Architecture of Surveillance and Control: The Critical Socio-Political History of Postwar Modernist Architecture and Urban Planning

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Abstract

This paper tries to explore many aspects of Michel Foucault's in an attempt to see if his idea of 'panopticism' is a practical image for understanding power relationships and the evolving technologies of surveillance and society's optical and spatial anxieties in the post-Second-World-Was European world. It focuses on examining the connections between the hidden mechanism of surveillance and control within architecture and design in two systems of governance in post-war European societies: Western European democracy and Eastern European socialism. Despite different political trajectories, these two political systems manifested some shared characteristics with regard to the idea of "modernism" and its essence in the aspect related to transparency. This paper argues that the kind of societal control does not only operate through the wide use of surveillance devices like telescreens or CCTV, but could exist under the guise of innovative modernist architecture and urban planning with the apparent applications of modernist values that reflect liberal, progressive, and reformist endeavors. For this, some interesting remarks, both differences and similarities, can be found between the popularity of modernist architecture of the post-war Western liberal democracy, and the design of modern separated prefabricated apartment blocks in socialist Eastern Europe, both of which applied their own notions of "modernism" to suit their respective societal realms, yet with the same goal of social reconstruction and modernization.

1. Introduction

Within George Orwell's novel Nineteen Eighty-Four (1949), modernity and technology allow for societal control through the creation of fear and paranoia.[1] Everywhere in the imaginary totalitarian state of 'Oceania', both in public or private spheres, a telescreen is constantly hearing and seeing what a citizen is doing on the other end. Covert observation can occur anywhere with the government being able to keep an eye on everyone at once. The party slogan "Big Brother is watching you" conveys the great sense of omnipotence to surveillance.[2] This kind of all-pervading surveillance system is akin to the mechanism within the 'panopticon', a prison model first proposed by utilitarianist Jeremy Bentham in 1791. About two centuries later, Michel Foucault reformulated Bentham's idea into the socio-political notion of 'panopticism' which has become one of many useful tools available in the academic world that can be applied to help understand the hidden power mechanism and ideologies behind different phenomena.[3] This paper tries to explore many aspects of Foucault's theory in an attempt to see if his idea of panopticism is a practical image for understanding power relationships and the evolving technologies of surveillance and society's optical and spatial anxieties in the post-Second-World-War European world. The timeframe of the post-war era is chosen due to the apparent change in the architectural sceneries of many European cities after the end of the Second World War in favor of a modernist design for the mass. The paper aims to explain how his theory of the 'disciplinary society' can be used as a lens to see the political implications behind the modernist interior and architectural design movement as manifested within the background of postwar Western European liberal societies, as well as the pervasiveness of the new type of urban planning and housing development in the Soviet Union during the post-war era.

[1] George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1949).

[2] Ibid., 2.

[3] Michel Foucault, Alan Sheridan (Trans.), *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (London: Allen Lane, 1977).

2. Surveillance and its socio-spatio mechanisms within architectural design

There has been a growing interest in 'the everyday' in spatial disciplines such as geography and architecture, drawing from critical theorist scholars such as Henri Lefebvre and Edward Soja who claim that everyday spaces, such as accommodations and working places are not neutral entities without political implications since they perpetually produce and reflect ideologies within the society.[4] According to this perspective, 'space' is never disconnected from the society that produces it. It reflects the cultural context in which it resides while at the same time giving concrete form to culture, and in a way, being a kind of cultural marker that can be observed and analyzed. A well-known Slovenian philosopher and cultural critic, Slavoj Žižek, has articulated this same idea in his lecture on the topic of 'Architecture and Aesthetics':

> "[Architects have] a great ethical-political responsibility which is grounded in the fact that much more is at stake in architecture than it may appear. (...) When you [architects] are building houses, you are also (...) materializing not only public ideologies, but you go often without knowing, (...) you write there in stones, even more not just public ideologies, but what public ideologies cannot say publicly, the obscene secret as it were. (...) To understand the ideology of the Soviet Union, it was not enough just to read official ideologies. You read official ideologies and then you step out of the door and look at the houses, (...) and the houses tell you [about the really existing ideologies]."
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> (Slavoj Žižek, 2011).[5]

[4] Henri Lefebvre, *The production of space* (Oxford, OX, UK: Blackwell, 1991), 53-54; Edward W. Soja, Thirdspace: *Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1996); Ibid., *Postmodern geographies: the reassertion of space in critical social theory* (London: Verso, 2010).

[5] Slavoj Žižek, "Slavoj Zizek on Architecture and Aesthetics," Published by "Savician" on YouTube: 8 November 2011, URL: www.youtube.com/watch?v=xdbiN3YcuEI (Retrieved 10 July 2020).

In *Discipline and Punish: the birth of the prison* (1977), Michel Foucault (1926-1984), the famous French philosopher associated with the post-structuralist movements, illustrated the dystopian potential of architecture as a mechanism of surveillance and power. Foucault used Bentham's Panoptical structure of Prison as a metaphor for the constant surveillance based on visibility that induces people's self-sanctioning behavioral modification due to anxiety and fear of being judged or punished. This kind of architecture as present in Bentham Panopticon was designed to enforce obedience and make people within this kind of structure govern each other with minimum authoritative interventions.

Figure 1: Jeremy Bentham's concept of "Panopticon" on the model of a prison building

(Source: "Panopticism", 2014)

In the middle of Bentham's model prison 'panopticon' (Figure 1) stands a circular tower which is pieced by windows that allow a supervisor to look (without being seen) into the surrounding prison cells that form a circular structure that houses them. The individual in each cell never knows whether he/she is being watched or not, and therefore assumes that he/she is. In this way, architecture "is no longer built simply to be seen" from the external space, but would also "operate to transform individuals: to act on those it shelters."[6] This model of panopticon has the power to normalize the conduct of people who behave as if they are being constantly watched. Within these spatial settings

[6] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 172.

where a structure embodies watching power, individuals become “caught up in a power situation of which they themselves are made to be the bearers.”[7] The major effect of the panopticon is to induce in the individual a feeling of permanent visibility that ensures the automatic functioning of the silent discipline within a totalitarian regime. Rather than being tricked or coerced to obey, individuals can easily be subconsciously lulled into conformity. Power has then become more hidden as it is “exercised spontaneously and without noise”.[8]

This kind of social engineering is embodied not only in the plan of prison architecture of Bentham’s “Panopticon”, but also extends beyond a discourse of the penal system in many other modern institutions such as asylums, hospitals, schools, and not excluding urban plans and the construction of modern housing estates in which the spatial nesting of hierarchized surveillance could be found. This type of over-pervasive social engineering is diffused and ‘panoptical’ in its nature, exercizing over everyone regardless of social stratification. While apartments and office rooms embody the culture and social dynamics of the residents and workers respectively, their built environment can also communicate with those who stay inside in subconscious manners, buttressing ideological implications that are hidden behind their forms and facades. This view is principally articulated in the architectural theories of surveillance which focus on understanding the physical and spatial nature of surveillance which involves the centralized mechanisms of direct and indirect watching over subjects through urban planning and architecture of housing.[9] This way of dissecting architectural space has been largely influenced by the works of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, and Jacques Lacan, and is echoed by Slavoj Žižek with their common view that ideology, in its most powerful form, is hidden from the view of the person who submits to it. As Žižek puts it: “When we think we escape it, at that point we are within ideology.”[10]

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[7] Ibid., 201.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Maša Galič, Tjerk Timan, “Bentham, Deleuze and Beyond: An Overview of Surveillance Theories from the Panopticon to Participation,” *Philosophy & Technology* 30, no. 1 (March 2017): 9-37.

[10] Sophie Fiennes, James Wilson, Martin Rosenbaum, Katie Holly, *Slavoj Žižek, and Magnus Fiennes, The pervert's guide to ideology* (British Film Institute: Zeitgeist Films, 2014).

3. Relationship Between Architecture and Politics

In many ways, the socio-political changes of post-war Europe can be explained through Foucault's architectural theory of surveillance combining with the notion of interconnectedness between a political system and a type of architecture popularized within the system. Crucially, if we are to link the notion of power and surveillance to politics, we would also see direct connections between architecture and politics, with the former having the effect of influencing the way we conceptualize our society and the political system that is embedded into it. As Mitchell Kapor puts it, "Architecture is politics", with the crucial change in political regimes usually linked to a new kind of architecture that assists and reflects the mechanisms of the new political system.[11] Different political systems in the past, such as the Roman Empire and the Nazi dictatorship used architecture as one of the main tools to symbolize their power and authority and to enforce their ideology. Both Roman and Nazi architecture reflect the notions of grandeur, monumentality and eternity, which are how both regimes wanted to appear. Concerning the period of time under consideration in this paper, namely Europe during the post-war period, one can see how architects and societies after the war began to principally change their architectural concepts. Due to the circumstances of the Second World War and its physical effects on many European cities, the architectural changes across Europe after the end of the Second World War were massive. Both in Western Europe and Eastern Europe, the coming of the new post-war era saw the need for rapid reconstruction after the physical catastrophe of the Second World War together with the rapid technological development driven by the preparation for the war in the past decades, meaning that the wish of left-wing inter-war functionalist avant-garde architects to realize their modernist dream in architecture and design was made reality. Architecture for the mass was no longer mainly about 'the showing of power' like what appeared during the Nazi or Stalin time, but more about a tool to facilitate human activities in different aspects.

[11] Zeni Jardin, *Mitch Kapor: Politics is Architecture, and Architecture is Politics* (April, 2006), URL: https://boingboing.net/2006/04/22/mitch-kapor-politics.html (Accessed 9 May 2020).

4. Modernist-Functionalist architecture and its take-off in the post-war era

Post-war European cities saw apparent similarities, regardless of geographical and political divides between capitalistic-democratic Western Europe and socialist Eastern Europe, in terms of the urban development and architectural design of many new buildings which take the form, aesthetic and essence of the modernist-functionalist style. Modernist-Functional architecture describes an architectural style that is influenced by the social, artistic, and cultural attitude and essence of 'Modernism' which rejects all the historical decorations and ornaments as wasteful and failing to reflect the spirit of the post-industrial age, and of 'Functionalism' which contends that a good design of any object should be determined purely by its function without esthetic considerations.[12] A faith in scientific reason and rationality which is considered part of the progressive trajectory to the Enlightenment underpins the Modernist-Functionalist architecture.

Though taking-off as the popular stylistic choice for the architecture of many new buildings constructed during the post-war years,[13] the ideological and stylistic origins of modernist-functionalist architectural design dated back to the early twentieth-century European-wide modernist-functionalist movement. The moment was led by Swiss architect Le Corbusier who popularized the new 'modernist' architectural style that would fit the new machine age, while at the same time, help solve the housing shortage which, in itself, reflected one early symptom of the 'crisis of modernity'.[14] The utilitarian intent

[12] Decoration and ornament are usually seen within the architectural styles that have the origins that predated modernism such as the Baroque, Renaissance, Gothic, Classical, and Neo-classical style. These styles were considered by the left-wing avantgarde as associated with the notions such as primitiveness, eroticism and uselessness. See Jimena Canales, and Andrew Herscher, 'Criminal Skins: Tattoos and Modern Architecture in the Work of Adolf Loos.' *Architectural History* (University of Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2005), 235-256.

[13] This was against the background of physical reconstruction of cities and buildings wrecked by the war as well as the post-war population boom around the first decade of post-war years which necessitated the construction of more dwellings.

[14] The term 'crisis of modernity' was coined by Edmund Husserl who referred to the crisis of the European humanity (and scientific rationality), questioning the benefits of the Enlightenment which is often termed 'modernity' and linked to the second Industrial Revolution. See Edmund Husserl. *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*. Translated by D. Carr. (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1977).

was as strong as the symbolism of modernism. The modernist style was largely supported by many left-wing avantgarde architects such as Karel Teige in Czechoslovakia who incorporated Marxist sociology into his modernist architectural designs that endorsed a uniform and egalitarian lifestyle for all.[15] All modernist-functionalist dwellings were supposed to be not only esthetically equal but also equal in their functions. Empty space works like a blank canvas where users are invited to reinterpret the space. Modernist architectural designs with an emphasis on spatial continuity blurring the distinction between the exterior (public) and interior (private). The white color of walls of modernist buildings helps make things stand out, reflecting the notion of clarity with "everything stands out from it and is recorded clearly".[16] Deceptive facades must be stripped off to reveal the naked industrial materials. This can be achieved with the use of glass walls to reveal the supporting structure inside the building such as steel and cement which reflect the sense of durability, strength and honesty. Modernist architecture is dominated by the idea of transparency and absolute publicity with everything made visible to an anonymous collective gaze.

The early post-war years saw ripe conditions for the flourish of modernist-functionalist architectural design around Europe: the need for quick (and cheap) physical reconstruction that allowed architects to experiment with innovative technologies, the demand for new dwellings for the post-war baby boomer population, the popularity of the assembly-line techniques (advanced before and during the war in shipbuilding and aircraft production) that enabled speedy 'prefabrication construction' widely used in the construction of large-scale buildings that symbolized welfare, standardization, economies of scale, and the advanced technology of the modern age. Moreover, in Germany, Hitler's stigmatization of modern art indirectly caused the boom in modernist designs after his death in 1945, with many commissioners of German museums during the post-war years atoning the guilt of their country's past by embracing modernist designs labeled

[15] Teige, Karel, Eric Dluhosch (trans.). *the minimum dwelling* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: The MIT Press, 2002).

[16] Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today*, trans. James I. Dunnett, (London: Architectural Press, 1987), 190.

as 'degenerate art' during Nazism.[17] The promotion of modernism in post-war years became associated with the process of 'self-denazification' of the German society as well as the general denunciation against the legacy of the Nazi culture in the realm of art and architecture. In the Soviet sphere, Stalin's death in 1953 prompted a reaction from Khrushchev who proclaimed his repudiation of Stalin's cult of personality together with the former Eastern Bloc historical and decorative architecture known as 'Stalinist style', an antithesis of the modernist-functionalist style at the time.[18] These factors created ripe conditions for modernist architecture to flourish in real world practice from the early post-war years onwards.

5. Post-war Europe and the Psychology of Surveillance

The post-war growth of the modern state and the rise of capitalism significantly contributed to the heightening of surveillance. Within the context of the Cold War, fears and anxieties of nuclear confrontation and the sense of secrecy, meant, as Ian Brookes argues, that the culture of surveillance was intensified and "absorbed into the culture of everyday life."[19] Psychology, both as an academic discipline and professional field, became prevalent in the 1950s after years of fighting, death and separation in the 1940s and was increasingly applied to improve human welfare. Abraham Maslow argued that psychologists in the 1950s were uncritically focused on flaws and weaknesses with the great drive to 'correct' or 'alter' individual's outlooks in order to bring them in line with

[17] See Olaf Peters. *Degenerate Art: The Attack on Modern Art in Nazi Germany 1937* (Prestel Publishing, 2014); Barbara Lane. *Architecture and Politics in Germany, 1918-1945* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985); Jeffrey Herf. 'Reactionary Modernism Reconsidered: Modernity, the West and the Nazis' in Zeev Sternhell, *The Intellectual Revolt against Liberal Democracy, 1970-1945* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1996), pp. 131-158.

[18] Nikita Khrushchev, 'Industrialised Building Speech' (7 December 1954), Retrieved from: volumeproject.org/industrialised-building-speech-1954/ (uploaded 1 March 2009).

[19] Ian Brookes, "The Eye of Power: Postwar Fordism and the Panoptic Corporation," in 'The Apartment'. *Journal of Popular Film and Television* 37, no. 4 (2009): 150-160.

the norm as well as to prevent them from what was considered wrongdoings.[20] More than ever before, people were being measured and ranked according to their states of mind. In line with Foucault's argument on the change in the nature of punishment through history, the war crimes trials imposed by the allies on the ex-Nazis and their collaborators in the immediate post-war years were arranged not so much as to punish or to take revenge on the body of the convicted, but more as a kind of psychological laboratory, as a mental examination as much as a judicial proceeding. The ultimate purpose of the trial was, as Foucault wrote, "to assess the soul of the offender", "to supervise the individual, to neutralize his dangerous state of mind, to alter his criminal tendencies."[21] Psychoanalysis was broadly accepted as the best tool to provide the answers to 'cure' the ex-perpetrators' minds, helping to differentiate the normal from the pathological ones. From the beginning of the post-war years, psychology infiltrated in many areas of life, including within the interior design and architectural sphere. Modernist architectural movements flourished against the background of the post-war social democratic environment in Western Europe and socialism in Eastern Europe, both of which promoted egalitarianism. The following sections demonstrate the application of Foucault's notion of panopticism to look at the relationships between politics and surveillance in everyday life in the realm of post-war European architecture.

5.1 Modernist Architecture and Western European Social-Democracy

The need for rapid reconstruction after the physical catastrophe caused by the Second World War was ubiquitous. This was against the background of the popularity of Fordist productive mode of growth which encouraged standardization which fitted well with the post-war capitalistic climate that yearned for speedy economic recovery and growth. A new type of working environment that resembled an industrial assembly-line in blue-collar factories, though in a new guise, became popular in Western Europe from the 1950s onwards. Within this new working environment, all the employees are encouraged to work together in one open floor to increase communication, production,

[20] Abraham H. Maslow, *The psychology of science: a reconnaissance* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

[21] Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 18-19.

and teamwork. Driven by the popular application of psychology to everyday life, designers and architects proposed a new office planning idea originating in Germany. The so-called 'Office Landscape' (Bürolandschaft), a partition-free office environment, helped enhance the flow of information, a sense of sociability as well as community through an expansive space.[22] This promoted a ritual in which people unitedly worked together without the appearance of hiding or secrecy. The notion of architectural transparency became dominant, with the popularized modernist notion of "a transparency of building materials, spatial penetration, and the ubiquitous flow of air, light and physical movement."[23] The widespread use of glass promised a social change through new building techniques and materials which internalize and reflect the rationalization and the progress of modernity revolving around the myth of transparency.[24]

This spatial organization of the personnel in 'Office Landscape' and the glass façade of the modernist buildings, though seeming to reflect the sense of freedom and sincerity through transparency, have some aspects that resemble the model of surveillance and control similar to Bentham's Panoptical prison layout. In this state of conscious visibility, individuals feel like they are being constantly observed, inspected and supervised. Management was no longer cosseted in executive suites. Each person in the open-plan office and modernist buildings with glass windows was rendered in a condition of continuous visibility, which, in turn, affected their working behavior and levels of productivity. This results in the creation of what Foucault called "docile bodies", the productive and obedient individuals who are easily and successfully adapted to the demands of the capitalistic post-industrial societies.

[22] George Musser, *The Origin of Cubicles and the Open-Plan Office* (17 August 2009), URL: https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-origin-of-cubicles-an/.

[23] Anthony Vidler, *The architectural uncanny: essays in the modern unhomely* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 217-218.

[24] Henriette Steiner, Kristin Veel, *Living Behind Glass Facades: Surveillance Culture and New Architecture. Surveillance & Society* 9, no.1-2 (2011): 215-232.

Figure 2: Osram Bürolandschaft (1950s) in Munich, the Federal Republic of Germany

(Source: URL: www.henn.com/en/projects/office/osram-headquarters)

Figure 3: Oxford House (1950s) in London, Britain

(Source: URL: www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/third-major-developer-posts-big-loss-following-property-revaluation/10014880.article)

In many ways, both the take-off of the open office space and modernist architecture can be understood as part of the wider socio-economic and political trend of post-war Western Europe. Foucault himself claimed that Panopticon was actually "the very formula of liberal government", seeing the effects of disciplinary power not as prohibitive, but

instead, productive and diffuse.[25] By looking at the long history of the notion of transparency in modern architecture, transparency has largely been seen as a positive and uplifting concept associated with the ideas of equality, openness, and contact with nature.[26] In congruence with this, far from conveying the message that this kind of power restricts freedom, this new model of open office was made to appear as having a role in empowering the employees who would have full capacity to act and express their thoughts freely within a free-flowing spatial office layout. The post-war liberal government was made to be perceived by the citizens as transparent for everyone to check its activities, epitomizing the vision of democracy which is fundamentally open, participatory, and decentralized. In return, the citizens were then expected to be transparent for the state to check their activities, to be subjected to the constant gaze by the state bureaucracy which collected their information as sources of its power. In this sense, the post-war liberal preoccupation with freedom and transparency played a big role in assisting the mechanism of disciplinary power, which was then being diffused into the aspects of everyday life, as can be seen in the new way office space was broadly organized and how the idea of modernist physical and optical transparency became prevalent in post-war Western European architecture.

5.2 Modernist-Functionalist Dwellings and Socialist Ideology

'Modernism' and 'socialism' are typically positioned as opposing one another, with the former popularly assigned to liberal capitalist democratic countries according to the Cold War binary rhetoric. The term 'socialist modernism' breaks away from this way of thought, connecting modernist cultural products directly with socialist values. In this sense, surveillance mechanisms were not limited to postwar Western Europe, but also inside the Soviet socialist bloc, with post-Stalinist socialist ideologues eagerly utilizing modernist values to make innovative social changes in the name of socialist modernization.

Taken from architectural and environmental psychology, Stephen Bittner argues that the configuration of cities was the strongest factor for organizing the psyche of the

[25] Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-79* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008), 67.

[26] Colin Rowe, Robert Slutzky, *Transparency* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1997).

masses.[27] The comprehensive urban reform of '*byt'* (everyday life) was mirrored in the post-war Eastern European housing construction campaign which shared the Western modernist norms of rational living and transparent function, form and appearance. By taking an example from inside the Soviet Union, after 1954, a greater degree of familial privacy was given to people when Khrushchev commissioned the large-scale urban and suburban development scheme that, in the 1950s, transferred millions of people from communal apartments to newly built separate apartments within prefabricated dwelling blocks.[28] In connection with the de-Stalinization process, the architects of these housing estates subsequently eschewed decorative details that used to be popular during the Stalinist regime, and instead, reinforced an architectural aesthetic that reflected simplicity and lightness.[29] This, however, was seen by Christine Varga-Harris and Victor Buchli as not a real liberalization of attitudes towards the domestic realm, but a tacit promotion of omnipresent surveillance that affected residents' daily lives in a more totalitarian way.[30] As the uniformity in house form could homogenize domestic settings as well as domestic behaviors and values, the postwar Soviet houses or 'Khrushchyovki', with uniformity of material structure, worked as "an instrument of regimentation of life."[31]

[27] Stephen Bittner, "Green Cities and Orderly Streets. Space and Culture in Moscow, 1928-1933," in *Journal of Urban History* 25, no. 1 (November 1998): 24.

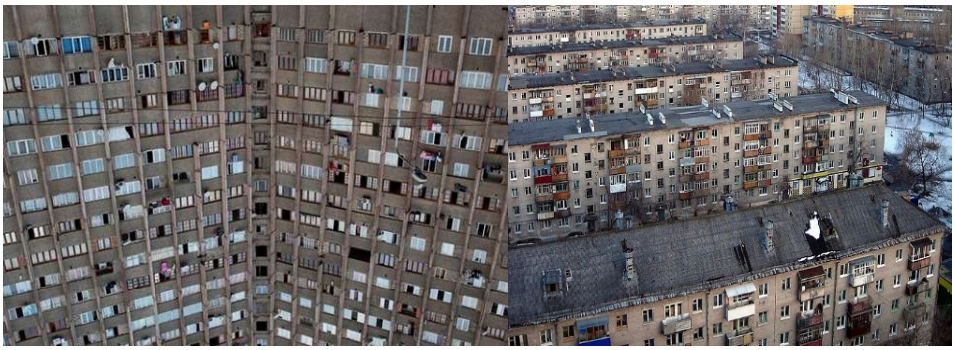
[28] Christine *Varga-Harris, Stories of house and home: Soviet apartment life during the Khrushchev years* (London: Cornell University Press, 2015).

[29] Catherine Cooke, 'Beauty as a Route to "the Radiant Future": Responses to Soviet Architecture'. *Journal of Design History* 10, no. 2 (1997): 137-60.

[30] Varga-Harris, *Stories of house and home* (2015); Victor Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism* (Oxford: Berg, 1999).

[31] Lewis Siegelbaum, *Borders of Socialism: Private Spheres of Soviet Russia* (New York: Pelgrave Macmillan, 2006), 156.

Figure 4: '*Khrushchyovki*' apartments



(Source: 'Russian Khrushchyovka', URL: uk.pinterest.com/pin/350858627202364720/;'Khrushchyovka. Let's build some soviet cities!', URL: www.sas1946.com/main/index.php?topic=41786.0)

In many of the satellite states of the Soviet Union such as Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, and Poland, extensive construction of apartment buildings of similar type could also be seen. Large scale housing estates became the most visible architectural and urban legacy of the old regime. Unlike the housing estates constructed in the post-war years in Western Europe which emerged alongside the Welfare State, these Eastern European estates were much larger in size and were mostly built on blank green fields separated from the already existing urban areas and were expected to become independently functioning cities that would work like a well-oiled machine that could run smoothly on its own. Monotonous, greyish, homogeneous, poorly constructed, and over-scaled, these are the notable negative characteristics of the large-scale high-rise multi-story blocks of flats constructed of prefabricated concrete panels which reduced construction time and costs. A retreat from public engagement among the greater part of citizens was one of the effects of this sub-urban mass housing development. In Czechoslovakia, for instance, the peak of the construction of large-scale housing estates in main cities occurred at the same time when the phenomenon of 'chata mania' or the peak of the purchases of private cottages in the small villages for city-people's weekend getaways. Paulina Bren relates this chata-mania phenomenon to the city people's trauma which made them *en mass* decide to "escape" into the countryside away from

the city.[32] In East Germany, especially East Berlin, the architectures and planners of the housing estates incorporated the surveillance mechanisms into the building plans, as to assist the works of the East German state security '*Stasi*' which ballooned in size (one secret police to every 180 citizens) and scope as the magnitude of mass housing construction grew.[33] Being state-owned, these apartment buildings could be easily infiltrated by the state which provided the secret agents with the manual which contained a detailed map of the whole settlement. The postwar settlements were constructed with a great deal of open space between buildings with high rise towers in the middle of open spaces where the Stasi sought to establish control. Most of the buildings only had 2 entrances, offering a clear view of who came in and out. With each apartment block being placed together parallelly like solitaire, almost all residents had at least a view of one side of the opposite building, making everyone seem to have a panopticon-like view of the surroundings (Figure 7). According to Edward Cohn's study of postwar Soviet Union, the Communist Party within the Soviet bloc from the mid-1950s were "less repressive, but more intrusive" with the focus of the party on everyday life, and less on the explicit suppression of thoughts and the inculcation of ideological beliefs in line with communist ideals.[34] It is evident that the number of those who were purged dropped dramatically in the 1950s due to the replacement of the purge with the system of reprimand.[35] This view aligns with Foucault's idea that, in modern times, there was a drift from an overt brutal physical punishment and purge to a more efficient humanitarian punishment and implicit social control. In their studies of the Soviet power, Stephen Kotkin and Oleg Kharkhordin developed the similar point of view regarding the seemingly more intrusive control and surveillance within the context of everyday life during the

[32] Paulina Bren, 'Weekend Getaways: The Chata, the Tramp, and the Politics of the Private Life in the Post-1968 Czechoslovakia'. in David Crowley, and Susan E. Reid (eds.), *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2002).

[33] Eli Rubin, *Amnesiopolis: Modernity, Space, and Memory in East Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 131-151.

[34] Edward Cohn, 'Disciplining the Party: The expulsion and Censure of Communists'. in *the Post-War Soviet Union, 1945-1961* (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2007).

[35] Ibid., 62.

post-war era.[36] With the repudiation of Stalin's personality cult and the associated repressive style of rule from the early 1950s, both scholars argue that a new model of more extensive social control was put in place in which collective organizations, such as the party and comrades' courts, encouraged citizens to discipline each other through mutual surveillance.[37] For Kharkhordin, though with the opposite intention, this move to a less visible exertion of power paradoxically reflected the achievement of the Stalinist goal, "a fine-tuned and balanced system of total surveillance."[38]

Figure 5: Montparnasse, Andreas Gursky - in East Germany

(Source: URL: creativepool.com/files/Magazine/images/article/170394%211438257996%21full.jpg; Yugo Zapadnaya district in Moscow, URL: expatriantotchka.blogspot.co.uk/2013/03/soviet-blocks-of-flats.html)

[36] Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press 1995); Oleg Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia: A Study of Practices* (Berkeley: the University of California Press, 1999).

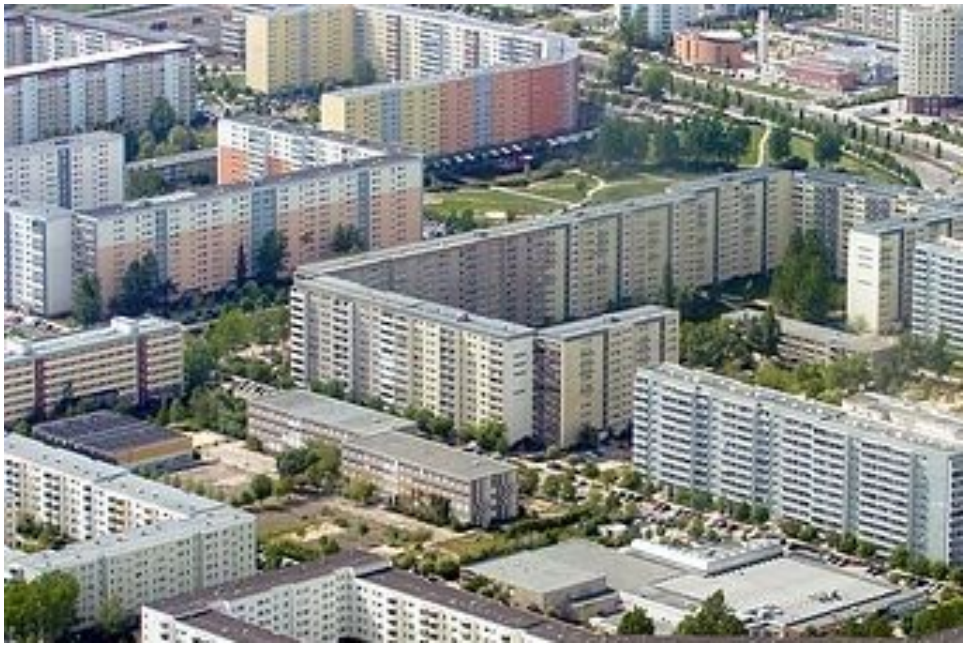
[37] Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain* (1995).

[38] Kharkhordin, *The Collective and the Individual in Russia*, 300.

Figure 6: Petrzalka in Bratislava

(URL: https://depositphotos.com/143929523/stock-photo-concrete-jungle-petrzalka-in-bratislava.html; https://www.auto.sk/zivot-vodica/parkovanie-petrzalka-vsetko-co-potrebujete-vediet-o-novom-systeme)

Figure 7: Marzahn - Plattenbau in East Germany



(Source: URL: https://www.pinterest.de/pin/241224123766058337/

In the Soviet bloc countries, the Soviet power after the Khrushchev era concentrated less on the traditional state organs, and more citizens' behavior, with the nonconformists being threatened in a much stronger and intrusive nature. By mobilizing the public from below, nonconformists would be punished, not by the communist state organs, but by their neighbours or those who knew them best. This societal and peer pressure would then reshape and normalize their behaviors through persuasion and fear of being negatively judged. In this manner, the individual's desire to have a better life or to be successful in their careers constituted a more effective impetus to the compliance with the state than the actual punishments or purges. These mechanisms characterize a well-developed surveillance system relevant to the concept of hierarchical observation articulated by Foucault, which raises the capacity to identify any breach of rule deserving sanction at a distance while, at the same time, decreasing the likelihood of the necessity of the actual punishment. Within the new post-war living environment within the large-scale housing estates like that of 'Khrushchyovki', though without any CCTV, this kind of spatial operation within the residential realm served to heighten the level of conformity. This optical effect operated without noise, in the background of a more visible and apparent social surveillance through the work of the security agents and informers who were also greatly assisted by the surveillance potential within the architecture of the socialist settlements. In other words, with the configuration of socialist housing estates, power became centered less in the traditional organs of the state, but more on the behaviors of the citizens who were made to govern themselves through hierarchical observation made effortless inside the spatial settings in the form of large-scale housing estates.

Importantly, there are some downsides to the application of Foucault's theorization when trying to make sense of the power relations and post-war European culture. From the perspective of those adopting the Marxist viewpoint, scholarly critique from Edward Cohn and Andrew Fleming point out the abstract nature of Foucault's conception of power which is seen not so useful as a stimulus for positive social changes in contemporary societies.[39] By viewing power as independent of the person who exercises it, and an

[39] Cohn, "Disciplining the Party" (2007); Andrew Fleming, *The Discipline of Freedom Foucault, Neo-liberal Governmentality and Resistance* (ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2014).

inescapable and all-pervasive disciplinary grid naturally diffused among all citizens within the modern society, limits the potentials for people to ask and struggle for changes from below as the dividing line that separates the oppressor and the oppressed is eliminated. This perspective would give an even more dire situation of society when coupled with the argument made by Herbert Marcuse in *One-Dimensional Man* (1964) about the tendency, in contemporary society, of the oppressed to be siding with the oppressors.[40] According to Marcuse, each worker in one-dimensional society (advanced industrial society) is made to feel content and free as they are provided with liberties, comforts, and satisfactions. In reality, though, they are still what he called "sublimated slaves" that "exist as instrument," in other words, a cog in the machine that exist mainly to fulfil the aims that would unfairly benefit more those with power in hands.[41] The way of looking at history through the lens of surveillance and control can either give a too dark and pessimistic view about our society, or produce an antagonistic reaction from those who find themselves to be under its mechanism. In many ways, it could be argued that it is too superficial to apply the theory of surveillance on architecture and design. We must also take into consideration that the progress of modernization and social transformation was not uniform throughout broad geographical spaces of Europe, making this application of Foucault's theory limited only to the understanding of the power-relations existing in urbanized areas. Also, though the post-war housing estates in Russia looked grim and uniform from the outside, the people within them were vibrant and full of stories if we zoomed in to look at their everyday lives from other perspectives. A transnational perspective and cross-sectional perspective, therefore, are needed in order to better understand the phenomena objectively.

All in all, this paper has demonstrated that long since the beginning of the postwar era, architecture and interior design in Europe were largely aligned with and implicated in the systems of surveillance and control exercised through their openness and simplicity. By looking through Foucault's lens of panopticism, the take-off of modernist buildings and interior designs and the construction of new apartments in Eastern Europe

[40] Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man, Studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society* (New York: Routledge, 1991).

[41] Ibid., 36.

during the postwar era became not only the building sites of the modern and communist way of life but also a means of hidden social engineering where the citizens were "caught up in a power situation of which they themselves are made to be the bearers."[42] In this way, European societies in the postwar era can be perceived as not so disciplined, but disciplinary, or as a kind of "societies of control" as explained by Deleuze. In the Western European sphere, it seemed that the surveillance mechanisms within architecture appeared as a tool for driving capitalist growth and productivity as well as the democratic culture of transparency and openness. In the Eastern European world, they worked more as a tool to contain oppositions, inducing a greater sense of paranoia and secrecy. Although this paper only discusses the history of surveillance mechanism within interior design, architecture, and urban planning in post-war Europe, it is clear that the esthetics of surveillance in our globalized world today manifests itself in a similar nature, but much more subtle and overt. Glass windows and open office space are still a norm today. Large scale housing estates with a functionalist design are still being constructed, borrowing the spatial planning from that of the post-war era with a modernist style that seems to be timeless and still answering much to the familiar problem of overpopulation and overurbanization. Spatial surveillance methods have now been updated to become that of no-fixed-space digital surveillance through social media, E-commerce and data-gathering in exchange for entertainment and services available on individual mobile devices. Paradoxically, it seems that surveillance usually occurs where autonomy and privacy are sought. The Geo-political power of nation-states is also buttressed by surveillance, with architecture and design functioning as an armature to the systems of security and defense in order to protect national sovereignty. We are now more than ever before being categorized through digital social sorting, being targeted by advertisers who bombard us with advertisements of the products they know that we might be interested in according to our shared personal details. Surveillance is now more prevalent, boundaryless, automated and digitized. It has become a routine. The disciplinary codes of conduct are out in the open for everyone to see, yet its power seem less suspicious and less sinister than ever before.

[42] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 201.

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