ARCHITECTURE, REVOLUTION AND TEMPORALITY: THE SOVIET AVANT-GARDE AND THE POLITICS OF MODERNISM

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to present a political re-reading of modernism and the Soviet Avant-garde through their conceptualizations of temporality. To that end, affirmative and negative characteristics of modernism and the avant-garde in their relation to modernity and the capitalist mode of production are examined, and their over-identification with capitalism is questioned. Thereafter, the Soviet context of modernism and the avant-garde are analyzed through the temporal conception of Bolshevism. The study claims that both the appeal of the post-revolutionary Soviet context to modernist and avant-garde visions and their liquidation originate from the insights into temporality. It aims to reveal that the constructivist theory of architectural space presents an intensified variant of modernist spatio-temporality, a dependence on the unknown, processes and mobility, and pre-assumptions of the continuous future breaks from the past.

Keywords: Modernism, Avant-garde, Modernist Temporality, Soviet Avant-garde, Constructivism

ÖZ

MİMARLIK, DEVRİM VE ZAMANSALLIK: SOVYET AVANGARDI VE MODERNİZMİN POLİTİĞİ

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Bu çalışma modernizm ve Sovyet Avangardı'nın zamansallık kavrayışları ekseninde bir politik okumasını sunmayı amaçlar. Bunun için modernizmin ve avangardın modernite ve kapitalist üretim tarzı ile ilişkilerindeki olumlayıcı ve olumsuzlayıcı nitelikleri araştırır ve kapitalizmle özdeşleştirilmelerini sorgular. Modernizm ve avangardın Sovyet bağlamını bolşevizmin zamansallık kavrayışı ekseninde ele alır. Çalışma, hem devrim sonrası Sovyet bağlamının modernizm ve avangard hareketler nezdindeki çekiciliğinin, hem de bu iki olgunun Sovyetler Birliği'ndeki tasfiyesinin zamansallık kavrayışlarından kaynaklandığını iddia eder. Bilinmeyene, sürece ve devingenliğe dayanan, gelecekteki süreklileşmiş geçmişten kopuşların baştan kabuluyle hareket eden konstrüktivist mimari mekan teorisinin modernist mekansal-zamansallığın yoğunlaşmış bir varyantı olduğunu ortaya koymayı amaçlar.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Modernizm, Avangard, Modernist Zamansallık, Sovyet Avangardı, Konstrüktivizm

To My Family,

Hasan Sadi, Nesrin and Gökberk Demirok.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Asnova	: Association of New Architects
CIAM	: Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne
Inkhuk	: The Moscow Institute of Artistic Culture
NEP	: New Economy Policy
OSA	: The Union of Contemporary Architects
Proletkult	: Proletarian Culture
SA	: Contemporary Architecture
Unovis	: Affirmers of the New Art
USSR	: The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Vkhutein	: The Higher Art and Technical Institute
Vkhutemas	: Higher Art and Technical Studios

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> Throw Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, etc., etc. overboard from the Ship of Modernity. He who does not forget his first love will not recognize his last.
>
> D. Burliuk, A. Kruchenykh, V. Mayakovsky, V. Khlebnikov. *Slap In The Face Of Public Taste,* 1917.

> The tradition of all dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living.
>
> Karl Marx. *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, 1852.

Modernism, as a trend of thought, primarily corresponds to a unique conceptualization of temporality in which 'true presence' is achieved through a continuous self-renewing process which conjoins the ephemeral and the fleeting with the eternal and the immutable.[1] This temporal conception is characteristically inherent to the experience of modernity, fueled by Enlightenment thought, and militantly inherited by Modernism as a cultural reaction to Modernity. As an ideological response to the dynamic social events of Modernity, Modernism's

[1] David Harvey. *The Condition of Postmodernity.* Cambridge MA, Oxford UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1989, 10.

conceptualization of temporality intersected with social and technological dimensions at the turn of the 20th century. As a particularly cultural field, Modernism, as Anderson notes, emerged through three coordinates, namely a highly codified academism in the arts, the emergence of key technologies arising from the Second Industrial Revolution, and a belief in the proximity of social revolution.[2] The Modernist reaction to these coordinates was operated by virtue of the temporal conception centering on "breaking from the past" in every possible aspect. The study fundamentally aims to examine the influence of the Modernist conceptualization of temporality on the politics of Modernism.

If Modernism has a social dimension, then is the Modernist conceptualization of temporality also loaded with political references? Does it present an essential coherence with revolutionary politics in terms of their search for breaking away from the past? It is certain that several Modernist protagonists thought that way, particularly their more radical, Avant-gardist extent. However, in the decades following World War I, Modernism was ideologically absorbed by the capitalist mode of production, contributing to free-market logic, creative destruction processes and the organizational needs of capitalism. Are the ideological compositions of Modernism and Avant-gardism fundamentally obliged to integrate with the capitalist mode of production in one way or another? This study intends to re-examine these inquiries by discussing Modernism and the Avant-garde through their capitalist and socialist contexts in relation to their conceptualizations of temporality. With that aim, it is purposeful to focus on the relationship of Modernism and Avant-garde movements to revolutionary movements, and particularly in the Soviet context.

Is it possible then, that there is a historical correspondence between Marxism and Modernism? In terms of their temporal conceptualizations, drawing a correspondence is possible in the first analysis: The notion of progress, and the struggle for a total break from the existing social order which are inherent to Marxism, display a coherence with the Modernist conceptualization of time which

[2] Perry Anderson, "Modernity and Revolution," *New Left Review* I/144 (1984), 104.

aims to achieve its true presence with the destruction of the old, a release from past normativity but positioning itself through an eternal and immutable temporal flow. Marx and Engels had rarely written on aesthetics and culture; however, it is known that their aesthetic taste is apparently classicist. Nevertheless, during their time, Modernist insights had not yet flourished as a maturated aesthetic movement. Moreover, they considered aesthetics as an autonomous field to understand the world.[3] In this sense, it is comfortable with Modernists' demand of aesthetic autonomy. However, in contrast with the self-prominence of Modernists' in the social processes, for Marxism the cultural realm may have a minor influence on a radical social change.

Thus, the main correspondence of the two was a political-historical one having taken place at the turn of the 20th century. Besides the temporal attractiveness of a revolutionary break from the past, the rise of the socialist movements around Europe attracted the Avant-garde groups within their heterodoxies and simultaneously the Modernists in terms of their intention to respond to the current crisis of modern bourgeois society. Consistently, whenever the October Revolution appeared, the Soviet context was seen as an opportunity for the actualization of Modernist and Avant-garde visions. However, this correspondence was to be swept away when the Avant-garde and Modernism were liquidated in the Soviet Union and the main body of European Modernism was absorbed by and came to terms with the capitalist mode of production in a couple of decades. Nonetheless, particularly in the field of architecture, the experimental period of the Soviet Avant-garde left very abundant and prolific spatial experiments. In this regard, this study endeavors to trace how the Russian Avant-garde made an effort to relate to the revolutionary context of the Soviet Union. Indeed, the study aims to locate a problem of temporality in their incompatibilities with the cultural politics of Bolshevism, and, it claims that both the attractiveness of the Soviet context to Modernist visions and the contradiction between Avant-garde Modernism and Bolshevism arises from the commonalities or

[3] See, Eugene Lunn. *Marxism and Modernism: An Historical Study of Lukács, Brecht, Benjamin, and Adorno*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1982.

the differences in their conceptualizations of temporality. Bolshevism as the main vanguard of "breaking from the past" suggested a continuous manner in culture considering that the traditional "backwardness" of their country could only be overcome by embracing the entire body of bourgeois-progressive culture.

The study particularly focuses on the Soviet Avant-garde's experiments on architectural and urban space in relation to their conceptualization of temporality. In the post-revolutionary years, a type of utopian temporality was mobilized by the Soviet Avant-garde within their proposals on the architectural and urban space. The debates on the new cities of the first five-year plan gave way to the emergence of urbanization theories with unique temporal conceptions. The debate between the Urbanists and Disurbanists presents insights into mobility, gradual inhabitance, spatial flexibility and the inter-relation with nature through a utopian sense of temporality. However, again their failure arose from a temporal contradiction. In fact, Disurbanist conceptions mainly originated from the genuine spatio-temporal interpretation of the Constructivist theory of space. Depending on the unknowns and assuming continuous future breaks from the past, Constructivism displays an intensified and radicalized version of the Modernist conceptualization of temporality. The Constructivist design method proposes to systematize the "unknowns" in a "modest" manner, particularly emphasizing "the process." In this regard, it has a unique conception of space differentiating itself from its Modernist currents in the West. Spatial theory of Constructivism questions the pre-determinancy of the design processes on the future evolution of the architectural space. Constructivist theories and practices certainly gave a particular priority to the social transformation proposal of the revolution. However, their spatial proposal was to disaccord with the momentum of the social transformation. In most cases, the cultural patterns of dominantly peasant population originating from the traditional rural "backwardness" of Russia conflicted with Constructivist visions. Moreover, their spatial theory depends on the awareness of this discordance such that they proposed transitional spaces of social transformation in spite of the fact this prognosis was not able to prevent their failure.

The “heroic” period of Modernism still preserves its formative position for understanding the relations of art and architecture with other social agents, political movements and power, and in the most general sense, with the mode of production. So long as the contradictions and the crisis of modernity continues, Modernism remains its fundamental character throughout the architectural theory since it is the first comprehensive intellectual and operational attempt to confront the novel deprivations of capitalist modernity and representing a desire of transforming it in its “heroic” phase in the inter-war period. Besides, since the experience of Modernism is the first comprehensive stance of architecture within the social content in modern terms, this study intends to reiterate its archetypal position in this regard in spite of its depreciation in terms of social concern. On the other hand the study endeavors to find a middle course between the over-emphasis on the social role of architecture and its degradation into a socially dysfunctional agent. For a possible middle course between the two, the experimental period of the Soviet Avant-garde presents an abundant set of insights. The Avant-garde self-commitment of Soviet architects has failed in several respects, but at the same time their very limited experiments provide visions for architecture’s possible positive contributions to social processes, but through a temporal awareness.

CHAPTER 2

THE POLITICS OF MODERNISM

2.1. Modernity, Modernism, the Avant-garde

As a pedestal and historical phenomenon which is formative to the conceptual basis of contemporary architectural theory, Modernism remained to be the prevalent object at issue being the lineament of various positions and approaches throughout the 20th century and afterwards. For both preventing the potential ambiguities arising from reductionist generalizations and the extravagant use of the term 'Modernism' and providing a coherency with the endeavor of the study, in this sub-chapter it is aimed to construct a portrayal of the paradigm in an effort to gather different perspectives through the historicity of the term. Thus, here it is aimed to fold the various descriptions of Modernism and the Historical Avant-garde through the influential debates of the 20th century staying in a relevant line with the main focus of the study.

In this respect, firstly the aim is to reach a profound understanding of the socio-historical paradigm termed as ‘modernity,’ which is widely indicated to be the main designating phenomenon of Modernism as both an historical trend of thought and aesthetic movement. Secondly the Avant-gardism as an extent of modernism is analyzed aiming to elucidate the dialectical relation between these two terms.

2.1.1. Modernism and Modernity

Modernity, in the most general sense, is perceived as the successive transformations which are fueled by Renaissance and Enlightenment thought throughout the

conceptualization of objectivity, the material world as an open course for human intervention, and, of time, that the past ceases to exist as a model for present action in which the 'new' is to be searched, and consequently, transformations of social organization to operate through these novel perceptions.

While extending the historicity of modernity to pre-Renaissance times pointing out the use of the term 'modern' as early as 12th Century, Habermas indicates Enlightenment thought as the basis on which modernity gained maturity as a 'project.' 'The project of modernity,' according to Habermas, depends on the immanent consistency of the perpetual development of the objectivating sciences, the universalistic forms of morality and law, and of autonomous art as it was projected by Enlightenment thinkers.[4] The cognitive potentials of distinctive high forms created within this development are sought to be mobilized through praxis, encouraging the rational organization of social relations.[5] These were in all aspects dependent on the transformation of the comprehension of temporality: With the emergence of modernity, time is considered as being linear, irreversible and progressive, instead of basing time on a static concept, regarding the past as the archetype of it.[6] For medieval humanity, the time of eternity was the foremost, the concrete course of history had secondary importance by reason that earthly time was no more than a preparation for the time of eternity, until the Renaissance originated the notion that history contained a course of development. For the project of modernity, human sovereignty over nature and rationality in every aspects were the means and preconditions of human liberation, and in such a project, it is barely possible that the universal, eternal, and the immutable qualities of all of humanity can be achieved.[7] The notion of progress and the search for breaks with history and tradition which are inherent to modernity were embodied by Enlightenment thought.[8]

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[4] Jürgen Habermas, in Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves, Seyla Benhabib (eds), *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity: Critical Essays on The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1997), 45.
[5] *Ibid*.
[6] Hilde Heynen. *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (Cambridge and Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1999), 9.
[7] David Harvey. *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge MA, Oxford UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1989), 12.
[8] *Ibid*.

Harvey comprehensively structures modernity in relation to Enlightenment thought. He presents an overlap of enlightenment ideals and the promises of the project of modernity and attributes the origins of the temporal logic of modernity to Enlightenment thought.

According to Giddens modernity consists of modes of social life or organization[9] associated on three grounds: Firstly, the emergence of a general understanding which considers the world as convenient to be transformed by human intervention, and secondly, the development of industrial production and the market economy leading to the complex institutionalization of the economy, and thirdly, the institutionalization of politics at a certain level.[10] By virtue of these characteristics, modernity is much more dynamic than any type of social order of the past, and modern society, 'unlike any preceding culture, lives in the future, rather than in the past.'[11] Regarding the extent of developments on the three grounds that Giddens describes, at the turn of the 20th century, humanity witnessed an intensive dynamism, in which societies, to a noteworthy extent, started to 'live in the future rather than the past' in their novel experience of time-space compression.

It was during the late 19th and early 20th centuries when the desire to be subjects of modernization intensified. Berman, in his seminal book, describes the ground of this mood through which modernist was thought to have flourished. The discoveries in the physical sciences had transformed our perception of universe and position of the human within it. In addition, these discoveries were transformed into technology via industrialization.[12] Thanks to the technological progress, new human environments were created, the old ones destroyed, and life had gained speed.[13] New systems of corporate power and class struggle had emerged along with massive demographic changes, rapid and catastrophic urbanization, and the development of systems of mass communication which envelope and bind together diverse people and

[9] Anthony Giddens. *The Consequences of Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996), 1.
[10] A. Giddens and Christopher Pierson. Conversations with Anthony Giddens (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 94.
[11] *ibid.*
[12] Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air* (New York: Penguin Books, 1988), 16.
[13] *Ibid*.

societies.[14] Powerful national states have risen with advanced bureaucratic organizations in a search for expanding their powers. Furthermore, mass social movements have grown questing to gain some control over their lives.[15] The bearing and driving force of all these developments was ‘an ever-expanding, drastically fluctuating capitalist world market.’[16]

Multiple phenomena, summarily, are significant in Berman's portrayal of modernity within multifaceted cause and effect relations: the common mood of destroying the old, technological advances along with rapid industrialization, dramatic social changes, the transformation of the human environment in favor of the urban space, the inventions of governmental and institutional structures and the devastating expansion of the capitalist world market. These phenomena were not separate measures but the components of a greater experience of modernity within complex cause and effect relations. Berman, constituted these components of his characterization on the basis of a historically dual nature of modernity. According to Berman, Modernity has a dual character that, while it promises unlimited visions for humanity, at the same time, threatens to destroy the existing characteristics and accumulation of humanity in various aspects.[17] While Modernity has a unifying character as it cuts across the existing boundaries of categories such as geography, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion and ideology, at the same time, it creates a maelstrom of constant disintegration and renewal, of struggle and contradiction, of ambiguity and anguish.

This duality exists in both temporal and spatial terms, and it is frequently put forward.[18] Harvey points the ‘conjoining of the ephemeral and the fleeting with the eternal and the immutable’ characteristics of modernity which not only leads to a

[14] *Ibid*.
[15] *Ibid*.
[16] *Ibid*.
[17] *Ibid.,* 15.
[18] Harvey, *op. cit.,* 10.

ruthless break from the past conditions in any aspect but also corresponds to a never-ending process of inner ruptures and fragmentations.[19]

In short, modernity is characterized by the advancement of human conceptualization of the material world into a certain affirmative belief in human intervention on nature and in the cumulative progress of humanity, fueled by Renaissance and Enlightenment thinkers, by a great shift in terms of social organizations and institutions, and by the expansion of the capitalist mode of production and its market with its drastic social consequences, in a dual character which features both a fixed continuity and ruptures through its own perception of temporality.

Therfore, how does Modernism correlate to modernity? In the 20th century, Modernism formed through the diverse range of visions, ideas and values flourishing from subjective and objective interrelations of humans with the processes of 'modernization' which amount to the social processes that bear the process of modernity and keep it a condition of permanent becoming.[20] Berman elaborates on modern society and culture as a whole. For him, modernist thought is procreated within an overall structure of modernity which hosts the world-historical processes of "modernization." Modernism is regarded in the cultural realm in the broadest sense. In this regard, it is beyond the limits of an aesthetic category, a trend of thought which finds its expression mostly in a cultural realm.

Osborne approaches Modernity itself as a cultural category which corresponds to a fundamental manner of time consciousness in capitalist societies, as it is a socially realized temporal formalism which is constitutive for certain formations of subjectivity.[21] Cunningham and Goodbun suggest that Modernism would be the general term that refers to the cultural or subjective self-consciousness and expression of temporal logic of Modernity which embodies a dialectic of negation

[19] *Ibid.*, 12.
[20] Berman, *op. cit.*, 16.
[21] Peter Osborne, 'Non-Places and the Spaces of Art', *The Journal of Architecture* 6, no. 2 (Summer, 2001), 189, quoted in David Cunningham and Jon Goodbun, "Marx, Architecture and Modernity," *The Journal of Architecture* 11, no. 2 (2006): 175-176.

and newness, a constant revolutionizing that perpetually negates all fixed, fast frozen relations.[22]

How is Modernism then characterized as particularly an aesthetic movement? An artistic creation may refer to history at the same time constituting its own "modernity" finding its unique place through the temporal logic of Modernity. In this sense, Avant-garde art is not simply anti-historical since it particularly opposes merely the false normativity of a historical manner based on the imitation of past models.[23] According to Harvey, Modernism as an aesthetic movement has oscillated through his 'dual formulation' of ephemeral and the fleeting, and the eternal and the immutable.[24] Habermas points out a similar duality in which the ephemeral and the transitory as the dynamics of modernity at the same time correspond to an eternality and immutability by aesthetic modernism. In this sense, according to him, the work referred to as modern, walks hand in hand with unplanned renewal of a 'historical contemporaneity of the zeitgeist' in search of an objective expression peculiar to itself.[25] The distinctive features of these kinds of works are the new which is soon replaced by the upcoming style and losing its novelty. On the other hand, regardless of this replacement, Habermas underlines that the modern will always preserve the undercover relations with the classical, which survives through the ages. The power of modern artwork, therefore, does not come from how it corresponds to the requirements of the past but comes from its contemporary aspects, which is not the past anymore. Therefore, as Jauss stated, the modern makes itself classical.[26] This very characteristic of modern, i.e., transformation of a contemporary feature into a now past one, constitutes both destructive and constructive moments. In this regard, Modernism, as a self-negating movement, is a 'yearning for true presence': the new value which is accorded to the ephemeral, the momentary and the transitory, and the

[22] Cunningham and Goodbun, *ibid.*, 176.
[23] Habermas, *op. cit.*, 41.
[24] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 10.
[25] Habermas, *op. cit.*, 39-40.
[26] *Ibid*.

concomitant celebration of dynamism, expressing precisely the yearning for a long lasting and immaculate present.[27]

Thus, Modernism is characterized mainly according to its temporal logic which flourishes from the greater context and paradigm of Modernity. In fact, their conceptualizations of temporality were perhaps the most apparent common ground of aesthetic Modernism and the project of Modernity. How, then, does Modernism constitute itself historically as a cultural-aesthetic phenomenon through this conceptualization of temporality? Anderson, in his debate on Berman's *All That is Solid Melts into Air,* explains Modernism as a cultural field, but asserts that it developed through three coordinates: 'the codification of a highly formalized academicism' in the arts, 'the inventions of the Second Industrial Revolution' and 'the imaginative proximity of social revolution'.[28] The persistence of '*anciens régimes*' and their academicism gave way to a critical range of cultural values with their insurgent forms of art to measure themselves against tradition.[29] To this end, a large variety of new aesthetic practices which have little or no unity had the ground to constitute themselves in opposition to academicism. The new machine age and its inventions reproduced a 'powerful imaginative stimulus well reflected in Parisian cubism, Italian futurism or Russian constructivism.'[30] Moreover, the third is 'the imaginative proximity of social revolution,' which is discussed further in the following chapters of the study as a central constituent affecting the history of Modernism and the Historical Avant-garde.[31] In other words, Modernism developed through an intersection of the grounds of a semi-aristocratic ruling order, a semi-industrialized capitalist economy, and a still emerging labor movement.'[32]

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[27] *Ibid.*, 40.
[28] Perry Anderson, "Modernity and Revolution," *New Left Review* I/144 (1984), 104, accessed December 23, 2014, http://newleftreview.org/I/144/perry-anderson-modernity-and-revolution Anderson questions Berman's perennialist approach on modernization and his positive emphasis on capitalist development. According to Anderson, modernism needs to be framed within more differential conceptions of historical time and space, as the capitalist development itself has a curvilinear advancement, not planar.
[29] *Ibid.*, 104.
[30] *Ibid.*, 105.
[31] *Ibid.*,104.
[32] *Ibid.*, 106.

In addition to the correspondence of Modernism as the inherent cultural constituent of Modernity, it developed in the form of an aesthetic movement inter-relatedly with a cultural basis of Modernity. Thus, Modernism, as a historical trend of thought, was developed through the humanitarian effort of responding to the experience of modernity and intersecting various ideological currents; however, it also specifically corresponded to cultural terms as an aesthetic movement which struggled for a positive relation with this experience with its own diverse range of aesthetical characteristics.

2.1.2. Modernism and the Avant-garde

As a result of its characteristic conception of temporality, Modernism developed along with an Avant-gardist attitude as it strove to break ties with the past in every possible manner. To begin in the usual way, originally a French word, *avant-garde* means "advance-guard" or more literally "fore-guard," which refers to soldiers marching at the first ranks in order of battle. The earliest usage of the term as a progressive, forward-looking and sophisticated standing through politics and arts dates back to 1825, Murphy writes, as Saint-Simonist Olinde Rodrigues expressly calls upon the artists 'to serve as avant-garde' for social change and for a glorious future."[33] Dating back to the 19th century, "to serve as avant-garde" attaches a social concern in an alternative sense in addition to the innovative attitudes toward the arts limited to its internal margins. Such a dual relation is ascribed to the dialectics of Modernism and the avant-garde by many, pointing out the disparities of the two.

Kenneth Frampton describes the development of modern architecture between two lines. According to him, after the Enlightenment, modern architecture developed through the divergence between ‘the utopianism of the avant-garde, first formulated at the beginning of the 19th Century in the ideal physiocratic city of Ledoux, and that anti-classical and anti-utilitarian attitude of Christian reform first declared in

[33] Richard Murphy. *Theorizing the Avant-garde: Modernism, Expressionism and the Problem of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 35.

Pugin's *Contrasts* of 1836.'[34] The two lines of Modern Architecture – or to extend it in a more general sense, Modernism – may be described as a rejection of the existing which takes roots in the past and utopianism as a yearning for a non-existing ideal, through the relationship with the extent of its Avant-garde. Both tendencies call for a search for and celebration of the new. Frampton assigns this divergence to describe the dialectical range in which Bourgeois culture 'has oscillated between the extremes of totally planned and industrialized utopias on the one hand, and, on the other, a denial of the actual historical reality of machine production.'[35] Machine production is ineluctable historically, thus, the inner dynamics of modernism grew contextually in relation to the fate of Bourgeois culture. Therefore, now the main focus here would be the internal dialectics of the main direction arising from the duality described by Frampton: the novel historical reality of industrial production and utopian visions through it, which propose the absolute disengagement from the existing and a total breakthrough to the future by means of the new social relations of production; or in other words, the dialectics between Modernism and the Avant-garde.

In an effort to describe such a classification and display the disparities of the two boundaries of these dialectics, Williams explains the origins of the disparity. He distinguishes the main groupings in the artistic realm into three phases developing rapidly during the nineteenth century. Firstly, some innovative groups sought to protect their practices against the expanding art market.[36] These transformed into an innovative and more radical quest to form their own facilities of production, and finally, they transcend into a fully oppositional position against the existing cultural establishments and beyond, against the entire social order which sustains the existence and reproduction of their opponents' power, attacking in the name of their art on an entire social and cultural order.[37] Williams places Modernism starting with the second type of group, the innovative and radicals, while asserting that the Avant-

[34] Kenneth Frampton. *Modern Architecture: A Critical History*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 2007), 9.
[35] *Ibid*., 9.
[36] Raymond Williams. *The Politics of Modernism Against the New Conformists* (London-New York: Verso, 1989), 51.
[37] *Ibid*.

garde begins with the third, the fully oppositional type. According to him, Modernism suggested a new kind of art for the novel social and perceptual world.[38] In this manner, Modernism's proposal would be identified as the fulfillment of a progressing novel context, while the Avant-garde displays an alternative and revolutionary characteristic: The Avant-garde was aggressive, and searched for a breakthrough to the future; instead of being the bearers of the already defined progress, their members proposed to revive and emancipate humanity with their creativity.[39]

The main characteristics of Modernism were constructed through oppositions. Their innovations and experiments, are more clearly spotted 'by what they are breaking from' than by what 'they are breaking towards'.[40] Thus, Williams asserts that Modernism involved a prolific diversity. The degree of opposition with regard to the dialectics between rupture and continuity is determinant in the forming of the Avant-garde's extent of Modernism within this diversity. In the same vein, Murphy perceives the Avant-garde as the political and revolutionary cutting-edge, of the broader movement of Modernism from which the Avant-garde endeavors with difficulty to free itself.[41] In this dialectical relationship, the Avant-garde questions the blind spots and unreflected presuppositions of Modernism, while Modernism reacts with the effort to allow some of the failures and successes of the Historical Avant-garde.[42]The inherent characteristic of Modernism defining itself through oppositions and differentiations makes its relation with the Historical Avant-garde vivacious in this framework.

On the other hand, Peter Bürger, who considers Avant-gardism as a historical category instead of an aesthetic one, significantly distinguishes Modernism and Avant-gardism, asserting that while Modernism searches for a continuous novelty of form, the Avant-gardes on the other hand, seek for the transformation of the status

[38] *Ibid*.
[39] *Ibid*.
[40] *Ibid*.
[41] Richard Murphy. *Theorizing the Avant-garde: Modernism, Expressionism and the Problem of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 3.
[42] *Ibid*.

of art within the relations of production, proposing a change through the practice of art itself.[43] The Historical Avant-garde, according to Bürger, aimed to merge art and life categorically, by attacking the autonomy of the art object and institutionalization differently from that of Modernism.[44] However, such a categorization would bear an over-emphasis on the socio-historical role of the Avant-garde as Tafuri's approach very much equates Modernism and the Avant-garde to each other particularly in terms of their ideological absorption by capitalism.[45]

Therefore, the characteristic nature of Modernism developed an identity through its relationship with Avant-gardism to its radically destructive extent. In fact, this tension inherent to the relation between the two is essentially pertinent to the distinction in their temporal logic: By radicalizing the urge towards continual change and development, the constant rejection of the old and the longing as the basic principle of modernity, the Avant-garde represents a 'spearhead of aesthetic Modernism which in itself can be said to have a broader basis.'[46]

2.2. Modernism, Avant-garde and Capitalism

Opposition to the bourgeois culture was one of the characteristic ideological sources among Modernists in their relationship with their radical extent, the Avant-garde. However, this intellectual vein did not operate in exact coherence with its ideological source. Every Avant-garde movement of the early 20th century "implicitly, or more often explicitly claimed to be anti-bourgeois, in all its range of meanings, turns out to be a key to the many movements which claimed to be its opposite."[47] The anti-bourgeois vein did not represent homogeneity, defining divides politically, and "in remaining anti-bourgeois its representatives either choose the formerly aristocratic valuation of arts as a secret realm above money and commerce, or the revolutionary

[43] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Michael Shaw, Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1984.
[44] Michael Chapman, "(dis)Functions: Marxist Theories of Architecture and the Avant-garde" in *Contemporary Aesthetics,* Vol 12, 2014.
[45] See, Manfredo Tafuri. *Architecture and Utopia Design and Capitalist Development* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1976). Tafuri's approach is discussed in advance.
[46] Heynen, *op. cit.*, 27.
[47] Williams, *op.cit.*, 51.

doctrines, promulgated since 1848, of art as liberating vanguard of popular consciousness."[48]

The early 20th-century modernism saluted the temporal events flourishing at the start of the 20th century in an anti-feudal and anti-bourgeois discourse. Mass production was regarded as 'democratic,' and it was hoped that technology would abolish the feudal remnants of the past, and socialism promised to emancipate the dynamism which was restrained by capitalism.[49] 'Imaginative proximity of social revolution' – one of Anderson's three coordinates of Modernism[50] – fueled the rejection of bourgeois society: The potential social revolution was regarded as a silver lining and encouraged the currents of Modernism to sustain and radicalize their rejection of the social order as a whole.[51]

In spite of these early motives of Modernism, a total deduction of an anti-capitalist essence from its 'anti-bourgeois' characteristics on the whole range of Modernism is problematic, easy to say but harder to prove; likewise, despite the many Modernist protagonists who claimed their motives to be anti-bourgeois, many like Greenberg, Tafuri, and Williams, to some extent, displayed the contribution of Modernism to the advance of bourgeois culture and capitalism.[52] Moreover, in the well-known criticism of Tafuri, this contributing role of Modernism had a total character as well, describing Modernism and the Avant-garde as having a foundational role of committing the ideological constitution of the capitalist mode of production.[53] Thus, it is essential to point out two separate and different items: The anti-bourgeois vein was a source of motivation for Modernism and implicit to its intentions; however, simultaneously, modernism and its Avant-garde extension reproduced the crucial

[48] Williams, *ibid*., 34.
[49] Tony Pinkney, introduction to *The Politics of Modernism Against the New Conformist,* Raymond Williams (London-New York: Verso, 1989), 16.
[50] Anderson. op.cit., 104.
[51] *Ibid.*, 105.
[52] See, Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review*. 6:5 (1939): 34-49; Manfredo Tafuri. *Architecture and Utopia Design and Capitalist Development* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1976); Raymond Williams. *The Politics of Modernism Against the New Conformists* (London-New York: Verso, 1989).
[53] See, Manfredo Tafuri. *Architecture and Utopia Design and Capitalist Development* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1976).

cultural inputs of the developing bourgeois culture and partook in recreating the bourgeois ideology. Is it, then, also reductionist to assert that modernism is totally and initially a phenomenon of capitalist relations of production? The oscillation of Modernism and the Historical Avant-garde along this dialectic is the main focus of the first section of this sub-chapter.

2.2.1. Modernism, the Avant-garde and the Capitalist Mode of Production

As early as 1939, Greenberg portrayed the flourish of the Avant-garde, depicting its origins and grounds in the Enlightenment project's questioning of existing social values. He asserts that Avant-garde art had issued from the evolution of this questioning into a historical criticism, and subsequently, was formed and discussed mainly by the elite strata of the bourgeois class hosting a high taste for art. Correlatively "kitsch" culture had emerged to serve the lower classes isolating the Avant-garde away from the mainstream. The Avant-garde had been absorbed by consumerism and its opposing potential was inhibited.[54]

However, the main source of disapproval of the Avant-garde seems to have been arising mostly from the perception of history which leaves the Avant-garde in a duality that was opposing the capitalist mode of production in the form anti-bourgeois discourse while displaying an optimistic outlook on its already developing productive forces. According to Cunningham and Goodbun's approaches to the problem in relation to the progressive social logic of capitalist modernity, "In regard to the "temporal logic of modernity" and to its dialectic of negation and newness, artistically, the modernist work is that which, in some way, registers this non-identity of modernity and tradition within itself, engaging the social logic of capitalist modernity at the level of form."[55] Negating the present and searching for the new did not transcend the limits of capitalism due to the fact that the inner logic of capitalist modernity constructed itself on such an impulse of progress. The negative positions

[54] Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* 6, No. 5 (1939), 34-49.
[55] Cunningham and Goodbun, *op.cit.*, 176.

on Modernism and the Historical Avant-garde are very often purported in association with this duality.

The affirmative sense on the productive forces and 'progressive' motive of the capitalist mode of production is not only characteristic of Modernism but also intrinsic to various trends of thought, as it is to Marxism, since the time of Marx and Engels.[56] According to them, the productive forces briefly refer to the combination of the means of labor with the power of human labor. In the case of the capitalist mode of production, these correspond to the machinery and the new technologies of production as well as the emergence of the modern proletariat. The most famous example of such an affinity is displayed in the *Communist Manifesto*, which includes an affirmation of the bourgeois progressivism while pointing the newly emerging modern proletariat to overthrow it, as the "grave-diggers of bourgeois."[57] In Marx's theory, it is explicit that dialectics between the novel developments of capitalist modernity and the devastating effects concomitant with it, is the dynamic force of a historical progress, of the transition to socialism. However, at the same time, Marxism with the Revolutions of 1848 triggered the disputability of the affirmative sense on modernity as the ineluctability of progress and the categorical fixity of Enlightenment thought: The socialist movement increasingly challenged the unity of Enlightenment reason, which proposes that capitalist modernity could bring benefits to all by throwing off feudal class relations, and inserting a class dimension into modernism.[58]

Saluting the productive forces of the capitalist mode of production was characteristic of a wide range of 19th-century Western philosophers as the predecessors of the Modern Movement. An optimistic belief in progress depending on the human intervention on nature and the abolishment of the past models, with all their contradictions and antinomies, pervaded the ideological cosmos in the 19th century.

[56] See K. Marx, and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1970). Cunningham and Goodbun makes a very comprehensive summary of Marx's conception, see Cunningham and Goodbun, *op. cit.*, 178-179.
[57] K. Marx, and F. Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1970), 47.
[58] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 29.

Throughout this period, as mentioned previously, a general affirmative outlook on the new technologies of production and the newly emerging social context from relations of capitalist production was dominant, resulting from the broader context of modernity. However, at the turn of the 20th century, when this optimism started to be questioned, and by the outbreak of the First World War, the belief in evolution, progress, and history itself was wiped out as the war destroyed the historical fabric and severed everyone from the past suddenly and irretrievably.[59] In what motive and how, then, did the Modernists find themselves on this ground and demanding a mission to be the bearers of the social and technological developments which had already started to become disputable? Harvey explains it, by bringing the Nietzchean aesthetics to the subject, for describing the autonomous self-committing motive of Modernism. According to him, after Nietzsche paved the way to place aesthetics above science, rationality and politics, aesthetic exploration became a potent way to constitute a new mythology to conceive the eternal and the immutable in modern life comprising ephemerality, fragmentation and patent chaos.[60] Consequently, cultural Modernists obtained a new role as 'defining the essence of humanity' in the circumstances that the 'eternal and immutable' was no longer automatically presupposed. Artists might have had a heroic role to play in the processes of 'creative destruction' as a fundamental condition of Modernity.[61]

In this regard, the social ambitions of cultural Modernism depend on the belief that aesthetic exploration would be the bearer of the eternal and the immutable amid the ephemeral and fragmental characteristics of modernity. The superior characterization of aesthetics to 'science, rationality and politics' leads the artist to procreate a divine aesthetic mission to accord with the condition of 'creative destruction.' However, the aesthetic field itself became subject to the condition of 'creative destruction' as the cultural producers were compelled to produce something conformable to the commodification and commercialization of a competitive market

[59] *Ibid.*, 278.
[60] *Ibid.*, 19.
[61] *Ibid.*

of cultural products, in spite of the common anti-establishment and anti-bourgeois rhetoric.[62]

Besides the autonomous transformation of cultural production in accordance with the capitalist market, aesthetic Modernism, which has emerged as a reaction to the new conditions of production, circulation and consumption in pre-World War I context, transformed into the pioneer of such changes, not only providing ways to absorb, reflect upon, and codify these changes, but also suggesting the lines of action that might modify and support them.[63] How, then, do Modernism and its Avant-garde extension execute its pioneer role in relation to the capitalist mode of production and its larger social context?

Tafuri constitutes his position in a very close relation to the condition of the productive forces of capitalism. According to Tafuri, with regard to Modernism (specifically modern architecture) and the Avant-garde, –does not distinguish the two while decrying, has justified the capitalist mode of production by rationalizing its internal logic and fixing the contradictions, having an amendatory role. He asserts that Modern architecture and the visual communication systems produced by Modernism, entered into a crisis in their intention to abolish 'the imbalances, contradictions, and retardations characteristic of the capitalist reorganization of the world market and productive development'.[64] Most of the economic objectives formulated by Keynes coheres with the fundamental poetics of Modern Architecture in purely ideological form.[65] Modern architecture has sealed its own fate by becoming the bearer of the ideals of progress and rationalization which is extraneous to the working class, or corresponding no more than a social democratic perspective.[66] He insists that the 'revolutionary' aims are taken away from

[62] *Ibid.*, 22.
[63] *Ibid.*, 23.
[64] Tafuri, "*Architecture and Utopia", op. cit.*, 178. Tafuri enounces the amendatory role of Modernism on capitalist production by showing the correlation between their intentions and capital's necessities quoting from Ford, who expresses capital's demand for artists in an industrial relationship. Quoted in Tafuri, *ibid.*, 67.
[65] Manfredo Tafuri, "Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology" in Hays, K. M., ed., *Architecture Theory since 1968*, (Cambridge and Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), 28.
[66] Tafuri "*Architecture and Utopia*", *op. cit.*, 181.

architecture or from 'ideological prefiguration' in general, by capitalist development.[67]

Attacking the utopian sense of the Avant-garde, Tafuri asserts that the dynamic functioning of the system necessitates and instrumentalizes criticism of conservative thought[68] and the utopian sense, then, becomes the justification and the refitment of the actual moment of development. Ideology negates itself to be freed from its own crystallized forms and commits itself into the construction of the future to constitute the 'dominion of a realized ideology over the forms of development.'[69] Tafuri points out the contradictions between the intentions or utopian aims and the actual emphasis on the transformation of Avant-garde visions into the 'ideology of plan' by capital. He asserts that only by recognizing itself as a part of a comprehensive plan and accepting that it must function as a component of a global machine can humanity legate its actions, which was the exact ideological condition for the prominent Avant-garde visions in spite of their ingenuous radicalism.[70] Their call for the 'mechanization of the universe,' for universal proletarianization, for forced production, in revealing the ideology of the Plan, overshadows their actual intentions.[71] Thus, according to Tafuri, the Avant-garde movements were not distinguished from the broader phenomenon of Modernism in terms of contributing to and being absorbed by capitalist relations of production. The promises of Avant-garde visions dissolved into the 'Modernist ideology of plan.'[72]

Harvey similarly points out Modernism's accordance with and integration into capitalism, but subdivides it ideologically and asserts that only the type of Modernism which is compatible with the inner logic of capitalism could survive. Although the enlightenment objectives were never far from the rhetoric of inter-war Modernism, the practical circumstances and financial resources were not convenient

[67] *Ibid.*, ix.
[68] *Ibid.*, 53.
[69] *Ibid.*, 50.
[70] *Ibid.*, 74.
[71] *Ibid.*, 76
[72] *Ibid.*, 178.

to realize such goals.[73] The Modernist motive of a 'radical break with past' gave way to an ideological affiliation between socialism and Modernism, which discredited Modernism in the capitalist West. Therefore, Harvey notes, only the 'machine-style Modernism of the Bauhaus sort' could survive in the societies where the accumulation of capital continued to be the main motive of action.[74]

2.2.2. Periodizing Modernism

The duality of 'Being and Becoming,' which is central to Modernism's history, 'has to be seen in political terms as a tension between the sense of time and the focus of space.'[75] The form of periodization is fundamental to describe this 'becoming' of Modernism as a generally accepted phenomenon. It is the Post-War context in which, very often, Modernism's degradation to a formal language arising as a coherent object of commercialism, and its function to rebuild capitalism both in physical and cultural terms, appear to be more observable. Since the end of World War II, Modernism has become the new but fixed form of the 20th century, according to Pinkey. Addressing the post-World War II context, he asserts that Modernism had no longer borne its former anti-bourgeois character and comfortably integrated into international capitalism, revealing the spuriousness of its attempt at a global market, trans-frontier and trans-class.[76] Its forms became the constituents of cultural competition and commercial processes, in accordance with market logic which involves its shift of schools, styles and fashion.[77] While pointing out the relation between the Modernism and capitalism, like Tafuri, Pinkey's reading addresses a more obvious break between the inter-war and post-World War II characteristics of Modernism. Tafuri, on the other hand, lays the emphasis on how the conceptions of the Modern Movement, from the very beginning, conjoined with the nature of the capitalist mode of production. He divides the development of the Modern Movement before 1931 – which he refers as the date on which the crisis of Modernism was felt

[73] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 280.
[74] *Ibid.*, 281.
[75] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 283. This formulation is intensely used by Harvey.
[76] Pinkey, *op. cit.*, 35.
[77] *Ibid.*

in all sectors and at all levels – into three successive phases: Firstly, regarding urban ideology as the opposition of romantic mythology; secondly, a phase of Avant-gardist creations of ideological projects and defining of unsatisfied needs which transcend also to architecture; and the third phase, in which architectural ideology becomes '*ideology of the plan.'*[78] According to Tafuri, the ideological function of architecture was 'rendered superfluous, or limited to rear-guard tasks of marginal importance' after the 1929 crisis, through 'the elaboration of the anti-cyclical theories and the international reorganization of capital, and after the launching in Russia of the First Five-Year Plan,' which gave way to the crisis and supplanting of the third phase.[79]

He describes a "regression" and an "anxious struggle" through the Modern Movement starting from 1935, and counters the tendency among historians to place "the crisis of Modern Architecture" as a shift arising from an accidental transformation of Modernism around the 1930s pointing the rise of Fascism over Europe and Stalinism in the Soviet Union.[80] Modernism has become the architectural and artistic base of the "golden age of capitalism" which refers to Post-World War II economic expansion and prosperity along with the highly bureaucratized organization of capitalism through Keynesian policies, opening the way to the emergence of the welfare state. According to Tafuri, by reducing the crisis of Modern Architecture to Fascism and Stalinism, historians 'systematically ignore the introduction, throughout the world, immediately after the economic crisis of 1929, of a new and decisive factor: the international reorganization of capital and the establishment of anti-cyclical planning systems.'[81] Tafuri particularly focuses on the correlation between the post-war Keynesian capitalism and Modern Architecture. According to him, the Keynesian idea of interventionism highly resembles Le Corbusier's understanding of the reality of class in modern cities endeavoring to solve class conflicts by transcending its consequences. The architect-operator

[78] Tafuri, *op. cit*., "*Architecture and Utopia*", 48-49.
[79] *Ibid*., 49.
[80] Manfredo Tafuri. "Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology," in Hays, K. Michael. *Architecture Theory since 1968*. Cambridge, (Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), 28.
[81] *Ibid*.

intervenes in a plan which aims to integrate the general public. Hence, the plan lost its utopian aspect and was reduced to reality, and the ideology of the plan, i.e., the architecture, reinstates itself as an operator. According to Tafuri, this is where the crisis of modern architecture starts: In its modern life, it began with industrial capitalism, but, industrial capitalism amassed the ideology of architecture for itself. [82] The fate of the Modern Movement can be seen with this antagonism, as it provides an indirect stimulus for the gradual supply of the unmet demands of the rationalization of cities in the process established by the system.[83]

Modernism became a fulfilling constituent of the post-war restoration of world capitalism as well as its proposals that had the opportunity to descend from a utopian level as 'the ideology of plan' became a reality, 'an operant mechanism.' Large industrial capital as the natural target of Modernism captured architectural ideology, the destruction of war and the conditions of incomplete modernization acted as indirect stimuli for the system and a field of operation for the cut off of Modernism from the utopian level.[84]

Post-World War II Modernism displayed a 'much more comfortable relation to the dominant power centers in society' and 'became establishment arts and practices in a society where a corporate capitalist version of the Enlightenment project of development for progress and human emancipation held sway as a political-economic dominant,' according to Harvey.[85] Likewise, the stems of this post-Second World War 'becoming' from the ideological configuration of inter-war Modernism is significant. Harvey mentions the tension between locality and universality in the novel experience of space and time, and points out a transition across Modernists in depicting this tension: Inter-war Modernism was 'heroic' as it attempted to represent, and thereby contain, the accelerations, fragmentations, and imploding centralizations in a singular image in order to restore global welfare by overcoming nationalism and

[82] *Ibid*., 28-29.
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] Capitalist restoration operated in global scale: "The 'modernization' of European economies proceeded apace, while the whole thrust of international politics and trade was justified as bringing a benevolent and progressive 'modernization process' to a backward Third World." Harvey, *op. cit.*, 35.
[85] Harvey, *ibid*.

localism.[86] According to him, Modernism already took a strong positivist turn not long after the First World War, as logical positivism was to become central to post-World War II social thought being concordant with both the practices of Modernist architecture and the advancement of all forms of science as avatars of technical control.[87]

Anderson, asserts that 'the codification of a highly formalized academicism,' 'the emergence of the key technologies or inventions of the second industrial revolution' and 'the imaginative proximity of social revolution' which he describes as the three constituent coordinates of modernism,[88] were altered by World War I, but was not totally eliminated, and somehow 'they lived on in a kind of hectic after-life' for another twenty years. However, these three historical coordinates were to be destroyed by World War II, eliminating the vivacity of Modernism, with the development of the routinized, bureaucratized economy of commodity production and mass consumption, which is almost identified with mass culture.[89] However, according to Anderson, the history of Modernism is not planar and he suggests a differential conception of Modernity and Modernism in both spatial and temporal terms.[90] Thus, his approach is differentially contextual as he implies that the fate of Modernism is very well dependent on remittances, fluctuations and dynamism of these three coordinates.

As Colquhoun interprets, 'based on an idealist and teleological conception of history, modernist theory seems radically to have misread the very *Zeitgeist* it had itself invoked, ignoring the complex and indeterminate nature of modern capitalism, with its dispersal of power and its constant state of movement.'[91] With the integration of functionalism into the logic of post-war reconstruction which necessitated a rapid and efficient building of large numbers of dwellings, Modernist architecture broke

[86] *Ibid.*, 279.
[87] *Ibid.*, 32.
[88] Anderson, *op. cit.*, 104.
[89] *Ibid.*, 106-107.
[90] *Ibid.*, 102.
[91] Alan Colquhoun. *Modern Architecture* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2002), 11.

away from Avant-garde visions and lost its socially critical position in the inter-war period, compromising with an institutionalized and officially recognized approach.[92]

Eventually, the Modernist hope arising from expanding industrialization, the new technologies of transformation, communication etc., and machinery production, and concomitantly with these, the growing modern proletariat and the imaginative novel social context that it promised had failed. This failure was very well related mainly to the capitalist restoration after the Great Depression and the rise of manifestations of fascism over Europe paving the way for the questioning of Enlightenment thinking in general, and the positive perceptions on the development of the productive forces of capitalism.[93] These questions rose not only in the Modernist ideology but also in the entire range of movements of thought affirming the "progressive" sense, including Marxism.[94] The concurrent condemnations of technological determinism or a unilinear perception of history had risen. These condemnations had built themselves in the intellectual atmosphere of the so-called "golden age of capitalism" over Europe, premising post-modern criticism of Modernism. The "golden age" refers to the post-World War II economic expansion and prosperity along with the

[92] Heynen, *op. cit.*, 149.

[93] In the post-Second World War era, many had intensively questioned the unilinear conception of history with a general positive attitude toward bourgeois progressivism of the 19th and early 20th century intellectuals. An influential reaction was made by Adorno and Horkheimer in *Dialectic of Enlightenment.* Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noer, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford and California: Stanford University Press, 2002). However, already prior to the First World War, Weber had questioned the optimism of the progressive sense of Modernity. See, Max Weber, *From Max Weber: essays in sociology*. Routledge, 2009.

[94] Wood discusses the issue through Marxism. She defends Marx's thought asserting that productive forces are prominent in the course of history solely in a dialectical relation with the relations of production. In this regard, according to Wood, "historical materialism is not, now or in its origins, a technological determinism; that its great strength lies not in any unilinear conception of history but, on the contrary, in a unique sensitivity to historical specificities." Ellen Meiksins Wood, *Democracy Against Capitalism: Renewing Historical Materialism*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 1995, 122. However, the first inquiries into the unilinear conception of history and the development of productive forces date back to the conception of "uneven and combined development" asserted by Trotsky. According to him, human progress was not a linear, continuously advancing process of bourgeois modernization. Leon Trotsky, *The Third International After Lenin*, part 1, section 4, Leon Trotsky Internet Archive (www.marxists.org) 2002, 2003. Accessed February 06, 2015, https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/1928/3rd/index.htm
For a more orthodox view on Marxism with technological determinist overtones, see G. A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978)

highly bureaucratized organization of capitalism through Keynesian policies, giving way to the emergence of the welfare state.[95]

2.2.3. Is Modernism Totally Bound to Capitalism?

Is it impossible then to present any alternative non-capitalist description through the ideological configuration of Modernism? A discussion of autonomy is not of interest in this study, but Tafuri's approach seems to have structuralist overtones excluding subjective human intervention, either political or ideological, and historical the outcome which results from material and ideational clashes of human subjectivity. In this sense, Jameson makes one of the most powerful criticisms of Tafuri's depiction of Modern Architecture as a component of a capitalist total closure in which any possible fate of Modernism and the Avant-garde is determined by their attachment to capitalism. Jameson considers Tafuri's position as both anti-modernist and anti-postmodernist, particularly focusing on his negative dialectical approach to history.[96] He discusses the totality of Tafuri's conception, which represents a total closure of the capitalist system, absorbing any vision alternative to it or opposing it, and claims that Tafuri expresses a 'paralyzing and asphyxiating sense of the futility' of any innovative approach in architecture.[97] Tafuri approaches any work of art suggesting a provisional "solution" in a perspective that 'reads the artwork against a context restructured or rewritten as a situation and a contradiction.'[98] In this sense, according to Jameson, the negative insights of Tafuri were the natural result of his general structure of his dialectical historiography, of his vision of history as an increasingly total or closed system, considering 'the present as the final and most absolute contradiction.'[99] Consequently the "narrative historiography" of Tafuri

[95] Aureli illustrates the contextual development of Tafuri's theory. See Pier Vittorio Aureli, "Manfredo Tafuri, Archizoom, Superstudio, and the Critique of Architectural Ideology" in Peggy Deamer (ed.), *Architecture and Capitalism: 1845 to the Present* (London and New York: Routledge), 2014, pp.132-149.
[96] Fredric Jameson, "Architecture and the Critique of Ideology", in Hays, K. M., ed., *Architecture Theory since 1968*, (Cambridge and Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998).
[97] *Ibid.*, 446.
[98] *Ibid*.
[99] *Ibid.*, 450. According to Jameson, Tafuri shares this conceptualization of total system with Barthes and Adorno.

displays a resultative approach relating the fate of the Modern Movement to the evolutionary development of capitalism, excluding any possibility of Gramscian strategies of counter-hegemony. Can strategies of counter-hegemony, then, function in a proposed social change and what can the operational role of architecture be in constructing counter-hegemony? Jameson does not suggest a direct conception of an enclave as a counter-hegemony strategy, such as the *Siedlung* practices, and draws attention to the ambiguities in Gramsci's texts on this issue.[100] However, implying a conception of counter-hegemony, he suggests that the spatial practices in the countries other than developed capitalist countries would be functional to create a counter-culture involving utopian visions.[101]

Counter-hegemony as fragmentary resistance may be perceived as a conveyance to the sense of the radical transformation of early Modernism: The early discourse of the historical Avant-garde, to which a motive of radical transformation is confidently inherent, relatively lost its power in the post-World War II era and displayed a compromising attitude between social responsibility and the market. [102] Thus, once radical transformation calling for a total rebuilding became impossible, this motive was supplanted by a fragmentary long-term transformation in which cultural resistance and embraced localities were prompted, under the 'hegemony' and 'counter-hegemony' as the explanatory meta-terms.[103] However, by organizing such a process of fragmentary resistance, architecture may regenerate its political power alongside a social re-structuring.[104] Thus, Modernist radicalism acquired currency once politics in architecture stepped into political architecture.

Wood, on the other hand, makes a fundamental objection to the trend that relates rationalism as "the mechanization of universe" in favor of capitalism to the project of modernity. She suggests that the emphasis should be 'in the project of "improvement," the subordination of all human values to productivity and profit' not

[100] *Ibid*., 452.
[101] *Ibid*., 454.
[102] Güven Arif Sargın, Köktenci Dönüşümden parçacı Direnişe; Sosyal Mimarlığın 100 Yıllık Kısa Öyküsü. *"Arredamento Mimarlık"*, (2003), pp.55-7.
[103] *Ibid*.
[104] *Ibid*.

in the enlightenment ideals while pointing to the destructive side of modernity.[105] She objects to the general tendency that equates modernity with the growth of capitalism which makes capitalism invisible or at least neutralizes it, implying the possibility of a non-capitalist modernity, asserting that the 'conflation of "modernity" with capitalism encourages us to throw out the baby with the bath water, or, more precisely, to keep the bath water and throw out the baby'.[106] With that aim, she extracts the non-capitalist characteristics in Enlightenment thought, which gave rise to modernity, to argue that capitalism is not the foregone conclusion of modernity and that modernity simply means the emancipation of petty commodity production from its feudal constraints followed by its evolutional transformation into modern industrial capitalism.[107] The anti-modernist conceptualization of modernity as the development of capitalism approaches capitalist laws of motion as if they were the universal laws of history, making capitalism invisible or at least naturalized; indeed, capitalism and bureaucratic domination are not concomitant with the progress of reason and freedom.[108] Likewise, the intellectual and cultural contribution of Modernism to the capitalist mode of production and bureaucratic domination is not the natural extent of its ideological commitment to Enlightenment values. Modernism is politically multi-dimensional, and although conveniently absorbed by capitalism, it is not essentially destined to be associated with capitalism at its pure ideological level. In this regard, it is problematic to "neutralize" capitalism within the debates on Modernism. Regarding its ideological commitment to Enlightenment values, Modernism is ultimately dependent on the relationship between capitalism and Enlightenment. Moreover, the conceptualization of the history of modernity with the essential existence of capitalist relations assumed as latently implicit of every scope of material relations in a cellular level is also problematic for the theorization of Modernism in its relation with capitalist mode of production. Such an approach

[105] Ellen Meiksins Wood. "Modernity, Postmodernity, or Capitalism?" *Monthly Review* July-August 1996, 21-39, 34.
[106] *Ibid.*, 26-28.
[107] *Ibid.*, 26. A similar situation is relevant for the fate of Modernism in its relation with capitalism as most of its former motives are non-capitalist and even anti-capitalist in many cases. Therefore, the question becomes applicable if a non-capitalist Modernism is existent or not.
[108] *Ibid*.

implies a total cultural closure with structuralist overtones leaving no place for any attempt of counter-hegemony assigning any possible element of political opposition to being functioned by the capitalist mode of production. Moreover, an argument of total ideological correspondence of Modernism and capitalism ignores the turmoil amongst the social agents which Modernism endeavors to correlate in the 20th century.[109]

In this regard, this study is intended to be perceived as an objection to the anti-modernist argument that modernity – and correlatively Modernism – is a capitalist phenomenon inherently, and by implication of impossibility to describe a non-capitalist modernity, and its temporal conception may be ideologically emancipated from capitalist logic. However, since the fate of Modernism is dependent on its association with other social agents, the Modernists' search for social transformation through architecture is very well related to the revolutionary context within which Modernist social visions would act in resonance with socio-political, economical and institutional manners.

2.2.4. What is Unique to Architectural Modernism?

One can assert that architecture is more dependent on given technical, economic and social circumstances. According to Frampton, 'while all the arts are in some degree limited by the means of their production and reproduction this is doubly so in the case of architecture which is conditioned not only by its own technical methods but also by productive forces lying outside itself.'[110] In this manner, this dependency of architecture is more obvious while accounting the relationship of Modernism and Avant-garde to capitalism. In one respect, architecture fixes art to space by these given circumstances. Its reception is fluxional depending on the changes of its use value – and under capitalism exchange value – while it defines a physically static, at least to some extent, spatial configuration. Its static nature contradicts the permanent denial of the old as the characteristic of Modernism, situating it as a unique medium

[109] Such a manner is explicitly asserted by Colquhoun. Colquhoun, op. cit., 11.
[110] Frampton, *op. cit.*, 9.

of time-space compression.[111] Hence, architecture is often ascribed to a unique position among the debates on Modernism and the Avant-garde, especially regarding their relations with capitalism.

The Modern Movement in architecture struggled to respond consistently and comprehensibly to the challenge of Modernity. It considered itself constituting an appropriate response to the experience of Modernity and to the problems and possibilities arising from the process of modernization in a strong relationship with Avant-garde movements on the common ground of opposition to tradition and bourgeois culture.[112] But how far does this positive relation persist and how does architecture position itself in relation to the artistic avant-garde?

The historical Avant-garde proposed the transformation of the Hegelian sublimation of art, which proposes a transfer and integration of art into the praxis of life, into the organization of a new life praxis from a basis in art instead of integrating it with the current praxis of life, with bourgeois society and its rational plans.[113] Through the avant-garde logic of destruction and construction, the Modern Movement in architecture demanded the destruction of bourgeois culture and kitsch which is architecturally represented by the eclecticism of ornamentation, and, by substituting it with purity and authenticity and expression of construction logic, in accordance with a political dimension desiring a socially balanced and egalitarian society in which the ideals of equal rights and emancipation would be realized.[114] However, as distinct from their counterparts in art and literature, radicality and destructivity were not the central characteristics of the Modern Movement. The Modern Movement did not renounce the principle of rationality even if that rationality stood for a bourgeois value; furthermore, its opposition to tradition has already been fueled by the irrational remnants of tradition.[115] Therefore, the Modern Movement cannot be

[111] See, Harvey, *op. cit.* Harvey claims that Modern architecture accords with the tempo of capitalist modernity by functioning in processes of creative destruction.
[112] Heynen, *op. cit.*, 26.
[113] *Ibid.*, 28.
[114] *Ibid*.
[115] *Ibid.*, 29.

considered to be the architectural Avant-garde of the twenties and thirties, according to Heynen, in spite of its relations with constructivism and Dadaism.[116]

While pointing the integration of Modernism and the Avant-garde to capitalism, Tafuri also highlights the unique role of architecture: Architecture strove to bring an order to the Avant-garde's chaotic representation of the urban environment, with the ideology of plan.[117] The formlessness and chaos of the city was to be fixed by removing all the progressiveness it involves. The avant-garde movements explicitly put forward the programmed control of the novel forces which arose from technological development. However, soon afterwards they realized their incapability of operating to give a concrete form to that aim. At this point, architecture could step in absorbing and surpassing the appeals of the Avant-garde movements, and put them into crisis when it responded to the needs indicated by the Avant-gardes.[118] When the artistic Avant-garde movements were incapable of responding to this "necessity of programmed control" of new forces released by technology, the entreaty of reason, the task was the work of architecture. Architecture, then, was to be the mediator between the progressive Avant-garde visions and concrete reality of capitalist production.

The unique case of the avant-garde attitude in the architectural medium, then, may also be perceived through the relation between the Modern Movement and the Historical Avant-garde. Even if it is produced as a relatively autonomous intellectual activity, let us say, paper architecture, and not to be built and therefore does not need patronage or any concrete relation with a capitalist mode of production and market, architecture has to relate itself to a form of building activity. In this regard, its abstraction has limits. This situation also may be related to the utopian thought in the sense that utopias are very often manifested in spatial terms, in which architecture relates the current reality with the proposed non-existent social situation. This particular case makes architecture conceived to be the convenient medium for the

[116] *Ibid*.
[117] Tafuri, "*Architecture and Utopia*", *op. cit.*, 96.
[118] *Ibid*.

realization of a utopia, but also a limited medium for the manifestation of a utopia. In this sense, utopias may be regarded as the challenges to the limits of the architectural medium.

Herewith "an avant-garde architecture" is fundamentally in a disputable manner without the conditions that Avant-gardism materializes its own conception of modernity involving a wide range of social, economic and cultural transformations that it proposes. Coherently, the emancipatory potential of architecture is limited in this regard, even in comparison with other arts without such conditions. Nevertheless, the Modern Movement in architecture responded to the current organizational needs of postwar Keynesian capitalism particularly by transforming its early enlightenment ideals in full accordance with the capitalist mode of production and breaking from its social content. However, over-criminating the Modern Movement for any catastrophic consequence of the capitalist mode of production is also problematic since as a cultural field, Modernism categorically has a class dimension. Can an architectural avant-garde, then, be possible when avant-gardism constructs its own modernity, when architectural practice emancipated from its relatively intense dependency on the relations of production which is challenged by the avant-garde movements?

2.2.5. Political Commitment of Modernism and the Avant-garde

As mentioned previously, an ambitious motive for social transformation was aroused among the Modern Movement in contextual relations with the political atmosphere of the Inter-war Europe. The collapsed economies, the political uneasiness related to capitalist urbanization and industrialization which required action, the decay of unified Enlightenment beliefs and the emergence of perspectivism, gave way to a possibility to inform social action with some aesthetic vision.[119] Modernism, in terms of both the intellectual and aesthetic trend of thought, became substantial by being considered the spearhead of social change by the fierce class and traditional resistances to capitalist resistances to capitalist modernization in Europe, giving it

[119] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 31.

the avant-garde a political and social role.[120] Correlatively, numerous artists and architects took credit for attacking the social and cultural order in the name of Modernism. Not only in artistic terms but also in terms of political involvement, many fell into revolutionary searches, attaching themselves to political movements.

From Saint-Simon and Fourier's utopian socialisms to Morris' Arts and Crafts Movement to *Deutscher Werkbund*, a range of theories and praxes relating architecture to politics was inherited during the post-World War I era.[121] Morris rejected both capitalism and machinery production while *Deutscher Werkbund* sought for the retention of industrialization in a non-capitalist manner searching for an alternative that would combine the benefits of modern technology with a return to the pre-industrial community values that capitalism was in the process of destroying.[122] The Modern Movement, on the other hand, was both an act of resistance to social modernity and an enthusiastic recognition of an open technological future.[123]

There was first, writes Williams, a strong attraction to forms of anarchism and nihilism and revolutionary socialism with a comparably apocalyptic character in their aesthetic representation.[124] While many tended towards anarchism due to the deep emphasis on the liberation of the creative individual, the October Revolution and hostility to the war caused a tendency towards proletariat revolution.[125] However just prior to 1917, the rhetoric of revolutionary violence had driven Italian and

[120] *Ibid.*, 27.
[121] Mallgrave asserts: "On the one hand, it is possible to argue that European architectural theory of the 1920s is less an innovation and more a consolidation of ideas put forth prior to the war, in fact before 1900. On the other hand, the phenomenon of avant-gardism – with its political dimension – was indeed novel, to say the least. Only in a few historical instances, such as after the French Revolution, has architectural thinking assumed such an overtly political coloration, and rarely has theory." Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Modern Architectural Theory: A Historical Survey 1673–1968* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 236-237.
[122] Colquhoun, *op. cit.*, 11. According to Hobsbawm, Morris evoked the first conscious and direct link with socialism. Morris became a sort of Marxist and made a contribution to the social transformation of the arts both theoretically and practically. Eric Hobsbawm, *How to Change the World: Reflections on Marx and Marxism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press: 2011), 249.
[123] Colquhoun, *op. cit.*, 11.
[124] Williams, *op. cit.*, 57.
[125] *Ibid*., 57.

Russian Futurists to different poles: Marinetti moved to fascism while Mayakovski campaigned for a popular Bolshevik culture.[126] To summarize the diverse political interests of the Modernist Avant-garde, the Bauhaus director Hannes Meyer, André Lurçat, alongside almost the whole body of Soviet artists, architects and urbanists were involved in the communist camp. Leger, Aragorn and Picasso actively supported the communist parties. Among the members of the Modern Movement who joined the European Social-Democratic parties were Josef Frank, Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky; Ernst May a co-founder of *Deutscher Werkbund*, Ludwig Hilberseimer, Victor Bourgeois who was vice-president of CIAM. On the other hand, Mussolini supporter Giuseppe Terragni and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti supported the crude Italian Fascism in their searches for opposing bourgeois culture. Others acted with the motive of the search for the solutions to modern society having faced the rapid industrialization and World War I, including Le Corbusier, who was a member of the syndical movement in France, and the Bauhaus architects, embracing some various political tendencies, mainly searched for the new technical and programmatic solutions to the new social context, in a peaceful relation with the forms of industrial production in social-democrat Weimar Germany.

2.2.6. The Avant-garde and Working Class Movements

Bearing the diverse political attitudes of the Modern Movement in mind, with regard to the main focus of the study, it is quintessential to focus on the interrelation of the Avant-garde and Modernism with Marxism and working-class movements in Inter-war Europe. As mentioned previously, the project of modernity had already begun to be questioned in the 19th century in the course of the loss of faith in the ineluctability of progress and the unease with the categorical fixity of Enlightenment thought.[127] As class disparities grew, Marxism and the socialist movement challenged the unity of Enlightenment reason, and inserted a class dimension into Modernism; this dimension shattered the belief that once the feudal class is

[126] *Ibid*., 58.
[127] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 29.

overthrown by the bourgeoisie, the benefits of capitalist modernity can be brought to all.[128]

Marx did not approach art consisting of mimetic narrations of the material world or its functions of agitation in political struggles. On the contrary, he attributed the artistic realm as a pure intellectual activity, the poetic expression of cognitive perception. Despite the fact that he mainly focused on the form as an expression of essence, he was also sensitive to the formal notions, in addition to intelligence, which directly appealed to the senses and to excitement.[129] Marx associated the play impulse to the productive impulse: "Production without play, however, deprives the worker of the aesthetic enjoyment inherent in all truly human activity and returns him to an elementary, exclusively practical relation to nature."[130] Such an inhuman activity stunts aesthetic development, being a source of alienation. Coherently, then, "art must cease to be one function among the others in the social production process", and, it must cease to be, or at least cease to be limited to a separate activity in the total productive output of society.[131] This attitude of Marx towards art coheres with the Modernist conception of art as a separate autonomous field. However, in coherence with the Avant-garde proposal of integrating art to everyday life Marx rejected the isolated autonomous position of the artist,.

In the 20th century, the thinkers of the Frankfurt School had a pioneering character in the Marxist theorization of aesthetics as they focused on the autonomy of art, its relation with the dominant ideology and its potential role in class struggles. Marcuse upheld the arts as an autonomous aesthetic realm which was thought to be historical. According to him, the direct politicization of art sacrifices art's commitment to the internal autonomous truth of art which calls for its own, autonomous forms of representation and communication.[132] Thus, according to him, art cannot be

[128] *Ibid*.
[129] Lunn, *op. cit.,* 23-24.
[130] Louis Dupré. *Marx' Social Critique of Culture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), 259.
[131] *Ibid*., 263.
[132] Douglas Kellner (ed.) in Marcuse, H., Art and Liberation: Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse V. 4, (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 56.

instrumentalized to serve pragmatic purposes, and it cannot serve existing reality. It constitutes another reality, an aesthetic dimension that can promote the interests of liberation.[133] In this sense, Marcuse ascribed a positive potential to art as an autonomous intellectual activity. Likewise, Adorno also put forward the emancipatory potential of autonomous art. Due to its autonomy, according to him, art offers a vision of an alternative world, negating reified consciousness and rejecting the dominant order. Only if art were autonomous together with the engagement of the viewer, would it offer resistance; thus, Adorno distinguished art and the products of the culture industry which purposefully created distraction and amusement.[134] Benjamin in his well-known essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" mentions the illusive quality of classical and romantic aesthetic ideals whose authority has been taken off by modern technological reproduction.[135] He introduces the concept of the "aura" to describe this illusive quality.[136] Modernity and the fading of the cult did not completely cause the auratic art to disappear. In modern art's laying emphasis on autonomy, Benjamin discerns a remnant of the cult of aura. This autonomy, together with the distance native to ancient religious works, was developed and maintained by the *L'art pour l'art* movement.[137] The attempt to preserve the very status of artwork in the 19th century against the banality that stems from the capitalist mode of production evolved through the Modernist demand for autonomous art against the mechanical reproduction of artworks which would eliminate the 'aura' entirely. In this manner, Mallarmé radically suggests that pure artwork should be totally isolated from any influence of the real world or freed from any kind of political or social influence.[138]

By the end of autonomous art in the Post-Modern era, artist individual subject has lost its ability to distinguish between the art form and commodity form, and, the

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[133] *Ibid*., 57.
[134] Leach, Neil (ed.), *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 4.
[135] Benjamin, Walter. *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*. Ed. Hannah Arendt, (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), 223.
[136] *Ibid*., 221.
[137] *Ibid*., 224.
[138] Arne Melberg. "The Work of Art in the Age of Ontological Speculation: Walter Benjamin Revisited." *Walter Benjamin and Art*. Ed. Andrew Benjamin (New York: Continuum, 2005) 93-107.

political manner is abolished.[139] The subjective position of the artist also provided a motive to question the existing social context; it was replaced by an artistic manner which does not have any consideration for a transformative role. In this sense, the autonomous arts were also not transformative, but its subversive characteristics present some possibility for a social change – especially in a post-modern context.[140]

An "emancipatory" potential is frequently attributed to art within its autonomous realm with Marxism in a different manner than their direct politicization and utilitarian use through class struggle such as its use for propaganda purposes. The problematic relation between Avant-gardism and working-class movements in the early 20th century and Avant-garde's failure in the mid-1930s USSR may be considered to be the cases in which this dual approach to the arts can be traced.

Although one of the main historical coordinates of Modernism is 'the imaginative proximity of social revolution,'[141] the relation of the pioneers of Modernism with the agents of the proposed social revolution was usually remittent in terms of the position of the cultural producers of early 20th century to the "class dimension" of the Modernist Project. In this regard, the common context from which both the working class movement and the Modernist Avant-garde arose is primarily purposeful to focus on. Hobsbawm explains the co-existent developments of working class movements and the Avant-garde through the heterodoxies starting from the 19th century. According to him, what is revolutionary in the arts is also not necessarily revolutionary in politics as the two phenomenon are not logically connected.[142] However, the opposing and outsider position of both social democratic and Avant-garde circles to the bourgeois orthodoxy led to an 'unfriendly coexistence' of the two bearing a motive against the morals and value systems of bourgeois society. The cultural heterodoxy and alternative lifestyles as well as women challenging the

[139] Jackson Petsche, "The Importance of Being Autonomous: Toward a Marxist Defense of Art for Art's Sake." *Mediations: Journal of the Marxist Literary Group*, vol. 26, no. 1-2, 2013, 144. http://www.mediationsjournal.org/files/Mediations26_1.pdf Accessed 20 May 2017.
[140] *Ibid*., 153.
[141] See, Perry Anderson, "Modernity and Revolution," *New Left Review* I/144 (1984),
[142] Eric Hobsbawm, *How to Change the World: Reflections on Marx and Marxism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press: 2011), 246.

sexual orthodoxy and young people excluded from bourgeois society and rebelling against it, were charmed by the politically revolutionary or 'progressive' minority movements.[143] The concurrence between Avant-gardism and these politically revolutionary movements primarily arose from their outsider condition to bourgeois society rather than from a common vision.

Nevertheless, Modernism endeavored to relate to working class movements: Addressing the pre-First World War period, Harvey asserts that the Modernist canon for individualistic and intensely 'auratic' art was difficult to accord with the directly politicized art loaded with propaganda purposes and integrated with a political revolutionary movement; yet artists somehow involved in the political avant-garde parties and they frequently 'related to events and issues around them and constructed ways of seeing and representing which have social meanings'[144] This effort of Modernism and the Avant-garde as well as heterodoxy and the outsider condition of their proponents to the bourgeois society did not provide a perfect accordance with working class movements. Common heterodoxies of the Avant-garde and anti-bourgeois mass movements inherited a problematic relation from the last decades of the 19th century: Increasingly institutionalized mass parties involved in the daily politics of a reformist practice were far from excited artists and writers while these parties would less likely favor the arts which a working class public would not have readily understood or approved.[145]

Even though the Avant-gardes hoped for a social revolution being charmed by the October Revolution and the Munich Soviet of 1919 concurrently with the anti-war mass movements, they were much more involved in Nietzschean thought, in anarchist and anarchizing rebels as members of a non-political middle-class cultural dissidence.[146] On the other hand, the members of working class movements maintained their traditional cultural tastes as they favored 'understood languages and symbolic codes of communication which expresses the contents of works of art'

[143] *Ibid*.
[144] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 29.
[145] Hobsbawm, *op. cit.*, 253.
[146] Ibid., 254.

keeping them distant from the cultural radicalism of Avant-garde developments.[147] Avant-gardism was considered to be another symptom of the crisis of bourgeois culture by Marxists. Luxemburg, Plekhanov, Trotsky had disapproved of Avant-garde language, while Lunacharsky and Bogdanov, who rationalized their sympathy for the Avant-garde innovators, would likely to have met resistance from the main body of Marxists.[148] In short, the Modernist Avant-garde's effort remained incompatible culturally with the working class, and ideologically with the political pioneers of the working class movement, while the cultural Avant-gardes usually tended to a non-political middle-class stance.

However, the anti-war movement after 1914 and the October Revolution provided the ground for the re-association of artistic and political revolt, and prompted the juncture between Marxism (in the form of Lenin's Bolshevism) and the Avant-garde, particularly in Russia and Germany.[149] When the monarchy collapsed, a potential socialist revolution was "avoided" and the bourgeois social democrats came to power in Germany. It was hoped that the post-war restoration of the cities would provide modern social housing and modern urban environments for the population. In the meantime, the October Revolution attracted artists and architects for the transformation of everyday life for the sake of the new way of socialist living. The modernist motto of "breaking ties with the past" would had been possible on the condition that a political break had taken place in both countries. The imaginative social transformation projected by these political breaks excited the Modernists and seemed to promise an inspiring process for them in which to take part in order to realize their visions. However, this common ground was so mostly one-sided that while Modernists came close to Marxism, the Marxists generally kept their distance from Modernism.[150]

[147] *Ibid*., 254.
[148] *Ibid*., 255-257.
[149] *Ibid*., 257.
[150] Lunn, *op. cit.* p. 69.

CHAPTER 3

MODERNISM, REVOLUTION AND TEMPORALITY

> Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country.
>
> V.I. Lenin, *Speech Delivered To The Moscow Gubernia Conference Of The R.C.P.(B.)*

The October Revolution was once believed to provide the contextual ground for the realization of Modernist visions. This belief first and foremost has temporal references in terms of a break from the past order in every aspect that the revolution was considered to have carried out. Substantially, before the abolishment of Modernism and the liquidation of the Soviet Avant-garde, the USSR embraced an immense set of experiences which conjugates with the visions of the Modern Movement in many aspects.

The Revolution attracted the modernist ethos of a radical break with the past for ideological reasons, and accommodated a ground for a whole set of experiments and initiatives in a wide range of arts, including architecture, although the proper ground was limited and the resources were inadequate for these experiments.[151] The revolution gave way to the outburst of a creative energy, which led to the redirection

[151] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 280.

of the pre-First World War Avant-garde insights into a realization of socialism.[152] This 'creative energy' formed an alliance with the revolution in which, as Artun describes, artists themselves took over the governance of art for the first and last time.[153]

The will for a possible flattening of the existent social order were inherent to the avant-garde movements of the inter-war period making any revolutionary context attractive to the international Modern Movement. Social transformation ideals of the revolution corresponded with the imaginary proposals of the Avant-gardes upon the impact of utopian tradition among the Russian intelligentsia as well as Russia's relative backwardness in terms of modernization in comparison to the West. In this regard, in addition to the projection of social transformation, the Bolshevism and Avant-gardism were closest in spirit first and foremost 'in the realm of technology and its physical celebration.'[154] Machine, geometrism and functionalism fascinated a broad range of artistic innovations in various artistic fields. In spite of having originated from pre-war Western Europe, the Soviet Avant-garde had the opportunity to accommodate their experiments in political discourse thanks to the official support and their energetic mood arising from the revolutionary context.[155] An open technological future coincided with the visionary capabilities of the revolutionary context. Such an attractiveness was not only valid for the artistic avant-gardes but also for the entitre range of professionals from various disciplines, promising not 'simply a minor occupation, but a "nation planning," macro-community design; in other words, a Utopia built on the ground and on the grandest possible scale.[156] It is beyond doubt that such a context is an extraordinarily attractive opportunity for any profession to express its talents and imagination. Indeed, the connections of Soviet artists and architects with the international Avant-garde and

[152] Colquhoun, *op. cit.*, 121.
[153] Ali Artun, "Formların Siyaseti ve Tatlin Kulesi", in *Dosya 37: Sanat ve Politika Ekseninde Mekan*, Mimarlar Odası Ankara Şubesi, 2016, 37:1, 4. However, this governance does not properly include architecture in comparison with the other arts as it is discussed in advance.
[154] Richard Stites. *Revulutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 159.
[155] Ibid.
[156] *Ibid.*, 190.

the Modern Movement hads been intense until the mid-1930s: Tatlin's art was saluted in the First International Dada Fair; El Lissitzky's artistic practice in Germany was intensively acknowledged in Avant-garde circles; Le Corbusier was eager to work in the USSR, designed the Tsentrosoyuz Building in Moscow, and had an effort in the Palace of Soviets Competition; CIAM, until its de-politicization in 1933, had a particular interest in the architectural developments in the USSR during the debates on the first five-year plan.[157] Ernst May led his brigade involving Mart Stam, Hans Schmidt, Alfred Forbat, Walter Schwagenscheidt, Wilhelm Schütte, Margarete Schuette-Lihotzky, particularly in designing the city of Magnitogorsk.[158] Hannes Meyer taught and supervised a number of projects in the USSR between 1930 and 1936. The rise of fascism around Europe and the 1929 crisis possibly played a significant role in this close interval; however, undoubtedly the revolutionary context of the Soviet Union substantially attracted the Modernist motives of these professionals.

In spite of the dynamic juncture of the first years of the revolution, for architecture, the Soviet context rarely had the possibilities of executinge large-scale building activity because of the constraints in economical, technical and political terms. Only when the first five-year plan was implemented in 1929, a considerable momentum of building activity started. However, the post-revolutionary Soviet context presented a setting for the intensive and prolific activity of art and architecture at the experimental level and it greatly and perennially influenced the Historical Avant-garde and Modernism on an international scale. However, Bolshevik cultural politics did not display a complete coherence with Modernist and Avant-gardist visions even before the officialization of Socialist Realism in 1932.

Although the Avant-gardes superficially developed a positive discourse on the socialist movements, this discourse did not represent an essential harmonic relation either with working class or with their "vanguard" parties in both cultural and

[157] See, Eric Mumford, "CIAM and the Communist Bloc, 1928–59." *The Journal of Architecture* 14.2 (2009): 237-254.
[158] *Ibid*.

political manners.[159] Such disharmony with the revolutionary political movements also – and perhaps the most significantly – prevailed in the Soviet context: Although the Soviet Avant-garde intended to fuel revolutionary dynamism, its practice and conceptualizations contradicted in many aspects the Bolshevik approach to culture, but most significantly the differences in their conceptualizations of temporality. The artistic Avant-garde engaged the political and cultural definitions of revolution in their perception: Russian Avant-garde art, while its Bohemian status had ended by being officially recognized, heralded the "new"; however, their conceptions of time had not been limited to "history" in Lenin's – and more broadly Bolshevism's – sense.[160] For Bolshevism, the legitimizing factor of the revolution was history, and thus, socialism should have also embraced the great artefacts of bourgeois culture continuously. This was also necessary to overcome the backwardness of Russia; in other words, the temporal contradiction of the October Revolution in Marxist terms, which corresponds to a temporal gap with developed Western capitalism. Therefore, both the attractiveness of the Soviet context to Modernist visions and the contradiction between Avant-garde Modernism and Bolshevism arose from temporal conceptions.

In this regard, this chapter first aims to form a general framework of the Soviet Avant-garde and Modernism in their relation to the revolution by tracing back to their pre-revolutionary origins. The intellectual framework of the Soviet Avant-garde is discussed in the first sub-chapter in relation to their conceptualization of temporality. In the second chapter, the failure of Avant-gardism in its relationship with Bolshevik cultural policy is discussed through their contradiction of temporal conceptions and intellectual evolution of the Marxism of that period in relation to Enlightenment values and Bourgeois culture.

[159] In the second chapter, the relationship between Avant-gardism and the working class movements is discussed.
[160] Susan Buck-Morss. *Dreamworld and catastrophe: the passing of mass utopia in East and West*. MIT press, 2000, p. 45.

3.1. The Intellectual Framework of the Soviet Avant-garde

3.1.1. The Pre-revolutionary Origins of the Soviet Avant-garde and Modernism

The post-revolutionary context of the Soviet Union is perceived as proper ground for the visions of Modernism in architecture and its avant-garde allies. However, the proposals of the Soviet Modernists, their technical formal and spatial innovations and their social priorities had already developed a considerable momentum in the pre-Revolutionary period.[161] The milieu of Russian revolutionary culture-making and speculation had acquainted European Modernism in many forms and the Russian artistic intelligentsia rapidly assimilated and reinterpreted it.[162]

The development of Modernism in Russian Art followed a similar line to Europe but with considerable authenticity. Relative industrial backwardness, autocratic regime, affiliation with Enlightenment thought, density of feudal relations and the relative latency of the emergence of the bourgeois class individuated the Russian intellectual setting in the 18th and more precisely in the 19th centuries. Throughout these centuries, the development of Modernism was under the effect of these, and the cultural interaction with the West, and the 1917 Revolution, which was also relatively fueled by these individualities, was to constitute a different type of interaction with the Modern Movement.

Russian Art, which mainly consisted of the traditional icon painting, came under domination of portrait painting in the 'Imperial Style,' starting from the late 18th century with the impact of Enlightenment thought, secularism and nationalism.[163] The origins of the Russian Avant-garde date back to the anti-academic rise of the Free Artists Artel of St. Petersburg in 1863 amid the Great Reform era of Alexander II. The Artel then transformed into the 'Wanderers Movement' ("*Peredvizhniki*" in Russian), which was a social realist movement concerned with social realities,

[161] Catherine Cooke. "Professional Diversity and Its Origins", in Papadakēs, A., and Catherine Cooke, eds. *The Avant-garde: Russian architecture in the twenties*. Vol. 61. Architectural Design, 1991, 9.
[162] Stites, *op. cit.*, 6.
[163] Ali Artun. *Sanatın İktidarı, 1917 Devrimi Avangard Sanat ve Müzecilik*. İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2015, 29.

mainly the misery of the Russian Peasantry differently from the Art academies' imposition of the 'Empire Style' as well as featuring anti-monarchic reactions being fueled by the intellectual atmosphere already having prompted the abolishment of serfage in 1861.[164] Aiming 'to bring art to the people,' the social realist Wanderers Movement identifies the current academic tradition as the representative of the principle of 'art for art's sake'.[165] As realism ultimately was an appearance of modernity, the turning point of Russian Avant-garde was the transition from modernity to the aesthetic of Modernism as in Western Art.[166]

This turning point mainly occurred with the emergence of the World of Art Movement ("*Mir iskusstva*" in Russian) against the social realism of the Wanderers Movement by upholding the transformation of art into politics – instead of doing politics via art like the social realists, the unity of the arts, as *gesamtkunstwerk*, cosmopolitization and internationalization of Russian art, and artistic individuality.[167] The World of Art Movement organized the *World of Art* Magazine, which was published between 1898 and 1903, and through colonies of art, came into a vivacious mutual contact with Western European artists, being a foundational movement from which various Avant-garde colonies were to flourish in the later pre-revolutionary years.[168]

However, what was the content of this turning point that gave way to the Soviet Avant-garde? Ultimately it was the opening gate for interaction with current Western movements, and turning the 'aura' back to Russian Art in terms of 'art for art's sake' but in a Modernist motive. Gray explains what the World of Art Movement stood for by epitomizing Benois, who was a protagonist of that movement, as 'the renewal not only of art but of the whole man, not only of painting but of art that embraces the whole of life; the idea of art as an instrument for the salvation of mankind, the artist, the dedicated priest, and his art the medium of the eternal truth and beauty'.[169]

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[164] *Ibid*., 30.
[165] Camilla Gray. *The Russian Experiment in Art 1863-1922*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1986, 9.
[166] Artun, *"Sanatın İktidarı"*, 32.
[167] *Ibid*., 35.
[168] *Ibid*.
[169] Gray, *op. cit.*, 37.

Emphasis on the autonomy and prophetic role of the artist and the search for 'the eternal truth' corresponded to the Modernists' motives. However, the withdrawal from social issues was to return in a Modernist sense by engagement with the 1917 Revolution.

The World of Art Movement founded the relations between Russian and Western Art. However, the shift in this relation appeared mainly with the 1905 Revolution, which led the rapid expansion of industrialization via large Western investments and integration of Russia with the Western European economy, making the Russian artistic movements bound up with the developments in other European centers.[170] The experiment of this movement reproduced many new Avant-garde colonies with their exhibitions and publications in increasing numbers, including *Jack of Diamonds*, *Blue Rose*, *Golden Fleece*, *Donkey's Tail*, *Union of the Youth* as the pre-war Avant-garde art.[171]

This relation of the Russian Avant-garde with the West is not in the form of supervening: So long as it interacts with the European Art centers, it gains autonomy and becomes an important center in the realm of Avant-garde Art.[172] This autonomy and authenticity of the Russian Avant-garde from their Western counterparts endured to the post-revolutionary period, and even intensified in the revolutionary context. This also applied to architecture: Such an autonomy and authenticity towards Europe originates mainly in the relative industrial backwardness of Russia and its socio-cultural differences leading to a unique composition of reactions in to Russian intelligentsia. Despite, the rapid changes within the anachronistic social system paralleled with those in Europe during the industrial age, Russia's material backwardness and perception of psychological and social individualities particularly intensified the modernization processes in the country.[173] Brumfield points out the dual characteristics of this interaction with the West:

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[170] *Ibid.*, 65.
[171] Artun, *"Sanatın İktidarı"*, 35.
[172] *Ibid*, 35.
[173] William Craft Brumfield. *The Origins of Modernism in Russian Architecture*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and Oxford: University of California Press, 1991, xix.

> Even as Russia sought to assimilate the progressive features of a more highly developed technological society, the country both observed and reacted against the new age in Europe; attitudes included suspicion on the part of an officialdom that wished to contain European influence within narrow, technical boundaries and distrust of European spiritual values by certain segments of the Russian intelligentsia.[174]

The remittent relation with the West in pre-revolutionary Russia is an apparent factor for understanding the authenticity of the Soviet Avant-garde. To assert the individualities of the Soviet Avant-garde in comparison to the Western, Artun points to the dynamic, spawning and collective nature of colonial organizations in pre-revolutionary Russian Art[175]: Differently from the patronage systems of the Renaissance in the West, Russian Art Colonies organized in the public spaces in which the agents from various social classes came together. These colonies were intellectual and political associations that focused on the metaphysical issues of art rather than producing art, in a utopian motive visioning that a revolutionary transformation may trigger an ideal age of freedom.[176] Similarly, the modernist autonomy from the church and aristocracy, and in an aesthetical manner is not boosted by the art market, but by the collective organization of art in colonies. Moreover, Russian Art, in spite of its cosmopolitan character, preserves its ties with local aesthetics providing itself an authenticity against a European-centered aesthetics.[177]

Architectural Modernism also developed in relation to a similar line with the arts in terms of anti-academism and relations with the West, but resting upon the unique complications of architecture among other arts, such as its relative limitedness of practice in terms of patronage systems, its dependency on building techniques and on the sufficiency of funds. Architecture seemed immune to the 'unprecedented acceleration and creative ferment and renewal' in the other arts in the second half of

[174] *Ibid*.
[175] Artun, *"Sanatın İktidarı"*, 39.
[176] *Ibid*., 40.
[177] *Ibid*., 42.

the 19th century and early 20th century, and was unprepared both artistically and technically to absorb the avant-garde extremes until the October Revolution.[178]

Between the years 1860 and 1917, the large cities in European Russia werer substantially rebuilt, along with a series of dramatic social and political developments and rapid modernization in various fields. The expansion of private capital and the physical necessities of the novel condition of increasingly populous and economically complex urban settings challenged the architecture's dependency on imperial institutions and patronage, concomitantly triggering the condemnation of the neo-classical imperial design.[179] However, these did not directly lead to a shift to in favor of Modernism but rather gave way to an eclecticism and stylistic confusion stemming from the limits of tradition and insufficient building techniques and funds in the late 19th century.[180] Nonetheless, Russian architectural settings started to question the academic tradition theoretically, reforms were made in educational institutions and professional organizations were founded.

In 1834, Mikhail Bykovsky, who two years later was to be the director of the Royal College in Moscow, asserted the unsustainability of the classical order systems in architecture asserting that 'any system of aesthetic rules and norms was historically and culturally conditioned and therefore transient, dependent on aims, time and place, on the moral force of a given people, rather than universal.'[181] Constituting a free-thinking regime in Moscow's architectural setting, Bykovsky initiated the first anti-classicist debate in Russian Architecture. In this atmosphere, Apollinari Krasovsky provides the first theoretical position in Russian Architecture in relation to new technologies by arguing that an architectural product is to be based on a

[178] Anatolii Strigalev, "Nonarhitects in Architecture", 680-665, in, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt. *The Great Utopia: The Russian and Soviet Avant-garde, 1915-1932*. Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, 1992.
[179] *Ibid*, 1.
[180] *Ibid.*, 2.
[181] Catherine Cooke. *Russian Avant-garde Theories of Art Architecture and the City*, London: Academy Editions, 1995, 7.

technical rationality and the science of construction, or on an aesthetic rationality and science of form and suggesting the synthesis of these two.[182]

Bykovsky's contribution to the autonomy of architecture was beyond his efforts in the Royal Academy. He also participated in the anti-academic College of Painting and Sculpture, which later transforms into the Moscow College of Painting Sculpture and Architecture (MUZhVZ), and after the revolution, joined *Vkhutemas* – organized discussion groups leading to the foundation of Russia's first independent architectural association, the Moscow Architectural Society (MAO) in 1867.[183] The relative climate of freedom in the 1870s gave rise to the debate on Fedor Shekhtel, who trained at Bykovsky's MUZhVZ and made the most radical manifestation of his time in terms of the modernist attitude via his buildings embracing features including expressions of material behavior, free plans, celebrations of manufacture and commerce, celebrations of cleanness and efficient control through technology.[184]

However just prior to the revolution, the rejection of the Modern became a trend within the architecture profession. This signifies a contradictory case that while new building materials, techniques and functional methods were introduced into the architectural scene, the architects of 1910s Russia gradually had more interest in the past forms.[185] The abolishment of classicist domination in architecture was to take time even in the post-revolutionary period.

3.1.2. Main Factions of the Soviet Avant-garde

Before the revolution, there was not considerable contact between the Avant-garde and the Bolsheviks.[186] In spite of their very limited touch before the revolution, the Avant-garde utopia and the utopian visions of the radical intelligentsia coexisted after the revolution.[187] This co-existence was so unbalanced that while the Soviet

[182] *Ibid*, 8. This debate is also the precursor of the debate between suprematists and constructivists which will be focused on in advance.
[183] *Ibid*.
[184] *Ibid.*, 10.
[185] Selim O. Khan-Magomedov, *Pioneers of Soviet Architecture: The Search for New Solutions in the 1920's and 1930's*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1987, 50.
[186] Artun, *op. cit.*, 66. See, Gray, *op. cit.*
[187] Stites, *op. cit.*, 6.

Avant-garde expected to merge their visions with the socialist future of the country, Bolshevism was not eager so much for this association as it is discussed further at the end of this chapter. However, the expectations of the Soviet Avant-garde led to an outburst in their visions. This sub-chapter discusses the theories and ideological motives of the Avant-garde in their response to the revolution.

The revolution cut off their constraints and ended their Bohemian status. They were now more concerned and related to what was happening outside of their internal realm, assuming that they could play an active role in the revolutionary transformation. This was a change of focus from Modernist artistic autonomy in favor of a more radical form of the Modernist understanding of temporality. Malevich yearned to build a new world belonging to man himself.[188] Mayakovsky aspired the becoming of the street artist's brushes and squares of his palette.[189] Cubist painter Natan Altman made spatial designs for the celebration of the first anniversary of the revolution.[190] He attempted to give an Avant-garde identity to the revolution: A heroic proletarian figure, red banners and a proper slogan was not Proletarian art, according to him; this was a distorted understanding only attracting those ignorant of art.[191] Nevertheless, both Malevich and Tatlin regarded the radical pre-revolutionary developments in the arts as the preview of the social revolution.[192] From the pre-revolutionary origins, several artistic trends, such as Futurism, Suprematism and Constructivism, developed into influential strands by the yeast of the revolution.

Russian Futurism in the visual arts already emerged in the 1910s as Cubo-futurism constituting dynamism in a type of cubist language. However, the literary Futurism at its peak in post-revolutionary Russia indirectly influenced the figurative arts and architecture by their insights in linguistics, radically reshaping the literal form.[193]

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[188] Gray, *op. cit.*, 219.
[189] Ibid., 224.
[190] Ibid., 221.
[191] Artun, *op. cit.*, 67.
[192] Gray, *op. cit.*, 219.
[193] Selim O. Khan-Magomedov, *Pioneers of Soviet Architecture: The Search for New Solutions in the 1920's and 1930's*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1987, 62.

Futurists were among the first to regard the arts based on a new social function, already in 1918, calling on artists to enlighten workers and present their artistic touch through the reconstruction of a socialism of physical spaces.[194] However, since they proposed a radical level of destruction, their proposition to have an active role in the social processes seemed to be quite difficult because of the Bolsheviks' intention to put an end to the destructive spirit of the revolution.

The founder of *Suprematism*, Kazimir Malevich, believed in developing a language, a system of forms and signs to transform the World, which was likely being influenced by Neoplatonism and Mysticism.[195] In these terms, he was distant from Marxism. However, he had a passionate relationship with the revolution, he correlated the revolution with the forms, and he expected the revolutionary rise of a novel language. He attempted to associate both the material world and utopian images with forms and his utopian language was an expression of morphology, semiotics and the hermeneutics of communism.[196] According to Malevich, art existed outside cultural development, and had no sense of temporality or historical progress.[197] In this sense, he differs from the Modernist conceptualization of temporality in spite of his early Cubo-futurism. However, he still had a radically destructive sense to create the world of forms, a formal system of the material world. Even his *architectons* did not depend on any sense of utilitarianism and functionalism although they were architectural abstractions. El Lissitzky also had a strong interplay with Suprematism. However, he conceived the temporality differently from Malevich. According to El Lissitzky, Suprematism was not the recognition of an absolute form as a constituent of an already described universe, but on the contrary, Suprematist forms symbolized the world in front of them, which is pure and never-existed before at the first phase of foundation; and this was why the Suprematist *Black Square* was their guide as the zero point of form.[198] In this sense, El Lissitzky did not reflect the idealism of Malevich. He developed his *Prouns* as an

[194] *Ibid.*, 51.
[195] Artun, *op. cit.*, 69.
[196] *Ibid*.
[197] *Ibid.*, 73.
[198] *Ibid.*, 76.

abbreviation for "design for the confirmation of the new" in Russian.[199] He regarded his *Prouns* as the sentences that represented the new social, scientific and technological values and aims.[200] Although El Lissitzky inter-influenced Suprematism, it is difficult to regard him within the limits of any stylistic category.

Figure 3.1 "New Man," El Lissitzky, 1923.

Source: [data base online] https://uploads4.wikiart.org/images/el-lissitzky/new-man-1923.jpg [Accessed: 15.05.2017].

[199] *Ibid.*
[200] *Ibid.*

Figure 3.2 The model of the Tatlin's Monument to the Third International, 1919. Source: [data base online] https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/ff/Tatlin%27s_Tower_maket_1919_year.jpg/220px-Tatlin%27s_Tower_maket_1919_year.jpg [Accessed: 15.05.2017].

Constructivism, on the other hand, evolved from *Production Art,* which proposes the total dissolution of art through the process of production. Differently, from Production Art, Constructivists propose a transformation of art into production and the artist into a producer, aiming to associate art with engineering, machinery, and communism.[201] It was the most influential strand of the Soviet Avant-garde in an international scale, particularly in Germany. Moreover, Constructivism was the most

[201] *Ibid.*, 84.

eager successful strand in terms its relation with revolutionary visions. It attempted to relate to the new relations of production as well as the production techniques themselves, saluting the machine they proposed to form an integration with social processes and technology. Constructivists regarded art as the fulfillment of the intellectual and physical necessities of social processes.[202] Tatlin's *Monument to the Third International* (Fig. 3.2) became the most prominent symbol of constructivism with its dynamic form resembling a screw as a symbol of the novel technology of its period with its 400-meter high iron structure as a challenge for the past forms and as a representation of revolutionary ambition. Alexei Gan influentially theorized Constructivism as a method consisting of the *tectonic*, *faktura* and *construction.* According to him, the tectonic achieves an integrated concept by meeting the ideology and form, and *faktura* constitutes an idiosyncratic state of the material, while the construction is the material process of the total integration of the two.[203]

The post-revolutionary realm of architecture was less vivacious than the realm of art. This is primarily because, until the 1930s, there was rarely any building activity. However, it also arose from the Bolshevik policies. Avant-garde artists had official recognition and took part in revolutionary events. However, classicist architects kept their positions in the first years of the revolution, dominating the main direction of Soviet architecture. According to Khan-Magomedov, there were two kinds of "dictatorships" that arose from the art policies of the People's Commissariat, that of Leftists in the figurative arts and the Rightists in architecture.[204] Furthermore, the period of War Communism still did not allow any considerable building activity. These led to a great asymmetry between the proposals of the architectural avant-garde and their realizations, in spite of architecture being regarded as the most proper medium for Avant-garde visions.

The development of the Soviet architectural Avant-garde was precisely under the influence of the artistic Avant-garde. Architects worked with leftist painters, which

[202] Ahu Antmen, *20. Yüzyıl batı sanatında akımlar: Sanatçılardan yazılar ve açıklamalarla*. Sel Yayıncılık, 2016. 104.
[203] *Ibid.*, 111.
[204] Khan-Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 24.

gave way to the multi-disciplinary institutions that brought together the Avant-gardes in the figurative arts with a variety of professions, like those of their European counterparts, such as *Esprit Nouveau* in France, *De Stijl* in Holland and *Bauhaus* in Germany.[205] These gatherings led to a theoretical shift in the architectural realm, particularly after 1920. Unovis, Inkhuk and Vkhutemas were the most important associations that embraced multidisciplinary interactions contributing to the development of avant-garde attitudes in architecture. After 1920, Avant-gardist and Modernist attitudes in architecture gradually entered into the architectural scene of the Soviet Union.

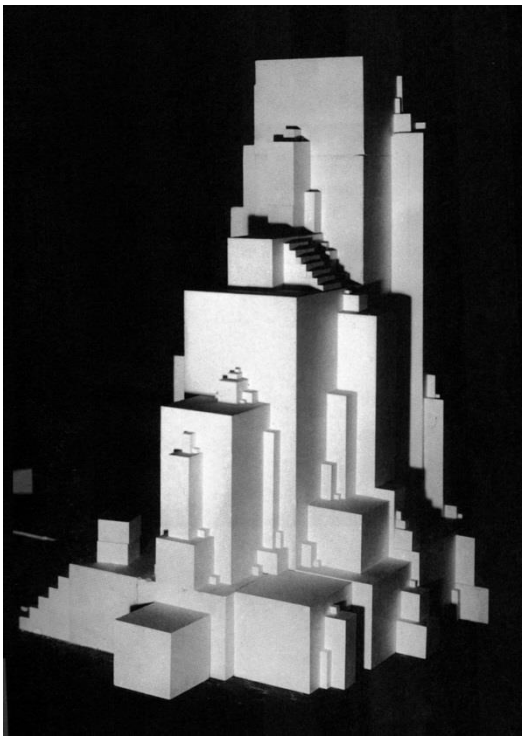

Figure 3.3 Architecton, by Kazimir Malevich, 1926.
Source: [data base online]
https://i1.wp.com/rosswolfe.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/architekton-zeta-by-kazimir-malevich-1926-found-in-the-book-building-the-revolution-soviet-art-and-architecture-1915-1935-by-jean-louis-cohen-and1.jpg [Accessed: 15.05.2017].

[205] *Ibid.*, 67.

Unovis (1919-1922), meaning Affirmers of the New Art, was the main association of Suprematist artists.[206] The association was influential for the later works of Malevich and El Lissitzky in their attitudes through architecture. El Lissitzky's *prouns* and Malevich's *architectons* (Fig. 3.3) endeavored to form a mediation between their Suprematist paintings and architecture. While Malevich's *architectons* strove to avoid any possible utilitarian implications, El Lissitzky's design for the Lenin Tribune introduced the functional use of the formal principles of *Suprematism* in the architectural medium.

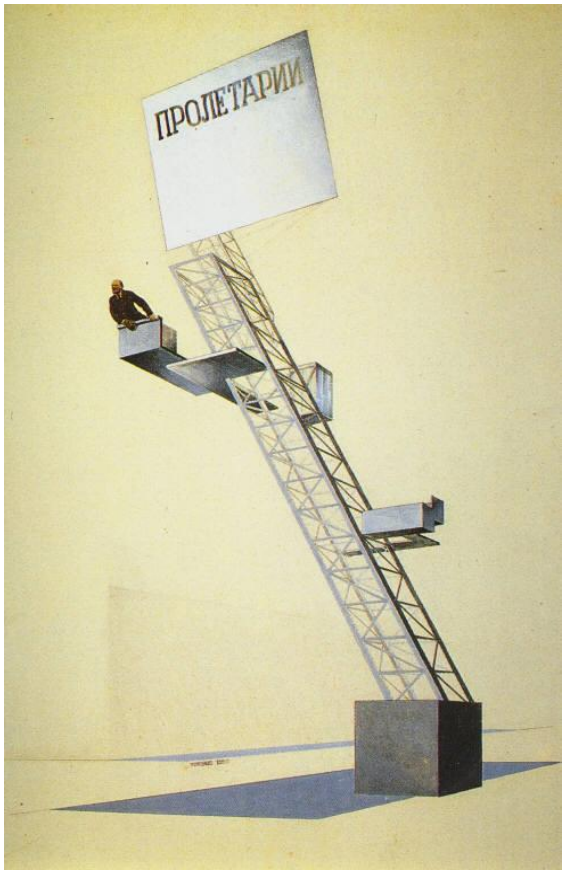

Figure 3.4 Lenin Tribune, by El Lissitzky, 1920.
Source: [data base online] https://uploads1.wikiart.org/images/el-lissitzky/lenin-tribune-1920.jpg [Accessed: 15.05.2017].

[206] *Ibid.*, 67.

Inkhuk (1920-1924), the Moscow Institute of Artistic Culture, was substantial in the doctrinal divergence of the Soviet Avant-garde. It accommodated creative individuals from a broad range of professions such as painting, sculpture, architecture, art history and theory.[207] Constructivist art evolved from production art at *Inkhuk*, and developed the first doctrines of Constructivism in the architectural medium. Alexei Gan, Alexander Rodchenko, and Varvara Stepanova constituted the theoretical basis of Constructivism. The split at *Inkhuk* between the Constructivists and the Rationalists was to be formative for the Soviet Modernist architecture of the 1920s. Ladovsky developed his rationalist attitude in his working group at *Inkhuk*, which emerged through the split from Rodchenko, Stepanova and Gan's Constructivism.[208] Even though he did not join the Constructivist group at Inkhuk, Alexander Vesnin's first insights into Constructivist architecture, as its main theoretician, developed at Inkhuk.

In addition to these two important associations, perhaps the most influential institution in the development of Soviet Avant-garde architecture was Vkhutemas (1920-1930), the Higher Art and Technical Studios, (converted to Vkhutein, the Higher Art and Technical Institute in 1927) embracing the main strands of post-revolutionary Soviet architecture and a great divergence of professions. Incorporating a novel educational system, Vkhutemas was a school that incorporated architecture, industrial design and visual arts, very much resembling and having a reciprocal interaction with the Bauhaus. The first years of the institute's three main groupings depending on the teaching classes emerged as the academic-classicists led by Zholtovsky, Schusev and Leonid Vesnin; the United Leftist Studios with Ladovsky and Krinsky; and the independent Studio of Experimental Architecture led by Ilya Golosov and Melnikov. These groupings led to an increasing interest of students against the classicists and in favor of the Ladovsky's rationalist attitude.[209] The institute contributed much to the development of the rationalist strand of Soviet Architecture depending on the psychoanalytic methods in spatial design which were

[207] *Ibid.*, 67.
[208] *Ibid.*, 70. See, Cooke, *op. cit.*
[209] Khan-Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 71.

later represented by the *Asnova* ("Association of New Architects", 1923-1932) group headed by Ladovsky. The rationalists primarily focused on suggesting objective criteria derived from scientific research for the formal constituents of architectural space. El Lissitzky also favored their studies and somehow took part in them in spite of the fact that he, for the most part, lived in Germany during those years of Asnova. Their design method highlighted the 'scientific study of physiological and psychological principles governing individual perception of architectural form, space and color.'[210] Hence, they drew apart from Constructivism, which 'paid too much attention to the technological and functional efficiency of architectural form.'[211] In this sense, Ladovsky's sketches of a communal housing (Fig. 3.6) represents well the characteristics of his formal searches.

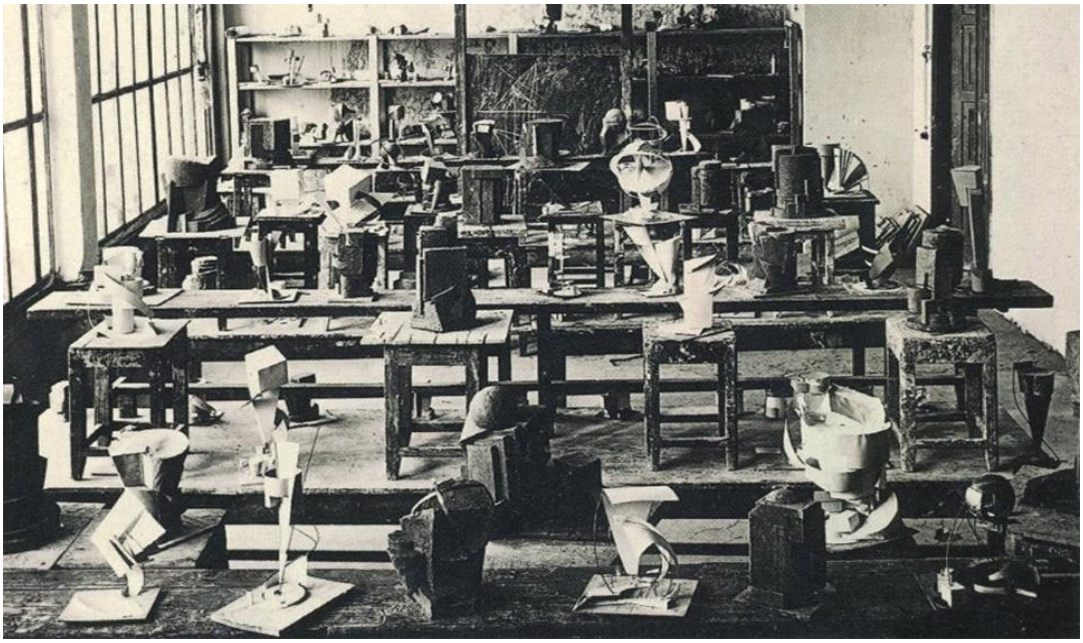

Figure 3.5 Student Exhibition at Vkhutemas (1927-1928).
Source: [data base online] https://www.architectural-review.com/pictures/1180xany/1/6/6/1425166_SovietBauhausIndex.jpg [Accessed: 15.05.2017].

[210] *Ibid.*, 107.
[211] *Ibid.*

Finding its expression mainly at OSA (Organization of Contemporary Architects, 1925-1930) and its influential publication *SA* ("Contemporary Architects"), Architectural Constructivism was not an explicit translation of artistic Constructivism.[212] However, its emphasis on process and method and their intimacy with technology and functionalism are the elements that imply the artistic precedents of architectural Constructivism. More importantly, however, their conceptualization of temporality, which presents a more radicalized form of Modernist temporality, had been mostly derived from Gan's and Rodchenko's texts and Tatlin's influential works of art.[213] In addition, Constructivism had a more direct interest in the social project of the Revolution, which involved the proposition of social transformation and reconstruction of a new way of life.

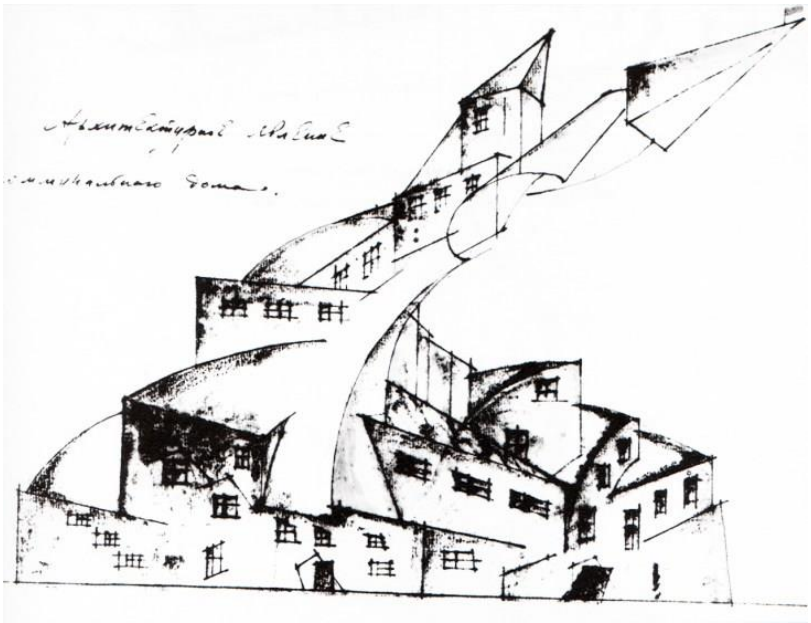

Figure 3.6 Ladovsky's sketch of a commune house
Source: [data base online]
https://thesocialistcity.wordpress.com/2014/09/29/nikolai-ladovsky-la-casa-comuna-y-el-metodo-psicoanalitico-de-ensenar-arquitectura/#jp-carousel-526
[Accessed: 15.05.2017].

[212] *Ibid*., 151.
[213] Architectural Constructivism is discussed in more detail in the fourth chapter of this study, its relation with artistic Constructivism is also mentioned.

3.2. The Temporal Contradiction of Soviet Avant-garde

3.2.1. Modernist Conceptualization of Time

As it is mentioned in the second chapter, since the Enlightenment Period, past forms ceased to be the absolute references of appeal in the various disciplines of science and art. Modernity, in its process of expansion, presents a novel conceptualization of temporality which conjoins the ephemeral and the fleeting with the eternal and the immutable by a self-renewing continuity. Thus, while Modernity calls for a radical break with the preceding historical conditions, at the same time it renders a never-ending process of internal ruptures and fragmentations within itself.[214] As a self-negating movement, Modernism is a yearning for a true presence: While the new value is accorded to the ephemeral, the momentary and the transitory, the concomitant celebration of dynamism expresses precisely the yearning for a lasting and immaculate present.[215]

The point that characterizes Architectural Modernism and differentiates it from the pre-modern is the emergence of speculative epistemology replacing normative epistemology.[216] This epistemological shift also corresponds to the demand for the autonomy of artistic practice which searches for independence from the traditional norms. However, Modernism has a specific emphasis on the temporal dimension of this quest for the rigidity of socio-historical normativity in Architecture. In fact, the Modernists aiming to create their own normativity – such as Le Corbusier's Five Points of Architecture – pursued this common conception of temporality which demands the "true presence" of self-renewing continuity.

However, speculative epistemology which fuels the quest for novelty, does not exclude norm-free references to the past. According to Tanyeli, the two main aspects of the transformation in architecture after Modernism are the rationalization of

[214] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 12.
[215] Habermas, *op. cit.*, 40.
[216] Uğur Tanyeli, "Modernizmin Sınırları ve Mimarlık" in Batur, E., ed., *Modernizmin serüveni: bir "temel metinler" seçkisi 1840-1990*, (Sel Yayıncılık, İstanbul: 2015) 65-72, 67.

design practice and the elimination of the conception of traditional meaning from the architectural product.[217] Historicism and anti-historicism are the different ideological intentions which arise from the same "modern" epistemological system.[218] Anti-historicism mainly arises from negating the traditional conception of meaning after the arrival of Modernism. In this sense, the Modernist conceptualization of time is not simply anti-historical, as Habermas asserts, as it is directed only against the false normativity of historical understanding essentially oriented towards the imitation of past models, as Modernism is capable of rebuilding historical references in its own contemporaneity emancipating it from historical normativity.[219] However, the norm-destructing nature relates a break from the existent in the quest for authenticity, by courtesy of its conception of the realization of true presence. In this regard, Modernism even refers to history that always mobilizes the manner of rupture.

This mentality of rupture is evoked by the processes of creative destruction as the main impetus.[220] The ideological justification of this destructive mentality of rupture may have been functionalism, rationalism, technological progress or a novel spatio-social context of urbanization as well as political revolution. These themes are often embraced in an inter-related manner. Without any doubt, the Soviet Avant-garde justified its own conception of temporality by the Bolshevik Revolution as a blanket phenomenon for these themes; however, it was to conflict with the Bolshevik conceptualization of time.

3.2.2. Bolshevism and Avant-gardism: Utopia, Realpolitik and the Contradiction of Temporality

Both the appealing character of the post-revolutionary Soviet Union for Modernist and Avant-garde visions and the contradiction between the Avant-garde movements and Bolshevism arise from the commonalities or the differences in their

[217] *Ibid*., 69.
[218] *Ibid*., 71. Tanyeli discusses this issue through functionalism: Although functionalism is often considered as the major pivot of Modernism, it is a paradigm irrelevant with anti-historicism having its origins in 18th and 19th Centuries. *Ibid*., 70.
[219] Habermas, *op. cit.*, 41.
[220] Harvey, *op. cit.*, 19

conceptualizations of temporality. In this regard, this sub-chapter aims to locate a problem of temporality through the conflicts between the utopia and *realpolitik* in the post-revolutionary Soviet ideological cosmos, and the contradiction between the desire of the Avant-garde for a total break from the past and Bolshevism's projection of cultural continuity.

Depictions of utopia are often prompted in constructing a doctrine – whether political or artistic – as they structure a criticism of the existing case in an opposition to a non-existing one. Modernism and the Historical Avant-garde were very often intimate with ideational utopias functioning as the means for the reconstruction of the experience of modernity. In the sense of breaking ties with the past, a disavowal of the existing order the Modernist project has a utopian motive which is often mobilized by its Avant-garde extension.[221] In the case of the cultural politics of post-revolutionary Russia, there are three different conceptualization of temporality in relation to each other: utopianism, which has its origins among the Russian Intelligentsia in the 19th century, a modernist sense of breaking ties with the past, and a Bolshevik approach to history, having its concrete form in Lenin's thought, which indicates that socialist culture should embrace the whole cultural account of humanity. How then these concepts produced and relate, influenced and conflict each other? Did these concepts of temporality individualize Modernism in Soviet context?

A revolution by nature makes a clean break and provides the mood of standing on top of the destruction of past structures, towards an endless vista. It is 'an eschatological moment in human experience' indicating the 'New Order, the New World, the New Life' and 'the motifs of release, liberation, and devolving power that infuse the rhetoric and symbolism of the revolutionary moment are invitations to refashion and redesign.'[222] These invitations arise particularly from a sense of

[221] For a comprehensive analysis of the modern utopias of 20th Century see, Robert Fishman *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century: Ebenezer Howard, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Le Corbusier*. Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1982.
[222] Richard Stites. *Revulutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 3.

temporality in which an open future, freed from the normativity of the past, is defined frequently in relation to a utopian sense.

Every movement that intends to 'change the world' has a 'utopia,' an envisagement of the future which relieves the pains of present condition and rewards present struggles.[223] The 'utopian' vision of Bolshevism was developed through Marxism in the proposed long effort to build a communist society. Besides Marxism, the utopian tradition of the Russian intelligentsia was a central dynamic in the Post-Revolutionary intellectual atmosphere of the Soviet Union. The utopian tradition of the Russian intelligentsia was admittedly influential regarding this phenomenon, providing inputs for both Bolshevism and the Soviet Avant-garde. Already in the decade before the revolution in Russia and among the Russians in exile, utopian discourses so abounded that in a country still inadequately connected by rail, flying machines real and imagined were invested with transformative social meaning.[224] 'The traditions of Utopian dreaming and alternative life experiments that marked its past and the intersection of the moment of the revolution' with the intense technological developments of 20th century occurred in an era in which both politics and technology are considered as 'globally interlocked.'[225]

Carr asserts that Marx synthesized the two separate intellectual channels of the utopian tradition in the West: the one which handles the development through morality, the triumph of virtue and the reshaping of human nature and the tradition and the other which envisages the development through economic and technical aspects, productivity growth and the overspread of scientific knowledge.[226] However, "utopianism" was ahistorical, and Marx surpassed the idealism of utopianism by means of historicism. Accordingly, a prosperous envisagement of communist society rarely exists in Marx's works as Lenin expounds as such:

> There is no trace of an attempt on Marx's part to make up a utopia, to indulge in idle guess-work about what cannot be known. Marx treated the question of

[223] E.H. Carr. *1917 Öncesi ve Sonrası.* (İstanbul: Birikim, 2007), 75.
[224] Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 45.
[225] Stites, *op. cit.*, 3.
[226] *Carr*, "*1917*" 76.

> communism in the same way as a naturalist would treat the question of the development of, say, a new biological variety, once he knew that it had originated in such and such a way and was changing in such and such a definite direction.[227]

Apart from the passages in the *Critique of the Gotha Program,* where he discusses the period of transition from capitalism to communism, Marx wrote almost nothing on the *modus operandi* of any prospective socialist system. Instead, he focused on analyzing capitalism and displaying the dynamics which are to destroy the bourgeois society. Such an attitude was so coherent that, as an historical method, one of the fundamental characteristics of Marx's theory was its reaction to the utopianism of the early socialists who projected ideal socialist societies from the abundance and ingenuity of their imaginations without concerning themselves with how they were to be evolved out of the existing societies.[228] Carr explains why Marx avoided a detailed program of socialism, by referring to Sorel: It would be an un-Marxist attempt to depict a theoretical examination of the future economic order as it would correspond to an attempt to form an 'ideological superstructure in advance of the conditions of production' on which it is to be constituted.[229]

Marxism is not a utopian theory; however, it has a "utopia." It is not utopian because Marxism involves the moral transformation of 'human nature' together with the advancement of objective historical ground that makes it possible. In this sense, it rejects the mobilization of utopia as a guidance for and measurement of current presence. However, it has a utopia in terms of the ultimate goal of communism. What Bolsheviks experienced in the first decades of the revolution was a clash between the envisaged cosmos, the 'ultimate goal,' and the present cosmos, the urgent tasks in a huge peasant country with negligible industry, and economically and culturally isolated by the rest of the world. Bolsheviks regarded the adoption of the 'ultimate goal' by the masses as necessary. At this point, Carr draws attention to Lenin, who

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[227] V.I. Lenin. "The State and Revolution," *Lenin Collected Works,* Vol. 25 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), 463.
[228] E.H. Carr. *The Bolshevik Revolution 1917-1923 Vol. 2.* (New York: The Macmillan Company: 1952), 3.
[229] As cited in, Carr, "*The Bolshevik*", 5.

mentions this historical duality between dream and reality with his famous quotation from Dmitry Pisarev in one of his most substantial early works, *What is to be done?*

> My dream may run ahead of the natural march of events or may fly off at a tangent in a direction in which no natural march of events will ever proceed. In the first case my dream will not cause any harm; it may even support and augment the energy of the working men... There is nothing in such dreams that would distort or paralyze labor-power. On the contrary, if man were completely deprived of the ability to dream in this way, if he could not from time to time run ahead and mentally conceive, in an entire and completed picture, the product to which his hands are only just beginning to lend shape, then I cannot at all imagine what stimulus there would be to induce man to undertake and complete extensive and strenuous work in the sphere of art, science, and practical endeavor.[230]

Bolshevism constructed its utopia in regard to Marxism, reproduced it and transformed it contextually throughout to whole inter-war period. The period of War Communism, NEP and Stalin's Five Year Plans embraced such contextual transformations and evolutions of Bolshevik Utopia. All three are the phases that are characterized by the clashes between the existing and the imagined. While asserting that 'Communism is Soviet power plus the electrification of the whole country,'[231] Lenin remarks on the dialectics between the "ultimate goal" or the "utopia" and the historical "imperatives" of Soviet socialism in a certain material context. Various questions of debate on Soviet socialism remark on such dialectics as well as those internal to the arts, architecture and urbanism. The trails of the dialectics between utopia and reality, and conflict competition with other current utopian projections such as the Avant-garde's, may be adopted in almost every practice of the Bolsheviks in various fields. Very often, these dialectics brought out tension and it was this tension which is not only amidst the experiments of the Soviet Avant-garde in 1920s but also very well related to the fate of the Soviet Avant-garde through the inter-war period.

[230] Cited in V.I. Lenin. "What is to Be Done?," *Lenin Collected Works,* Vol. 5 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964), 509-510.
[231] Lenin, V. I. (2002). "Our Foreign and Domestic Position and Party Tasks," Speech delivered Speech Delivered To The Moscow Gubernia Conference Of The R.C.P. (B.), *Lenin Collected Works,* Vol. 31 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964)

The outbreak of the revolution led the Bolsheviks to face the problem of overcoming the dual contradiction between destructiveness and constructiveness. The Bolsheviks were anxious about the exorbitances of spontaneous mass behavior which they encountered after the revolution.[232] The Bolsheviks charmed the collapse of familiar forms and symbols, but they were anxious about the outlook of an unending destruction. They affirmed destruction but also demanded order, demolishing the old power structures, while at the same time envisaging the new ones to 'house the perfect society.' The intelligentsia, who joined the Bolshevik camp to promote their own visions and timetables of utopia, was now fragmented; a segment of it was now in opposition to the Bolsheviks, while the others aimed to impose an Avant-garde interpretation of revolutionary restructuring on the Bolshevik agenda.[233] Consequently, a fruitful set of ideas, feelings, projects and experiments has emerged in an environment of remittent relations between Bolshevism and the Avant-garde visions in the post-revolutionary Soviet Union. The contradiction between destructive and constructive attitudes, as a natural outcome of the revolutionary moment, now expressed itself in terms of the conceptualization of temporality.

Susan Buck-Morss explains the dialectical tension within the revolutionary social forces through contradictions of temporality in Bolshevik cultural politics. She conjoins historical facts of Bolshevik cultural politics through a conception of revolutionary time, aiming to display inherent perceptual distortions of this structuring of the imaginary field.[234] She attributes the failure of modernism and the Avant-garde in the Soviet Union to the differences in the conceptualization of time between Marxism and the Avant-garde. 'At least since Hegel and including Marx,' the legitimization of a political revolution was mainly ensured by the history which provides a 'continuity of meaning' by transforming the violent rupture of the revolutionary present.[235] Since Russia was an exception in terms of an expectation and possibility of a socialist revolution and the expected workers' revolution in

[232] Stites, op. cit., 6.
[233] *Ibid*.
[234] Susan Buck-Morss. *Dreamworld and catastrophe: the passing of mass utopia in East and West*. MIT press, 2000, 41.
[235] *Ibid.*, 43.

Europe did not succeed, Bolsheviks were to develop a temporal insight to overcome this contradiction in terms of both political and cultural discourses. Mass support of the October Revolution consisted of various social and intellectual sectors that several types of millennialists, Avant-gardists and utopian dreamers aspired to interpret the revolutionary future as their own. Therefore, Bolshevism needed to act on behalf of all these varieties, structuring their aspirations within a historical continuum that confined their force to embrace them.[236] The utopian dimension of a large variety of discourses was dissolved and constrained 'in the process of being inserted into the temporal narrative of revolutionary history.'[237]

The Marxist notion of historical progress is then also a legitimizing factor for the immediate utilitarian practices of revolution. Furthermore, it indicates a necessity to situate the revolution's inherent characteristics of rupture in the sense of historical continuity. The "backwardness" of Russia was already a matter of debate among Marxists as Russia was largely a peasant country with a limited population of a modern proletariat dominated by feudal relations. This characteristic of the revolution in Russia caused another contradiction of temporality in terms of the Marxist conception of history for the Bolsheviks. In other words, it was more challenging to build socialism in Russia than the other industrialized countries of Europe. The rupture between the base and superstructure necessitated the radical modernization of the country economically as well as socio-culturally. Only if the process of modernization were accelerated, 'the gap between the economic meaning of time and the political meaning of time' could have been overcome.[238] The Soviet Avant-garde demanded a protagonist role in this process of modernization no matter how conflicted they were with Bolshevism in terms of conceptualization of temporality. While they projected a total break from the past, the Bolsheviks aimed to overcome this gap by mobilizing the past constituents of bourgeois culture.

[236] *Ibid*.
[237] *Ibid*.
[238] Buck-Morss, op. cit., 58.

According to Eagleton, 'it was the weakness of culture in Russia, in the sense of the paucity of civil society, the lack of an elaborate ruling-class hegemony, as well as of a "civilized" and hence incorporated working class, that helped to make the revolution possible; ironically, the Russian working class was ideologically stronger just because it was culturally weaker.'[239] Therefore, the relative absence of culture – in the alternative sense of science, knowledge, literacy, technology, and know-how – which was in favor of the actualization of a revolution, at the same time made it difficult to sustain it.[240] This was the most decisive factor in the cultural politics of the post-revolutionary Soviet Union. Coherently, the experimental period of the Soviet Avant-garde was affected by modernization processes along with the still indeterminate cultural politics:

> It is here, in the cultural realm, that Lenin's thought is least avantgarde —not because of his admiration for Tolstoy and furtive enjoyment of classical music, but because unlike the political revolution there was indeed a given model here to conform to, the developed technology and productive forces of the West. "We must take the entire culture that capitalism left behind and build socialism with it," he writes. "We must take all its science, technology, knowledge and art." It is as though it is enough for the proletariat to appropriate this whole lineage, not to submit it to criticism in the style of, say, *Proletkult*, for socialism to be established. The contradiction of the revolution is thus an arresting one: it is the very backwardness and devastation of Russian society, the drastic depths of the problems it confronts, that forces one into a non-revolutionary, "continuist" position as far as Western capitalist civilization goes; whereas the whole notion of cultural transformation—the equivalent in everyday life of modernism in the aesthetic realm or revolution in the political one—appears an idle distraction in a famished, illiterate, civically inexperienced nation. It is because of the depth of social need that the revolution cannot penetrate to the depths of the self.[241]

Therefore, it had already been a question of debate that the revolution was to deny the Bourgeois culture totally in favor of a pure proletarian culture – most visible in Bogdanov's *Proletkult* – or socialist culture was to outgrow from the former cultures of the old order. This dispute had growth in relation to the huge rupture between the base and the proposed superstructure as a central phenomenon for Bolshevik cultural

[239] Terry Eagleton, "Lenin in the Post-modern Age," in Budgen, Sebastian, and Slavoj Žižek. *Lenin Reloaded: Toward a Politics of Truth, Sic Vii*. Vol. 7. Duke University Press, 2007, 55.
[240] *Ibid*.
[241] *Ibid.*

politics. Ultimately, the formula for overcoming this rupture was to inherit the Bourgeois Culture moving it into the future in a socialist content. In spite of the enthusiasm of its protagonists, the modernist approaches of the Soviet Avant-garde in the sense of breaking the ties with the past as pure novelty were approached as dysfunctional for this task. To incorporate the peasantry into the project of socialist modernity, aesthetic Modernism was seen irrelevant. Thus, after Stalin headed towards building the socialism in one country, the fruitful cultural atmosphere of the 1920s was cast aside in favor of an eclectic neo-classicism of Socialist Realism – not only in architecture but also in the other arts. Aesthetic Modernism and the entire body of the Avant-garde experiments were accused of being "bourgeoisie formalist" or "utopian" while the urgent task of building socialism by following the five-year plans was ongoing. The incompatibility in terms of the conceptualization of temporality in tandem with the utopian-*realpolitik* dichotomy of the Soviet Socialism directly affected the failure of Soviet Modernism.[242] There was already rivalry in the 1920s between the utopian experimenters struggling to build a counterculture from the inside out and the "anti-dreamers," who wanted a comprehensive leap into modernization and socialism.[243] After the "anti-dreamers" came into power in the 1930s, they endeavored to incline other intellectual forces and physical energies towards rapid industrialization, the abolition of private economy and civil society, and the collectivization of the peasantry.[244]

Bolshevism primarily endeavored to overcome the rupture between the socio-economic base and the superstructure. According to Lefebvre, the prediction of Bolshevism on overcoming the rupture between base and superstructure failed in its

[242] However, even 'at the height of Stalin's power, there was never a monolithic art or architectural style,' as architectural Modernism relatively survived throughout 1930s. Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 49. For a detailed analysis on Modernist reactions to Socialist Realism, see Danilo Udovički-Selb, "Between Modernism and Socialist Realism: Soviet Architectural Culture under Stalin's Revolution from Above, 1928-1938." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 68.4 (2009): pp 467-495. Boris Groys, on the other hand, suggests a continuity of the utopian vision between the Avant-garde and Socialist Realism. See, Boris Groys, *The total art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, aesthetic dictatorship, and beyond*. Verso Books, 2014.
[243] Stites, *op. cit.*, 226.
[244] *Ibid*.

effort.[245] 'Russian Society managed to produce superstructures of astonishing novelty' in every field of endeavor including politics, architecture and urbanism, but 'these superstructures were far in advance of the existing structures (social relations) and base (productive forces),' and failed.[246] The level of the superstructures achieved by the process of revolutionary creativity had to be caught up by the existing base and structures in the effort to fix their delay.[247] According to Lefebvre, it is obvious that these structures and base failed in that effort, giving way to the collapse of the superstructures created by the revolutionary intellect on top of a base (peasant, backward) that had not been properly and adequately modified.[248]

In contrast to the Bolshevik conception of time, the Soviet Avant-garde characteristically proposed a radical rupture in time, rejecting the whole body of past culture. The 1917 Revolution attracted the Modern Movement and Historical Avant-garde at an international scale because of the radically interruptive nature of revolution; however, Bolshevism renounced the rupture politics in favor of sustaining the revolution. In this sense, as Buck-Morss notes, the "time" of the avant-garde was not the same as that of the vanguard party: While practices of the avant-gardes interrupt 'the continuity of perceptions and estranges the familiar, severing historical tradition through their fantasy,' the Bolsheviks, on the other hand, 'submitted to a historical cosmology that provided no such freedom of movement' in the course of history, asserting that cultural products would serve "progress".'[249] Hence, the relative backwardness which was once believed as the reason for the unsustainability of socialism in Russia now was an obstacle for Modernist practices in the effort of sustaining socialism. In spite of the efforts of the Soviet Avant-garde to contribute in the modernization process, its practices were often seen as Russian society not having been ready to embrace.

[245] Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 183-184.
[246] *Ibid.*
[247] *Ibid*.
[248] *Ibid*.
[249] Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 49.

Besides Bolshevism's intention of overcoming the historical "backwardness" of productive forces in Russia in Marxist terms, the Bolshevik attitude to culture arose from a broader historical phenomenon that among the progressive public of the inter-war period, the Soviet Union was not only perceived as the bearer and the main representative of the whole body of Enlightenment values, it also pretended to be. Tafuri asserts that the Bolshevik revolution was seen 'as the realization of the Temple to Humanity, as the realization of the fullness or the purity of the ideology of the Enlightenment, as a synthesis of Jacobinism and petit-bourgeois anarchism' while explaining the interest of the German Expressionists in the Soviet Union.[250] Having its origins in the 1920s, this perception of Soviet socialism accelerated after 1933 with the attempts of anti-fascist fronts across Europe. "The USSR now represented both the traditions and aspirations abandoned by the bourgeoisie."[251] As Hobsbawm notes, the USSR attracted intellectuals to Marxism thanks to a combination of the 'crisis of progress' in bourgeois society with a confident reassertion of its traditional values in the USSR, as the USSR was considered to be the main representative of reason and science which the bourgeois ceased to bear, the defender of the Enlightenment values against fascism.[252]

This signifies a contradictory duality: While the perception of the Soviet Union as the main representative of the entire body of Enlightenment values attracted Modernist protagonists – among others with several intellectual stances – at an international scale, on the other hand, Bolshevism's pretence to be as such gave way to the liquidation of Modernism in favor of a more historicist cultural policy embracing the great products of bourgeois culture. In other words, while a considerable number of Modernists were coming closer to socialism, the dispute between cultural rupture and cultural continuity was to be concluded in favor of the latter and unfavorably of Modernism.

[250] Tafuri, 1987, *op. cit.*, 124. Tafuri questions the political content of the post-World War I relations between the Avant-gardists based in Berlin and the USSR. He claims that the interest of German Modernists in the developments in the Soviet Union evokes a Kautskyst socialism as they over-emphasize the development of productive forces.
[251] Hobsbawm, *op. cit.*, 283.
[252] Ibid., 286.

CHAPTER 4

SOVIET AVANT-GARDE AND TEMPORALITY IN THE ARCHITECTURAL SPACE

> 'Change life!' 'Change society!' These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space. A lesson to be learned from the Soviet constructivists of 1920-30, and from their failure, is that new social relationships call for a new space, and vice versa.
>
> Henri Lefebvre, *the Production of Space.*

If there is any common historical ground between Modernism and the October Revolution, the most significant characteristic of this ground would be their motive for breaking the ties with the past. This is essentially a compatibility in their conceptualization of time. Moreover, the post-revolutionary Soviet Union was perceived as a prominent context for the social project of Modernism, yet it attracted various members of the Modern Movement, particularly because of a "temporal" attractiveness, as previously discussed. In this regard, this chapter discusses the Soviet Avant-garde's conceptualization of temporality on the basis of two themes: Firstly in the context of its temporal contradiction with Bolshevism, which is mentioned in sub-chapter 3.2.2., and, secondly ,the internal conception of time among the Avant-garde, particularly that of Constructivism, which is dependent on,

'multifunctionality, mobility, and convertibility',[253] and puts the emphasis on "process" and "unknown," and therefore, having a unique conceptualization of time among its Modernist currents. Several spatial experiments of the Soviet Avant-garde, particularly Constructivist spatial schemes, are discussed through these two themes of temporality in relation with their own utopian temporality.

The temporal contradiction between Bolshevism and the Soviet Avant-garde indicates also a type of competition between utopias, the competition between the utopia of immediate industrialization to close the gap between capitalism to survive, and, the utopia of the Avant-garde, which proposes a complete break from the past and suggests a fluxional, changing and dynamic future conception. In this respect, several utopian experiments of the Soviet Avant-garde in architectural and urban space are intended to be examined in terms of both their own internal conception of temporality and in relation to Bolshevik conceptualization of time.

This chapter mainly focuses on Constructivism. As the most prominent and influential strand of the Soviet Avant-garde, it has a unique conceptualization of temporality. According to Barris, the language of constructivism was dominated by 'strategies of transformation; instability; movement and dynamism; fusion of time, of form, of the real and unreal or the known and unknown; opposition to previous artistic and social norms, and a commitment to the active, intellectual and emotional engagement of the spectator'.[254] This dynamic character of Constructivism suggests an unsteadiness through both the process of space production and space itself which is dependent on the unpremeditatable nature of socialist future. In this regard, it represents a unique form of Modernist temporality. Likewise, a similar feature is also inherent in *Disurbanism*, yet it is originated in OSA[255] which is already the epicenter of architectural Constructivism. Likewise, *Disurbanists* propose mobilization in space and a "process" of inhabitation on nature rather than presenting a spatial end product in their effort to respond to the debates on urbanization of the Soviet Union

[253] Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 121.
[254] Barris, *op. cit.*, 53.
[255] OSA is the abbreviation for the 'Organization of Contemporary Architects' which was founded in 1925.

in the last years of the 1920s. The transitional space that Constructivists introduced to their radical communal housing proposals for the proposed social transformation was a type of assumption of the contradiction between the Soviet Avant-garde and Bolshevism in terms of the conceptualization of temporality, and it was their attempt to solve this contradiction in the realm of communal housing. By focusing on these experiments, this chapter aims to examine the Soviet Avant-garde's conceptualization of temporality in spatial terms and suggests that Constructivism intensifies and radicalizes the Modernist sense of temporality by projecting continuous future temporal breaks.

4.1. Utopian Temporality in Space

Utopia is a spatial concept, a hybrid form of *eu-topia* indicating 'good place,' and *ou-topia* meaning 'no place;' therefore, it is a non-existing good place.[256] According to Thomas More, utopia is beyond the earthly and signifies a social ultimate, which is hard to achieve, and leaving the possible hints of a social mechanism up to its audience, it attempts to examine the mechanism's ability of spatialization.[257] In this sense, utopia has a temporality in which a process is defined and its current presence is measured. In fact, since the time of ancient Egypt, utopias have proposed the emancipation of human life from alienation and its transformation into an entire creative experiment.[258] Architecture is assumed to be the ideal art of utopias thanks to its vibrant nature engaged in everyday life and its structure which is convenient for *gesamtkunstwerk,* a total work of art.[259] In this regard, social utopias are frequently built upon in spatial terms. Nineteenth-century utopian philosophers, such as Saint-Simon, Owen and Fourier, manifested their social visions through space in an architectural-urban form.

Inheriting this attitude, Ebezener Howard, Patric Geddes, Tony Garnier, Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier proposed utopias which stood on 'the intersection between

[256] Güven Arif Sargın, "Sapkın Mekanlar (Marginal Spaces)". *Annex (Gazette for the İstanbul 2003 Biennale),* (2003), 1.
[257] *Ibid*.
[258] Artun, "Formların Siyaseti", 7.
[259] *Ibid.*

the 19th century ideals and 20th century technology.'[260] In this sense, the spatial visions also frequently relate to a utopian sense at the turn of the 20th century; the two phenomena commonly embraced in a conjoined manner. Ebezener Howard's *Garden City*, Frank Lloyd Wright's *Broadacre City* and Le Corbusier's *Radiant City* were proposed utopias planned with both urban reconstruction and social revolution in mind. However, these utopias were not indicative of impossible dreams; according to Fishman, they rather involved a coherent program which transcended the immediate situation, for a direct action to break from established society.[261] In terms of its search for the new as the ephemeral, the momentary and the transitory, and the concurrent celebration of dynamism which expresses precisely the yearning for a lasting and immaculate present[262], the Modernist conception of temporality has also a correspondence with utopianism.

Similarly, the notion of rupture and breaking of the revolutionary context encouraged the utopian attitudes against the current immediate situation which inherited the destruction of war and overcame the maelstroms of revolution, but loaded with expectations of an egalitarian future society boosted by developing technology. In this context, the Soviet Avant-garde attempted to transform the old order and create a new society by mobilizing a utopian sense. Utopias were functional for depicting their temporal conceptualization as well as expressing their destructive attitude against the traditional, old order by depicting an order of the future that had never existed. Utopia is mobilized as an instrument, against which the current situation would measure itself. The first years of the post-revolutionary Soviet culture were dominantly utopian. Technological fantasy and future speculation pervaded the entire cultural realm. Once they had the possibilities, they would have attempted to transform the Soviet Union immediately into 'a physical Utopia of modern cities of glass and steel, inhabited by functionally dressed citizens who would be treated to Constructivist and Futurist culture'.[263] Furthermore, the proposals of 19th-century

[260] Robert Fishman, *Urban Utopias in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1982, 8.
[261] *Ibid.*, x.
[262] Habermas, *op. cit.*, 40.
[263] Stites, *op. cit.*, 172.

utopian socialists were among the main sources of reference for the Soviet Avant-garde, such that several architects directly adopted their works – especially Fourier, often without discussion of social meaning.[264] Fourier's conception of *phalanstery* substantially influenced their device of the 'social condenser'.[265]

4.2. Utopian Temporality of *Urbanism* and *Disurbanism*

The mobilization of utopia as a matter of course were directed to the obvious problems of the Revolution. Overcoming the backwardness of the peasantry and the urgency of industrialization were the central problems for the Bolsheviks. Both were also among the major sources of the temporal contradiction of Bolshevism in terms of preconditions of a socialist revolution in Marxist terms. The spatialization of a desired rapid industrialization in dominantly rural Russia was a central problem as well as the peasantry being perceived as the stronghold of conservatism. In this regard, according to Barris, Bolshevism followed three different strands of utopianism: Firstly a rural utopia depending on a mistrust of urban life, proposing the replacement of peasant and religious rituals with revolutionary ones in an effort to uplift the peasantry and abolish its backwardness.[266] An urban-technological utopia countered this, projecting to overcome rural backwardness through an absolute conquest of nature and the country by the city and technology, and thirdly, bearing the similar visions of technology and urbanization, an administrative utopia aimed to interrelate with the first two.[267] These utopian visions were to intertwine in the rejection of the capitalist city and in the search for a new urban form which expected to overcome the opposition between city and country. The debate between *disurbanists* and *urbanists,* which is focused on in advance, also bears the traces of these three strands.

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[264] *Ibid.*, 200.
[265] Owen Hatherley, *Landscapes of Communism: A History Through Buildings*. New Press, The, 2016, 167.
[266] Roann Barris, "Russian Constructivist Architecture as an Urban Carnival: The Creation and Reception of a Utopian Narrative." *Utopian studies* 10.1 (1999): 42-67, 45.
[267] *Ibid*.

The affirmation of the urban order against the rural and the triumph of the machine over nature are the central elements to both Bolsheviks and intellectuals in their utopian visions.[268] This was inherent also in avant-garde productions, proletarian poetry, and revolutionary science fiction, such that 'a world-city or the world-as-a-city, with urban minds beaming out reason and wisdom into the primeval darkness and citybuilt machines shaping the tangle of nature into symmetrical forms' was a major image.[269] Yet, Constructivism was the utopia of an 'urban carnival and the magical machine'.[270]

In the first decades of the revolution, one of the most significant problems regarding the city for the professional community was how to overcome the opposition between town and country coherently with the tendency in the Marxist classics.[271] In his *Anti-Duhring,* Engels and, in the first volume of *Capital*, Marx[272] emphasized the abolition of the division between town and country by achieving the most equal distribution of heavy industry and population throughout the country.[273] Moreover, regarding the megapolis with horror[274] and ultimate expression of capitalism, and abolishment of rural backwardness were among the central themes of the Soviet professional community, shaping the debates on town-planning and urbanism.

When the first five-year plan came up with the proposition of building 200 industrial and 1000 agricultural towns in 1929, Soviet professionals accelerated their debate on the form of a socialist city.[275] OSA was the epicenter of this debate, procreating the two strands of an approach: *Urbanists* and *disurbanists*. While *urbanists*

[268] Stites, *op. cit.*, 52.
[269] *Ibid*.
[270] Barris, *op. cit.*, 42.
[271] Khan-Magomedov, op. cit., 271
[272] Merrifield, *op. cit.*, pg. 24.
[273] Urbanism was one of the most immature themes in the Marxist classics. Merrifield asserts that "apart from anything else, it seems at odds with Marx's affirmation of capitalist urbanization, for now he posits a post-capitalist city based around a small-scale urban ideal, in symbiosis with nature and resembling the pre-capitalist, artisanal town he formerly condemned. Engels, in 1872, would oddly follow suit." Andrew Merrifield, *Metromarxism: A Marxist Tale of the City*, New York and London: Routledge, 2002, p. 24.
[274] R. Antony French. *Plans, pragmatism and people: the legacy of Soviet planning for today's cities*. London: UCL Press, 1995, p. 48.
[275] Khan-Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 284.

proposed a denser version of Howard's *Garden City*, *disurbanists* advocated the total dissolution of cities throughout the country as low-population communal settlements.[276]

The *urbanists*, whose most influential theorist was Sabsovich, based their proposals on the idea that the city was to be composed of large and even immense communal housing blocks, clustered around the industrial plants whose workers they served. It had neither a center nor a periphery, nor did it have differentiated neighborhoods.[277] The proposition was compact communities adjoined with industrial units and state farms, inhabited by at least 40,000 and at most 100,000 people according to current demand of already being built industrial plants.[278] Approaching the city as a "social condenser," the OSA *urbanists* grounded their argument on cost and sociability and promoted concentration, density, planning and mammoth city forms.[279] Their conceptions were close to Le Corbusier's Plan Voisin, proposing a high density urban inhabitation; however, *urbanists* attributed an understanding of collectivity achieved by spatial social condenser qualities.

Disurbanists, on the other hand, proposed a more radical approach. For Okhitovich, the passionate promoter of *disurbanism*, it was the power grid that was to form the basis of the new regional planning and he proposed a rectangular pattern that covers the entire country, so that a factory can be installed at any point.[280] In this manner, it was easier to furnish the whole country with factories, consistently with the aim of "building socialism". Such a dilution of industry was to be realized along with the dilution of housing.[281] Housing which is organized with respect to industry that depended on mobility can easily transform according to the changes in the lives of individuals (e.g. marriage) and to the social or economic needs on a macro-scale.

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[276] Bülent Batuman, "Kent Karşıtı Kentleşme: Rus/Sovyet Ütopyasında Doğa ve Kent", in, *Mimarlığın ABC'si*. İstanbul: Say Yayınları, 2012, 67.
[277] Anatole Kopp. *Town and Revolution*. New York: George Braziller, 1970, 171-172.
[278] Khan-Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 284.
[279] Stites, *op. cit.*, 198.
[280] Kopp, "*Town*" *op. cit.*, 173. By "power grid", Okhitovic refers to the electrification program in1920s, the GOELRO Plan.
[281] *Ibid*.

However, housing was to be freely located in natural surroundings with each group of houses being served by collective facilities and this ‘return to nature’ could have been achieved with a sophisticated transportation system. This idea included the flexible building practices according to the changes in an already industrializing country, consistent with the existing building policy which prefers low-cost prefabricated housing. Okhitovich himself preferred ‘prefabricated, portable or mobile, collapsible homes that could be set up anywhere along the "magistral," or line of communication and service points which were the key element of communalism and easily accessible to residents, consisting of shopping centers, cultural centers and communal gathering points.[282] Ginzburg and Barsch also put forward a *disurbanist* green city proposal for Moscow shortly after the OSA debate of 1929.[283] However, they suggested horizontal communal blocks instead of individual houses although they shared the general attitude of Okhitovich’s proposition of the redistribution of cities along a web of transportation and industry.

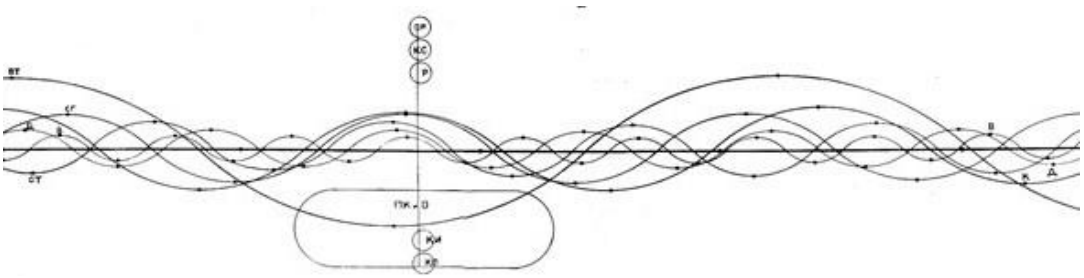

Figure 4.1 Disurbanist diagram showing the frequencies of urban services for the distributed population.
Source: [data base online]
http://www.kosmograd.com/newsfeed/images/redmars/disurbanist_proposal_01.gif
[Accessed: 15.05.2017].

[282] Stites, *op. cit.*, 195.
[283] Khan-Magomedov, op. cit., p. 339.

The *Disurbanists* proposed de-urbanization, de-centralization, and mobility that suggested an impulsive spatialization of socialism which would be determined by future context. According to them, 'the functions of the city must be studied not in their static condition, but in terms of their change, dialectically looking as far as it is possible to see into their future development.'[284] In these terms, they resemble the temporal conception of constructivism, yet they are both connected with OSA. N.A. Milyutin's *Sotsgorod* (Socialist City), which consists of both urbanist and disurbanist elements, depended on a gradual social transformation into communal living and a gradual growth of the city along a linear scheme that comprises belts of parks, housing, roads, greenery, belt, industry and railroads.[285] Because of his suggestion of a flexible framework for a gradual development, financial sensitivity, as well as allowing for both *urbanist* and *disurbanist* variants, his proposal had been the closest concept that was given expression in reality.[286]

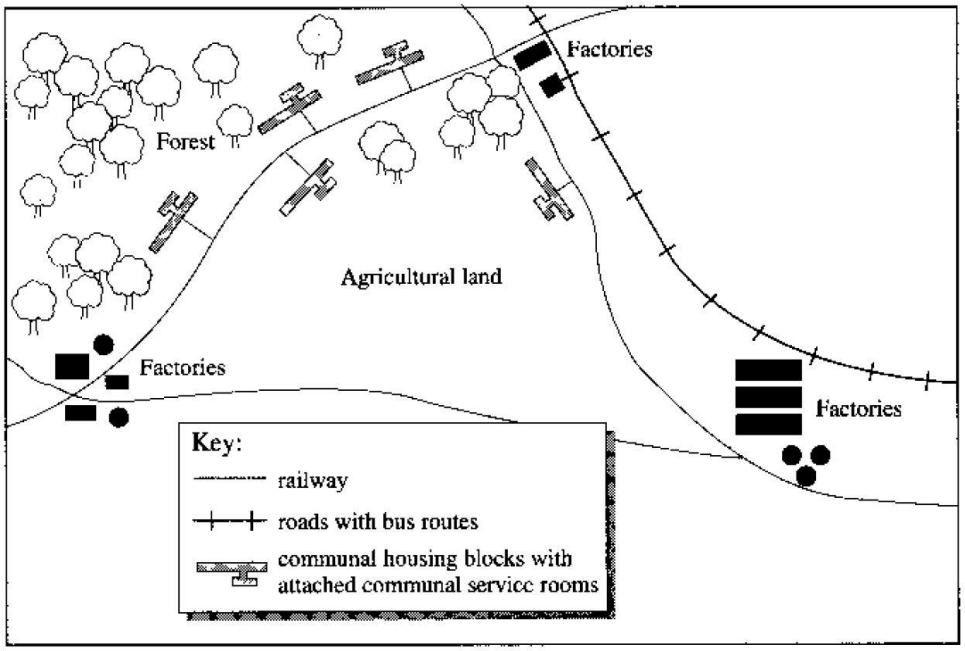

Figure 4.2 Okhitovich's disurbanist city concept.
Source: French, R. Antony, and Ra French. *Plans, pragmatism and people: the legacy of Soviet planning for today's cities*. London: UCL Press, 1995, p. 36.

[284] "Rezoliutsii" (Resolutions of the Housing and Planning Section of the OSA's First Conference, April 1928) in SA, 1928, no. 4, p. 123. Quoted in Cooke, p. 197.
[285] French, op. cit., 41.
[286] Ibid.

In spite of their limited implementation, these avant-garde attitudes towards town planning achieved considerable success. In addition to their crucial contribution to urban theory, they achieved persuading the other disciplines and governors that a city principally should be planned.[287] The garden city principles which were very popular in the 1920s – particularly greening cities – were practiced to a considerable extent. Minimizing the distance between the workplace and the residence instead of rigid zoning and distribution of industry and employment throughout urban land instead of concentrating them in zones away from residences was a tendency advocated by the Soviet urbanism of the 1920s.[288]

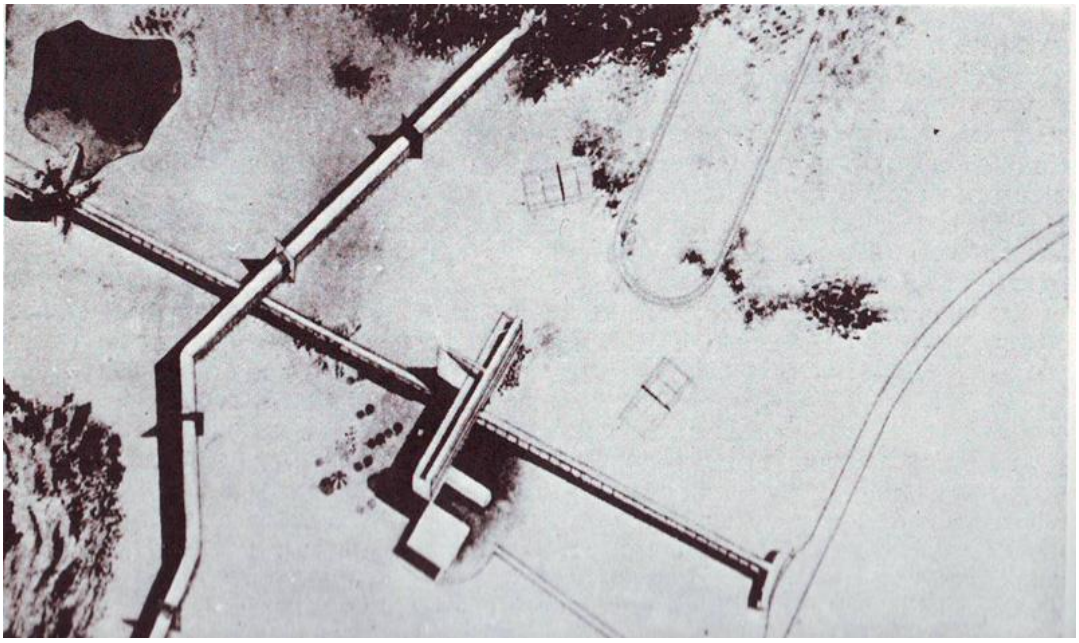

Figure 4.3 Moisei Ginzburg and Mikhail Barshch, Disurbanist scheme, 1930. Source: [data base online] http://socks-studio.com/img/blog/disurbanism-01.jpg [Accessed: 15.05.2017].

[287] French, op. cit., p. 47.
[288] *Ibid*.

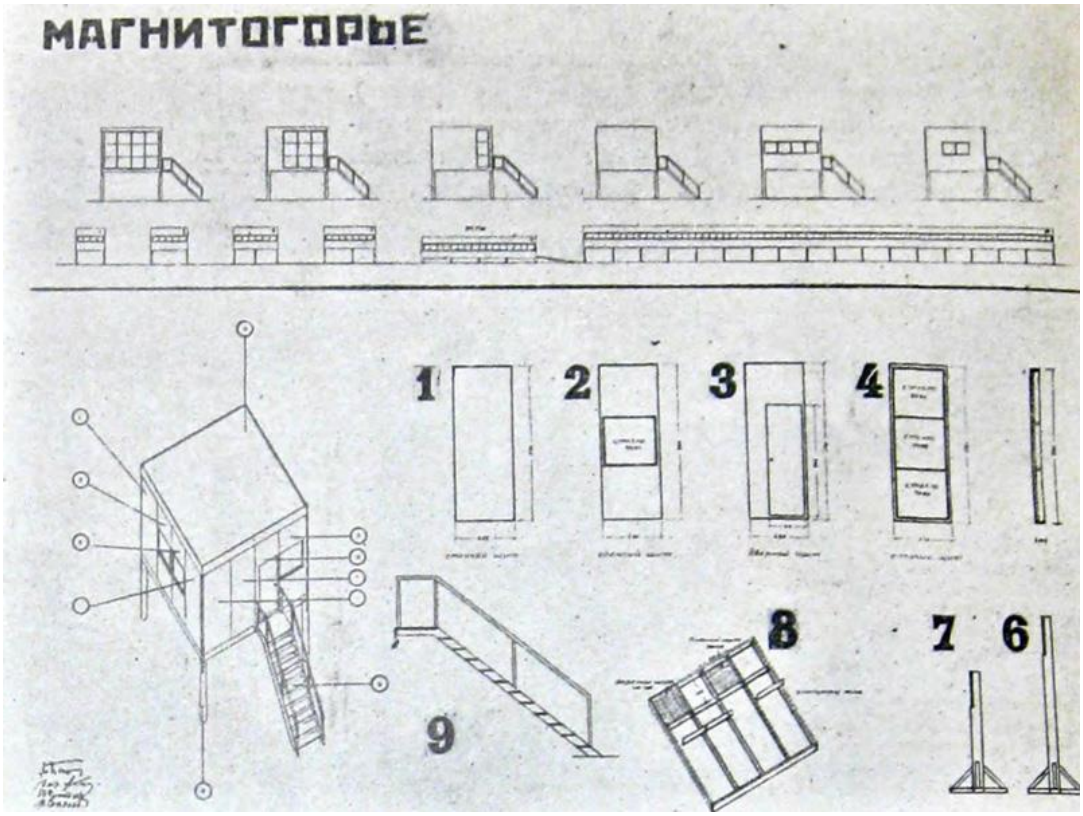

Figure 4.4 Okhitovich, Barshch, Vladimirov and Nikolai Sokolov's drawing for the Magnitogorsk Competition in 1930 showing prefabricated wooden construction components for their disurbanist proposal.
Source: [data base online] http://socks-studio.com/img/blog/disurbanism-03.jpg [Accessed: 15.05.2017].

Disurbanist projections were condemned for resembling 'the very ideal of petit-bourgeois', as in Amsterdam, their proposals of housing were maximally distant from each other.[289] Furthermore, the necessary technology to implement these proposals was not available; thus, there was no need for speculation about the future. However, the main reason was spatio-political: 'The concentration of the proletariat in a confined space' was vital for defending themselves against the surrounding capitalist world.[290] Moreover, while OSA's debate was ongoing, the new cities were

[289] Cooke, op. cit., 197. In fact, the *disurbanist* projections resemble the *Broadacre City* of Frank Lloyd Wright.
[290] *Ibid*.

already stated as being built on virgin land with the rural population speedily flowing into existing cities; thus, the dissolution of cities was irrelevant to reality.[291] The pace of the First Five-Year Plan necessitated feasible, immediate and direct solutions to the issue. The suggestions of prominent *disurbanist* professionals were regarded as fantastic, baseless, utopian and leftist experiments.[292] In other words, their temporality collided with the Bolshevik temporality.

4.3. Temporality in Constructivist Architecture

If the fundamental point that characterizes Architectural Modernism and differentiates it from the pre-modern is the emergence of speculative epistemology replacing normative epistemology,[293] then constructivism attempted to convey this epistemological conceptualization to the "everyday" by integrating and dissolving art through every segment of life, particularly into the production. Constructivist motivation for the total sublimation of art into life projects a radical break with the past not in terms of normativity within art, but rather a break from the art itself as a category. Constructivism, from the beginning, promoted "process" of design and used phases of artificial objects and focused on methods and systems. By depending on unknowns, and pre-assuming continuous future breaks from the past, constructivism displays an intensified version of the Modernist conceptualization of temporality in a unique utopian way.

The early manner of Constructivism evolved and transcended through the constructivist architects of OSA in the second half of the 1920s. These attempts involved a unique approach to both spatial and temporal conceptions. While their emphasis on the "process" challenges the static character of space by going beyond the design and building phases and transcending to use the phase, their categorical rejection of art represents a radical form of a Modernist conceptualization of temporality.

[291] French, op. cit., p. 42.
[292] *Ibid*.
[293] Tanyeli, *op. cit.*, 67.

Constructivism resembles the Modernist temporality. According to Rodchenko, "construction" is a modern concept; it is the art of the future; and the place of the art which does not integrate with life is the antiquity sections of archeology museums.[294] Mayakovsky warns the Constructivists for not being another new aesthetic genre, and emphasizes that their ideas have to be constituted through everyday realities.[295] Gabo and Pevsner ask if art assumes that "new life," it only accepts the novel creations that are built on the basis of the old; and they respond: Life does not wait and the progress of generations does not stop! According to them, unless its foundation is built upon the basis of the real principles of life, art does not survive against the pressure of a new-born culture.[296] Gan stresses that Constructivism has declared a merciless war against art because the aims and values of art are incapable of systemizing the feelings of a revolutionary atmosphere.[297]

Besides its coherence with the Modernist conception of temporality in terms of their proposition of a radical break with the past and tradition, Constructivism also creates its own temporality which is dependent on process and dynamism. The early theoreticians of artistic Constructivism also formed its unique internal temporality. Rodchenko and Stepanova asserted that if tectonics is the integration of ideology, and form and *faktura* is its material, then construction is the "process" itself, of the making of a practical design.[298] According to Gan, the tectonic achieves an integrated concept by meeting the ideology and form, and *faktura* constitutes the idiosyncratic state of the material, while the construction is the material process of the total integration of the two.[299]

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[294] Alexander Rodchenko, "Sloganlar (Slogans)" [In Turkish], in, Ahu Antmen (ed.), *20. Yüzyıl batı sanatında akımlar: Sanatçılardan yazılar ve açıklamalarla*. Sel Yayıncılık, 2016, 108.
[295] Vladimir Mayakovsky, "*LEF* Kime Sesleniyor? (Whom is *LEF* alerting?)" [In Turkish], in Antmen, *ibid.*, 113.
[296] Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner, "Gerçekçi Manifesto (Realist Manifesto)", [In Turkish], in Antmen, *ibid.*, 115.
[297] Alexei Gan, "Konstrüktivizm (Constructivism)", [In Turkish], in Antmen, *ibid.*, 112.
[298] Alexander Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova, "Birinci Konstrüktivistler Çalışma Grubu Programı (The Program of the First Working Group of Constructivists)", [In Turkish], in Antmen, *ibid.*, 110.
[299] Alexei Gan, "Konstrüktivizm (Constructivism)", [In Turkish], in Antmen, *ibid.*, 111.

Architectural Constructivism endeavored to translate this characteristic conceptualization of temporality into an architectural medium. Architecture was regarded as the most relevant medium for Constructivist theory because of its close relationship with everyday life and whole social processes.[300] The most significant architect in this translation of Constructivism into the architectural medium was Alexander Vesnin and his brothers. Vesnin adapted the formal aesthetic methods of *Leftist* art into an architectonic. The Vesnin Brothers' competitional entry of *Palace of Labour* was the first architectural symbol of Constructivism. The basic principles of architectural Constructivism were established by Vesnin; however, Moisei Ginzburg was to expand its theory and develop it as a body of doctrine.[301]

According to Ginzburg, it was an 'overriding methodological obligation under the new ideology, to solve the architectural task, like any other, only through precise evaluation of its "unknowns" and the pursuit of a correct method of a solution'.[302] The unknown future particularly obliged the underlining of "process." By their 'method of functional creativity,' Constructivists aspired to make a design of 'a unified organic process' which was to be hammered out from first priorities to second, from skeleton to envelope, from inside to out, as a conscious process from beginning to end.[303] It is based a utopia of process, which makes efforts to gather fragmented conjunctions through a dialogue.[304] The process was to make room for different agents, be a collective act of *construction* as the public and specialists contribute their components.

Ginzburg asserts that the constructivist must calculate correctly the complex overlapping relation between old and new within 'the dialectical development of life at any given time,' and, 'take as the precondition of its material forms not the areas of backwardness, but the landmarks of the new way of life and advanced technology.' In this manner, constructivism constitutes a dynamic unsteady-

[300] Khan-Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 150.
[301] *Ibid.*, 155.
[302] In, Cooke, *op. cit.*, 111.
[303] In Cooke, *ibid.*, 111.
[304] Barris, *op. cit.*, 42

progressive temporality inter-related to the external dynamics, amidst the greater objective progress of humanity. They endeavor to contribute to the progress by systematization, accepting the dynamism and unsteadiness in advance. This attitude also implies the consciousness of temporal contradiction of the Bolhsevik Revolution in terms of the backwardness of productive forces and culture in Russia for a socialist revolution in Marxist terms. With the consciousness of this contradiction, Constructivists attempted to fulfill this problem, at least in an architectural medium.

However, Constructivist architecture somehow draws apart from the former theorizations of Constructivism like Vladimir Tatlin, Alexei Gan and Alexander Rodchenko in terms of their suggestion of the total dissolution of art. Constructivist architects dissent with the "asceticism" of "production art" which emerged as a proletarian reaction to the NEP's petit-bourgeois resurgence[305], and is an intellectual source of artistic constructivism. If the resulting architecture of their approach was currently 'ascetic,' it was not because of the process but rather of youth in both the builders and the new life they were building, hence, new systems of compositional principles were going to have developed from the typical spatial patterns of the new problems themselves.[306] In this sense, Constructivist architects have a stronger relation with the temporal logic of modernity than their Avant-garde counterparts in the arts. Constructivist architects, according to Ginzburg, did not attempt to eliminate the aesthetic emotion; they were 'seeking to recognize that the character of it has changed under the influence of changed conditions of life, new economic priorities and new technology.'[307]

Barris transcends Constructivism's unique temporal conception of temporality into a context of utopian temporality. According to Barris, the 'constructivist paradigm

[305] Khan-Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 149.
[306] Cooke, *op. cit.*, 111.
[307] *Ibid.*, 118. However, Artun defines a more highlighted difference between artistic and architectural Constructivism. He asserts that the products of constructivist architects lacks the imagination of Tatlin, even though they respect his pioneering. According to Artun the projects of Constructivist architecture resembles no difference than Bauhaus, early Modernism or international style, it is pointless to seearch in their approach for an Avant-garde spirit that challenges to modernity. Artun, "*Sanatın İktidarı*", op. cit., 94.

itself is a paradigm of utopia.'[308] Defining their movement as a "method" instead of another "style," Constructivists' object was the action, to display the principle organization, rather than the appearance of an object; progress was their priority not the results.[309] Their underlining of process, which indicates an emphasis on function and creation, deemphasizes form and destroys the values of monism, unity and anthropomorphism. However, 'the constructivist form was a centripetal, open, and transparent form, oriented towards eternal expansion.[310] Yet, this spirit of spatial freedom and dynamism was counterbalanced by technological limitations and 'the constructivist belief that architecture was an act of will, an act of re-making the world'.[311] In this sense the transcendence of the known, which is inherent to constructivism, is utopian and devoid of messianic and prescriptive insights.[312]

Constructivist utopia hereby does not induce a static, pre-ordered "good place" as a utopia, it assumes the obscurity; rather, it seeks a utopian unknown in which Constructivists' "functional method" is a systematizing agent. In this sense, Constructivist temporality does not surrender to the unknown but takes responsibility as a proactive agent of social transformation proposed by revolution with the consciousness of an unprecedented future, the utopian unknown. They search for an order towards the unknown future but their order is not static. Through all these aspects, the emphasis on "process" is dominant. Constructivist utopia struggles to provide systematic inputs on these processes taking full account of their position among the other determinant social agents. The emphasis on the unknown arises from two phenomena: Firstly, Constructivism coheres with the Modernist conceptualization of temporality. Constructivism is not interested in the normativity of the past in any sense. Because successive moments of the future will not have any relation to the previous one as a reference, it is unknown. Secondly, but related to the first, since Constructivism considers that revolution has totally broke with the

[308] Barris, op. cit., 56.
[309] *Ibid.*, 53.
[310] *Ibid*.
[311] *Ibid*. In this regard, Barris, claims that this dual character of constructivism arises from the repudiation of Aristotelian logic in favor of Cassirer's project logic, a logic of categorizing the real and known in favor of one that produces the unknown from discovered principles.
[312] Barris, op. cit., 54.

old, social forms of the new social context will be built by various material dynamics in a revolutionary "process." The Constructivist conception of temporality intensifies and radicalizes the Modernist sense of temporality by projecting continuous future temporal breaks in this process. Although it has a historical direction, this novel revolutionary context is full of unknowns and the modest role of the architect is to seek the systemization of this process by providing inputs via known principles of Constructivism within the greater revolutionary social mechanism. In this regard, their modesty and Avant-gardism have a close contact. Furthermore, their emphasis on the "unknown" is also coherent with Marxism. Cooke quotes from Communist Party Secretary Kaganovich to indicate their coherence: "It would be un-Marxist to try to foresee what exactly the form of communist way of life will be in the distant future: we know only that it will change."[313] Coherently, Ginzburg asserts that Constructivism is a method that 'form is a function, x, which must always be evaluated anew by the architect in accordance with changes in the form-making situation'.[314] Ultimately, Marxism looks 'at things in terms of how they are changing'[315] coherently and Constructivists highlight the process, change, dynamism and mobility.

As a matter of fact, Constructivists attempted to create a system, to establish a scientific foundation for the approach to constructing buildings and services that would fulfill the demands of communist culture in its transient state, through all stages of its future development out of this period of ruin.[316] The next sub-chapters focus on the attempts of Constructivist architecture to fulfill the demands of this transient phase of proposed social transformation.

[313] L.M. Kaganovich, "On the Moscow Urban Economy and on the Development of the Urban Economy of the USSR", speech of L. Kaganovich to the June Plenum of the Communist Party Central Committee, Pravda, 4 July 1931, pp. 3-4, in Cooke, op. cit., p. 118.
[314] In Cooke, op. cit., p. 118.
[315] *Ibid*.
[316] Owen Hatherley. *Landscapes of Communism: A History Through Buildings*. New Press, The, 2016, 109.

4.4. The Architectural Program and Temporality of the Transformation of Everyday Life

The spatialization of the proposed social transformation was a central question for the Soviet Avant-garde. Their short period experiments mainly focused on this problem, and perhaps the most considerable theoretical contribution was in the field of the role of architecture as an agent which functions in a process of the transformation of everyday life. Soviet officials also gave major importance to everyday life, regarding it as the fundamental basis of the development of workers' political and social consciousness in accordance with collectivist values.[317] This realm was also most prominent in terms of demonstrating the temporal conceptualization of the Avant-garde. They endeavored to propose the socialist future by mobilizing a sensoriality of their utopian ideas on the transformation of everyday life, but without sacrificing the present moment.[318] By bringing art into life, they aimed to mediate utopia with the present via aesthetics without dictating but relying on the fulfillment of present pleasure and comfort.[319] For the architectural Avant-garde, this temporal conceptualization primarily depended on a spatial program.

A spatial program was the theme that would bring utopia down to earth. At the point that a utopian attitude conceived a spatial program, its temporality would be related to the present moment. If utopias endeavored to examine the ability of the spatialization of their proposed social mechanism,[320] it would be performed via a spatial program. In this regard, the spatial program was a central concept in the theorizations of architectural Modernism. From the urban scale to the building scale it was a key theme of debates.

Modernism essentially was an aesthetic response to the novel experience that emerged from the metropolitan condition: It endeavored to create the aesthetics of

[317] Victor Buchli. *An Archaeology of Socialism: The Narkomfin Communal House, Moscow*. Berg Publishers, 1999, 24.
[318] Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 66.
[319] *Ibid*.
[320] Sargın, "Sapkın Mekanlar", 1.

the novel sociality of the urban space as a body of relations as well as a struggle for the physical infrastructure of this new spatialization. This endeavor intrinsically necessitated, and was preoccupied by the spatial program. Hilberseimer's urban proposals and Frank Lloyd Wright's Broadacre City of Le Corbusier's *Plan Voisin* were the manifestations of the programmatic innovations that the novel urban context indicated. The architectural program was also central to the debates on social housing, under the influence of a inter-war social democrat approach.

In the Soviet Union of the 1920s, the spatial program was also intensively discussed since a radical social transformation was proposed. New building types, the meaning ascribed to production and working spaces, communal housing, abolishment of domestic labor, the publicity for propaganda, and a vision of collectivization of everyday life were all discussed through new spatial programs. Moreover, rapid industrialization demanded a massive modernization with its spatial infrastructure. The spatialization demanded by modernization was to be integrated with the vision of social transformation through spatio-programmatic methods.

Prior to the debates of the Soviet Avant-garde, the future social order had been occasionally conceived in spatial terms among Marxists. Stites points out Kautsky's envisions on the spatialization of the future social order: The focal points of this vision were the 'shape of the city, collective living in large residential ensembles, communal dining, and all kinds of community services made possible by a combination of the cooperative organization of life and the massive use of electricity, gas, modern building materials, and rapid transit.'[321] This framework was accompanied by the drastic transformation of the nuclear family, abolition of individual housekeeping, and the emancipation of women from domestic labor and their release into "productive" work. Lili Braun, a German Marxist feminist, projected a radical transformation of the early 20th-century bourgeois apartment building through the housing of dozens of atomized families into a collective of working people, proposing communal houses inhabiting 50 to 60 families, with

[321] Stites, *op. cit.,* 31.

central public services such as laundries, kitchens, dining rooms and childcare facilities.[322]

Housing was central to the debates on the spatial configuration of the proposed social order for Marxists and for Modernists in their search for the fulfillment of the novel situation at the turn of the 20th century. In the post-revolutionary Soviet Union, all aspects and every stage of the development of the new society reflected in the search for an appropriate form of housing.[323] In that manner, the utopian socialist proposals and studies of the Marxist-Leninist classic writers were the main references. The approach of the Marxist-Leninist classics to housing mainly consisted of regarding abolition of the opposition between town and country and the involvement of women in the social production process.[324]

4.4.1. Social Condenser

In addition to these two themes of the spatial program, the effort for the collectivization of daily life procreated perhaps the most unique invention of Soviet architecture: the 'social condenser.' The 'Social condenser' was a programmatic conception to transform daily life according to collective principles depending on the co-existence of different functions and activities and principally gathering as many individuals together as possible within a spatial relation to their everyday life. The transformation of everyday life through reorganization was given major importance by both the Soviet government and the Soviet Avant-garde.[325] Soviet architects defined novel urban functions as social condensers coherently with their projection to transform everyday life. Among them were palaces of labor, workers' clubs, factory kitchens, all of which were expected to function in a new socialist way of life. All should have been comprehended as 'social condensers.'

[322] *Ibid*.
[323] Selim O. Khan-Magomedov, *Pioneers of Soviet Architecture: The Search for New Solutions in the 1920's and 1930's*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1987, 341.
[324] *Ibid*.
[325] Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 54.

‘Social condenser’ was a spatial term which was necessarily to be applied through every scale of any spatial proposal. In this regard, a housing complex, a district or even a whole city would have been approached with a perception of the social condenser.[326] The urbanist proposals within OSA, as mentioned previously in this chapter, particularly depended on the conception of the ‘social condenser’ suggesting a much denser version of a garden city.

Above all, however, workers’ clubs held a special position. Since the first years of the revolution, many Soviet architects started to conceive of workers’ clubs that aimed to replace the old bourgeois society’s assembly places such as churches and theaters with less alienating gathering spaces for workers.[327] Without doubt, the workers’ club was among the most substantial element of spatialization of the proposed social transformation together with housing and working places. It was perceived as the basic spatial element of the recreation phase of the new way of life of the working class, which was to be the driving force of the revolution. However, this phase of recreation should not have resembled a capitalist reproduction of the labor force which depended on the compensation of what workers lost in production by consumption. Instead, they were perceived as collective social facilities of culture, self-education and recreation.[328]

Furthermore, the conception of the social condenser was a negation of the rigid zoning practices of 20th-century planning in the West. Referring to Ginzburg, Hatherley asserts that social condensers were expected to stimulate but not dictate the social transformation through spatial organization; for example, of wide corridors suitable for public gatherings, through strengthening the spatial connection between homes and public facilities, and through merging the private and public space.[329]

[326] *See*, A. Kopp, Constructivist Architecture in the USSR, Academy Editions, 1985, 70.
[327] Hatherley, “Landscapes”, *op. cit.*, 165.
[328] *Ibid*.
[329] *Ibid.*, 167.

Different from the rigid zoning practices in the West, the 'social condenser' 'was not low density, was not zoned, but threw together functions with great abandon.'[330]

4.4.2. The Transitory Temporality of the Communal House

In the aftermath of the revolution, housing communes were organized to promote communal living. In the first years of the revolution, there was rare building activity and these communes were overcrowded living spaces with 4 to 5 people per room. They were regarded as the basis for the formulation of new social dwellings; but even at its peak, the communal ways of life developed very slowly.[331] The reason for this was included the ill-suited quality of these physical spaces. After NEP, these housing communes were replaced with co-operative housing policies. After the mid-1920s, large scale housing construction became a current issue because of the housing shortages in the big cities which were experiencing a process of industrialization. In this regard, OSA initiated a discussion on communal dwellings proposed to function in th transformation of everyday life through socialist principles.

The proposal of transitionality in the architectural space was first expressed in OSA's internal competition for the design of communal dwellings in 1927. In 1928, the development of transitional designs for communal dwellings was carried out in the *Stroikom*, the Typological Section of the Committee for Construction, and evaluated at the governmental level for the first time.[332] The proposal of a transitional space was basically an intention to organize a gradual change by relating the current spatial demands of the existing society, which was not ready for radical transformation as envisioned by the Soviet Avant-garde. In this regard, it was an attempt to overcome the contradiction of the conceptualization of temporality with Bolshevism.

[330] *Ibid*.
[331] Khan-Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 342. Besides they were expected to carry a political task in the previously hostile districts to revolution, for their control and political transformation.
[332] Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 347.

The *Stroikom* architects focused on feasible solutions to the housing problem in a manner that promoted communal living patterns. They therefore formulized standard units as components of apartment buildings, suggesting different kinds of communal patterns. They developed multiple types of units with different levels of collectivity. These differences among these types were mainly based on the level of the accommodation of domestic labor and the nuclear family in a single unit. While some were designed for a single nuclear family, the others were suggesting a more crowded domestic life at a higher level of collectivization.[333] Principally, these developed types were regarded as the components of a transitional phase on the way to a totally collectivized way of living. Many were expected to transform into the spaces of full-collectivization where the nuclear family and domestic labor completely vanished and daily activities such as eating are carried out in the centralized communal services.

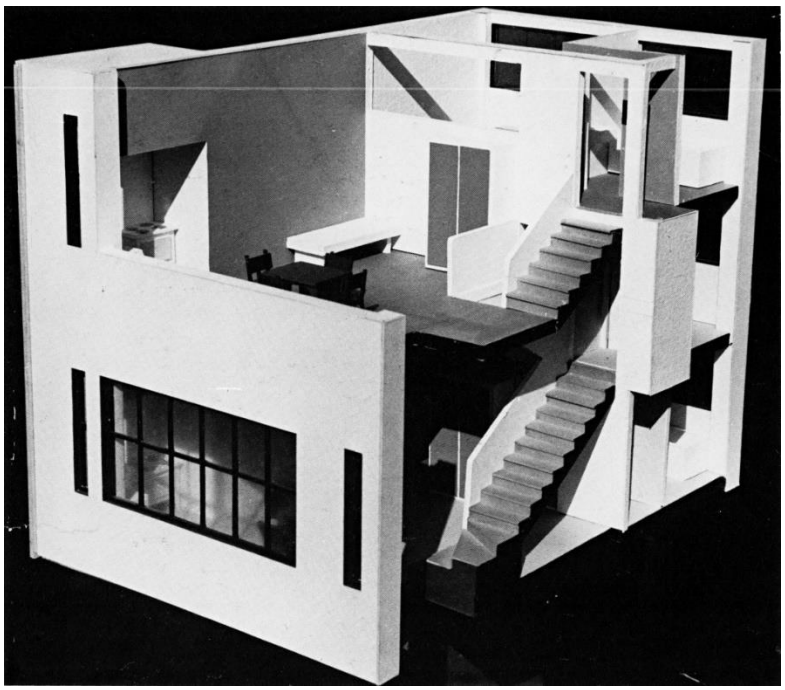


Figure 4.5 Stroikom's F-type dwelling unit.
Source: [data base online] https://rosswolfe.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/f-type-split-level-dwelling-unit.jpeg [Accessed: 15.05.2017].

[333] See, Magomedov, "Transitional housing designs incorporating new uses of space", *op. cit.*, 347-389.

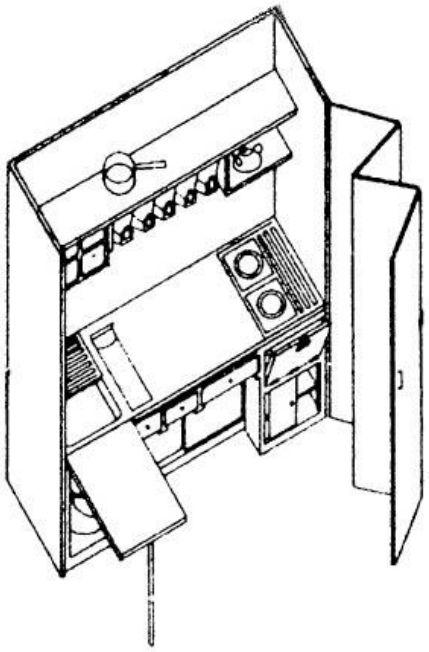


Figure 4.6 The Stroikom design for a cooking alcove, projected to be removed later when life was fully collectivized.
Source: [data base online] http://www.zondagcs.nl/images/projects/7/7-03-stroikom%20studies,%20ussr,%201930.jpg [Accessed: 18.05.2017].

The most prominent of this projection of the transitional space in the social transformation was the Narkomfin building designed in 1928-1930 by Moisei Ginzburg and Ignaty Milinis, as it is frequently regarded also as the most significant product of architectural constructivism. Its design consisted of F-type and K-type buildings and dormitory accommodations with rooms for one or two people.[334] F-type units (Figure 4.5) were designed for individuals or couples without children, while the K-types relatively preserved the form of the nuclear family apartment, providing space for children and cooking.[335] F-type units housed only spaces for basic individual needs such as sleep, personal hygiene and intellectual activity.[336] It hosted a kitchenette in an alcove, but this was to be easily removed when life was fully collectivized. (Figure 4.6) The residents of the F-type were expected to eat in

[334] Buchli, *op. cit.*, 67.
[335] *Ibid.*, 71.
[336] *Ibid*.

the restaurant of the communal facility (Figures 4.8 and 4.9) which was connected to the block with a gangway, also hosting the library and communal gymnasium. Their children were to grow in the kindergarten near the residential block. However, the K-type units were projected to accommodate children with their parents and allow a family dinner around a table thanks to its kitchen space. Still, a visual and physical connection was intended to be strengthened with the communal facilities.[337] The design of the Narkomfin building principally attempted to boost the connection of the interior with the exterior, aiming to maximize the recognition of the surrounding natural environment and commune in which the inhabitants lived. Several ideas of Stroikom and Narkomfin were to be borrowed by Le Corbusier in his design principles of *Unités d'Habitation*.[338]

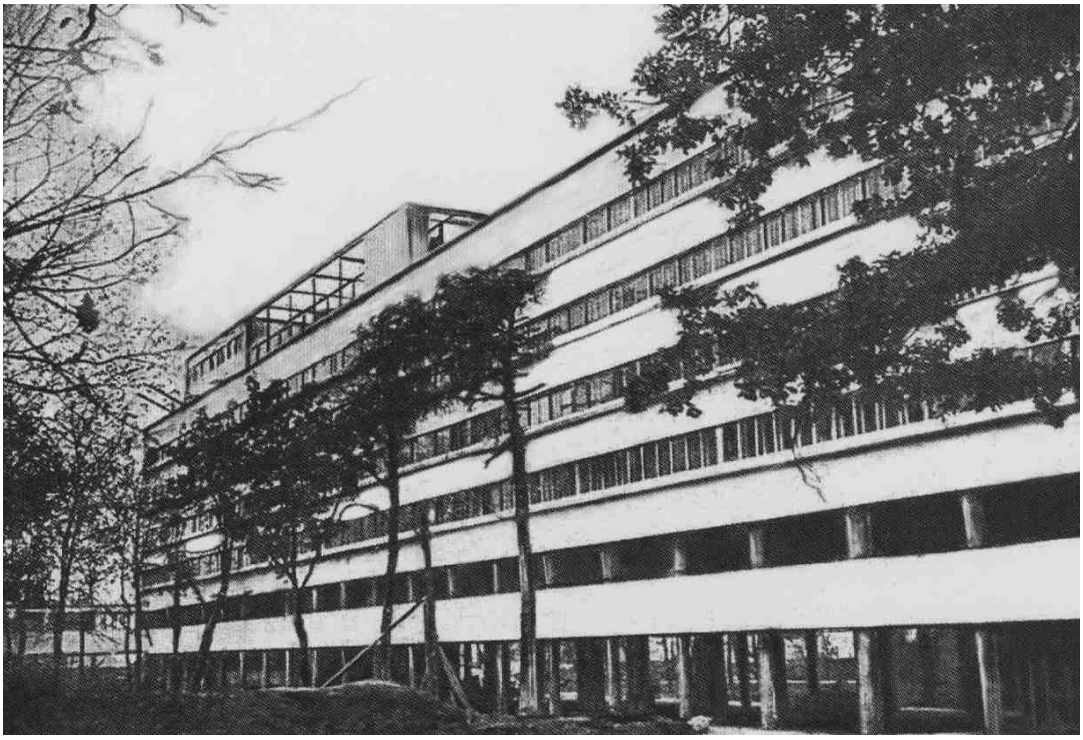


Figure 4.7 Narkomfin Building designed by Ginzburg and Milinis
Source: [data base online] http://www.opendemocracy.net/files/original.jpg [Accessed: 18.05.2017].

[337] *Ibid.*, 73.
[338] Owen Hatherley, *Militant Modernism*, Winchester and Washington: 0 Books, 2008, 55.

However, after the mid-1930s, in particular the K-type units of the Narkomfin building lost their communal status, affected by the great purge.[339] For the most part, the kitchenettes in the F-type apartments were not removed. The ground floor was already occupied shortly after its construction because of the housing shortage.[340] In 1929, when it was already being built, the concept represented by the Narkomfin building began to be regarded as archaic.[341] The transitional space projection and the fully collectivized living ideas were demolished in favor of the K-type and D-type units which preserve the bourgeois way of domestic living.[342] Moreover, after 1929, with the emergence of unease and lack of confidence through everyday life reforms and the disurbanist tendencies' rising into prominence, OSA gradually reduced its focus on communal housing buildings.[343] However, a similar attitude was also inherent in disurbanist proposals in terms of projecting a transitional phase in the process of social transformation. Okhitovich conceived family units which were to be separated into individual rooms in the future phases of social transformation where the children were to be brought up collectively, and the family vanished.[344] Okhitovich's disurbanism frequently suggested mobile, temporary structures spread over the land leaving space for future socio-spatial changes; in this regard, it was compatible with the spatial concept of transition. Differently from the supporters of communal housing in which the individual is frequently surrounded by people, disurbanists were more sensitive to individual space as they proposed individual rooms supported by collective services for everyday necessities.[345]

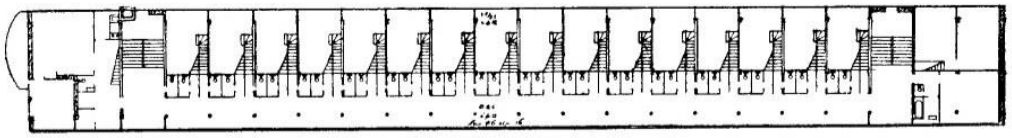
Here, the conception of transitional space was a failed attempt to translate the spatial theory of Constructivism into a material situation. The concept still evokes the temporal conception of architectural Constructivism since it attempted the rigidity of spatial temporality, leaving space for future changes. However, the result was not

[339] Buchli, *op. cit.*, 113.
[340] *Ibid.*
[341] *Ibid.*, 76.
[342] *Ibid*.
[343] Buchli, *op. cit.*, 64.
[344] Khan-Magomedov, *op. cit.*, 392.
[345] *Ibid*.

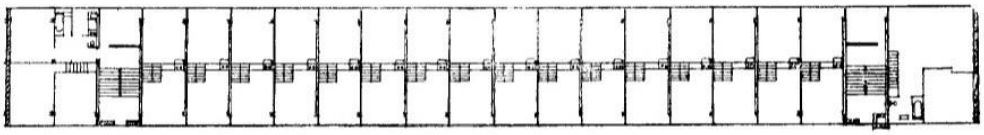
as the architects expected.[346] The projections of Constructivist architects conflicted with the social habits and everyday culture of the inhabitants. For the most part, no transition had existed in terms of abolishment of the nuclear family and communal eating as the most significant proposals of the transition. The transitional concept within the communal housing is a product of a type of Avant-gardism which intends to fulfill a reality through a utopian perspective. In this respect, 'transitional space' is categorized within the programmatic composition. The failure of the 'communal house' arose from the defects in this intention to fulfill the reality through a utopian perspective, relatedly with the conception of temporality. In many cases, their intention to fulfil the "reality" had failed due to the cultural incompatibilities and behavioral patterns of the users as well as the architectural preferences of the Soviet government. However, these experiments were substantial because they had been among the first Modernist challenges to the temporal fixity of the architectural space. These experiments were the attempts to make architecture to constitute its own Modernist temporality having considered the future evolution of an architectural end-product in a social sense.

[346] See, Buchli, *op. cit.*

Figure 4.8 The Narkomfin Building, view from the courtyard showing the bridge between the apartment block and communal facilities.
Source: [data base online]
https://i1.wp.com/rosswolfe.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/pages-from-narkomfin-8.jpg?w=414&h=&crop&ssl=1&zoom=2 [Accessed: 18.05.2017].



Floor **a** with continuous side corridor.



Floor **b**.

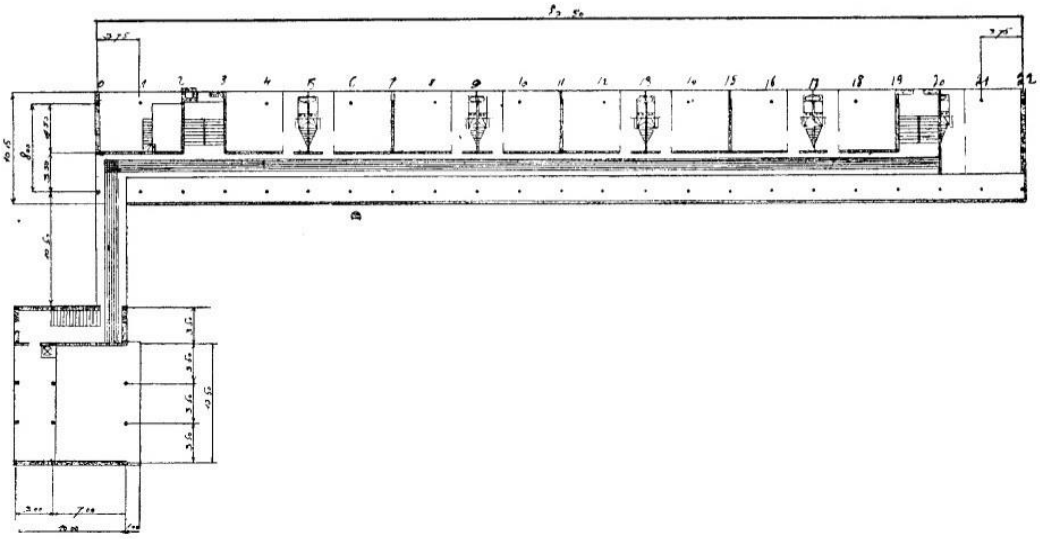


Figure 4.9 Narkomfin Building, floor plans showing the housing units and their spatial connection with the communal service block.
Source: [data base online]
https://i0.wp.com/rosswolfe.files.wordpress.com/2013/10/karel-teige-the-minimum-dwelling.jpg?w=531&h=&crop&ssl=1&zoom=2 [Accessed: 18.05.2017].

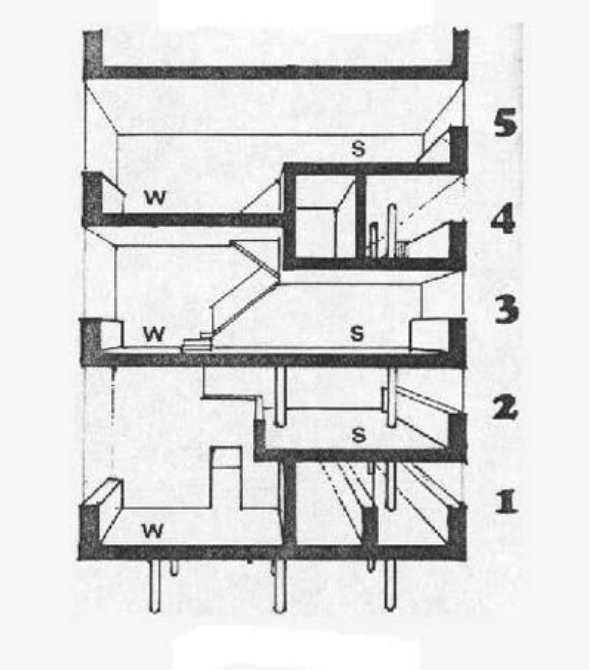


Figure 4.10 Narkomfin Building, section diagram of the housing block, showing the vertical relations of F-type and K-type units.
Source: [data base online] **https://en.wikiarquitectura.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Narkomfin_plantas_seccion.jpg** [Accessed: 18.05.2017].

4.5. Chapter Conclusion

After the mid-1930s, the Soviet Avant-garde was abolished from the architectural and artistic scene in coherence with the officialization of socialist realism as the cultural politics of the Soviet government and the other successive turmoil that the Soviet people experienced such as the great terror and the war against fascism.[347] Their effort has failed particularly due to their contradiction to Bolshevism in terms of temporal conceptualization, as mentioned in the third chapter of this study. However, this temporal contradiction was also reflected at the base level that many of the physically implemented projects of the Soviet Avant-garde had not been popularly affirmed as in the case of the communal houses. This also arose from the

[347] In the 1960s, not Avant-gardism but Modernism as a stylistic manner was to be popular in the USSR.

temporal problem which was conceived by the Bolsheviks as the cultural and industrial backwardness of their country.

In many cases, the rural population who had just moved into the cities to join the labor force of industrial production did not uphold the new life proposed by the Avant-garde, in relevance with their origins of peasantry. They were culturally and psychologically unprepared to live in such spaces, and their behavior patterns conflicted with the Avant-garde spatialization of everyday life.[348] In other words, the Avant-gardes had failed to predict such a spatial experience despite their efforts as such in transitory flats of communal housing. At the same time, the Avant-garde proposals had to encounter the technological capacities of the country. There was a great asymmetry between their imagination and the technological realities. Chernikov drew extraordinarily imaginative structures as "machine architecture" resembling high-tech buildings of the 21st century in an under-industrialized country. Tatlin designed his *Monument for the Third International* in 1919 as a 400-meter high glass-iron structure. El Lissitzky imagined horizontal skyscrapers as early as the 1920s. Perhaps an exception for this was the Gosprom Building, built in Kharkiv, as a skyscraper complex at an extreme scale for its time with a very unique spatial quality and "modern" language. Moreover, Melnikov exceptionally attempted to overcome this dichotomy, by achieving a "modern" language as in the case of his influential design of the Soviet Pavilion, which was built of wood by peasants using the "traditional Russian axe".[349] In spite of their very limited implementation at the physical level, the spatial theorizations of the Soviet Avant-garde –particularly Constructivism – in the realm of architecture and urbanism, presents a considerable amount of insights in terms of their cognitive influence.[350]

Moreover, the Constructivist theory of space may be examined in relation to a Lefebvrian sense in terms of his conception of the 'conceived space,' the 'perceived space' and the 'lived space.' To mention briefly, 'conceived space' referred to a place

[348] Stites, *op. cit.*, 204.
[349] Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 74.
[350] Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 63.

for the practices of social and political power, while 'perceived space' referred to 'the practical basis of the perception of the outside world,' and 'lived space' was crucial for the segments of everyday life to function well at all levels as it depended the direct spatial experiences of people.[351] Lefebvre stressed the absolute and conceived space leading to a certain 'lived space' because they did not signify how people would experience space.[352] Space as a social product would be materialized through a dialectical process of production involving these three fundamental dimensions. The constructivist method of spatial design, particularly its emphasis on the 'process' would present some theoretical perception in a possible case of space production depending on the use value in order to overcome these categories.

As mentioned in this chapter, the insights of the Constructivist design method did not project a rigid spatial temporality in a difference from their Modernist counterparts in Western countries during their time. In fact, it may be suggested that the Modernist spatial zoning practices contradicted their own temporal conception of Modernism because their practices at the same time spatially fixed temporality by precluding the unprojected spontaneous novelties of everyday life. Architectural Constructivism and both the disurbanist and urbanist proposals in the OSA debate of 1929 were the theorizations which endeavored to overcome this problem. The rigid temporality of zoning had been broken down in their proposals of the social condenser in which a dynamic unsteady functionalism was defined. However, the materialization of their ideas was quite disputable as it may be seen in the case of transitional space projections.

351 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991, 222.
352 *Ibid*.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

> Don’t start with the good old things but the bad new ones.
>
> Bertolt Brecht

> Now if you want to look for the roots of a destructive "modernity" – the ideology, say, of technocentrism and ecological degradation – you might start by looking here, not in the Enlightenment but in the project of "improvement," the subordination of all human values to productivity and profit.
>
> Ellen Meiksins Wood

Taking Wood’s point into account, Modernism is not “innocent” in terms of its contribution to ‘the project of “improvement,” the subordination of all human values to productivity and profit’.[353] However, it would be very problematic to “over-criminate” Modernism, coherently with the sense that Wood’s attitude to Modernity. This is probably experienced more intensively in the last decades of the 20th century with the development of post-modern criticism, that the total assimilation of Modernism into the cultural logic of the capitalist mode of production gave way to

[353] Wood, *op. cit.*, “Modernity”, 34.

the loss of intellectual ground for a cultural reaction to capitalist modernity in a sufficiently comprehensive scale as Modernism involved the formative inputs of such a reaction. Indeed, some questions on Modernism can still be asked: Is it still possible to consider some constituents of Modernism as a phenomenon that may function in a positive social change? May Modernist thought still be regarded in a progressive sense? Of course water under the bridge now, however, these questions should still have some kind of currency as Modernism is the first comprehensive response to the still-expanding dynamism in the space-time compression that humanity has been experiencing in the last couple of centuries. Several contemporary issues which are central to today's intellectual milieu were attempted to be responded by the protagonists of Modernism. Among them, the relation of technology with other agents of society, contradictions that arose from social and economic modernization or from rapid urbanization, problems of locality and universality, overcoming diverse fields of alienation, politics of aesthetic realm, etc. somehow still had the traces of Modernism as a formative theoretical basis to contemporary responses to these problems.

The architectural experiences of 20th-Century Modernism and its Avant-garde extent are substantial for the future practices of social architecture as they are the first prevalent modern attempts to incorporate architecture with a progressive social agenda. In this regard, the study avoids displaying an absolute-total conclusion on the characteristics of the relation between Modernism and the capitalist mode of production in terms of whether this relation is positive or negative. Both their negative and positive relations with the capitalist mode of production are historically experienced. Here "the last analysis" is categorically problematic in a Marxist sense as Modernism and the Avant-garde are secondary agents of political history. In this regard, in an evocatively Tafurian sense, architecture has to be modest among the hierarchy of social and political agents. On the other hand in a Marcusian sense, architecture as a "social art" or an aesthetic field of social-programmatic science, might contribute to a progressive social change in its own right. It has a potential in terms of intersecting with a process of a positive social change, but within the entirety with other social agents. The study objects to the characterization of Modernism

without its socially concerned content. However, the study counters the conceptualizations with exaggerated categorical distance between Modernism and the Avant-garde, in the sense that such conceptualizations tend to attribute an extravagant historical-political role to Avant-gardism. In addition, such conceptualizations underestimate the fact that Modernism developed through its relation to Avant-garde radicalism. Modernism is potentially open to be ideologically absorbed by the capitalist mode of production, like any other aesthetic movement. In other words, if Marx has inserted a "class dimension" into Modernity, Modernism also has one.

Digging out architecture's potential on a positive social change for a possible post-capitalist social transformation is also purposeful. As the most significant experiment in this sense, the Soviet Avant-garde's practices and failures may still present stimulating visions for today. It may inform us about how techno-optimism can exist within a social concern as in the case of Russian Futurism. Indeed, the 20th century with its world wars, nuclear weapons, and ecological destruction also displayed an intensive techno-optimism, but in social content. It was surely different from today's technological obsession: Today, technology promises to nullify our biological limits at extreme levels. However, since there is no reason to be optimistic about restrictions of their marketization, they promise a dystopian image of inequality that leaps through our most fundamental natural biological domain. This is paradigmatically far different from the frantic visions of Soviet bio-cosmism, which proposes the resurrecting all the dead of the past in a communist society to erase all past injustices and undo past suffering and destruction.[354] This frantic Modernist-futurist vision has an extremely unique utopianism which searches for dismantling time and shivering of the biological temporality. This utopia is so extensive that it promises to accommodate the unfortunate past generations who are devoid of living in that utopia, in the future, and, itis so egalitarian that it desires to be distributed to all those past dead. In these terms, even it is frequently seen as a short period of

[354] Žižek, Slavoj. *In defense of lost causes*. Verso, 2009, 186. Žižek claims that the great catastroph of Stalinism has saved the "humanity of man", by purging such futurist visions.

exceptional insanity, the futurist techno-optimistic trends in 1920s Soviet Union is far different paradigmatically from the utilitarian spirit of the Cold War space race and today's techno-gnosis. In this regard, not only the Soviet Modernist-Futurism but also all 20th century Modernism deserves interest as the first comprehensive reaction to the massive technological experience of humanity.

How Modernist temporality responds in non-capitalist modern context is a substantial inquiry. The modernist temporal conception was absorbed by capitalist relations of production and mobilized into its market logic and processes of creative destruction in the 20th century. How would, then, Modernist "yearning for true presence" materialize in a non-capitalist modern society? The limited Soviet experience of Modernism does not present a sufficiently prosperous case for such an inquiry, but it may provide some hints to extract more. The hints may be about the mobilization of utopia in a possible post-capitalist social change, the multi-dimensional temporality of revolution, or more peculiarly about the characteristics of artistic practice freed from the art market, the endeavor to integrate art into everyday life in a categorically exclusive way to consumerism, or how an Avant-garde culture may meet with mass movements as in the case of Bogdanov's *Proletkult* involving more than 80,000 active members. In the field of architecture and urbanism, Constructivist and Disurbanist experiments may present clues about the possible potentials and challenges to be faced in a case freed from land speculation. Disurbanist debates would be a considerable point for proposing new visions on the social processes of the inhabitation of nature in relation to today's possibilities of information technologies which downplays the spatial limits. Still, present opposition between urban and rural, having a major influence on both political and cultural scenes of today, would be debated in consideration of Disurbanist spatial approaches. Furthermore, the urban zoning practices that Jane Jacobs questioned with a pro-free-market understanding in her strongly influential book, *The Death and Life of the Great American Cities,*[355] re-examined through the

[355] Jane Jacobs, *The death and life of great American cities*, Vintage, 2016.

conceptions of disurbanism and the social condenser of Soviet Constructivism. The unique temporal projection of these conceptions would be stimulating for the solution of several contemporary urban problems arising from urban-zoning practices. Besides, although it was dismissed by a harsh rapid industrialization, Disurbanism accommodated the urban proposals of some sort of ecologically friendly industrial society.[356] Moreover, although it clashed with Bolshevik temporality, which necessitated a rapid industrialization at all costs to close the gap between developed capitalist countries, the ecologically friendly approaches of disurbanists may provide some insights into the obligatory ecological restoration and eco-friendly industrial society of the future.

The emphasis of architectural Constructivism on the "process" embraces both the architectural design phase and the use phase of the architectural space. In particular, their theoretical tendency to leave margins for future unknowns, potential changes, mobility, and dynamism evoke the current concepts as spatial flexibility, temporariness, mixed-use and zoning. Constructivists perceived architecture as a proactive agent in a social change, but they "knew their place" as they left space for the future evolution of the architectural space. In this sense, their experiments are substantial with regard to the theoretical debates on the pre-determinancy of design processes on architectural space.

Regarding the unique theorizations of space within the Soviet Avant-garde, this study also intends to contribute debates on the possibility of an architectural Avant-garde as architecture is strongly dependent on social relations of production and technology. Svetlana Boym considers the experiments of the Soviet Avant-garde as the practices of an alternative Modernity and mentions a project of critical Modernity.[357] She characterizes the experiments of the architectural Avant-garde as the architecture of the off-modern, which she considers as an 'architecture of

[356] See Buck-Morss, *op. cit.*, 115. Buck-Morss claims that Soviet Union had missed a great opportunity in terms of creating a model for an ecologically sustainable industrialization, by ignoring such propositions of disurbanists.
[357] Svetlana Boym, *Architecture of the Off-modern*. Vol. 2. Princeton Architectural Press, 2008, 4.

adventure' suggesting an 'alternative modernity.'[358] In this sense, the Soviet architectural Avant-garde searched for the Avant-garde logic defined by Bürger, integrating art into life.[359] Although it remained a distance from the artistic Avant-garde, the spatial projection of architectural constructivism, which was based on process and unknowns, and social variables, may be considered as one of the most influential manifestations of Avant-garde sense in the architectural medium, evoking the possibility of an alternative modernity. In this regard, it would be purposeful to re-examine their practices, in relation to the other Avant-garde proposals on architectural space, produced in the 20th century in a wider prospect. Or more particularly, re-evaluation of the practices of *Siedlung* in Weimar Germany comparatively with the Constructivist communal housing experiments may provide insights into the debates on alternative modernity and architectural avant-gardism.

In conclusion, the novel spatio-temporal experiences of today may be better comprehended by social architecture through a re-analysis of failures and achievements of Modernism and the Soviet Avant-garde with regard to their conceptualizations of time and space. Concurrently with the liquidation of the Modernist sense, social architecture has withdrawn to the fragmentary micro-resistance realms, relatedly to the political maelstroms inherited from 20th Century. This withdrawal may transform into counter-hegemony practices in a Gramscian sense; however, in a Modernist sense such modest practices would integrate themselves into a "grander narrative" which embodies and meets the other fields of social movements in an entirety. The experiment of the Soviet Avant-garde shows that on a proper ground, architecture may be a pro-active social agent, but its failure also shows that without a compatibility with other social agents, it does not have the possibility to act as a social subject. In this regard, a re-examination 20th-Century Modernism and the spatial experiments of the Soviet Avant-garde would provide substantial insights into the future of social architecture.

[358] *Ibid*., 6.
[359] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw, Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1984

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