies protected by brises soleils. The main complex is connected to the ocean by a funicular railway. In 1945 Merzhanov became Stalin's personal architect, perhaps a contributing factor in the exceptionally well-maintained state of the complex.

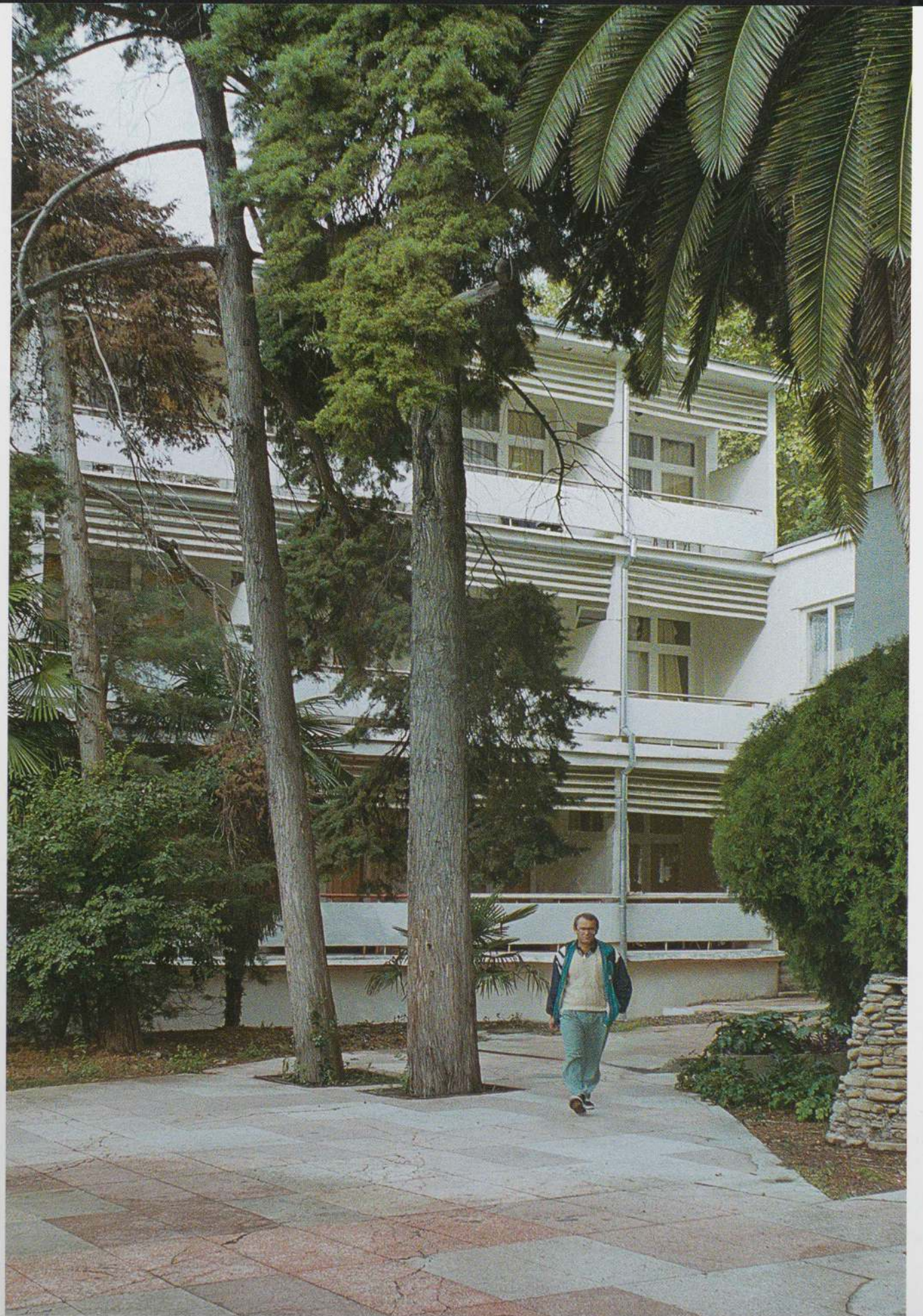








**Voroshilov Sanatorium**

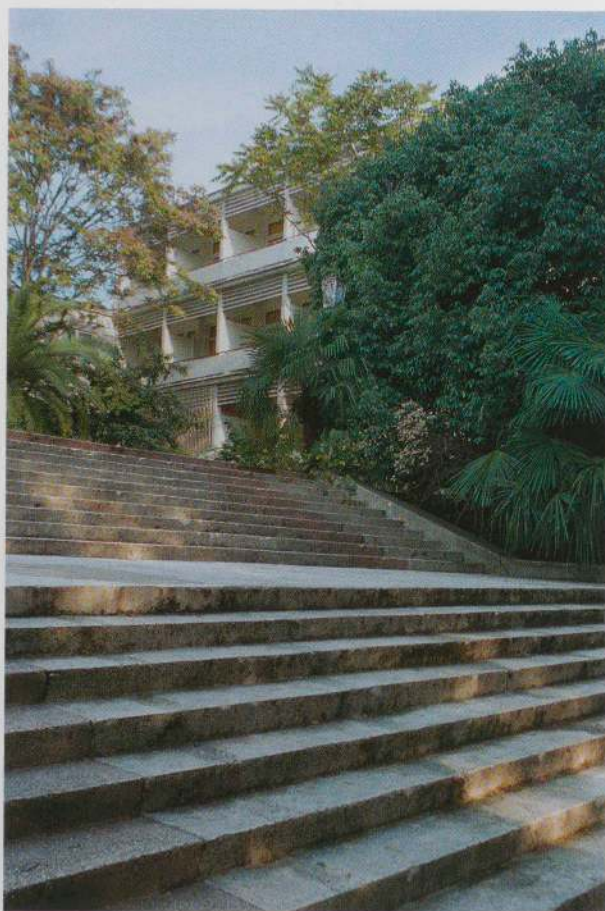








## Voroshilov Sanatorium

















Voroshilov Sanatorium









## Housing in the Kharkov Locomotive Plant Settlement

141–43 Moskovski  
Prospekt  
Kharkov, Ukraine

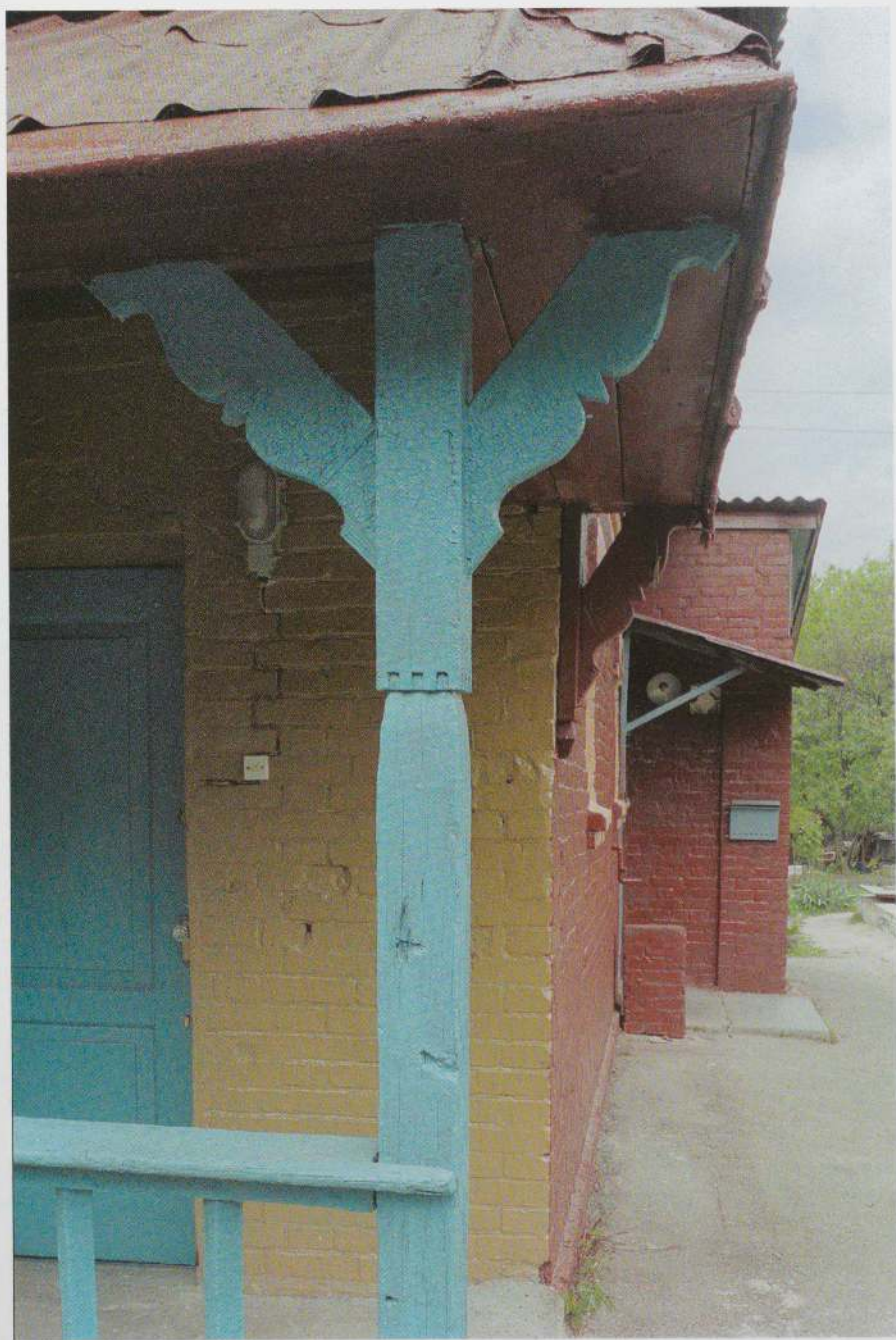
Viktor Trotsenko

1923–24

This low-density housing project is similar in concept to the Sokol District housing in Moscow. Still hesitant to embrace modernist principles, this early development incorporates the vernacular tradition in the carved support posts and fretted brackets at the entry porches. The simple structures are enlivened by an imaginative use of brick.









## Gosprom Building

**Dzerzhinski Square  
Kharkov, Ukraine**

**Sergei Serafimov,  
Mark Felger, and  
Samuil Kravets**

**1929**

Gosprom, the State House of Industry, was constructed as a conscious effort by the Soviet regime to diminish the influence of Kiev as the capital of Ukraine by moving the government administrative offices to Kharkov. Built as one of the key foci of the new town plan for the city, the buildings are a vital and powerful presence. The complex was originally conceived as a complete circle. Four segments were constructed, and of those, three remain. The fourth suffered significant damage in the World War II, and the original design was obliterated during the reconstruction. In 2004 the stucco facade facing the square was painted, and there is a plan to replace the windows.









**Gosprom Building**









**Gosprom Building**









## Gosprom Building









## Palace of Culture for the Railway Workers

81 Kotlov Street  
Kharkov, Ukraine

Aleksandr Dmitriev

1927-32

With its fluted stucco facade over a granite base, this building draws more on the vocabulary of art deco than on the rigorous formal tenets of constructivism. The high level of detailing, such as the bronze rails and granite newel posts in the stair, suggests a club for the employees of a dominant and well-funded industry. Kharkov was a prospering industrial center, and this theater is evidence of the ability of the city to attract investment from the central government.









## Palace of Culture for the Railway Workers







**3 ДНЕМ ПЕРЕ**



## Central Post Office

**2 Railway Station Square  
Kharkov, Ukraine**

**Arkadi Mordvinov**

**1928-29**

Still suggesting its symbolic role as a herald of the new era, the Central Post Office is a finely balanced modernist design. It is an imposing and dramatic presence on the square facing the railway station. The top corner of the central stair tower originally incorporated clock faces, whose outlines are still visible. The wing on the left became the regional offices of the Cheka and is still in use as a police department.









## Automated Telephone Exchange

Kharkov, Ukraine

P. Frolov

1930-31

One of a large number of buildings erected to support the new infrastructure of the expanding city, this small telephone exchange is distinguished by its sharply vertical emphasis in the narrow windows of the facade, recalling the arrangement of the banks of telephone switching equipment. It is still in use, and unlike most comparable small-scale projects, it has remained essentially unchanged.









**Automated  
Telephone Exchange**









## Palace of the Press

**Nizami Square**  
**Baku, Azerbaijan**

**Semen Pen**

**1932**

The Palace of the Press stands in the center of Baku at the corner of a park-like square that slopes away from the building. Taking advantage of the temperate climate, the building incorporates roof gardens, exterior balconies, and innovative methods of ventilation. It is now an office building for a number of small businesses and continues to maintain a connection to its original use with the editorial offices of a small publishing house and printing workshop.









Palace of the  
Press









Palace of the Press









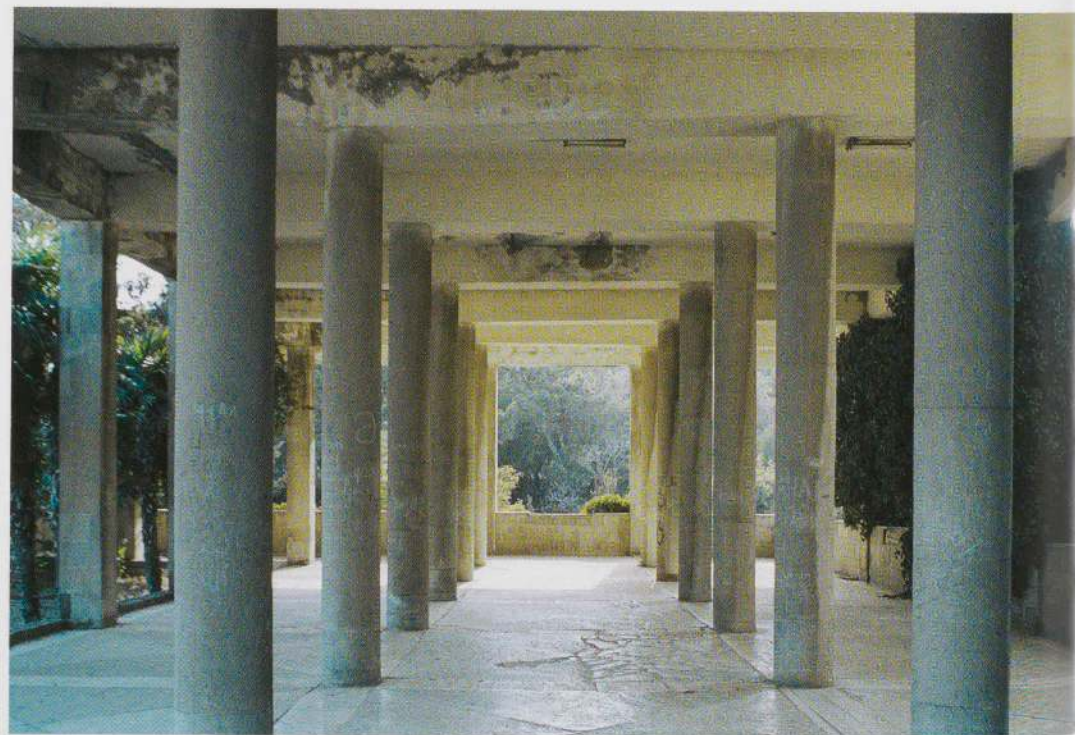
## Mountain Park

**S. M. Kirov Works**  
**Baku, Azerbaijan**

**Lev Ilin**

**1936–39**

A series of pavilions stands in this park overlooking the city and the ocean. Known as the Martyrs Cemetery, the park now commemorates the dead of the nationalist uprising put down by Soviet troops in 1990. The original intention of creating shady places for rest and tranquility has come to have a greater significance, and the simple structures, though somewhat overgrown, still provide pleasant places to linger and reflect; the pavilions afford a fine panoramic view over the city and are arranged with careful regard for the topography.









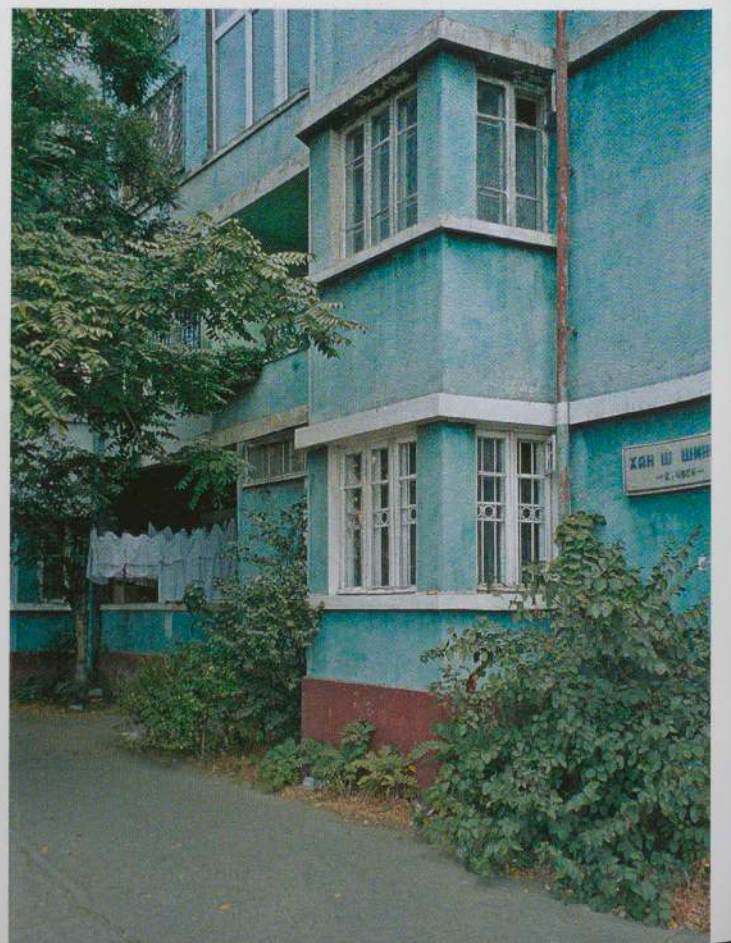
## Shaumian Settlement

Prospekt Azadly  
Baku, Azerbaijan

Anatoli Samoilov and  
Aleksandr Ivanitski

1925-28

One of the most extensive, ambitious, and relatively well preserved of the housing projects of the period, this scheme incorporates a varied group of six-story housing types. Some sections of the project have been destroyed, including a communal house that was converted into a hotel before it was demolished.









**Shaumian Settlement**









## Kirov Physiotherapy Institute

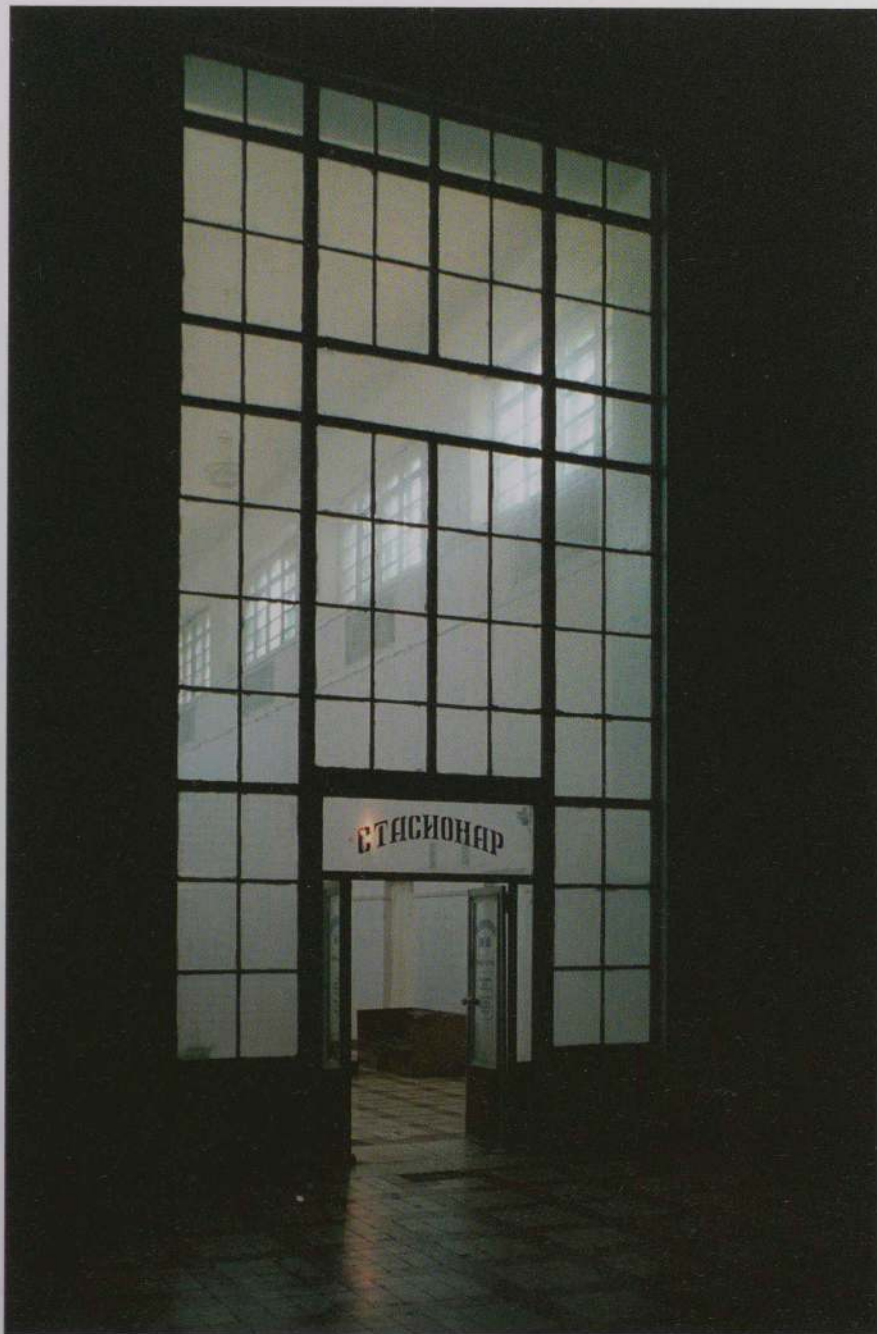
3 Hatai

Baku, Azerbaijan

Gavril Ter-Mikelov

1935

The exterior of this rehabilitation clinic is almost completely obscured by trees planted to mask its modernist design, which nevertheless is still completely apparent on the interior. The treatment rooms are located in two lateral wings leading off a central lobby, divided from the public space by the large glass walls. Patients could relax after treatment in the central hallway, which has a light and congenial atmosphere.









## Factory Kitchen

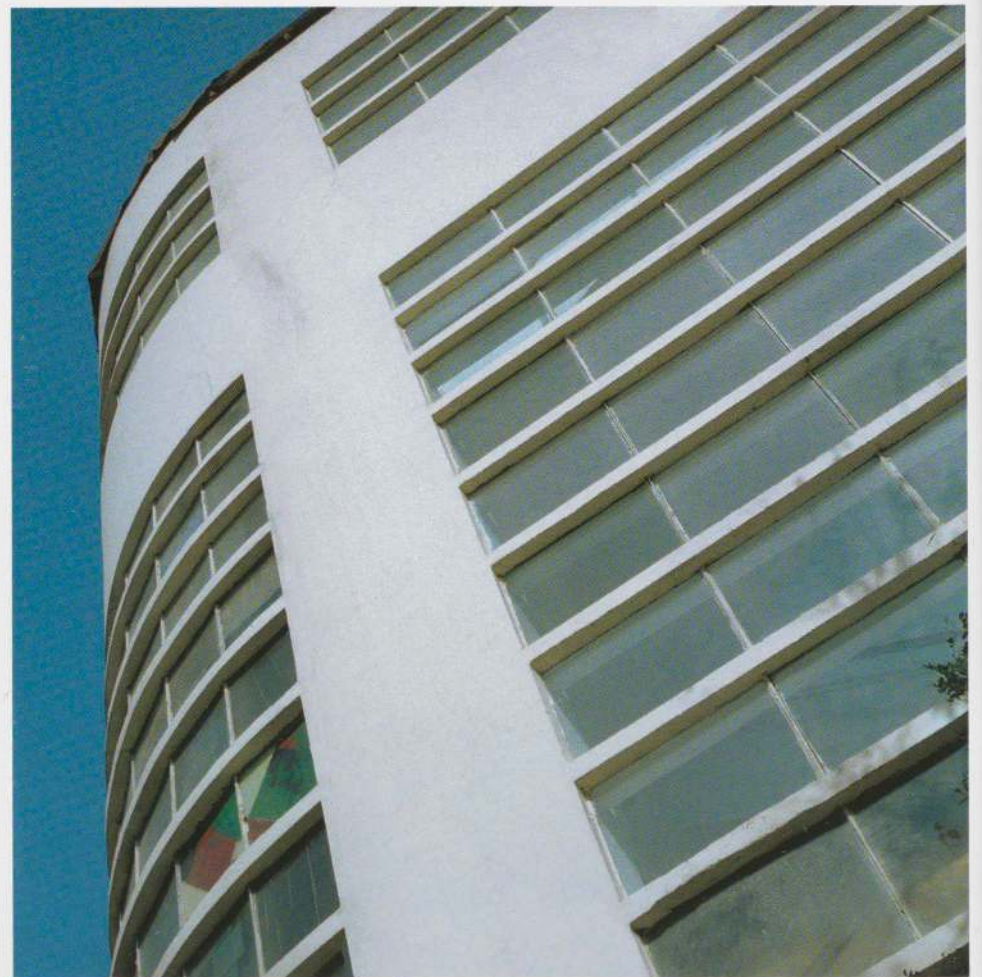
### Bailov Settlement

29 Neftchi Gurban Street  
Baku, Azerbaijan

Sadikh Dadashev and  
Mikhail Useinov

1930

Now converted into a maternity hospital, this factory kitchen has been greatly modified on the interior. The exterior, with its strong horizontal emphasis, remains largely as it was built. The treatment of the stairwell in narrow bands of alternating glazed and cast elements is an unusual variation on the rounded element so often encountered in modernist projects.









## Palace of Culture, Shaumian Works; Workers Club in Surakhany

Cherny Gorod  
Baku, Azerbaijan

Leonid Vesnin

1929

These two remarkable theaters are almost identical in the treatment of the main block. No longer in use and in poor condition, the structures still retain something of the flair of the original concept. The dramatic mass of the stage flies is used to maximum effect and the stairwells at the sides create an effect of mystery and tension that recalls both military and ecclesiastical architecture of the fifteenth century and yet remains rigorously modern in its immediacy. The stage was arranged so that performances could be given both in the auditorium and outdoors.









## Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution Secondary School

53 Lenin Prospekt  
Ivanovo, Russia

Vasili Pankov

1926-27

A simple, stripped-down art deco vocabulary lends seriousness to the decorative scheme of this building. Still in use as a school and renamed Number 32, the building has an observatory reached by a cast concrete spiral stair. The observatory is no longer functional because of ambient light at night and atmospheric pollution.









Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution Secondary School









## Red Talka Textile Mill

1 Sosnovaia Street  
Ivanovo, Russia

Boris Gladkov and Ivan Nikolaev

1927-29

The most prominent element of this factory is the water tower, which reflects the experimental projects of El Lissitzky. Although the interior of the factory is windowless, the rest of the design is characterized by long ribbons of glass on a prefabricated reinforced concrete frame. The construction system of one of these framing units is clearly apparent in the freestanding storage building.

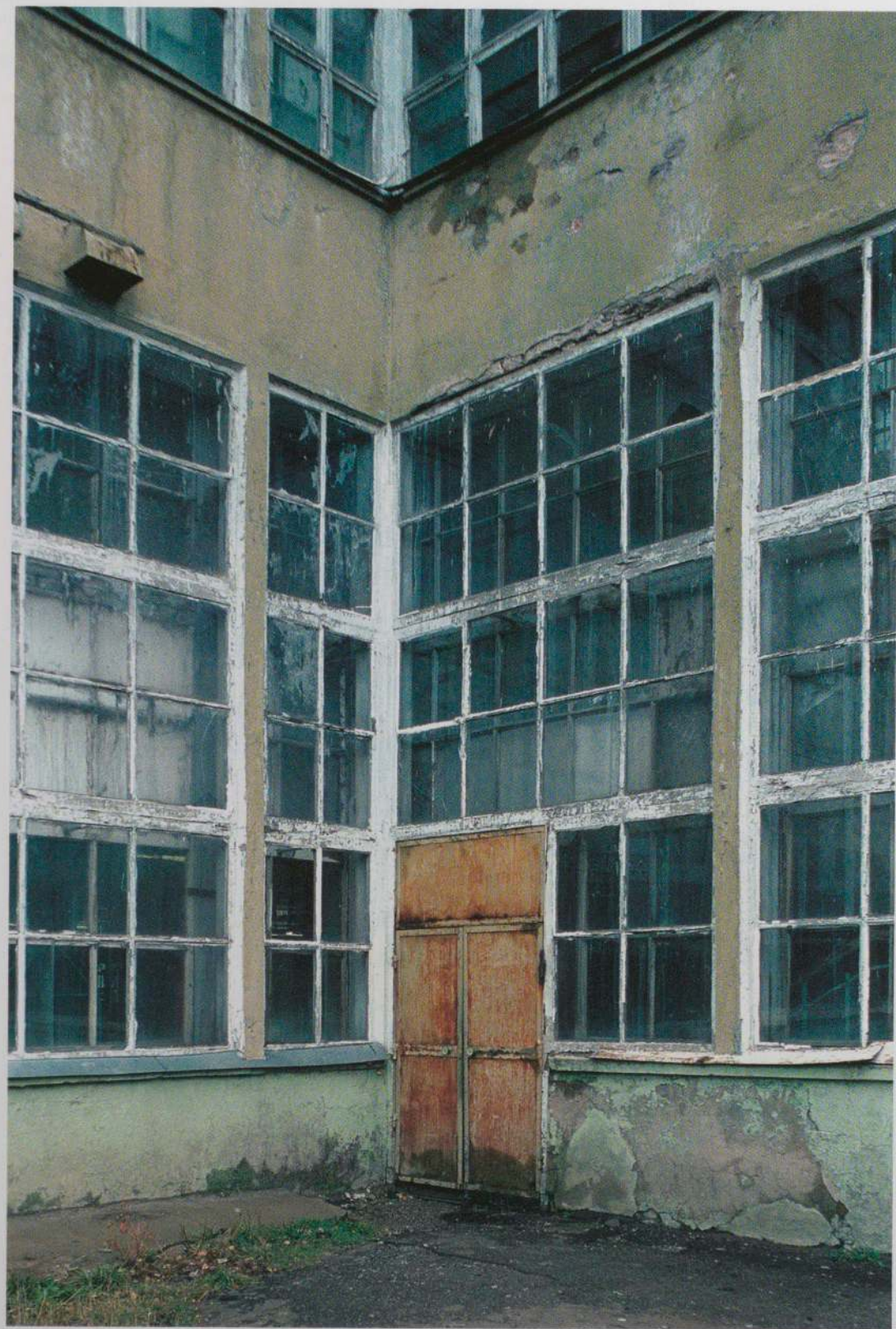








Red Talka Textile Mill









## First Settlement for Workers

Ivanovo, Russia

Leonid Vesnin and Team of  
Standard Company

1924-26

Prefabricated housing for workers was often proposed, but this settlement is one of only a few completed projects. Composed of elements that could be assembled in different combinations, the buildings show clearly their modular basis. The wooden battens that divide the facades are purely decorative, however.









**First Settlement  
for Workers**









## DneproGES, Dam and Power Station

Zaporozhe, Ukraine

Aleksandr Vesnin,  
Nikolai Kolli,  
Georgy Orlov, and  
Sergei Andrievski

1927-32

One of the biggest hydroelectric projects of its time, the Dnieper River dam and power plant remains impressive in scale. Reconstructed after World War II, the buildings of the powerhouse still adhere essentially to the original scheme, though there are some classicizing elements that suggest the period of the reconstruction. The original stucco walls were replaced with local granite.

















**DneproGES, Dam  
and Power Station**









## DneproGES, Dam and Power Station









## Residential Block No. 8

Sotsgorod Avtozavod

32 Molodezhny Prospekt  
Nizhni Novgorod, Russia

Vesnin Workshop, Nikolai Krasilnikov,  
and Nikolai Poliudov

1935-37

A portent of what was to come, this apartment building incorporates all the characteristics of early Stalinist architecture. With its imperial character and classicizing elements, it is already clear that the subtlety of the best work of the modernist period has already been lost. The Vesnins' political astuteness enabled the firm to survive the hardships of the Stalinist era largely unscathed. The office remained busy producing buildings for the regime, but these designs never approached the rigorous clarity of the work of the modernist period.









**Residential Block  
No. 8**









## Chekist Communal House

Malaia Pokrovskaja Street  
Nizhni Novgorod, Russia

Aleksandr Typikov

1929-32

The most austere of the buildings erected for the Cheka, perhaps with the exception of the brooding mass of the Leningrad headquarters, this regional office and communal house has fallen into dereliction and is now largely abandoned.









**Chekist Communal House**









## Diving Board, Dinamo Sports Club

**Kirova Street and  
Petrovskaia Alley  
Kiev, Ukraine**

**Vasili Osmak**

**1935**

Constructed on the principle of a catenary arc, this reinforced-concrete diving board displays highly advanced technical engineering standards; its form is as streamlined as the activity for which it was intended.







## Soviet Doctors Housing Cooperative

17 Bolshaia  
Zhitomirskaia Street  
Kiev, Ukraine

Pavel Aleshin

1927-30

One of the most finely detailed of all modernist buildings, this apartment complex is typical of Kievan design. A sophisticated system of brickwork fabricated from two different clays gives additional subtlety to the articulation of the curved facade. Aleshin lived in the second-floor apartment at the right of the building, which was otherwise reserved for physicians. The structure is in original condition, although some windows have been replaced in recent years.









**Soviet Doctors  
Housing Cooperative**









## Apartment Complex for Militia Personnel

**2/1 Kruglouniversitetskaia  
Street**

**Kiev, Ukraine**

**P. F. Savich**

**1933-35**

Standing on a sloping site near the central market, this block reflects the change in design direction after 1932, when Stalin's fiat abolished all professional organizations including independent architectural associations. Essentially modernist in its composition, the design is compromised by superfluous detail and vaguely classicizing elements that dilute and mask its clarity.







PHILIPS / WHIRLPOOL

АВІАКАСИ

МОРЗИЛЬНІ КАМЕРИ  
КОНДИЦІОНЕРИ



**Apartment  
Complex for  
Militia Personnel**









## Apartment Complex for Arsenal Plant Workers

4 Ianvarskogo Vosstania Street  
Kiev, Ukraine

Iosif Karakis

c. 1935

The Arsenal complex exhibits all the characteristics of post-1932 revisionism but still retains a shadow of modernist precepts. The engaged columns and lack of capitals and bases recall the work of Ivan Fomin, who sought to translate a neoclassical vocabulary into modernist terms.

















## "Metallist" Palace of Culture for Bolshevik Plant Workers

**38 Brest-Litovskoe Shosse**  
**(Prospekt Pobedy)**  
**Kiev, Ukraine**

**B. Moisevich**

**1928-33**

A veneer of stone, applied over the roughcast stucco, has disturbed the proportions of the facade of this small club. Inside are a few pieces of the original furniture, which are strongly influenced by Josef Hoffmann's designs.









**"Metallist" Palace of  
Culture for Bolshevik  
Plant Workers**









## "Pishchevik" Club for Food Industry Workers

10 Kontraktovaia Square  
Kiev, Ukraine

Nikolai Shekhonin

1931-33

The bold use of segmental arcs on both the exterior and the interior of this club creates a lively processional aspect that continues throughout the interior. The rotunda of the exhibition space is unique in Soviet modernist architecture. On the square, the balance between the club and the classical library building is exceptional; the two buildings create an effective counterpoint. The club is still in use as a performing arts center.









**"Pishchevik" Club for Food Industry Workers**









## Red Banner Textile Factory

53 Pionerskaia Street  
St. Petersburg, Russia

Erich Mendelsohn

1925-37

In 1925 Mendelsohn was invited to visit the U.S.S.R. in preparation for his design for the Red Banner factory in Leningrad. The powerhouse that provided energy to drive the looms survives, along with fragments of other parts of the plan. Whether the complex was never completed, demolished, or destroyed in the war is unclear. The project is almost unknown. Only a small illustration appears in *USSR in Construction*, and the model was published in the catalog of a retrospective exhibition of Mendelsohn's works. When these photographs were taken, the factory was still fulfilling occasional orders and the plant was brought into operation as needed.









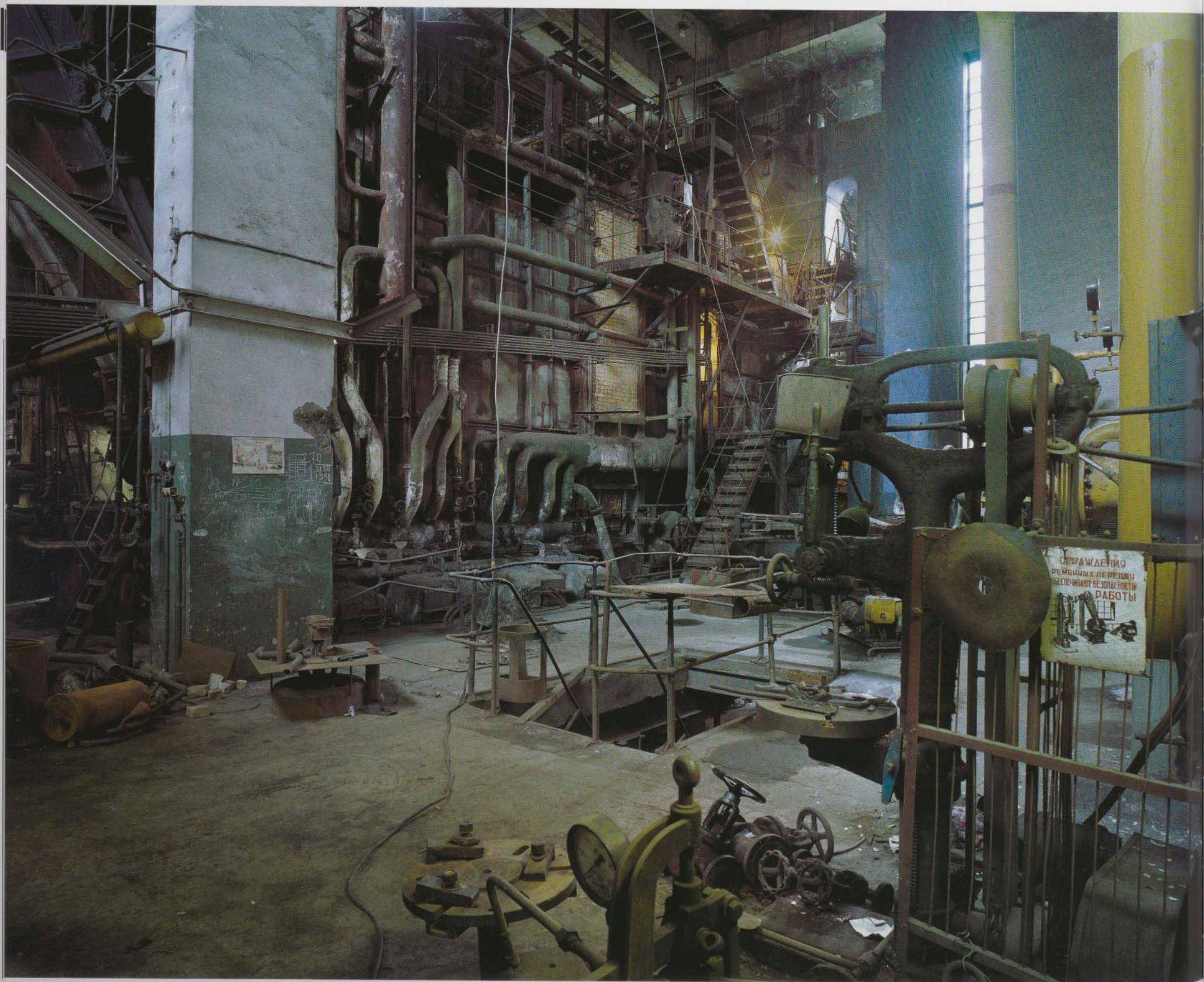
## Red Banner Textile Factory

















## Tractor Street Workers Housing

**Kirov District  
St. Petersburg, Russia**

**Aleksandr Nikolski with  
Aleksandr Gegello and  
Grigori Simonov**

**1927**

The population of the Kirov District played a major role in the success of the revolution and so benefited from favorable attention from the Bolsheviks. This manifested itself in a concerted building effort that led to a high concentration of superior buildings erected during the modernist period. The earliest of these is this remarkable housing scheme. Even after eighty years it still seems radical in its daring use of segmental arches and details that are almost cubist in their effect. The use of travertine for the masonry details is also exceptional.

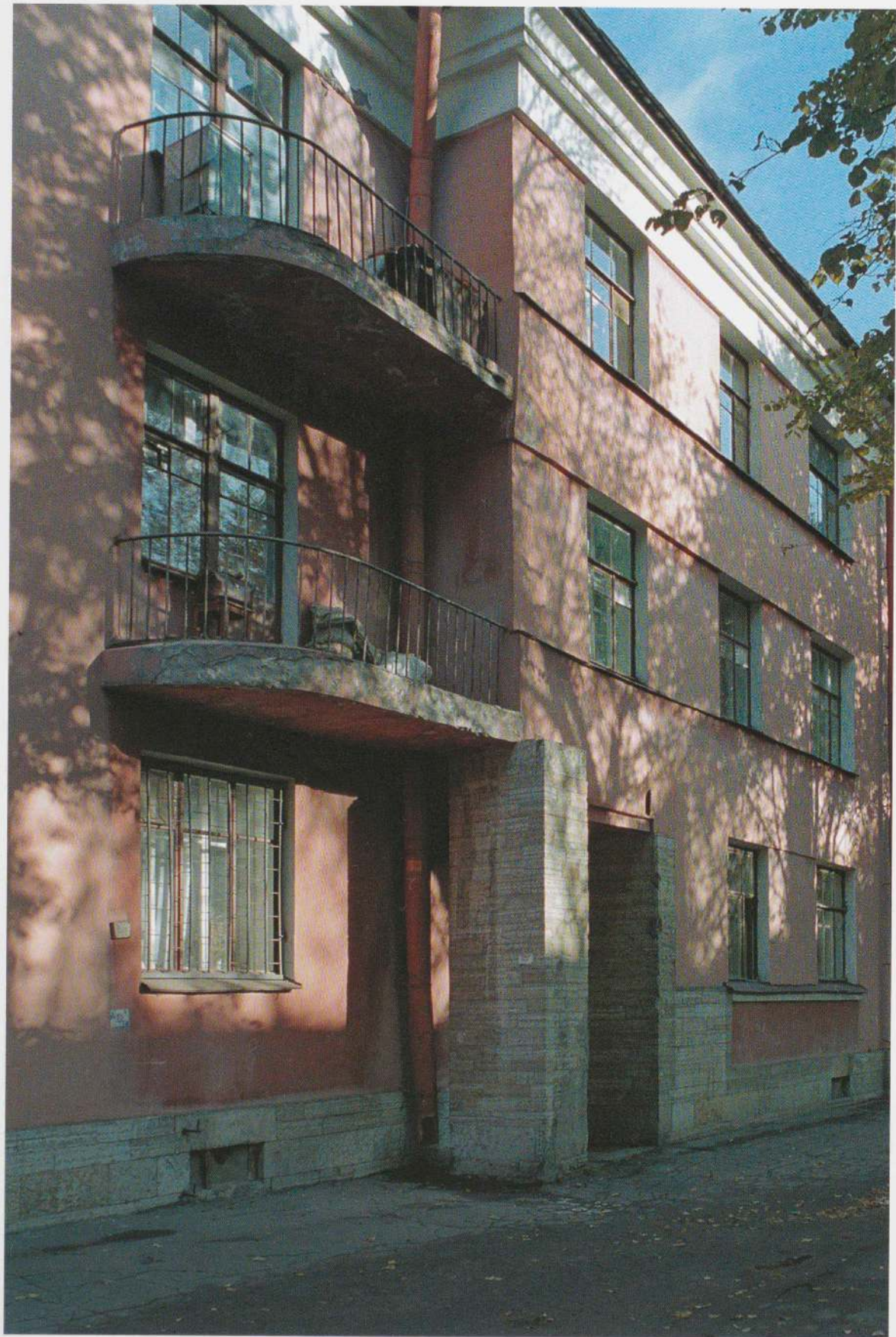








**Tractor Street Workers  
Housing**









## Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution Secondary School

9 Tkachei Street  
St. Petersburg, Russia

Grigori Simonov

1927-29

The basic form of a hammer and sickle is incorporated into the plan of this school. Still largely in original condition, the building is remarkably efficient and well suited to its function. The observatory, now closed, occupies the head of the hammer in the plan.









## Lensoviet Communal House

13 Karpovka River  
Embankment  
St. Petersburg, Russia

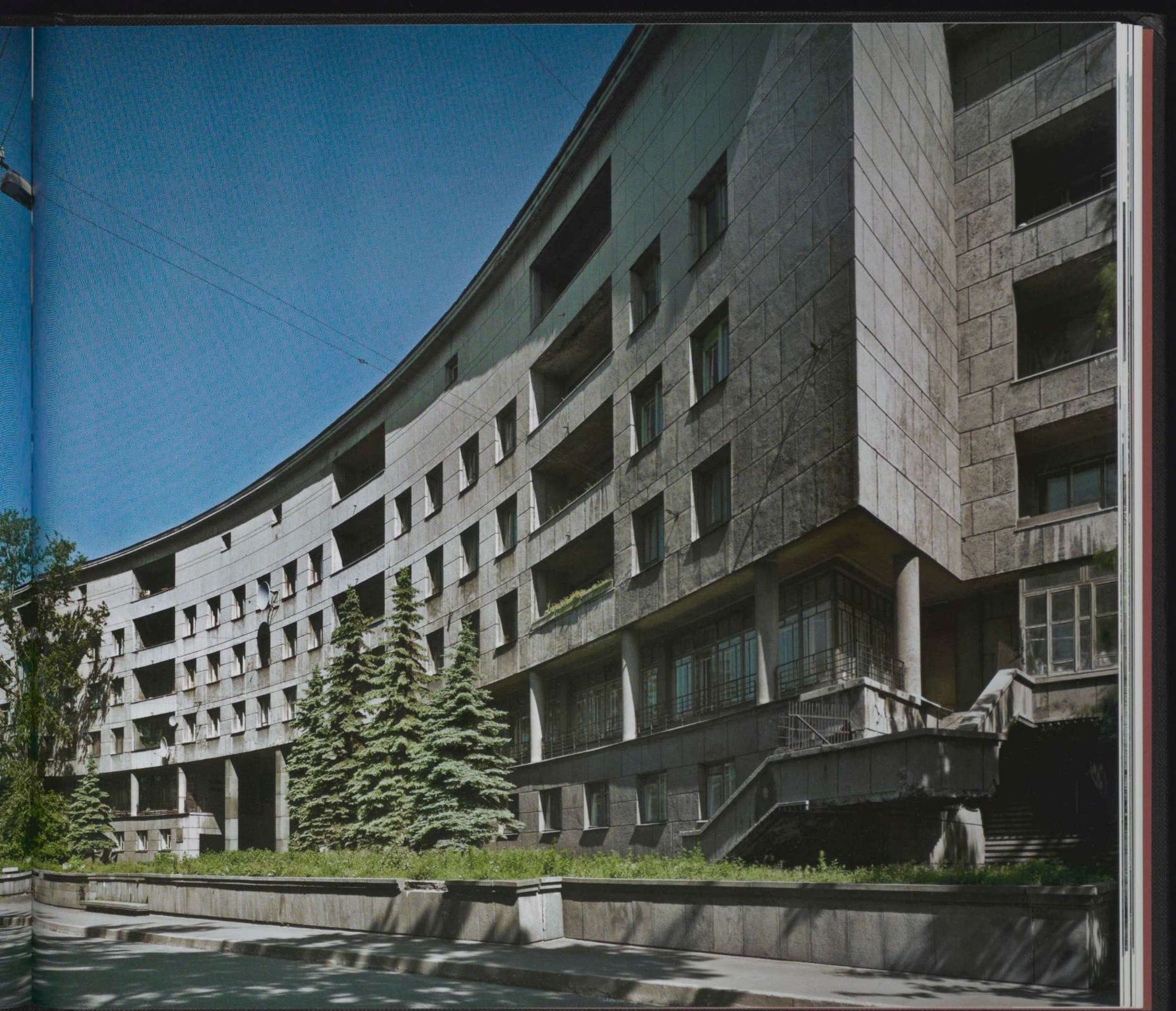
Evgeni Levinson and  
Igor Fomin

1934

Sited on the embankment of the Karpovka River, the Lensoviet Communal House was the most sumptuously appointed of all the modernist buildings in Leningrad. Built for high-ranking military officers, the masonry structure incorporates a subtle system of decorative detail. It is also remarkable for the imaginative processional program of stairways giving access to the different levels of public space.









Lensoviet Communal House









## Vyborg District Factory Kitchen

45 Bolshoi  
Sampsonievski Prospekt  
St. Petersburg, Russia

Armen Baruchev,  
Izidor Gilter, Iosif Meerzon,  
and Iakov Rubanchik

1928-33

This is the first of three factory kitchens built by a group from ASNOVA, one of the leading polemical groups that espoused rationalist ideas. Meerzon had worked with Vladimir Tatlin on the model of the tower for the Third International. All three of the kitchens share a similar architectural program, and it is still possible to read the evolution of the basic concept in each building. This one is the smallest but it incorporates the most radical ideas, particularly the cantilevered canopy over the roof deck. The building still operates as a bakery and pasta factory and the upper floor has become a Jewish community center with programs for the elderly.









## Vasileostrovski Factory Kitchen

68 Bolshoi Prospekt,  
Vasilievski Island  
St. Petersburg, Russia

Armen Baruchev,  
Izidor Gilter, Iosif Meerzon,  
and Iakov Rubanchik

1930-31

The second of the three factory kitchens by ASNOVA members, this was the most ambitious in scale and production. Now the building is completely derelict, and everything that could be salvaged for scrap has been removed, leaving only a shell. In this stripped state, the building has returned to its original purity of expression; light permeates the interior as it did when it was completed. Even though the vocabulary is uncompromisingly modernist, the construction techniques are essentially the same as those that had been in use for centuries. The trusses of the roof pavilion are wood reinforced with steel plates at the points of maximum stress.









Vasileostrovski Factory Kitchen









Vasileostrovski Factory Kitchen









**Vasileostrovski Factory Kitchen**









## Narvski Factory Kitchen and Department Store

9 Stachek Square  
St. Petersburg, Russia

Armen Baruchev,  
Izidor Gilter, Iosif Meerzon,  
and Iakov Rubanchik

1928-31

The most prominent structure at the northern end of the Kirov District, this building incorporates both a kitchen and a department store, which is still functioning. The enclosed top floor was originally an open terrace.





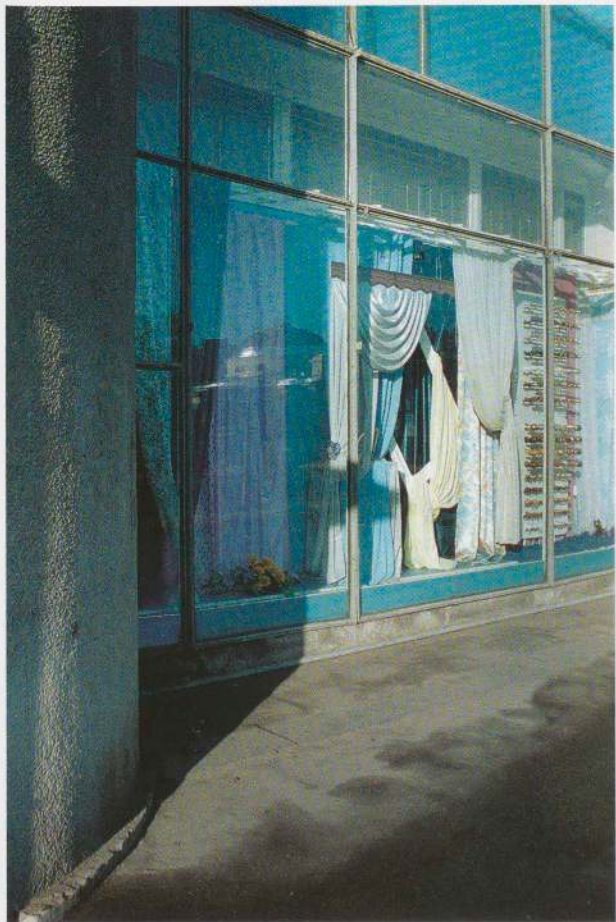




Narvski Factory Kitchen and Department Store









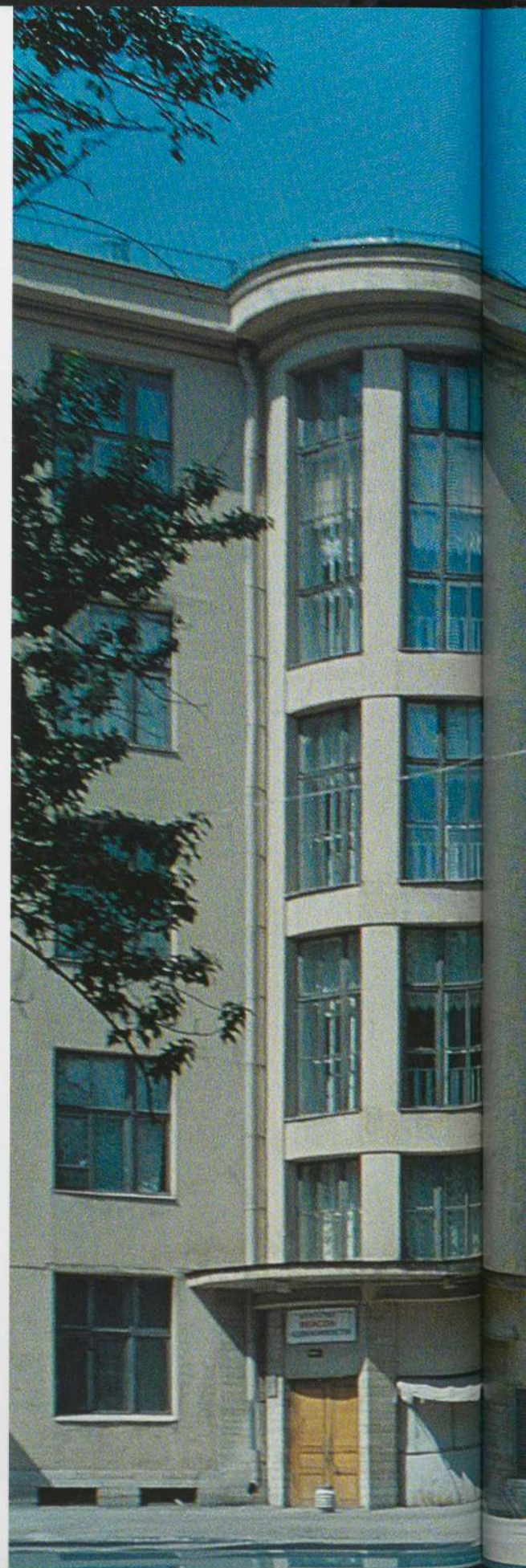
## House of Technical Education of the Kirov District

Stachek Square  
St. Petersburg, Russia

David Krichevski and  
Aleksandr Gegello

1931-35

The House of Technical Education was reduced to a shell after having been gutted by fire. The only section that remains intact is the curved entrance pavilion. The treatment here is unique with the highly unusual stepped windows ascending to give outward visual expression to the double stairways that lie behind the facade. The remaining interior space is now a furniture showroom.







18

ИВКАЯ  
МЕБЕЛЬ  
в 1984  
ГОДУ  
ИЗГОТОВИЛА  
МЕБЕЛЬ  
СТОИМОСТЬЮ  
12000 0000

ИВКАЯ  
МЕБЕЛЬ  
в 1984  
ГОДУ  
ИЗГОТОВИЛА  
МЕБЕЛЬ  
СТОИМОСТЬЮ  
12000 0000



## S. M. Kirov Palace of Culture

**83 Bolshoi Prospekt,  
Vasilevski Island  
St. Petersburg, Russia**

**Noi Trotski**

**1930–37**

A performance space and cultural center, the Kirov Palace of Culture displays all the characteristics of buildings erected in the aftermath of the edict of 1932, which represented the effective end of the modernist experiment. Here the application of classicizing elements—coffering, the imitation of ashlar masonry in the stucco, and the fluting on the engaged columns—already begin to obscure the modernist aesthetic that underlies the scheme.







БИЛЬЯРДНЫЙ КЛУБ

P

10:15-20

Pioneer

В 726 КВ 14

В 438 ЕТ 78



S. M. Kirov Palace of Culture







ДВ РЕЦ

ИМЕНИ  
М. КИР

"ВАЛУ-МЕБЕЛЬ"  
**ОФИСНАЯ МЕБЕЛЬ**  
ВЫСТАВОЧНЫЕ ЗАЛЫ  
Д.К. им. Кирова 3 эт. т. 217-54-05, 217-53-00  
Лыговский пр. 87. т. 194-65-99

САЛОН-МАГАЗИН  
**Зверё Моё**  
ВСЕ ДЛЯ ВАШИХ ПИТОМЦЕВ

МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ  
ТУРИЗМ  
КАФЕ



## Kirov District Soviet Building

**18 Stachek Prospekt**  
**St. Petersburg, Russia**

**Noi Trotski**

**1934**

The District Soviet Building is prominently sited at the end of the long axis of Stachek Prospekt. The administrative offices for the area continue to occupy the space, and the building is well maintained, although much of the interior has been altered. The main stairway and hallways have retained their original character, showing a high level of detail in the realization of the architect's designs. The clock tower, which dominates the ensemble, deploys a well-proportioned series of elements in a harmonious whole, and is perhaps the most finely resolved constructivist tower.









**Kirov District  
Soviet Building**









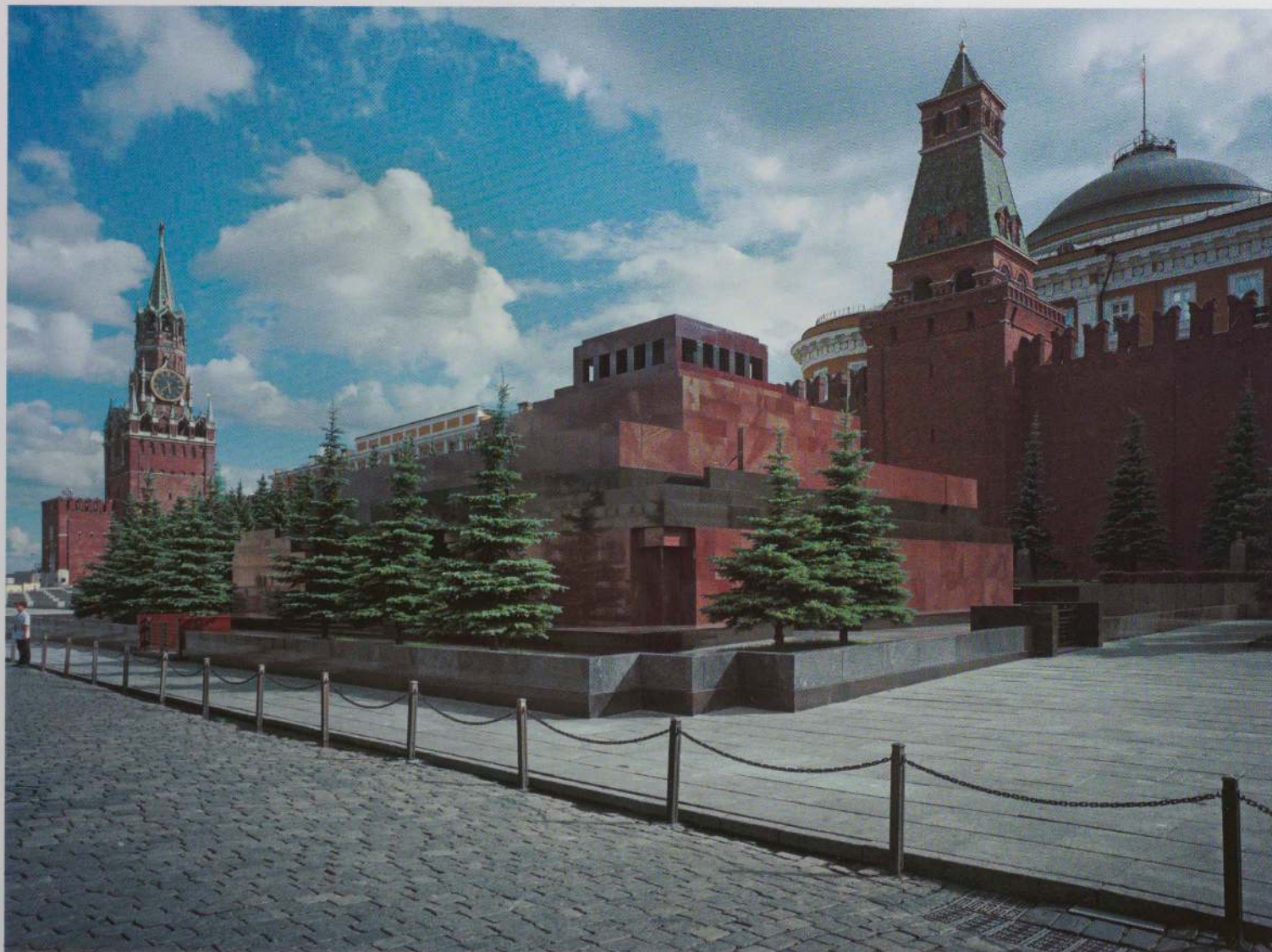
## Lenin Mausoleum

**Red Square**  
**Moscow, Russia**

**Aleksei Shchusev**

**1924–30**

The mausoleum was the third manifestation of the building erected to enshrine the embalmed body of Lenin. Constructed of the most sumptuous and rare materials selected for their durability, the building was to be the symbolic heart of the Soviet regime and provided the rostrum on which a succession of leaders of the Communist Party took the salute at the May Day parade. The building incorporates a guardhouse, administrative offices, and an elaborate system of climate controls. The installation of Lenin as the touchstone of the regime was the result of Stalin's own agenda to establish a foundation on which to construct his own edifice as the father of his country. With the openness of the Shabolovka radio tower as the herald of the modernist period in Russia, the impassive mausoleum can be seen as the final statement of the end of modernism in Russia and the U.S.S.R.





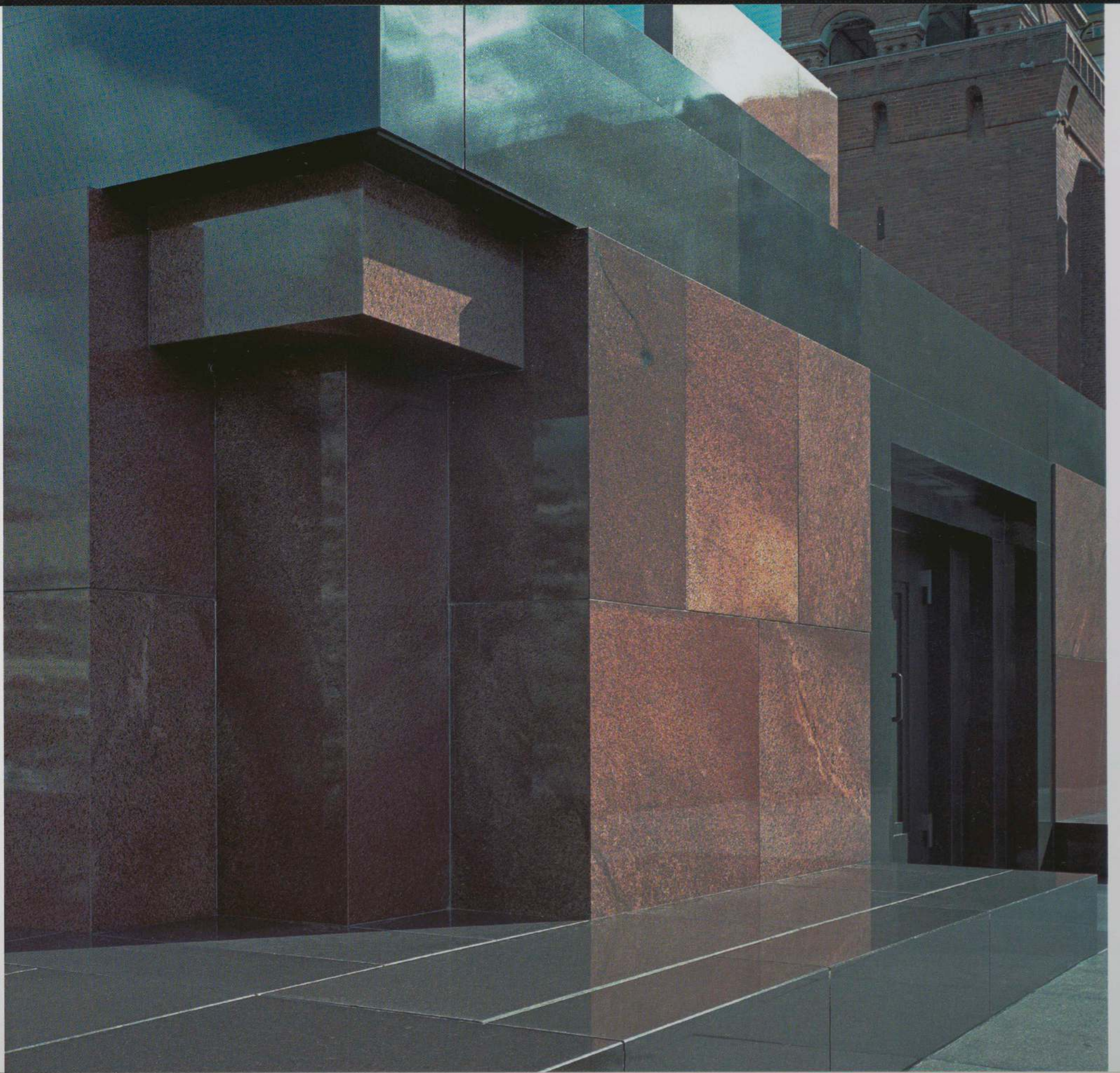




ЛЕЕНИН

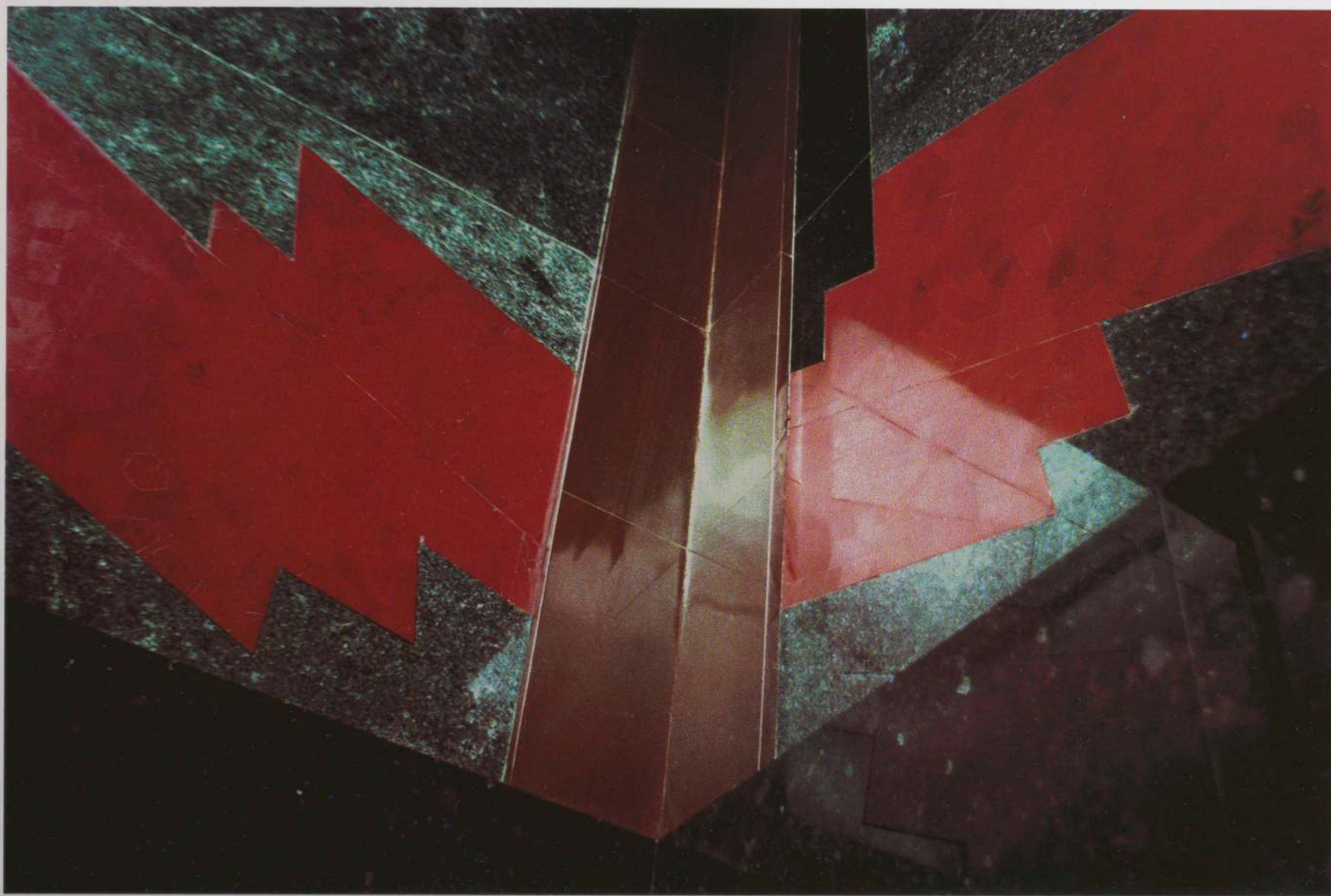








Lenin Mausoleum









# Architect Biographies

## **Pavel Aleshin**

(b. Kiev, 1881; d. Kiev, 1961)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1913

Principal projects:

Soviet Doctors Housing Cooperative, Kiev, 1927–30

Tractor Factory, Kharkov, 1929–30 (only partially built)

## **Sergei Andrievski**

(b. Kuliansk, Ukraine 1898; d. Moscow, 1978)

Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), Diploma 1927

Principal projects:

DneproGES (with A. Vesnin, N. Kolli, and G. Orlov), Dnieper River, Ukraine, 1927–32

Planning and construction of settlement at the Dneprostoi river-side, 1932

## **Ivan Antonov**

(b. 1887; d. 1940)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1917

Principal projects:

Chekist Housing Scheme (with V. Sokolov and A. Tumbasov), Sverdlovsk, 1929–36

House for Retired Bolsheviks, 8th March Street, Sverdlovsk, 1930

## **Grigori Barkhin**

(b. Perm, 1880; d. Moscow, 1969)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1901–8

Principal projects:

Competition project for a peoples home (with M. Barkhin), Ivanovo, 1924–25

Izvestia Building (with M. Barkhin), Moscow, 1925–27

Competition project for theaters in Rostov-on-Don and Sverdlovsk (with M. Barkhin), 1930–31

Sanatorium (with M. Barkhin), Sheki, Crimea

Publication:

*Theater Architecture*, 1949

## **Mikhail Barkhin**

(b. Bobruisk, 1906; d. Moscow, 1988)

Education:

Moscow Institute of Civil Engineering (MIGI), 1922–24

Principal projects:

Competition project for a peoples home (with G. Barkhin), Ivanovo, 1924–25

Izvestia Building (with G. Barkhin), Moscow, 1925–27

Competition project for theaters in Rostov-on-Don and Sverdlovsk (with G. Barkhin), 1930–31

Project for V. Meyerhold Theater (with S. Vakhtangov), Moscow 1930–33

## **Armen Baruchev**

(b. St. Petersburg, 1904; d. Shusha, 1976)

Member of ASNOVA, later ARU (Architects-Urbanists), 1930–31

Education:

Academy of Arts, Leningrad, Diploma 1927

Principal projects:

Factory kitchens in Vyborgski, Vasileostrovski, Nevski, and Moscow-Narvski districts (with I. Gilter, I. Meerzon, and I. Rubanchik), Leningrad, 1928–33

## **Lazar Cherikover**

(b. Poltava, 1895; d. Moscow, 1964)

Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), Diploma 1928

Principal project:

Dinamo Stadium (with A. Langman), Moscow, 1928

## **Sadikh Dadashev**

(b. Baku, 1905; d. Baku, 1946)

Education:

Politechnical Institute, Baku, Diploma 1929

Principal project:

Factory Kitchen (with M. Useinov), Bailov Settlement, Baku, 1930

## **Aleksandr Dmitriev**

(b. 1873; d. 1959)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1900

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1903

Principal project:

Palace of Culture for the Railway Workers, Kharkov, 1927–32

## **Mark Felger**

(b. Odessa, 1881; d. Leningrad, 1962)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1901–12

Principal projects:

Department of Industry and Planning, 1925–33

Gosprom Building (with S. Serafimov and S. Kravets), Kharkov, 1929

Residence for the Red Textile Workers Cooperative, Leningrad, 1930

Student housing for the Polytechnic Institute, Leningrad, 1932

## **Anatoli Fisenko**

(b. Moscow, 1902; d. Moscow, 1982)

Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), Diploma 1925

Principal projects:

Central Institute of Aerodynamics and Hydrodynamics (TSAGI; with A. Kuznetsov, B. Gladkov, G. Movchan, and I. Nikolaev), 1924–28

Complex for Moscow Textile Institute (MTI)

Tractor factory (with V. Shevzov), Cheliabinsk, 1930–33



**Ivan Fomin**

(b. Orel, 1872; d. Moscow, 1936)

## Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1894–97 and 1905–9

## Principal projects:

Competition projects for the Workers Palace and Crematorium, Petrograd, 1919

Competition project for the Soviet pavilion at the Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes, Paris, 1925

Dinamo Stadium Complex, Moscow, 1926–30

Extension to the Mossoviet (Moscow Council)

NKPS (People's Commissariat of Transport and Communications), Moscow, 1928–31

Competition project for Narkomtiazhprom Building in Red Square, Moscow, 1934

**Aleksandr Gegello**

(b. Ekaterinoslav, 1891; d. Moscow, 1965)

## Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1911–20

## Principal projects:

Competition project for the ARKOS Building, Moscow, 1923

Tractor Street Workers Housing (with A. Nikolski and G. Simonov), Leningrad, 1927

A. M. Gorky Palace of Culture (with D. Krichevski), Leningrad, 1927

Botkin Hospital (with D. Krichevski), Leningrad, 1929

House of Technical Education (with D. Krichevski), Leningrad, 1931–35

**Vladimir Gelfreikh**

(b. St. Petersburg, 1885; d. Moscow, 1967)

## Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1906–15

## Principal Projects:

Lenin State Library (with V. Shchuko), Moscow, 1923–52

Maxim Gorky Theater (with V. Shchuko), Rostov-on-Don, 1936

Foreign Office Building, Smolenskaia Square, Moscow, 1948–53

**Izidor Gilter**

(b. Moscow, 1902; d. Kiev, 1973)

Member of ASNOVA, later ARU (Architects-Urbanists), 1930–31

## Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1927

## Principal projects:

Factory kitchens in Vyborgski, Vasileostovski, Nevski, and Moscow-Narvski districts (with A. Baruchev, I. Meerzon, and I. Rubanchik), Leningrad, 1928–33

**Moisei Ginzburg**

(b. Minsk, 1892; d. Moscow, 1946)

## Education:

Accademia di Brera, Milan, Diploma 1914

Polytechnic Institute, Riga, 1914–17

## Principal projects:

Gosstrakh Apartment House, Moscow, 1926–27

Communal House (with A. Pasternak), Sverdlovsk, 1929–31

Narkomfin Communal House (with I. Milinis), Moscow, 1930

House of Government (with I. Milinis), Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, 1931

Competition design (with G. Hassenpflug and S. Lisagor) for the Palace of the Soviets, Moscow, 1932

Sanatorium, Kislovodsk, 1935–38

## Publications:

*Style and Epoch*, 1929

*Housing*, 1934

**Boris Gladkov**

(b. Moscow, 1897; d. Moscow, 1992)

## Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), 1920–23

## Principal projects:

Pavilions for the First All-Russian Exposition for Agriculture and Handicrafts, Moscow, 1923

Aerodynamic tube building for the Central Institute of Aerodynamics and Hydrodynamics (TSAGI), 1925

Red Talka Textile Mill (with I. Nikolaev), Ivanovo, 1927–29

Communal housing for students, Lefortovo, Studencheskaia Street, Moscow, 1930

**Ilia Golosov**

(b. Moscow, 1883; d. Moscow, 1945)

Member of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1925

## Education:

Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, Diploma 1912

## Principal projects:

Competition project for the Palace of Labor, Moscow, 1923

Competition project for the Moscow office of *Leningrad Pravda*, 1924

Lenin House of the People, Ivanovo, 1924

Zuev Workers Club, Moscow, 1926

Competition design for the Palace of the Soviets, Moscow, 1931–33

**Panteleimon Golosov**

(b. Moscow, 1882; d. Moscow, 1945)

Member of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1925

## Education:

Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, Diploma 1911

## Principal projects:

Pavilions for the First All-Russian Exposition of Agriculture and Handicrafts, Moscow, 1923

Pravda Building, Moscow, 1930–34



**Georgi Iakovlev**

(b. Romanovski Khutor, 1903; d. Moscow, 1969)

Education:

VKHUTEIN, Moscow, Diploma 1928

Principal project:

V. I. Lenin Military Political Academy (with A. Shchusev), Moscow, 1930–34

**Lev Ilin**

(b. Podosklai, near Tambov, 1880; d. Leningrad, 1942)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1897–1902

Academy of Arts, 1903–4

Principal projects:

Reconstruction of Stachek Prospekt, Leningrad, 1924–26

Town-planning project for Baku and Yaroslavl, 1930–36

Mountain Park, Baku, 1936–39

**Boris Iofan**

(b. Odessa, 1891; Moscow, 1976)

Education:

Regio Istituto Superiore di Belle Arti, Rome, 1914–16

Scuola d'Applicazione per gli Ingegneri, Rome, 1917

Principal projects:

VTsIK residential complex (with the Udarnik cinema), Moscow, 1928–31

Barvikha Sanatorium, outskirts of Moscow, 1929–35

Winning entry for the Palace of the Soviets competition, Moscow, 1931–34

**Aleksandr Ivanitski**

(b. Ostrog, Ukraine 1881; d. 1947, Moscow)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1898–1904

Principal projects:

General plan for Arkhangelsk, 1923–24

General plan for Baku and Apsheron, 1924–28

General plan for Tver, 1925–26

General plan for Rzhev, 1927

General plan for Nizhni Novgorod, 1929–39

Armenikend Apartments, Shaumian Settlement (with A. Samoilov), Baku, 1925–28

**Iosif Karakis**

(b. Balta, 1902; d. Kiev, [?])

Education:

Kiev Art Institute, 1923–27

Principal projects:

Dinamo Restaurant (with P. Savich), Kiev, 1933

Housing in Goloseevo, Kiev, 1931–32

Apartment Complex for Arsenal Plant Workers, Kiev, c. 1935

Housing and kindergarten, Ianvarskogo Vosstania Street, Kiev, 1933–36

**David Kogan**

(b. Odessa, 1884; d. Moscow, 1954)

Education:

VKHUTEMAS, Moscow, Diploma 1924

Principal project:

Mosselprom, Moscow, 1923–24

**Nikolai Kolli**

(b. Moscow, 1894; d. Moscow, 1966)

Education:

VKHUTEMAS, Moscow, Diploma 1922

Principal projects:

Project for the Central Stadium, Moscow, 1933–41

DneproGES (with A. Vesnin, G. Orlov, and S. Andrievski), Dnieper River, Ukraine, 1927–32

Centrosoyuz Building (with Le Corbusier and P. Jeanneret), 1929–36

**Nikolai Krasilnikov**

(b. Moscow, 1899; d. Moscow, 1983)

Education:

VKHUTEMAS-VHUTEIN, Diploma 1928

Principal projects:

Project for a housing quarter (with M. Barshch), Kharkov, 1929

Town-planning project, Chardjui region, 1931

Residential Block No. 8 (with A. Vesnin and N. Poliudov), Nizhni Novgorod, 1935–37

**Samuil Kravets**

(b. Vilno, 1891; d. Leningrad, 1966)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1917

Principal project:

Gosprom Building (with S. Serafimov and M. Felger), Kharkov, 1929

**David Krichevski**

(b. Ramenskoe, 1894; d. Barnaul, 1942)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1924

Principal projects:

A. M. Gorki Palace of Culture (with A. Gegello), 1927

Viborgski Palace of Culture (with A. Gegello), 1925–27

Botkin Hospital (with A. Gegello), St. Petersburg, 1929

House of Technical Education (with A. Gegello), St. Petersburg, 1931–35

**Aleksandr Kuznetsov**

(b. St. Petersburg, 1874; d. Moscow, 1954)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1891–96

Polytechnic Institute, Berlin



Principal projects:

Bogorodsk-Ghukhov Factory, near Moscow, 1908  
Stroganov School workshops building, Moscow, 1914  
Central Institute of Aerodynamics and Hydrodynamics (TSAGI;  
with B. Gladkov, A. Fisenko, G. Movchan and I. Nikolaev),  
1924–28  
Textile mill, Fergana, Uzbekistan, 1930  
Publication:  
*Architectural Structures*, 1940

**Arkadi Langman**

(b. Kharkov, 1886; d. Moscow, 1968)  
Education:  
Technische Hochschule, Vienna, 1904–11  
Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1911–13  
Principal projects:  
Apartment house, 9 Marshlevski Street, Moscow, 1923  
Gostorg (Soviet trade organization; under leadership of  
Velikovski), Moscow, 1925  
Dinamo Stadium (with L. Cherikover), Moscow, 1928  
DOM STO/Council of Labor and Defense, Moscow, 1933–36

**Le Corbusier (b. Charles-Edouard Jeanneret)**

(b. La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland, 1887; d. Roquebrune-Cap-  
Martin, France, 1965)  
Principal Russian projects:  
Winning submission for the Centrosoyuz Building (with Pierre  
Jeanneret), 1928  
Centrosoyuz Building (with N. Kolli), 1929–36  
"Response to Moscow," plan of Moscow and the surrounding  
region, 1930  
Competition project for the Palace of the Soviets, Moscow,  
1931–32

**Evgeni Levinson**

(b. Odessa, 1894; d. Leningrad, 1968)  
Education:  
Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1915  
Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1924–27  
Principal projects:  
Lensoviet Communal House (with Igor Fomin), Leningrad, 1934  
Karpovka River Embankment, Leningrad, 1934

**Nikolai Markovnikov**

(b. Kazan, 1869; d. Moscow, 1942)  
Education:  
Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1888–92  
Principal project:  
Sokol Garden Settlement, Moscow, 1923–30

**Iosif Meerzon**

(b. St. Petersburg, 1900; d. St. Petersburg, 1941)  
Member of ASNOVA, later ARU (Architects-Urbanists), 1930–31  
Education:  
Academy of Arts, Leningrad, Diploma 1927  
Principal projects:  
Model of Monument to the Third International (under the leader-  
ship of V. Tatlin), 1920  
Factory kitchens in Vyborgski, Vasileostovski, Nevski, and  
Moscow-Narvski districts (with A. Baruchev, I. Gilter, and I.  
Rubanchik), Leningrad, 1928–33

**Konstantin Melnikov**

(b. Moscow, 1890; d. Moscow, 1974)  
Education:  
Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, Diploma  
1917  
Principal projects:  
Competition projects for workers housing and for the Palace of  
Labor, Moscow, 1922–23  
Makhorka Pavilion for the First All-Russian Exposition of Agriculture  
and Handicrafts, Moscow, 1923  
Competition project for the Moscow office of the *Leningrad  
Pravda*, 1924  
Soviet pavilion for the Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs  
et industriels modernes, Paris, 1925  
Mossovet Truck Garage, Moscow, 1926–29  
Rusakov Workers Club, Moscow, 1927  
Frunze Workers Club, Moscow, 1927–29  
Kavchuk Factory Workers Club, Moscow, 1927–29  
Melnikov House, Moscow, 1927–31  
Burevestnik Factory Workers Club, Moscow, 1928–30  
Svoboda Factory Workers Club, Moscow  
Competition project for the Christopher Columbus memorial light-  
house, Santo Domingo, 1929  
Competition projects for the Palace of the Soviets, Moscow, 1932  
Competition projects for the Narkomtiazhprom Building on Red  
Square, Moscow, 1934  
Intourist Garage, Moscow, 1934  
Gosplan Parking Garage, Moscow, 1936

**Erich Mendelsohn**

(b. Allenstein [East Prussia], 1887; d. San Francisco, 1953)  
Principal Russian projects:  
Red Banner Textile Factory, St. Petersburg, 1925–27  
Competition project of the Palace of the Soviets, Moscow,  
1931–32  
Publication:  
*Russland, Europa, Amerika*, 1929



**Miron Merzhanov**

(b. 1895; d. 1975)

Education:

VKHUTEIN, Moscow, Diploma 1930

Principal Project:

Voroshilov Sanatorium, Matsesta, Sochi, 1930–34

Personal architect of Josef Stalin

**Ignati Milinis**

(b. Spasskoe, near Novosibirsk, 1899; d. Moscow, 1974)

Education:

Student in Kiev, 1921–24

VKHUTEIN, Moscow, 1927–29

Principal projects:

Project for the Palace of Labor, Rostov-on-Don, 1925

Experimental housing (with M. Barshch, V. Vladimirov, A.

Pasternak, and L. Slavina), Gogol Boulevard, Moscow, 1930

Narkomfin Communal House (with M. Ginzburg), Moscow, 1930

House of Government (with M. Ginzburg), Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, 1931

Club for Serp i Molot (Sickle and Hammer) Factory, Moscow, 1933

ZIL Apartment House, Moscow, 1936–37

**I. I. Moisevich**

Principal project:

Palace of Culture for Bolshevik Plant Workers, Kiev, 1928–33

**Arkadi Mordvinov**

(b. Zhuravlikha [near Nizhni Novgorod], 1896; d. Moscow, 1964)

Education:

All-Union Institute of Architecture and Engineering (VASI), Diploma 1930

Principal projects:

Post Office, Donetsk, 1927

Central Post Office, Kharkov, 1928–29

Competition project for the Kharkov State Theater, 1931

**Gennadi Movchan**

(b. Lapu, 1901; d. Moscow, 1998)

Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), Diploma 1926

Principal projects:

Central Institute of Aerodynamics and Hydrodynamics (TSAGI; with A. Kuznetsov, B. Gladkov, A. Fisenko, and I. Nikolaev), Moscow, 1924–28

All-Union Electrotechnical Institute (VEI; with A. Fisenko, L. Meilman, V. Movchan, and I. Nikolaev), Moscow, 1927–33

**Sergei Muravev**

(b. Moscow, 1890; d. Moscow, 1978)

Principal project:

AMO Automobile Factory (with E. Popov and V. Zlatolinski), Moscow, 1928–33

**Ivan Nikolaev**

(b. Voronezh, 1901; d. Moscow, 1979)

Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), 1920–25

Principal projects:

Central Institute of Aerodynamics and Hydrodynamics (TSAGI; with A. Kuznetsov, G. Movchan, B. Gladkov, and A. Fisenko), 1924–28

All-Union Electrotechnical Institute (VEI; with A. Fisenko, L. Meilman, G. Movchan, and V. Movchan), Moscow, 1927–33

Red Talka Textile Mill (with B. Gladkov), Ivanovo, 1927–29

Student housing, Textile Institute, Moscow, 1929–30

Textile mills in Kayseri and Nazilli, Turkey, 1932–35

**Aleksandr Nikolski**

(b. Saratov, 1884; d. St. Petersburg, 1953)

Member of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1926–28

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1902–13

Principal projects:

Tractor Street Workers Housing (with A. Gegello and G. Simonov), Leningrad, 1927

Secondary school on Tractor Street, Leningrad, 1927

Secondary school at Lesnoe Prospekt, Leningrad, 1932

Competition design for the Palace of the Soviets, Moscow, 1932

Stadium, Leningrad (now called the Kirov Stadium), 1927

**Georgi Orlov**

(b. Kursk, 1901; d. Moscow 1985)

Member of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1925

Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), 1921–26

Principal projects:

DneproGES (with A. Vesnin, N. Kolli, and S. Andrievski), Dnieper River, Ukraine, 1927–32

Planning and construction of Zaporozhe, Ukraine, 1932–35

**Vasili Osmak**

(b. Gogolev, 1870; d. Kiev, 1942)

Education:

University of Kiev and Petersburg Institute of Civil Engineering, Diploma 1895

Principal projects:

School No. 71, Polevoi Lane, Kiev, 1930s

Club for the GPU Workers, Lipskaia Street, Kiev, 1930s

Apartment house, Taraskovskaia Street, Kiev, 1930

Diving board, Dinamo Sports Club, Kiev, 1935



**Vasili Pankov**

(b. Iaroslavl, 1881; d. Ivanovo, 1950)

Education:

Engineering school, Moscow, Diploma 1904

Principal projects:

Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution, Secondary School, Ivanovo, 1926-27

Apartment houses on Baturin, Oktriabrskia, and Proletarskaia Streets, Ivanovo, early 1930s

**Aleksandr Pasternak**

(b. Moscow, 1893; d. Moscow, 1982)

Member of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1925-1931

Education:

Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, 1913-13

Principal projects:

Project for the town-planning of Armenikend Apartments (architectural team under the leadership of A. Ivanitski), 1927

Communal house (with M. Ginzburg), Sverdlovsk, 1929-31

Communal house (with M. Barshch), Gogol Boulevard, Moscow, 1930

Project for a Green Town, near Moscow (team OSA), 1930

**Semen Pen**

(b. 1897; d. 1970)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, Leningrad, Diploma 1925

Principal Project:

Palace of the Press, Baku, 1932

**Nikolai Poliudov**

(b. Moscow, 1907; d. Moscow, 1984)

Education:

Academy of Arts, Leningrad, Diploma 1931

Principal projects:

Sotsgorod Avtozavod (with Vesnin workshop and N. Krasilnikov), Nizhni Novgorod, 1935-37

Residential Block No. 8 (with A. Vesnin and N. Krasilnikov), Nizhni Novgorod, 1935-37

**Evgeni Popov**

(b. Medun, 1901; d. Moscow, 1965)

Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), Diploma 1927

Principal projects:

Textile manufactories in Leninakan and Bogorodsk (with B. Gladkov), 1927-28

AMO Automobile Factory (with S. Muravev and V. Zlatolinski), Moscow, 1928-33

Textile Combinat (with A. Pasternak and others), Kayseri, Turkey, 1932-36

**Moisei Reisher**

(b. Troitsk, 1902; d. Sverdlovsk, 1980)

Education:

Tomsk Technological Institute, Tomsk, Diploma 1926

Principal projects:

Water Tower for the Socialist City of Uralmash, Sverdlovsk, 1929

Student housing, Ural Polytechnic Institute (UPI), Sverdlovsk, 1930s

Student housing, Road-Transport College, Sverdlovsk, 1938

**Iakov Rubanchik**

(b. St. Petersburg, 1899; d. Taganrog, 1948)

Member of ASNOVA, later ARU (Architects-Urbanists)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1928

Principal projects:

Factory kitchens in Vyborgski, Vasileostovski, Nevski and Moscow-Narvski districts (with A. Baruchev, I. Gilter, and I. Meerzon), Leningrad, 1928-33

Project for communal house (with A. Baruchev), Matveev Lane, Leningrad

**Anatoli Samoilov**

(b. St. Petersburg, 1883; d. Moscow, 1953)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1900-13

Principal projects:

Armenikend Apartments, Shaumian Settlement (with A. Ivanitski), Baku, 1925-28

Apartment house, Dmitrovskia Street, Moscow, 1928-30

Central Institute of Cytology and Therapy, Moscow, 1929-33

**P. F. Savich**

Principal project:

Apartment complex for militia personnel, Kiev, 1933-35

**Sergei Serafimov**

(b. Trabezund, 1878; d. Leningrad, 1939)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1901-10

Principal project:

Gosprom Building (with M. Felger and S. Kravets), Kharkov, 1929

**Vladimir Shchuko**

(b. Berlin, 1878; d. Moscow, 1939)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1896-1904

Principal projects:

Restaurant and pavilion of Foreign Affairs (with V. Gelfreikh), for the First All-Russian Exposition for Agriculture and Handicrafts, Moscow, 1923

Moscow-Narva District Club, Leningrad, 1924

Podium for Lenin Monument (with V. Gelfreikh and S. A. Evseev) at the Finland Railway Terminal, Leningrad, 1926



Competition design for the Lenin Library, Moscow, 1928  
Maxim Gorki Theater (with V. Gelfreikh), Rostov-on-Don, 1936

#### **Aleksei Shchusev**

(b. Kishinev, 1873; d. Moscow, 1949)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1891–97

Principal projects:

Competition entry for the Central Telegraph Office, Moscow, 1925

Project for Lenin Library, Moscow, 1929

Project for the Christopher Columbus memorial lighthouse, Santo Domingo, 1929

Lenin Mausoleum (temporary, wood), Moscow, 1924

Lenin Mausoleum (stone), Moscow, 1930

Sanatorium for Army Officers, Matsesta, near Sochi, 1928

V. I. Lenin Military Political Academy (with G. Iakovlev), Moscow, 1930–34

Narkomzem (People's Commissariat for Agriculture), Moscow, 1933

#### **Nikolai Shekhonin**

(b. St. Petersburg, 1882; d. Kiev, 1933)

Principal Project:

"Pishchevik" Club for Food Industry Workers, Kiev, 1931–33

#### **Vladimir Shukhov**

(b. Graivoron [Belgorod province], 1853; d. Moscow, 1939)

Education:

Moscow Higher Technical School (MVTU), Diploma 1876

Studied in the United States, 1876–77

Principal projects:

Metal-glass cover for the shopping arcades (later GUM) at Red Square, Moscow, 1893

Pavilions in Nizhni Novgorod Exhibition, 1896

Platform of Bryanski Railway Station, Moscow, 1917

Shabolovka Radio Tower, Moscow, 1922

Metal covering of Bakhmetevski Bus Garage (architect K. Melnikov), Moscow, 1928

#### **Grigori Simonov**

(b. Troitsk, 1893; d. Moscow, 1974)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, Petrograd, 1920

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg

Principal projects:

Hospital, Vyshni Volochek, 1926

Tractor Street Workers Housing (with A. Nikolski and A. Gegello), Leningrad, 1927

Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution Secondary School, Leningrad, 1927–29

Public baths for the Lesnoe district, Leningrad, 1927–29

Residential block for Association of Pre-revolutionary Political

Deportees, Leningrad, 1932

Batenin housing scheme, Leningrad, 1936

#### **Veniamin Sokolov**

(b. Ekaterinburg, 1889; d. Leningrad, 1955)

Education:

Academy of Arts, Petrograd, Diploma 1918

Principal projects:

Building Workers Clubhouse, Leningrad, 1930

Dinamo Sport Club, Moscow, 1929–34

Teachers housing, Leningrad, 1934

Chekist housing scheme (with I. Antonov and A. Tumbasov), Sverdlovsk, 1929–36

#### **Gavril Ter-Mikelov**

(b. Baku, 1873; d. Tbilisi, 1949)

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1899

Principal project:

Kirov Institute, Baku, 1935

#### **Viktor Trotsenko**

(b. Kharkov district, 1880; d. Kharkov, 1978)

Principal Project:

Housing in the Kharkov Locomotive Plant Settlement, Kharkov, 1923–24

#### **Noi Trotski**

(b. St. Petersburg, 1895; d. Leningrad, 1940)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1913–20

Principal projects:

Winning entry for the Palace of Labor, Moscow, 1923

Bely Byshok Glass Factory, Leningrad, 1929

Boilerworks Building NZ, Leningrad, 1930

S. M. Kirov Palace of Culture, Leningrad, 1930–37

Kirov District Soviet Building, Leningrad, 1934

#### **Arseni Tumbasov**

(b. near Viatka, 1907; d. Sverdlovsk, 1974)

Education:

Ekaterinburg Arts and Industrial Graphics College, Diploma 1918

Principal project:

Chekist housing scheme (with I. Antonov and V. Sokolov), Sverdlovsk, 1929–36

#### **Aleksandr Typikov**

(b. Nizhni Novgorod, 1880; d. 1954)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, Diploma 1913

Principal projects:

Settlement, Rastiapino, 1925–27

Chekist Communal House, Nizhni Novgorod, 1929–32



**Aleksandr Vesnin**

(b. Iurevets, 1883; d. Moscow, 1959)

Founder of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1925

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1907–11

Principal projects:

Competition project for the Palace of Labor, Moscow, 1923

Competition design for the Moscow office of the Leningrad Pravda, 1924

Competition project for the Kharkov State Theater, 1930

Mostorg Department Store, Moscow, 1927–28

Club of the Association of Pre-revolutionary Political Deportees, Moscow, 1931–34

DneproGES (with S. Andrievski, N. Kolli, and G. Orlov), Dnieper River, Ukraine, 1927–32

Gorny Vozdukh Sanatorium, Sochi, 1928

Palace of Culture for the Proletarian District, Moscow, 1931–37

**Leonid Vesnin**

(b. Nizhni Novgorod, 1880; d. Moscow, 1933)

Member of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1925

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1900–1909

Principal projects:

First Settlement for Workers, Ivanovo, 1924–26

Palace of Culture, Shaumian Works, Baku, 1929

Workers Club in Surakhany, Baku, 1929

**Viktor Vesnin**

(b. Iurevets, 1882; d. Moscow, 1950)

Member of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1925

Education:

Institute of Civil Engineering, St. Petersburg, 1901–12

Collaborated with A. Vesnin and L. Vesnin on multiple projects

**Viacheslav Vladimirov**

(b. Moscow, 1898; d. 1942)

Member of OSA (Union of Contemporary Architects), 1926

Education:

Moscow Civil Engineering Institute (MIGI), Diploma 1923

Principal projects:

Project for Dom Kommuna Communal House (with M. Barshch), 1929

Gosstrakh Apartment House (with M. Ginzburg), Malaia Bronnaia Street, Moscow, 1926–27

Proletariat Club for Workers of the Compressor Factory, Moscow, 1927–29

Communal housing (with M. Barshch, I. Milinis, and A. Pasternak), Gogol Boulevard, Moscow, 1930

**Sergei Zakharov**

(b. Aleksandrovsk, 1900)

Principal projects:

Grand Ural Hotel (with V. Smirnov), 1929–30

House of Justice, Sverdlovsk, 1929–30

Building for Oblispolkom (Regional Executive Committee), 1930s

**Ivan Zholtovski**

(b. Pinsk, 1867; d. Moscow, 1959)

Education:

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg, 1887–98

Principal projects:

Master plan (with A. Shchusev) for the First All-Russian Exposition for Agriculture and Handicrafts, Moscow, 1923; Pavilions and main entrance arch

MoGES (Moscow City Electric Power Station), Moscow, 1926

Gosbank, Neglinnaia Street, Moscow, 1929

Competition project for the Palace of the Soviets, Moscow, 1931–32

**Vladimir Zlatolinski**

(b. Moscow, 1901)

Principal project:

AMO Automobile Factory (with E. Popov and S. Muravev), Moscow, 1928–33



## Acknowledgments

RICHARD PARE

You have before you the result of a chance encounter late on a cold afternoon in February 1993. I found myself looking at a photograph of Vladimir Tatlin and his assistants, tools in hand in the midst of constructing the model for his great visionary work, the Monument to the Third International. This genuinely iconic photograph, small in measure but filled with significance and summing up the hopes and aspirations of the Russian avant-garde, entered the collection of the Canadian Centre for Architecture. This led to an invitation from Howard Schickler, from whose collection the picture came, to accompany him to Moscow on his next visit. The idea of looking for the remaining modernist works was a natural extension of this exchange and led to an endeavor that has engaged me for the past thirteen years. Though by no means exhaustive, the archive is the most complete survey of the subject ever undertaken. The intention was to redress the balance for those forgotten visionaries whose neglected and suppressed works have only recently begun to emerge from obscurity and find their true position in the history of twentieth-century architecture.

The first invitation to Moscow was arranged through the Union of Photo-journalists. On that visit I was to meet a number of people who became instrumental to my success. Without their wholehearted belief in the project, it would not have been possible to work so effectively in a city and country in which I had no prior experience or contacts. In discussions that lasted long into the small hours, Eugene Asse, professor at the Moscow Architectural Institute, and his wife, Chuky, gave me insights into the background and origins of the modernist movement in architecture. John Kohan, then the Moscow bureau chief for *Time* magazine, offered insights into the society as a whole. Yuri Avvakumov and Alyona Kirtsova provided advice and assistance, verifying information and making connections. Vladimir Resvin, then director of the Russian Museum of Architecture, assisted with letters of recommendation and early forays into the city. I am profoundly grateful for the friendship and unfailing patience of Alexander Brodsky and Marsha Simonova. I cannot imagine how it would have been possible, without their help, to achieve even a fraction of what I have been able to accomplish. It was Sasha who was eventually to make the crucial introduction to Pavel Khoroshilov, then the

Deputy Minister of Culture of the Russian Federation, and a fellow enthusiast for photographic images. In his ministerial capacity, he granted permission and made the arrangements for me to photograph in many government offices and installations. His letters of introduction gave me opportunities to photograph far and wide, opportunities without which it would be impossible to consider the archive as meaningful.

The continuing support of my friend and longtime associate Phyllis Lambert made it possible to bring this whole undertaking to its present state. Without her recognition of the potential of a survey of Russian modernism through the eyes of a single observer, without her encouragement and the considerable research resources of the CCA, I could not have begun to rediscover much of what is here disclosed. The geographical range of the project is largely thanks to Phyllis's continuing commitment and was further expanded by the willingness of Nicholas Olsberg, then head of collections of the CCA, to bring the project forward.

Also at the CCA I am most grateful for the assistance of Julia Bourianova, then in charge of cataloguing the Russian collections. She compiled the dossiers on which much of this work is based, and she accompanied me as interpreter and facilitator on two arduous journeys, taking care of all the arrangements and persuading occasionally reluctant custodians that there was no choice but to admit me for the purposes of photography. On a third journey I was accompanied and assisted by Talia Dorsey. In the department of photographs, Louise Desy was always ready to answer my questions and brought her considerable knowledge of the photographic holdings to the service of the project, retrieving half-remembered historical images from the sketchiest descriptions.

Further significant funding for the project was provided by The Graham Foundation in Chicago. I am grateful to Joan Davidson and Furthermore, a program of the J.M. Kaplan fund, for support for the book. Advice and support also came from the Canadian Embassy in Moscow and there, Vera Alexander, Alison Grant, Mark Opgenorth, and Elena Gaisina gave assistance. Edgar Smith's belief in the undertaking and his wholehearted enthusiasm translated into greatly increased efficiency through his generous gift of the computer system that I have used in prepara-



tion of this work. For assistance in Moscow, I am indebted to Ulrich Glaunach of the Lafarge group of companies and to his colleague Phillipe Hardouin at the Paris head office.

In published resources, there were a few trailblazers, particularly the late Catherine Cooke, author of *Russian Avant-Garde, Theories of Art Architecture and the City*, a most useful compendium of commentaries, documents, and images. Alessandra Latour's *Mosca, 1890-1991* (Guida all'architettura moderna) provided a springboard from which to begin. Early on, Jean-Louis Cohen drew up a preliminary list of projects all over the Soviet Union, which has guided much of the work presented here. His essay sets the stage for the survey that follows. Further, he was able to resolve many difficulties of chronology and credits for the architects. His friendship and invaluable assistance in all aspects of this entire undertaking are greatly appreciated. Andrei Gozak drew up much of the data in the architect biographies and offered support and good advice at several stages during the project. Further biographical research was carried out by Leonid Pliushch and Alena Mokrousova.

Daniil Lorenz first escorted me to St. Petersburg in what was a memorable journey of sleepless days and nights as I worked through the unending daylight of a Baltic summer. On later visits to that city, the kindness of Ludmila Simonova made my work much easier. In Kiev the late Vladlen Bourianov took great pains to compile a dossier of photographs of modernist buildings in the city that he loved and knew in depth. His commentary on the evolution of the city in his lifetime was illuminating. I was ably assisted by his wife, Doctor Valentina Bondarovska, whose far-flung circle of acquaintance made certain that I was well received in the remoter reaches of my expeditions. In the Crimea she arranged a meeting with the endlessly courteous and patient Sergei Mastykin, Colonel retired. In Kharkov, Alexander Romanovski, chancellor of the Technical University, was unstinting in his generosity. My guide there was the indefatigable Valerii Shmukler. In Sochi, I remember with gratitude the determination of Oleg Kozinsky who, as chief architect for the city, was well placed to make sure that I was able to see everything of importance and to arrange the necessary access. In Baku it is hard to imagine how I would have managed without the support of Taghiyeva Roya, director of the National Carpet Museum, and Taghiyev Nuraddin.

At the suggestion of Yuri Mostovoy, in Ekaterinburg I was received by his brother Valentin Yahnis. His immediate grasp of my objective made the time spent there in the dying days of the year fully productive. In Ivanovo I was given housing and guidance by the office of town planning of that city.

Alexei Veriovkin and Mikael Damant were unfailingly cooperative in their willingness to negotiate very long days traveling round Moscow and onwards to further destinations.

Closer to home the success of the project owes a lot to many people. Among those to single out are Neale Albert for his assistance in making the book a reality, Harry Bowers and Dot Barad for their help with all things digital, and, more recently Ben Diep of Color Space Imaging, whose tutorials in the management of digital files raised the standard of my work at a stroke. Joseph Bartscherer made sure that I understood the possibilities and by example assured that I strove to reach the highest standard. There is still much to learn, and any shortcomings are entirely my own. Further help and encouragement came from John Szarkowski, Lee and Maria Friedlander, Rudolf and Annette Kicken, and Tim Dalrymple. I am grateful for the patience of my family, Hyun Hochsmann and Arabella and Rosamunde Pare, throughout what must have seemed the interminable years in which this project has come together.

Tadao Ando introduced me to Gianfranco Monacelli, whose immediate response to the idea of this book was affirming. All the complex details of bringing the book together were ably managed by Elizabeth White and Andrea Monfried. Katy Homans designed the book with her usual grace and thoughtfulness.

I am only too aware that there are many people left out of this already lengthy list; it is easy to lose track of all those on whom one relies to bring such a body of work together over such an extended period. There were so many people for whom a vague comprehension of my intentions was enough for them to permit me to go forward. I recall the kindness of so many, editors and writers, policemen and soldiers, military officers, politicians and professors, custodians and apartment dwellers, all of whom have played a vital part in the completion and furtherance of my work. I am grateful to them all.



## Index of Architects and Buildings

- Aleshin, Pavel 270, 336  
 AMO Automobile Factory 94  
 Andrievski, Sergei 252, 336  
 Antonov, Ivan 174, 336  
 Apartment Complex for Arsenal Plant Workers 278  
 Apartment Complex for Militia Personnel 274  
 Automated Telephone Exchange 218  
  
 Bakery, Moscow 26, 122  
 Barkhin, Grigori 16, 56, 336  
 Barkhin, Mikhail 56, 336  
 Baruchev, Armen 306, 308, 316, 336  
 Burevestnik Factory Workers Club 150  
 Bus Shelter, Sochi 182  
  
 Central Institute of Aerodynamics and Hydrodynamics 40  
 Central Post Office, Kharkov 216  
 Centrosoyuz Building 11, 14, 20, 21, 110  
 Chekist Communal House 264  
 Chekist Housing Scheme 174  
 Cherkover, Lazar 74, 336  
 Club of the Association of Pre-revolutionary Political Deportees 13, 126  
 Communal House, Ekaterinburg 170  
  
 Dadashev, Sadikh 236, 336  
 Dinamo Sports Club 27, 268  
 Dinamo Stadium 74  
 Dmitriev, Aleksandr 212, 336  
 DneproGES 30, 252  
  
 Factory Kitchen, Baku 236  
 Felger, Mark 12, 204, 336  
 First Settlement for Workers 13, 248  
 Fisenko, Anatoli 40, 336  
 Fomin, Igor 302  
  
 Fomin, Ivan 108, 337  
 Frunze Workers Club 144  
  
 Gegello, Aleksandr 296, 320, 337  
 Gelfreikh, Vladimir 98, 337  
 Gilter, Izidor 306, 308, 316, 337  
 Ginzburg, Moisei 6, 10, 12, 13, 15, 18, 22, 28, 78, 170, 337  
 Gladkov, Boris 40, 244, 337  
 Golosov, Ilia 13, 16, 20, 66, 337  
 Golosov, Panteleimon 130, 337  
 Gorni Vozdukh Sanatorium 190  
 Gosplan Garage 154  
 Gosprom Building 10, 11, 12, 29, 204  
  
 House of Justice, Ekaterinburg 178  
 House of Technical Education of the Kirov District 320  
 Housing in the Kharkov Locomotive Plant Settlement 202  
  
 Iakovlev, Georgi 116, 338  
 Ilin, Lev 228, 338  
 Iofan, Boris 118, 338  
 Ivanitski, Aleksandr 27, 230, 338  
 Izvestia Building 16, 56  
  
 Jeanneret, Pierre 110  
  
 Karakis, Iosif 278, 338  
 Kavchuk Factory Workers Club 146  
 Kirov District Soviet Building 326  
 S. M. Kirov Palace of Culture 322  
 Kirov Physiotherapy Institute 234  
 Kogan, David 38, 338  
 Kolli, Nikolai 11, 110, 252, 338  
 Krasilnikov, Nikolai 260, 338  
 Kravets, Samuil 12, 204, 338  
 Krichevski, David 320, 338  
  
 Kurochkin, V. I. 154  
 Kuznetsov, Aleksandr 40, 338  
  
 Langman, Arkadi 74, 339  
 Le Corbusier 7, 11, 12, 14, 16, 21, 110, 339  
 Lenin Mausoleum 21, 30, 330  
 V. I. Lenin Military Political Academy 116  
 Lenin State Library 98  
 Lensoviet Communal House 302  
 Levinson, Evgeni 302, 339  
  
 Markovnikov, Nikolai 54, 339  
 Marsakov, G. P. 26, 122  
 Meerzon, Iosif 306, 308, 316, 339  
 Melnikov House 16, 21, 29, 158  
 Melnikov, Konstantin 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 20, 21, 22, 27, 29, 138, 144, 146, 150, 154, 158, 339  
 Mendelsohn, Erich 6, 11, 14, 20, 29, 290, 339  
 Merzhanov, Miron 27, 192, 340  
 "Metallist" Palace of Culture for Bolshevik Plant Workers 27, 282  
 Milinis, Ignati 12, 62, 78, 340  
 MoGES 10, 11, 20, 44  
 Moisevich, I. I. 282, 340  
 Mordvinov, Arkadi 216, 340  
 Mosselprom 20, 38  
 Mostorg Department Store 60  
 Mountain Park 228  
 Movchan, Gennadi 40, 340  
 Muravev, Sergei 94, 340  
  
 Narkomfin Communal House 12, 21, 22, 28, 78  
 Narkomzem 90  
 Narvski Factory Kitchen and Department Store 316

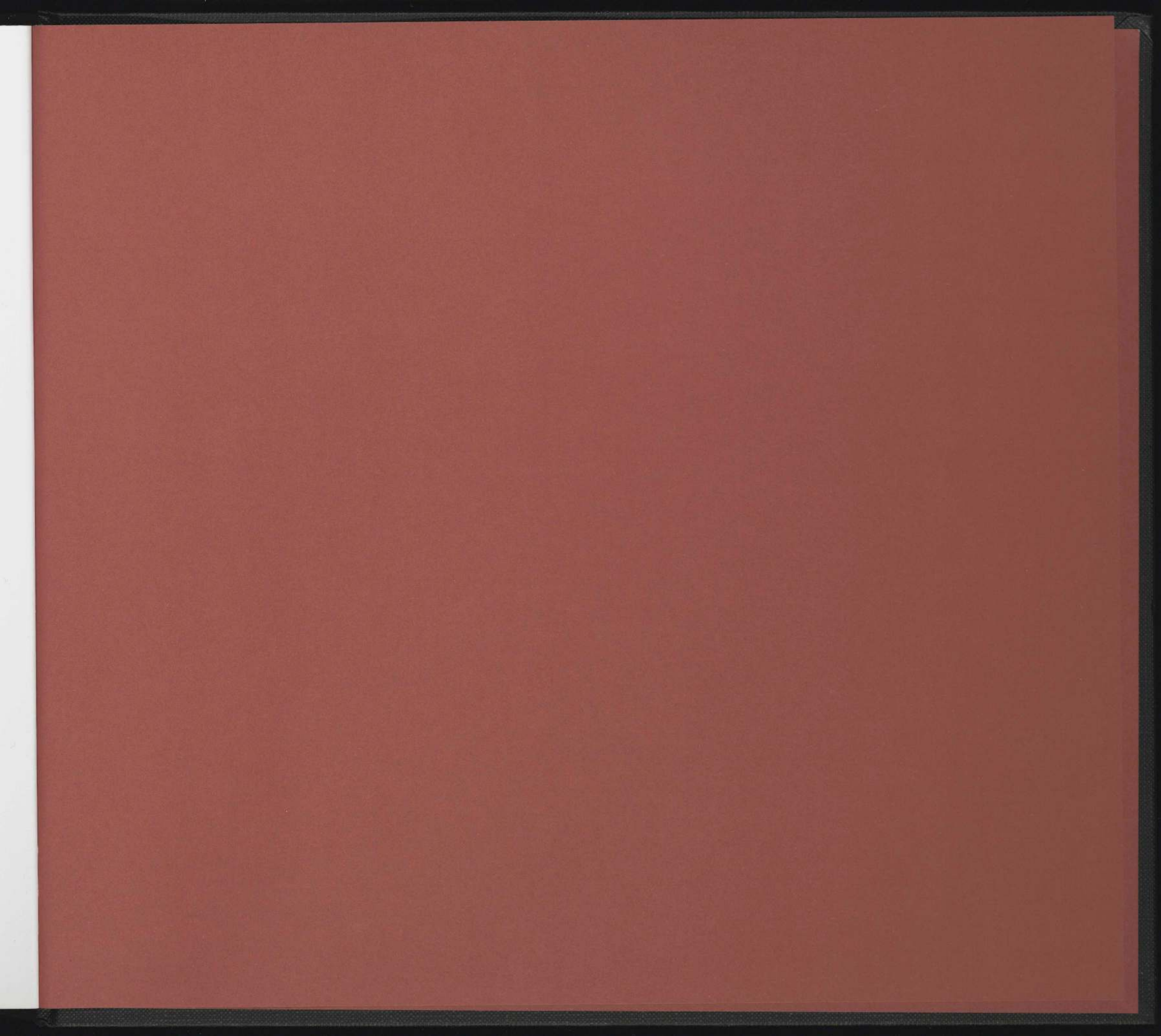


- Nikolaev, Ivan 40, 102, 244, 340  
 Nikolski, Aleksandr 296, 340  
 NKPS Building 108
- Orlov, Georgy 252, 340  
 Osmak, Vasili 268, 340
- Palace of Culture for the Proletarian District  
 134  
 Palace of Culture for the Railway Workers  
 212  
 Palace of Culture, Shaumian Works 238  
 Palace of the Press 222  
 Pankov, Vasili 240, 341  
 Pasternak, Aleksandr 12, 170, 341  
 Pen, Semen 222, 341  
 "Pishchevik" Club for Food Industry  
 Workers 286  
 Poliudov, Nikolai 260, 341  
 Popov, Evgeni 94, 341  
 Power Station, Moscow 52  
 Pravda Building 130  
 Proletariat Club for Workers of the  
 Compressor Factory 70
- Red Banner Textile Factory 11, 14, 29,  
 290  
 Red Talka Textile Mill 244  
 Reisher, Moisei 166, 341  
 Residential Block No. 8, Nizhni Novgorod  
 260  
 Rodchenko, Aleksandr 11, 38  
 Rubanchik, Iakov 306, 308, 316, 341  
 Rusakov Workers Club 20, 21, 27, 138
- Samoilov, Anatoli 230, 341  
 Sanatorium for Army Officers 27, 184  
 Savich, P. F. 274, 341
- Serafimov, Sergei 12, 204, 341  
 Shabolovka Radio Tower 13, 29, 34, 330  
 Shaumian Settlement 230  
 Shchuko, Vladimir 98, 341  
 Shchusev, Aleksei 10, 15, 16, 17, 27, 30,  
 90, 116, 184, 330, 342  
 Shekhonin, Nikolai 286, 342  
 Shukhov, Vladimir 13, 29, 34, 342  
 Simonov, Grigori 296, 300, 342  
 Sokol Garden Settlement 12, 54  
 Sokolov, Veniamin 174, 342  
 Soviet Doctors Housing Cooperative 270  
 Student Housing, Textile Institute 21, 102
- Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution  
 Secondary School, Ivanovo 240  
 Tenth Anniversary of the Revolution  
 Secondary School, St. Petersburg 300  
 Ter-Mikelov, Gavril 234, 342  
 Tractor Street Workers Housing 296  
 Trotsenko, Viktor 202, 342  
 Trotski, Noi 322, 326, 342  
 Tumbasov, Arseni 174, 342  
 Typikov, Aleksandr 264, 342
- Useinov, Mikhail 236
- Vasileostrovski Factory Kitchen 27, 30, 308  
 Vesnin, Aleksandr 6, 11, 13, 15, 18, 20,  
 60, 126, 134, 190, 252, 260, 343  
 Vesnin, Leonid 11, 13, 15, 20, 60, 126,  
 134, 238, 248, 260, 343  
 Vesnin, Victor 11, 13, 15, 20, 60, 126,  
 134, 190, 260, 343  
 Vladimirov, Viacheslav 70, 343  
 Voroshilov Sanatorium 27, 192  
 VTsIK Residential Complex 12, 118  
 Vyborg District Factory Kitchen 306
- Water Tower for the Socialist City of  
 Uralmash 166  
 Workers Club in Surakhany 238
- Zakharov, Sergei 178, 343  
 Zholtoviski, Ivan 20, 44, 343  
 ZIL Apartment House 62  
 Zlatolinski, Vladimir 94, 343  
 Zuev Workers Club 13, 20, 21, 66

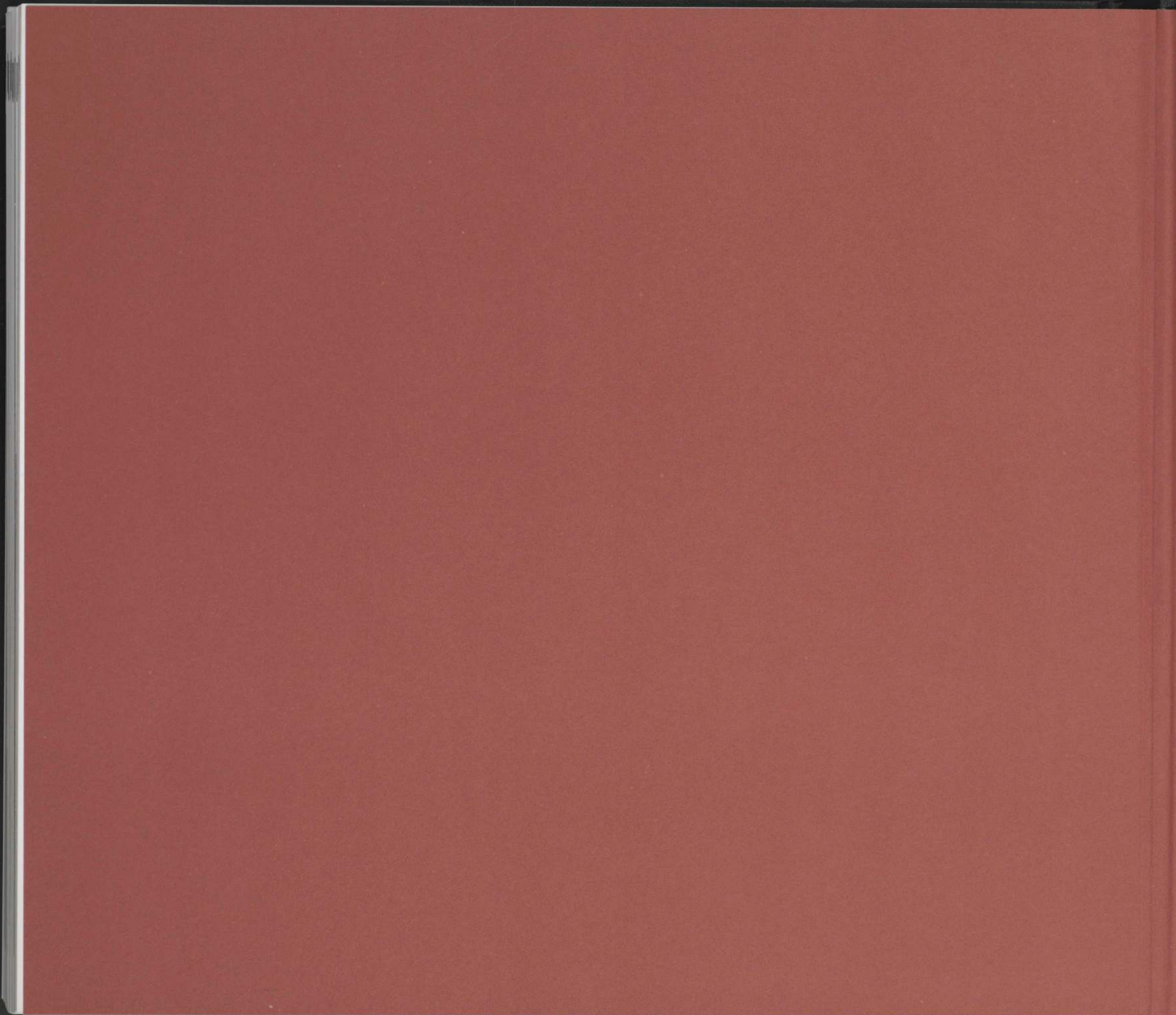














Architectural photographer **Richard Pare** has spent more than a decade documenting Soviet modernist architecture. He is the former curator of photographs at the Canadian Centre for Architecture and the author of *Tadao Ando: The Colors of Light*, *Egypt: Reflections on Continuity*, and *Court House: A Photographic Document*.

**Phyllis Lambert** is the founding director of the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal.

**Jean-Louis Cohen**, Sheldon H. Solow Professor in the History of Architecture at New York University, has published widely on European modernism.

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