

The Minimum Dwelling

Karel Teige

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Karel Teige : The Minimum Dwelling before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Minimum Dwelling:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy PJgood book1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy paulwongthanks!6 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The audacity of the early modern period laid bareBy Margaret P.The Minimum Dwelling explores the social aspects of early twentieth century domestic architecture and the problem of providing salubrious housing for the working masses. This is a new (and first) English translation of the original work published in Czech in 1932 and it is long overdue.The author, Karel Teige, was a well-known figure in his time, influential in CIAM and the international architectural dialogue of the

1920s and '30s. He was an avowed Marxist and he saw minimum dwellings for families merely as a step towards community housing in which every individual would live in a small cell and functions such as food preparation and consumption would take place in shared space, similar to a hotel. The discussion treats all aspects of the housing problem in a holistic manner that reminds us how daring the golden era of early modern architecture was, even by today's standards. The translation is very competent and respectful of the original book and readers should take the time to read the translator's notes in the foreword to fully appreciate this. There are over 400 pages of text, photographs, and plans. Works by many unfairly-obscure architects are presented alongside those by architects who have become well-known in the intervening years. The Minimum Dwelling still manages to convey the spirit, excitement, and freshness of the time in which it was written. Very highly recommended.

The long-awaited English-language publication of Karel Teige's influential book on the minimum dwelling as a new housing type for the working class. Karel Teige (1900-1951), one of the most important figures of avant-garde modernism of the 1920s and 1930s, influenced virtually every area of art, design, and urban thinking in his native Czechoslovakia. His *Minimum Dwelling*, originally published in Czech in 1932, and appearing now for the first time in English, is one of the landmark architectural books of the twentieth century. The *Minimum Dwelling* is not just a book on architecture, but also a blueprint for a new way of living. It calls for a radical rethinking of domestic space and of the role of modern architecture in the planning, design, and construction of new dwelling types for the proletariat. Teige shows how Gropius, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, and others designed little more than new versions of baroque palaces, mainly for the new financial aristocracy. Teige envisioned the minimum dwelling not as a reduced version of a bourgeois apartment or rural cottage, but as a wholly new dwelling type built on the cooperation of architects, sociologists, economists, health officials, physicians, social workers, politicians, and trade unionists. The book covers many subjects that are still of great relevance. Of particular interest are Teige's rejection of traditional notions of the kitchen as the core of family-centered plans and of marriage as the foundation of modern cohabitation. He describes alternative lifestyles and new ways of cohabitation of sexes, generations, and classes. The detailed programmatic chapters on collective housing remain far ahead of current thinking, and his comments on collective dwelling presage communal living experiments of the 1960s and 1970s, as well as the communal facilities in contemporary condominium buildings and retirement communities.

From Publishers Weekly "Today's proletarian dwellings... despite their current revolting appearance of hovels, housing barracks or overnight shelters, will be reproduced in the future on a higher level." Say what you will about his dubious faith in socialist housing schemes, celebrated Czech avant-garde artist and designer Karel Teige (1900-1951) elaborates some provocative and humane ideas for modern housing. His treatise *The Minimum Dwelling* (1932), translated into English for the first time by MIT architecture professor and Teige scholar Eric Dluhosch, surveys interwar European housing and argues, among other things, for the demise of the eat-in kitchen (the proletariat have no time to cook) and suggests the hotel, with its centralized services, as an ideal model for workers' dwellings. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal A Communist architect and theorist, the Czechoslovakian-born Teige (1900-51) aimed to develop, as scientifically as possible, a modern architecture that solved housing shortages. In this book, first published in Czechoslovakia in 1932, he detailed the need to develop a new model, especially for those suffering from tuberculosis. After looking at 19th-century dwellings, Teige considered the European housing exhibitions of his era and compared the nature of the modern house with that of the modern apartment. He also looked critically but admiringly at theories of multiunit designs by Le Corbusier, Gropius, and Wright. He then proposed the Socialist concept, adopted by kibbutzim in Israel, of abandoning the family household and socializing children at a very early age. With statistical tables, numerous interior and exterior views, floor plans, axonometric projections, and quotations from philosophers at the start of chapters, this book is a virtual synthesis of Teige's ideas. Teige was among the first to observe that the importance of the kitchen in the modern dwelling had decreased, and his commitment to small, economic spaces, in contrast to Le Corbusier's villas, expresses the true sense of the machine a habiter. For larger collections. Paul Glassman, New York Sch. of Interior Design Lib. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. It has taken 70 years for an English translation...nothing of equivalent significance has appeared in the interim. (David Wild, *The Architects' Journal*)