

**Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana** 

Iulia Stătică

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*Edited by Aga Skrodzka, Xiaoning Lu, and Katarzyna Marciniak*

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## **Abstract and Keywords**

This article discusses the role of domestic infrastructure in the constitution of subjectivities through the concrete examples of two socialist cities: Bucharest and Havana. This comparative study investigates the manner in which socialist ideological intentions materialized explicitly and in nuanced ways through the physical transformation of domestic space. The domestic revolution initiated by Khrushchev is interpreted as a narrative that both cities share, generating—through the implementation of state socialism—a common archaeology of the politics of domesticity that goes back to the programs of the 1920s Russian avant-gardes. The article proposes that this manifold archaeology of domesticity reveals that the political agenda, manifested in both contexts as an aesthetic project, entered the sphere of private life, transforming the home into a vehicle through which the body was politically shaped.

Keywords: domesticity, Bucharest, Havana, body, subjectivity, aesthetics, communism, housing, prefabrication

Nikita Khrushchev's speech, given in 1954 at the National Conference of Builders, Architects, and Workers in the Construction Materials, marked the road to the reformation of the Soviet Union and the countries within its sphere of influence.<sup>1</sup> His set of reforms, commonly known as the "Thaw," culminated in the endeavor that introduced the industrialization of construction, transforming domesticity and homemaking into mass practices controlled by the state. Khrushchev's ambitious housing program aimed to build 15 million apartments in order to provide every family with their own home.<sup>2</sup> Promoting the slogan "Build quickly, cheaply, and well," the paternalist state intended to use these standardized apartments as vehicles to shape the socialist society and to accommodate all types of families. Housing provision was envisioned as the right of all citizens, and simultaneously as a means to emancipate women by transferring household duties to socialized facilities such as kitchens, childcare centers, and laundries. Proposing a return to the ideas of the 1920s avant-gardes, Khrushchev's 1954 speech emphasized the role of the industrialization and rationalization of production, the home, and the body in the pursuit of

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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mass modernization. The new type of construction—the *khrushchevka*—became the emblem of Khrushchev’s technological drive, extending well outside of the Soviet Union. The Central Research Institute for the Experimental Planning of Housing in Moscow disseminated the technologies for the prefabricated panel factories to numerous Soviet cities and, simultaneously, to “nations such as Yugoslavia, Romania, Hungary, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Iran, Vietnam, Cuba, and Chile.”<sup>3</sup>

This chapter interprets the domestic revolution initiated by Khrushchev as a narrative that both Bucharest and Havana share, tracing a common archaeology of the politics of domesticity through the implementation of state socialism. The communist state’s desire to establish a new ideology through the convergence of productive and domestic life by means of industrialization resulted in an ontological transformation that connected ideology, domestic infrastructure, and the subjective body. This chapter asserts that the formation of the subjective body is rooted in the experience of the space—here, of domestic architecture—and is itself subject to transformation in its interaction with the governmental technologies that are embedded in the infrastructural project.<sup>4</sup> The notion of *domestic infrastructure* discussed here refers to the mass-produced housing units and the consequent domestic standardization that the communist state imposed in Romania from the 1950s through the 1980s and in Cuba from the 1960s through the 1980s. The main question guiding my inquiry is: how were aesthetic and technological processes of domesticity embedded in the rhetoric of the transformed everyday life, which paired the modern home with a modern body that was able to rationally respond to the ideological framework? Focusing on the cases of Bucharest and Havana, I argue that domestic infrastructure was the aesthetic and technological vehicle through which the body became politically inscribed and shaped. Further, I place the questions of women and family at the center of this inquiry.

Early ideals supported by the Russian avant-gardes such as the emancipation of women through the communalization of private life, household chores, and childrearing were rescued in the Khrushchev era by means of the totalizing role of the state. The dwelling cell—the apartment made from prefabricated panels—paralleled the rehabilitation of the nuclear family as foundational unit of socialist society, while the emancipation of women was to be accomplished through technology.<sup>5</sup> In the envisioned scenario, women’s housework would be eased by the modern amenities (running water, electricity, and sewers), equipment (their own bathroom and kitchen), and décor (functional standardized furniture) that the apartments offered, while women’s role as active, productive citizens would be highly encouraged. The new socialist feminine ideal arose from the unique mediation between the new domestic infrastructures and the government’s intention to transform women into both political subjects as well as productive and reproductive bodies.

Understanding the total project of domesticity initiated in the 1950s as built on the legacy of the programs of the Russian avant-gardes,<sup>6</sup> I interpret the political formation of the body as an infrastructural and cognitive process articulated at the “hearth” of the home. I further draw attention to the fact that these material and ontological transformations were exported in various forms outside of the USSR, and I explore the processes through

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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which this ideological colonization was achieved in both Bucharest and Havana. Supported by an extensive propaganda campaign, the industrialization of housing, standardization of design, and specific legal framework, combined with the strong rhetoric of labor in both cities provided the vehicles to control the private life and to create new patterns of socialization, interaction, and production.

### Ideology as Infrastructure

Employed as early as 1940 by Max Gluckman to talk about how spatial patterns can mediate power relations between the indigenous population and the colonizer,<sup>7</sup> the notion of infrastructure has maintained its relevance to the discussion of spatio-political agendas. In recent years, this notion has primarily been considered in the encounter between the science and technology studies and anthropology, in an attempt to understand the processes of materialization and their effect on subjects (and vice versa).<sup>8</sup> The articulation of infrastructure in cultural anthropology as “ontological experiments” has brought forward the question of the cultural and political assumptions that are embedded in those experiments’ design, as well as the social aftermath of their use.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the emergence of the notion of *infrastructural violence* has illuminated the ways in which physical infrastructures become mechanisms of inclusion or exclusion, negotiating the interaction between inequality and marginalization.<sup>10</sup> In this way, the materiality of the city—through its buildings, walls, streets, and so on—becomes an instrumental medium that reinforces certain social orders, and plays a key role in shaping certain biased hierarchies and practices.

In the anthropology of socialism, the use of the notion of infrastructure refers primarily to the architecture and artifacts that shape social relations and urban praxes, in line with the political ontology of Marxism.<sup>11</sup> As anthropologist Caroline Humphrey suggests with reference to the Soviet Union, while it was essential to the social formation, infrastructure was often taken for granted and subordinated to the essential process of production.<sup>12</sup> The provision of infrastructure as an ongoing and guaranteed service of the paternalist state was thus transformed into a subtle process not only for fulfilling citizens’ basic needs, but, more importantly, for, “orchestrating” their lives through state planning.<sup>13</sup> In what follows I argue that, in the cases of both Bucharest and Havana, the question of infrastructure is fundamental insofar as politics intervened not only in the production of infrastructure, but also in its functioning in relation to the subjects that inhabit it.<sup>14</sup> Infrastructural modernization not only became synonymous with the socialist state itself, but it was also critical in the articulation of the social development and therefore of the people within. The industrialization of domesticity transformed these socialist infrastructures into mediators between the ideological intent and the transformation of human subjectivities—that is, people’s embodied experience of the built environment.

My choice to juxtapose these two different contexts—Romania and Cuba—is part of an attempt to understand how Soviet instruments of ideological influence were translated in countries that were not part of the USSR, but that were under its influence, appropriat-

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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ing both ideological programs and technological support. In bringing these two contexts together, I establish that the material transformation of the domestic space constituted the primary ground of ideological colonization. Along with the collective vision of housing as an instrument of social formation, both contexts share many features: Soviet-type prefabrication, industrialization of housing, transformation of the domestic space, and penetration of the state into the private realm. Nevertheless, despite the decisive Soviet influence in terms of the ideological and technological imports, these two countries were peculiar in their ability to construct specific national discourses. In Romania this attitude emerged after the coming to power in 1965 of Nicolae Ceaușescu who was praised at the time by the Western world for his refusal to take part in the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by the Warsaw Pact forces. Marking a certain detachment from the Soviet power, this episode ensured an open road toward the creation of a “local” socialist discourse. The geographic detachment from the Soviet Union, and the strategic position due to its embeddedness in the US political and economic model as a function of distinct geopolitical agendas of the latter in the region before the 1959 Revolution, makes Cuba’s situation equally significant. What is particular about these two national versions of socialism is that both, in distinct ways, made the use of the body explicit in the shaping of socialist politics and imaginaries.

In Cuba, the institution of the *microbrigades* marked the emergence of a rhetoric in which the body had to be physically formed by the revolution, heralding the importance of a corporeal becoming of socialism. Initiated by Fidel Castro in his annual July 26 speech in 1970, the microbrigades were defined as worker collectives responsible for the construction and distribution of housing units for themselves and their colleagues. The microbrigades model in Cuba represented a unique case of the way in which the state used the rhetoric of bodily labor to support the process that anthropologist Martin Holbraad calls *infrastruction*—whereby the construction of the socialist housing districts becomes a necessary process of self-construction.<sup>15</sup> In Romania, the politics of demography—aimed at increasing the population—launched in 1966 through the criminalization of abortion and lack of contraception, just months after Nicolae Ceaușescu came to power, emphasized the role of the family and women in the construction of communism. While the home assumed the concrete, tangible framework in which individuals were formed, the womb became the transformative organic locus of the future socialist citizen, and control of fertility was proclaimed to be a right of the state, and not of women or of families.<sup>16</sup> The award by the communist state of the title of Heroic Mother (*Mamă Eroină*) (to women with ten or more children) as well as the Medal of Maternity (*Medalia Maternității*) (to women with six or more children) emphasized the role of women and of their body in social reproduction. The rhetorical framing of the reproductive energy of the body and its regulations through a specific legal framework emphasized the state’s intention to define the womb as a national space.<sup>17</sup>

In what follows, I reassess the instrumental role of housing infrastructures as a state project in the construction of a common domestic imaginary with the potential to direct the communalization of subjectivities and therefore the formation of a socialist body. The relationship between material forms and subject formation unfolds in this argument

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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through the use of domestic infrastructure as a technical and aesthetic instrument linking subjects to the state. The emphasis on the power of aesthetics emerged with particular force in the work of the Russian avant-gardes, in which communist visual culture did not just reflect but embodied and complemented the endeavors of scientific progress and subject formation. The emergence of the avant-gardes during the late nineteenth century supported the new political orientation that started to be shaped in Russia at that time. The Orthodox icon painting, folk art, popular lithographs (*lubok*), and children's drawings became a major source of influence at the beginning of this movement and developed into experimentation with large patches of color, thick black contours, and compositions that rejected the principles of classical art.<sup>18</sup> The artists of the avant-garde embraced the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, which implied that any artistic and material manifestation should become a vehicle for the total and complete political and social transformation.

For a period of about a decade (1918–1929), avant-garde artists played an important role in shaping cultural and social politics and in creating a new aesthetics of the revolution. Anatoly Lunacharsky—the People's Commissar of Education—became an instrumental figure in this endeavor by appointing representatives of the movement, such as El Lissitzky, Kazimir Malevich, Vladimir Tatlin, and Alexander Rodchenko, to key positions within the new cultural hierarchy.<sup>19</sup> These representatives envisioned the creation of an art whose objectives would satisfy not only aesthetic but also utilitarian principles, and would respond to the anti-traditional goals of the revolution. The movement—later called Constructivism—proclaimed the supremacy of production, while the worker was “invited to become machine” and to identify with the process of production itself.<sup>20</sup> In the discourse of the avant-gardes, the emphasis on hyper-industrialized society sought to connect with the spirit of revolutionary aspiration,<sup>21</sup> which included a new political order shaped by technological mediation. Architecture became an essential instrument of this mediation.<sup>22</sup>

## From Avant-Gardes to Mass Housing

Soviet science and technology became the source of revolutionary truth through their portrayal in popular culture as an exemplary model,<sup>23</sup> while the New Soviet Person (*Novy Sovetsky Chelovek*) proposed by the communist regime was himself or herself “scientifically” constructed.<sup>24</sup> Referenced often in the official discourses of the Khrushchev era, the scientific-technological revolution transcended the realm of the Cold War's international race against the capitalist West, and its role was to transform everyday socialist life.<sup>25</sup> The standardization of housing and workers' facilities was the main area where this was to be accomplished, shaping the socialist city and new socialist subjects. Buildings were not merely functional, utilitarian constructions; they were “new social condensers” to transform humanity, generating not only technical progress but also enthusiasm.<sup>26</sup> Constructivist architects worked toward the industrialization of housing, materials, and labor, seeking to rationalize the body and its capacity to produce. They promoted the transformation of society through the application of industrial techniques to eliminate domestic space and make domestic labor scientific,<sup>27</sup> in the conviction that the configuration of the home determined consciousness and behavior.<sup>28</sup> Home itself became industri-

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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alized,<sup>29</sup> in the striving for an ontological transition from high socialism to communism, where “there would be no room for domestic pleasures.”<sup>30</sup>

One recognizes in these ideals the endeavor to create an entirely new rationalized architecture and material culture based on communist theories of industrialized production and on the patterns of consumption guided by socialist ethics. By emphasizing the importance of an ontological transformation of the subject, the project of the avant-gardes asserted the total character of the new domestic infrastructure. These principles translated into the innovation of *dom kommuna* (communal housing): the complete attempt to reform *byt* (everyday life) and consolidate Soviet socialism’s revolutionary Marxist principles.<sup>31</sup> The materialization of these ideas was the famous Narkomfin project, a “social condenser”<sup>32</sup> meant to ensure the transition from preexisting bourgeois living patterns toward the collective living whereby collective dining, socialization, and childcare would become directed by state communal facilities.<sup>33</sup> Built between 1928 and 1929, the original Narkomfin complex, imagined by architects Moisei Ginzburg and Ignatii Milinis, comprised four separate buildings. The first and largest structure, the living block, was a long horizontal building that accommodated various types of living units. The second structure, the communal block, was connected to the living block by a covered bridge. This building accommodated most of the collectivized aspects of everyday life: kitchen, dining room, gymnasium, and library. The third structure housed the communal laundry, while the fourth structure—never built—would have housed the communal crche. The vision was that the community’s children would spend their days and nights under the supervision of trained professionals, in order to ease the burden on their parents—especially their mothers, who had to be able to pursue social and political work.<sup>34</sup> Narkomfin was designed as a prototype for all subsequent state housing in Russia. It was an early version of the *dom kommuna*, and it was seen as a social condenser to ensure the transition from preexisting bourgeois living patterns to F-units.<sup>35</sup> F-units were the ultimate expression of socialized life and the new *byt*, in which individual functions were to be transformed into social functions and housing was to play a major role in the transformation of humanity. F-units had no kitchens and could accommodate individuals or couples without children.<sup>36</sup> Narkomfin Communal House represented the Soviet’s state most complete endeavor to use domesticity for the production of a new consciousness and of a new social structure.<sup>37</sup> Lenin himself regarded communal facilities as a means to liberate women and transform them into productive citizens.<sup>38</sup>

Notwithstanding all the laws emancipating woman, she continues to be a domestic slave, because petty housework crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and the nursery, and she wastes her labor on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-racking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real emancipation of women, real communism, will begin only where and when an all-out struggle begins (led by the proletariat wielding state power) against this petty housekeeping, or rather when its wholesale transformation into a large-scale socialist economy begins.<sup>39</sup>

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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Revolutionary housing policy, however, was contradictory, and the endeavor to emancipate women translated into multiple, often conflicting, interpretations of their role. The effort to construct an “abstract standardized citizen with no gender, opinions, or needs” thus directed the state toward a mass modernization through the industrialization of construction.<sup>40</sup> Despite the political discourse that placed at its center the question of the emancipation of women—whereby house chores and child rearing would be replaced by the communal dining rooms, nurseries, and other amenities—the industrialization of housing and the fragmentation of domesticity provided the ideal vehicle through which the state was able to control both private life as well as the patterns of socialization, reproduction, and interaction. In the 1930s, the avant-gardes’ dream of buildings that would act as social condensers was replaced in practice with communal apartments, presented by the authorities as a “new collective vision of the future,”<sup>41</sup> and in line with the Stalinist restoration of family values. Abortion was outlawed, and the values of the traditional family were enforced with the aim to rationalize and control social order. Instead of creating gender neutrality, this made women’s role harder, as they had to negotiate between home, work, and political duties. Even though housing was the regime’s main concern, until the late 1950s, new apartments were designed to accommodate multiple families, while the production of furniture and small household goods remained artisanal.<sup>42</sup>

With the specific goal of moving away from Stalin’s paradigm, Khrushchev’s housing reform of providing every family with an affordable apartment, connected to modern amenities, transformed the cities through the implementation of industrialized mass construction and promised to finally realize the ideals of the revolution on a mass scale. The new apartments brought about a new, modern aesthetic, but simultaneously demanded changes in form—lower ceilings, smaller rooms, standardized furniture, use of reinforced concrete—and the domestic environment which was radically modernized.<sup>43</sup> The industrialization and standardization of housing construction combined with the state’s attention to the scientific approach with regard to the manufacture of everyday goods, food consumption, hygiene, and childrearing, and emphasized the importance of a modernized domesticity in the construction of socialism.<sup>44</sup> The domestic interior represented a space for the formation of the socialist subject and for aesthetic production, and thus it had to be regulated by the state. This rationalization of the domesticity involved not only the material shaping of the interior—efficiencies of space, furnishing, or decoration—but also the way in which the dwellers appropriated these transformations.

The communist paradigm that emerged in the Soviet Union had a major global impact and its influence grew alongside its accumulation of territory and power. In Romania, the communists took power in March 1945 with help from the Soviets, and on December 30, 1947, the communists proclaimed the People’s Republic of Romania (RPR). Produced within the bipolar background of the Cold War, the Missile Crisis in 1962 was the step to ensure Cuba’s pro-Soviet orientation. After the crisis, in June 1963, Castro made a historic visit to the Soviet Union and returned to Cuba to recall the construction projects he had seen, specifically the Siberian hydropower stations. He spoke about the development

of Soviet agriculture and repeatedly emphasized the need to draw on the Soviet experience to solve internal tasks of socialist mass construction in Cuba.<sup>45</sup>

### The Case of Bucharest

An article published in *Arhitectura RPR* (succeeding *Arhitectura* published between 1906 and 1944, *Arhitectura RPR* was reborn in 1952 during the communist regime as the publication of the Union of Romanian Architects) in 1954 discussed the idea of standardized architecture for the first time in the Romanian context.<sup>46</sup> Written by I. Silvan, chief architect at the Institutul de Proiectare a Oraşelor, a Construcţiilor Publice şi de Locuit (Institute for the Design of Cities and Public and Housing Constructions), the article acknowledged the use of prefabrication methods imported from the Soviet Union to respond to the housing construction targets set out in the 1951–1955 five-year plan:

Architects face the duty to express, through the typified housing that they create, their care for the working people, who have to be accommodated in beautiful and comfortable houses. At the same time, the need for rapid and high-quality construction determines the other side of the problem: to ensure, through design, rapid, economical, and high-quality work. In this domain as well, we can rely on the immense experience of the Soviet Union, which has found the right methods to continuously improve living conditions for the Soviet people.<sup>47</sup>

The article emphasized the importance of technology, where the aim was to produce all components in a factory; the workers on site would only need to assemble the prefabricated elements. The article presented one- and two-bedroom apartments,<sup>48</sup> indicating the standard dimensions of the living room, kitchen, hallway, and so on, as well as the overall area of the apartment. Two categories of apartment were proposed: large apartments (34–38 square meters for one-bedroom apartments, 46–55 square meters for two-bedroom) and apartments of reduced size (24–30 square meters for one-bedroom, 40–46 square meters for two-bedroom).

In the realm of architecture and urbanism, the annual or five-year plans marked the beginning of state design through the creation of the Institutul de Proiectări Industriale (Institute for Industrial Design) and Institutul de Proiectări de Construcţie (Institute for the Design of Constructions), which were in charge of the new standardized design. The Institute for the Design of Cities and Public and Housing Constructions was created alongside these; however, it did not cover Bucharest, for which a special institute was created called Proiect Bucureşti (Bucharest Institute for Architectural Design). The six-year state plan for 1960–1965 set even higher economic goals and demanded the further intensification of the housing sector, stipulating the construction of more than 300,000 apartments.<sup>49</sup> Housing reform was a result of a centralization process that aimed to use infrastructure to ensure the collectivization of society and the elimination of bourgeois individualism.<sup>50</sup> A new spatial structure for the city was envisioned to meet industrial requirements and reshape the socioeconomic system (see Figure 1). Forced industrializa-



## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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tion had absorbed a significant proportion of the rural population and sent it into towns or large cities, where it was never effectively integrated.



Figure 1 Aerial view of Grivița Avenue—1 Mai Boulevard, Bucharest, Romania, 1964.

Photograph published in *Arhitectura RPR* XII, no. 4 (1964): 26. (C) *Revista Arhitectura*, Bucharest

Inspired by Soviet economics, the urban unit that reshaped the city of Bucharest in the 1950s was the *cvartal* (quarter), which organized “identical buildings into regular patterns orthogonally aligned with the street grid.”<sup>51</sup> The surface area of this urban unit varied between 6 and 10 hectares, and the housing blocks were grouped around an inner courtyard that incorporated spaces for children’s play and learning.<sup>52</sup> The *cvartal* model was exported from the USSR at the end of World War II as a pattern for socialist countries to apply in order to adhere to the newly emerged ideology; it was a synthesis born of the early relationship between the Soviet Union and the avant-gardes. The notion of *cvartal* was born in the early 1930s when ideas of the CIAM (Congrès Internationaux d’Architecture Moderne)—such as standardization, rational use of space, low-cost mass housing—came in contact with Soviet practices from the collaboration between European and Soviet architects.<sup>53</sup> During the 1960s, as a result of the process of de-Stalinization, architecture and urban planning underwent further transformations. In contradiction to the rationalization and rigid structure of the earlier Soviet-inspired *cvartal*, the *microrayon* (microdistrict) gave state-owned housing spaces a structure that was at once more organic and more self-sufficient (see Figure 2). It consisted of a somewhat independent structure that could function entirely within its own borders. Two main functions determined the dimensions of the *microrayon*: the space for production, that is, the factory; and the school, which was required to accommodate all pupils in the neighborhood. Moreover, the buildings were much taller than in previous conceptions of urban organization, in order to ensure maximum efficiency. Generally, the occupied area varied between 15 and 45 hectares, with a population of between 4,000 and 12,000 inhabitants.<sup>54</sup> The domicile was standardized according to state-imposed norms,<sup>55</sup> and the apartments were distributed by state agencies according to the number of family members. The maximum

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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living area was imposed by the state (law 78/1952 and law 10/1968) and restricted to 8 square meters per person, excluding the auxiliary spaces such as kitchen, hallway, or the balcony. The same laws assert that anything beyond this limit gives the right to the state to assign the excess to other persons.



Figure 2 Giulești housing district, Bucharest, Romania, 1964.

Photograph published in *Arhitectura RPR* XII, no. 4 (1964): 27. (C) *Revista Arhitectura*, Bucharest

Furthermore, an article in *Arhitectura RPR* acknowledges the rational organization of the interior of the apartment: “The people who occupy a new apartment come from houses with different organization of space to dwellings in which the space is standardized. [...] The spatial organization of the apartment understands the use of space so that it belongs to the person and not to the objects. [...] In furnishing the apartment, one has to take into consideration the activity areas within the home. This is very important insofar as the furnishing responds to psychological and social needs [...]”<sup>56</sup> The living room in a standardized apartment occupies usually an area of 16–20 square meters, and its furnishing comprises almost with no variation “dining table and chairs, sideboard, cabinet along with a piece for TV and an extensible couch or armchairs.”<sup>57</sup>

The spatial representation of the new lifestyle was frequently featured in films that attempted to transmit the “right way” in which the urban and domestic transformations should be appropriated by citizens. *Serenade for the 12th floor* (*Serenadă pentru etajul XII*, 1976, Dir. Carol Corfanta) portrays the transition from a traditional way of living characterized by individual houses to a newly built housing district—a microrayon—in Bucharest in the 1970s. The film narrates and visualizes not only a material but also a spiritual transformation.<sup>58</sup>

The opening scene focuses on a heated discussion between Vasiliță, the bartender of the local bar, and a retired lathe operator, Mr. Firu, who had to leave his house in order to move into a newly built apartment. Vasiliță acknowledges the care of the state that “gave you homes,” but he is corrected by Mr. Firu, who explains that the state has not given but *assigned* him—a member of the working class—an apartment. Portraying the improved living conditions in the new apartments—more comfort, running water, sewage, bath tub,

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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and new furniture—the film was a propaganda vehicle to present the benefits of the standardized apartment living and to facilitate the transition between the two types of domesticity. The joy of moving into a new apartment is expressed when Mr. Firu goes in the middle of the night to see the apartment where he was supposed to move in the next day. He confesses to the tree in front of his apartment block: “Tomorrow, starts the first year, the first day: hot water, goodbye to coal, and goodbye to creaky floors!”

The housing district is portrayed here as the expression of the state whereby the value of egalitarianism and the technical value of standardization were reciprocally reinforcing: university professors, musicians, but above all workers would mingle in the same block as a result of the socialist-emplaced equality. The voice-over comments on the new social arrangement: “People who have never seen each other, but who, from tomorrow will greet each other as neighbors; people who know each other just for moments, but who joyfully help each other.” Despite the monotonous exterior of the new building, the neighbours are showcased as a vibrant community, gathering around the table to eat crepes with jam. The episode takes place in the living room of an apartment furnished with a standardized dining table and chairs, cabinet, sideboard, and armchairs; an exotic plant and the embroidered window curtain are the only elements that give the space more specificity. The representation of the house as a space of encounter and sharing popular food emphasizes the psychological dimension of the transition intended by the state.

## The Case of Havana

In Cuba, one of the first policy initiatives of the revolutionary government was to address the housing crisis. The documentary produced in 1959 by the Rebel Army’s National Bureau of Culture, *Housing (La Vivienda)*, Dir. Julio García Espinosa, 1959), anticipated the desire for a housing reform by emphasizing the profound differences that existed between different social classes in Cuba. Standardized housing was thus imagined as a social equalizer. The film ends with a projection of Cuba as a communist country: “That day, a day that dawned like any other, all the houses in my city finally looked the same.”<sup>59</sup> The Urban Reform Law of October 1960 initiated this process and established the normative idea of housing as a public service and—guided by the collectivizing ideals of the revolution—replaced the urban bourgeois idea of domesticity with the new housing units for the workers.<sup>60</sup> The introduction of the Soviet prefabricated panel was significant for the 1959 Revolution, as it validated the role of industrial technologies in the standardization of living, endorsing Castro’s plan for an egalitarian socialist utopia.<sup>61</sup> Within the context of ideological accord with the USSR, but also following the 1963 devastation wreaked by Hurricane Flora, the Soviet Union under Nikita Khrushchev donated a factory that was built in the city of Santiago de Cuba, in the southeastern region of the island, for the production of prefabricated panels. The imported large-panel factory marked the Soviet hegemony and initiated a period of mass housing considered by the state to be the center of social formation. State-controlled planning, industrialization of construction, communalization of housing, and urban configuration based on the Soviet neighborhood district (microray-

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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on) were all elements of the infrastructural transformation with new aesthetic, political, and symbolic values.<sup>62</sup>

The industrialization of construction and the use of prefabrication determined the emergence of the so-called microbrigades, as the government attempted to find parallel routes to state action on housing construction.<sup>63</sup> The initiation of microbrigades came at the pressing point of the failure of the 10-million-ton sugar harvest planned for 1970, when the government had to reconsider its strategy of adopting the Soviet economic and social model.<sup>64</sup> Envisioned as the most efficient socialist approach to housing provision, the microbrigades consisted of groups of thirty-three unskilled workers from factories, released from their daily work assignments and integrated into building brigades while receiving their normal salary. The state provided technical expertise and design templates for the assemblage of the prefabricated and semiprefabricated apartment buildings designed by the architects of the Ministry of Construction.<sup>65</sup> The resulted housing units—that were distributed by state agencies among workers based on need and merit—constituted a unique paradigm of government-regulated collective self-help housing, through which the state was able to project socialist ideals in order to inform subjective experiences of domesticity.<sup>66</sup>



Figure 3 Alamar housing district, Havana, Cuba.

Photograph published in *Arquitectura Cuba* 345 (1976): 54. Image in the public domain

In Havana, the microbrigades built several satellite districts, including Altahabana, Reparto Eléctrico, San Agustín, Cotorro, and Alamar (see Figure 3), the latter accommodating more than 130,000 people. The housing uniformity in design and layout achieved the level of abstraction desired within the Soviet Union as the base for a new social arrangement. Apart from the attempts to reduce the monotony of the facades through vividly painting the panels or cultivating the areas between the blocks, “what contributed more than anything to maintain a high social status and a considerable sense of pride in these settlements was the fact that their inhabitants were ‘honorable citizens’ selected on the basis of their outstanding work merits.”<sup>67</sup> As in the Romanian case, propaganda film reinforced the construction of the housing ideal. The first cultural institution funded by

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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the revolutionary government in 1959 was the Cuban Institute of Film Industry (ICAIC), and film represented one of the main vehicles that sought to construct the significance of Cuban housing and prefabrication.<sup>68</sup> Documentary films such as *We Have No Right to Wait* (*No tenemos derecho a esperar*, Dir. Rogelio París, 1972), *To Build a House* (*Para construir una casa*, Dir. Nicolás Guillén, 1972), *Microbrigades, a Diary* (*Microbrigadas, un diario*, Dir. Héctor Veitía, 1973), and *Of Life and Housing* (*De la vida y la vivienda*, Dir. Víctor Casás, 1975) sought to orient the popular taste towards the new lifestyle and to reinforce the idea that the building of homes meant primarily the building of socialism.<sup>69</sup>

A series of articles from an issue of *Arquitectura Cuba* (magazine of the Cuban architects, published for the first time in 1917 under the name *Arquitectura*), published in 1976, articulates the strong relationship between human formation, infrastructure, and ideology. The articles “The Man at the Center of the Transformations of the Community”<sup>70</sup> and “Human Settlements: An Expression of the Economic, Political and Social Structures”<sup>71</sup> suggest that creating a new society based on socialist principles was conceived not only as an objective transformation of sociopolitical structures but also implied the attendant construction of a subject formation and the creation of the New (Socialist) Person.<sup>72</sup> In the same issue of *Arquitectura Cuba*, an article on Alamar—the largest district that was built within the microbrigades system—describes how the inhabitants are expected to appropriate the new housing units by providing an analysis of three aspects: the person (*el hombre*), the furnishing, and the interior space.<sup>73</sup> The author emphasizes the role of the families for the new district: “The family-oriented character of the new community is outstandingly accentuated when compared to the percentages of nuclei of a single person in Havana. While in the capital the percentage of inhabitants who live alone reaches 13.7—some 50,000 people—in Alamar the figure reached has no statistical weight,”<sup>74</sup> while the scientific distribution of space is commensurate with the number of family members. Recognizing that the “social changes have an impact on housing,” the use of domestic space receives a clear gendered dimension, while the rational furnishing of the apartments becomes an integral part of the new project of domesticity.<sup>75</sup>

The distinct place that the constitution of the domestic space had in the formation of the masses was significant not only with regard to design and construction, but also in informing subjective aesthetic experiences to shape a common taste.<sup>76</sup> For the district of Alamar, “a furniture system was designed to break the traditional conception of living room, dining room, etc., flexible enough to allow its growth, at the same pace as the needs of the family nucleus increases; [...] that the furniture system be adjusted in its dimensions to the architectural spaces and dimensions of the population.”<sup>77</sup> The dining set (along with the large art objects that were historically stored in the dining room) would now be distributed in the kitchen or in other parts of the apartment: “It can be said in general terms that the original functions of the dining set are diluted into other areas; its specific function is minimized.”<sup>78</sup> Thus, the socialist design was imagined to reinforce the modern project of domesticity, while simultaneously allowing the state to regulate behavior that would lead to achievement of the revolutionary goals. Rationalizing and disciplining domestic behavior according to patterns of regimented taste intended to regulate pre-

existing practices and constituted one of the vehicles responsible for the reach of the socialist ontology.<sup>79</sup>

### The Aesthetic Project of Domesticity

But how did such political agendas come to be constructed on the basis of a powerful rhetoric that linked the constitution of the subjective body and the home? I suggest that the basis of this political agenda was constituted by an aesthetic project, whose traces go back—through an archaeology of domesticity—to the early Russian avant-gardes. In this way, Kazimir Malevich's paradigmatic *Black Square* (1915)—the visual reduction of all material content and, for a long time, the symbol of the avant-gardes<sup>80</sup>—anticipated the total transformation of domesticity generated by the industrialization of housing. Malevich declared the need for an abstract representation shorn of spiritual symbols to create a new society: "Only with the disappearance of a habit of mind which sees in pictures little corners of nature, madonnas and shameless Venuses, shall we witness a work of pure, living art."<sup>81</sup> At The Last Exhibition of Futurist Painting 0.10, he placed the painting high up in the corner of the room, in the space that was traditionally reserved for the religious icons in the Russian home, suggesting the political need for disorientation of the New Soviet Person.<sup>82</sup> Repudiating the figurative in favor of abstraction, Malevich's *Black Square* becomes the visual manifesto of the new prefabricated panel that would accomplish the domestic revolution. Using combinations of pure forms—built in conscious dialogue with the icons and the folk art—Malevich's aesthetic "subconsciously" aimed to determine the relationship between the subject and the world.<sup>83</sup>

The etymological meaning derived from the Greek *aisthēsis* points to the aesthetics as linked to perception and ontology that goes beyond the realm of art, becoming a reality.<sup>84</sup> With the body at its center, aesthetics develops into a cognitive form acquired through a corporeal experience: seeing, smelling, touching, and so on.<sup>85</sup> Thus space not only functions as the Foucauldian disciplinary technique,<sup>86</sup> but also, as in Susan Buck-Morss's conceptualization, it becomes a seductive and sedative instrument of the empathetic body whose critical power lies primarily in aesthetic domestication.<sup>87</sup> The character of an aesthetic experience has an immediate embodied, phenomenal reaction, in which the subject not only looks from the outside but is involved in giving meaning to the material form.<sup>88</sup> The transformation of domesticity becomes thus an aesthetic project that involves a total bodily experience—spatial, material, sensorial, and ultimately cognitive—that enables the user to appropriate a new mode of being.

Pierre Bourdieu envisions the way in which the repetition of small gestures within a daily routine—through a bodily experience of a certain ritual—teaches the body to behave, transforming patterns of understanding of its environment:

the "totalitarian institutions," [...] that seek to produce a new man [...] entrust to it in abbreviated and practical, i.e. mnemonic, form the fundamental principles of the arbitrary content of the culture. The principles embodied in this way are placed beyond the grasp of consciousness, [...] nothing seems more ineffable, [...]

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than the values given body, *made* body by the transubstantiation achieved by the hidden persuasion of an implicit pedagogy, capable of instilling a whole cosmology, an ethic, a metaphysic, a political philosophy, through injunctions as insignificant as “stand up straight” or “don’t hold your knife in your left hand.”<sup>89</sup>

The performative character of this ritual enables the subject to become part of it and to inhabit and appropriate the space of its production. Thus, through a similar process, new spatial patterns, materials, technologies, and taste became regulatory mechanisms that are normalized and appropriated over time as habitual. The reconsideration of the aesthetic project of the avant-gardes through Khrushchev’s reforms involved the elimination of the traditional, superfluous forms by means of the emergence of the concept of *dizain* (design) and of the standardization of taste: interiors of the apartments were no longer subjective, artisanal products, and the experience of the domestic interior started to have a communal, rational base.<sup>90</sup>

## Bodies and Infrastructure

As Malevich observed, the new aesthetic needed to work through the state since “the state is an apparatus by which the nervous systems of its inhabitants are regulated.”<sup>91</sup> The regulation of the domestic life intensified to such an extent that the “state was becoming a member of the family,”<sup>92</sup> and the primary “agency of socialization.”<sup>93</sup> The Federation of Cuban Women (FMC—*Federación de Mujeres Cubanas*) founded in 1960 aimed to construct a new socialist woman incorporated into both the political project and the workforce. Accepting a heteronormative discourse, the state encouraged marriages based on equal partnership between man and woman, through national campaigns,<sup>94</sup> and established policies to ease the burdens of housework through programs for socializing domestic labor.<sup>95</sup> It supported these new policies by allocating a large part of its gross national product to childcare services.<sup>96</sup> Increasing in number, from 109 nurseries in 1962 to 658 in 1975, day-care establishments provided medical care, meals, and clothes for children between the ages of six weeks and six years, and in 1967 they all became free of charge to the population.<sup>97</sup> Free access to the state health system aimed to promote a healthy body through scientific care, while trained personnel replaced traditional healers, midwives, and herbalists.<sup>98</sup> The coming into effect of the Family Code promoted equality between men and women in the context of domestic work, while the 1976 Constitution emphasized the state’s role in protecting “family, motherhood, and matrimony.”<sup>99</sup>

Nevertheless, the access of the state to domestic space through standardized design—allowing it to impose processes of socialization and appropriation of the space—was complemented by a specific legal framework with measures that determined the “acceptable understanding” of the family, the relations between genders and generations, and in the Romanian case, the rigorous control of reproduction.<sup>100</sup> In Romania, abortion was declared illegal in 1948, and the key role of women, children, and families in the construction of communism was underlined in the Family Code introduced in 1953.<sup>101</sup> Alongside an aggressive propaganda campaign, Ceaușescu implemented economic measures to



## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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stimulate natality, introduced legal mechanisms to make divorce harder to obtain, and restricted access to contraception. Later, in the 1980s, a project designed to build six standardized canteens in Bucharest would have replaced the domestic kitchens; these canteens were planned as spaces for intensive, collectivized food consumption with standardized menus, attempting in this way to ease the burden of domestic work for women, but at the same time to control consumption. Through a legal and symbolic apparatus that dominated both public and private life, the state encouraged women to pursue their social and cultural roles as workers, wives, and mothers.<sup>102</sup>

In many ways women became the main site of antagonistic political agendas: on one side, woman was the emancipated subject that could contribute to the building of socialism through her power to both produce and reproduce; and on the other side, she was a subject whose privacy and capacity to decide about her own body were tightly controlled by the state. Despite the idealized image of a domestic revolution in which technological advance and emancipation of the women were championed, the high degree of state control often left women's bodies objectified and reduced to a productive and reproductive mass.

Through her critique of Marx and Foucault, Silvia Federici observes that the battle against the rebel body, its political status, and its relationship to spaces, limits, and enclosures are all essential conditions for the development of labor-power relations and for the rule of modern capitalist governments.<sup>103</sup> Articulating the body as an essential medium to inquire into forms of power, Foucault has also provided the tools to understand how the body has been "historically disciplined."<sup>104</sup> The rise of the notion of "enclosure," the process of territorialization of the social, and the emergence of the new ideology of home as a political project,<sup>105</sup> all paralleled the idea of territorial and bodily control in the constitution of wealth. These processes of capitalist modernization required the transformation of the body into a work machine, able to mimic the technological process of the machines, and thereby resulting in the systematic destruction of women's power over biological and social reproduction.<sup>106</sup> The constitution of capitalism and the modern state addresses thus both the body's productive and reproductive capacities in relation to spatial concerns that have an infrastructural quality. In an attempt to form a new type of individual, the capitalist bourgeoisie engaged in the battle against the body attempting to overcome its "natural state,"<sup>107</sup> and to suppress the medieval concept of the body as a "receptacle of magic powers."<sup>108</sup>

Despite struggles against capitalist structures, the way to socialism translated precisely into a mass modernization, that radically transformed urban and social structures. Having strong agricultural traditions prior to the transition to socialism, both Romania and Cuba experienced mass migration from the countryside to the reformed city, and this had a profound impact on the dynamic of modernization. Rural labor, different temporal rhythms, and strong ties to land and/or religion were constitutive for a large part of the population. Consequently, socialism became not so much an alternative to the capitalist system of control—that would later be understood in biopolitical terms—but rather an opportunity to domesticate and systematize the body through radical mechanisms concealed behind the rhetoric of emancipation through labor. Like the feudal estate, the pa-



## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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terrestrial socialist state provided its workers with all services and facilities—houses, kindergartens, clinics, food, and so on—in an attempt to control and direct all aspects of everyday life, and to make workers dependent on the structure of the system.<sup>109</sup>

Belonging to a suzerain power by simply being part of a territorial enclosure meant dependence just as in feudal times; it also meant minimum control over one's own life.<sup>110</sup>

As these arguments show, socialist domestic infrastructure thus became a political technology that mediated between, and therefore transformed, spatially and temporally reconfigured practices, generating new ontologies.<sup>111</sup> Along with a new spatial structure and design, the state acknowledged the material dimension of the prefabricated housing and endorsed the idea that reinforced concrete offered a means to draw people together and therefore to enhance collective social consciousness.<sup>112</sup> In the Soviet Union, the synthetic nature of reinforced concrete made it a symbol of what Lenin called the “indissoluble unity” of the proletariat, formed through the revolution. Feodor Gladkov's classic novel *Cement* (1925), set in a cement plant, emphasizes the power of cement to bind together a “mass of loose particles,” and as the hero Gleb Chumalov puts it: “We produce cement. Cement is a firm bond. Cement is us, comrades—the working class.”<sup>113</sup> Responding to the new factory techniques of prefabrication, cement was the material to accomplish the desired architectural standardization, becoming a material and aesthetic symbol of the working class. It was precisely the introduction of a machine culture and the industrialization of all aspects of life that aimed to discipline the body through the appropriation of mechanization processes that transformed not only the productive realm—the productive labor—but also the domestic space.

The analogue between the materiality of the house and that of the body was also present in the Cuban propaganda discourse. Celebrating workers and the mass housing, in 1972 the Cuban government broadcasted the color documentary *We Have No Right to Wait*.<sup>114</sup> Along with scenes of the “social reality,” the documentary's musical score reinforces the accomplishments of the construction industry. Pablo Milanés's “The Builder's Song” speaks about the transformation of the country, the relationship between “material and social structures,” and the bodily engagement with the socialist project of infrastructure:

I see your brief body parked  
in the space where my legs  
and my hands were moving yesterday  
I touch your elaborate structure  
and I think of when you were nothing  
and how, from nothing, we brought  
you into being. [...] <sup>116</sup>

While the song is embedded in popular culture, it also has a clear propagandistic value. The text presents the becoming of the housing building and the power of the human body over that becoming. The song reveals the indispensability of the corporeal involvement in the constitution of socialism. It emphasizes once more the importance of the notion of *infrastructure*—the buildings and materials—in which people become “part of the very fab-

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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ric of their being, containing them by being contained *by them* in the most literal sense.”<sup>117</sup> The transformation of the body through labor marks not only the subject’s conformation, but also the very porous boundary between state control and individual privacy.

In Romania, the understanding of labor as a homogeneous, centralized expression of the communist ideology was a dominant theme, and simultaneously an explicit *object* of power, of social cohesion, and of coercion: “Work has become for us a matter of honor, enjoying the respect and appreciation of our society. The socialist Party, state-awarded prizes, medals, the title of Hero of Socialist Labor for the best of us [...]. To labor are dedicated poems and novels, musical and artistic works.”<sup>118</sup> The engagement of the body in the production of the socialist Romania and the socialist subject was made explicit through an extreme *cultul muncii* (cult of labor) constituted in various manifestations: from labor as coercion,<sup>119</sup> to heroic labor, to patriotic labor.<sup>120</sup> The normative right to space—the 8 square meters per person—could be increased depending on the “quality,” the productive capacities of the inhabitants,<sup>120</sup> and the number of family members. It was possible to stretch the limits of the state-imposed norms of standardization in the allocation of the domicile only by contributing to the productive character of socialism; the corporeal experience of labor—in both the symbolic and physical construction of socialism—became the currency for improved infrastructural conditions, including domestic spaces. Bodily labor, thus, became not liberating as Marx had envisioned, but commodifying.

The cases of Bucharest and Havana point to the complex narratives of a transnational history of the communist body and domestic space. An evaluation of this manifold archaeology of domesticity reveals that the political agenda, manifested in both contexts as an aesthetic project, entered and reconstructed private lives. As I have shown, this took place in the formative environment of home, which led to the transformation of subjective bodies, and ultimately the construction of the political subject. The conflation between the project of the body and that of the home probably represents the most radical and longest-lasting legacy of those nations’ socialist discourses, whose vestiges continue to shape the postcommunist experience.

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- (19.) *Ibid.*, 7.
- (20.) Manfredo Tafuri, "Avant-garde et formalisme: Entre la NEP et le premier plan quinquennal," in *URSS 1917-1978: La ville, l'architecture*, ed. Jean-Louis Cohen, Marco De Michelis, and Manfredo Tafuri (Paris, L'Esquerre, and Rome: Officina Edizioni, 1979), 30.
- (21.) Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 12.
- (22.) Tijana Vujošević, *Modernism and the Making of the Soviet New Man* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), 2.
- (23.) Irina Tulbure, *Arhitectură și urbanism în România anilor 1944-1960: Constrângere și experiment* (Bucharest: Simetria, 2016), 91.
- (24.) Usually translated in English as the New Soviet Man (and Woman), I will employ in this text what I consider to be a more accurate translation—The New Soviet Person—that maintains the substance of the Russian word *chelovek*, which is neutral with regard to gender.

## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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(25.) Reid, "The Khrushchev Kitchen."

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(29.) Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld*, 202.

(30.) Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 139.

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(32.) Kopp, *Town and Revolution*.

(33.) Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 67.

(34.) *Ibid.*, 174.

(35.) *Ibid.*, 67.

(36.) Kopp, *Town and Revolution*, 144.

(37.) Victor Buchli, "The Social Condenser: Again, Again and Again—The Case for the Narkomfin Communal House, Moscow," *The Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 3 (2017).

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(40.) James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 345-346.

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(42.) Susan E. Reid, "Khrushchev Modern," *Cahiers du monde russe* 47, no. 1-2 (2006), 232.

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(43.) Ibid., 234.

(44.) Ibid., 237–279.

(45.) See Jill Hamberg, *Under Construction: Housing Policy in Revolutionary Cuba* (New York: Center for Cuban Studies, 1986).

(46.) I. Silvan, “În legătură cu proiectarea secțiunilor-tip de locuințe,” *Arhitectura RPR*, no.1 (1954).

(47.) Silvan, “În legătură,” 3.

(48.) In Romania, a one-bedroom apartment is usually referred to as an “apartment with two rooms” (*apartament cu două camere*), while a two-bedroom apartment is an “apartment with three rooms” (*apartament cu trei camere*).

(49.) Grigore Ionescu, *Arhitectura în România: perioada anilor 1944–1969* (Bucharest, Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1969), 107.

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(51.) Juliana Maxim, “Bucharest: The City Transfigured,” in *Sanctioning Modernism: Architecture and the Making of Postwar Identities*, eds. Vladimir Kulić, Timothy Parker, and Monica Penick (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 10.

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(53.) Maxim, “Bucharest: The City Transfigured,” 22.

(54.) Ionescu, *Arhitectura în România: perioada anilor 1944–1969*, 74.

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- (62.) Lynch, "Cuban Architecture Since the Revolution," 101. See also Iulia Stătică, "From Domesticity to Environmentalism. Socialist Housing Infrastructures, and the Politics of the Feminine Body in (Late) Socialist Cuba" in *Political Architecture: Havana* (Copenhagen: Royal Academy of Fine Arts, 2018), 91.
- (63.) Mario Coyula, "The Bitter Trinquennium," in *Havana Beyond the Ruins: Cultural Mappings after 1989*, eds. Anke Birkenmaier and Esther Whitfield (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 43.
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- (65.) Joseph Scarpaci, Roberto Segre, and Mario Coyula, *Havana: Two Faces of the Antillean Metropolis* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 203.
- (66.) See [www.projectalamar.com](http://www.projectalamar.com); see also Hamberg, *Under Construction* and Stătică, "From Domesticity to Environmentalism."
- (67.) Kosta Mathey, "Microbrigadas in Cuba: An Unconventional Response to the Housing Problem in a Latin American State," *Habitat International* 12, no. 4 (1988): 70.
- (68.) Alonso and Palmarola, *Panel*, 125.
- (69.) *Ibid.*, 124.
- (70.) "El Hombre: centro de las transformaciones de la comunidad," *Arquitectura Cuba* 345 (1976), 4-7.
- (71.) "Los Assentimientos Umanos: una expresión de las estructuras económicas, políticas y sociales," *Arquitectura Cuba* 345 (1976): 8-24.
- (72.) Holbraad, "Cuban Housing as Revolutionary Infrastructure," 4.
- (73.) Wilfredo Benitez, "Investigación y diseño para la comunidad un Nuevo mobiliario para Alamar," *Arquitectura Cuba* 345 (1976): 53-57.
- (74.) *Ibid.*, 55.
- (75.) See also Stătică, "From Domesticity to Environmentalism."
- (76.) David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, "Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc," in *Socialist Spaces. Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*, eds. David Crowley and Susan E. Reid (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 11.
- (77.) Benitez, "Investigación y diseño," cited in Stătică, "From Domesticity to Environmentalism."



## Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana

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(78.) Ibid., 57.

(79.) Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 139-140.

(80.) Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 15.

(81.) Kazimir Malevich, "From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism: The New Realism in Painting," trans. Xenia Glowacki-Prus and Arnold McMillin in *Malevich on Suprematism. Six Essays: 1915-1926*, ed. Patricia Railing (Iowa City: The University of Iowa Museum of Art, 1999).

(82.) Alonso and Palmarola, *Panel*, 13.

(83.) Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism*, 16.

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(87.) Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld*, 257.

(88.) Renée Hoogland, "The Matter of Culture: Aesthetic Experience and Corporeal Being," *Mosaic, a Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature* 36 (2003): 1-18.

(89.) Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 94.

(90.) Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 138.

(91.) Kazimir Malevich, *Bespredmetnyi mir*, cited in Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism*, 17.

(92.) Lois S. Smith and Alfred Padula, *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 147.

(93.) Lourdes Casal Bengelsdorf, "On the Problem of Studying Women in Cuba," in *Cuban Political Economy: Controversies in Cubanology*, ed. Andrew Zimbalist (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), cited in Smith and Padula, *Sex and Revolution*, 146.

(94.) Nicola Murray, "Socialism and Feminism: Women and the Cuban Revolution: Part 1," *Feminist Review* 2 (1979), 64.

(95.) Hamilton, "Building Homes," 157.

(96.) Murray, "Socialism and Feminism," 65.

(97.) Ibid.

## **Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana**

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(98.) Smith and Padula, *Sex and Revolution*, 60. Eventually, there was an effort made to integrate them in the system by providing a workplace especially in medical facilities from rural areas (Smith and Padula, *Sex and Revolution*, 60).

(99.) Hamilton, "Building Homes," 157–158.

(100.) For an extensive analysis of communist Romania's control of reproduction, see Kligman, *The Politics of Duplicity. Controlling Reproduction in Ceaușescu's Romania* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998). See also Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979).

(101.) Kligman, *Politica duplicității*, 25.

(102.) *Ibid.*, 83.

(103.) Sutapa Chattopadhyay, "Caliban and the Witch and Wider Bodily Geographies," *Gender, Place and Culture* 24, no. 2 (2017): 160–173. See also Silvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body and Primitive Accumulation* (New York: Autonomedia, 2014).

(104.) Linda Zerilli, "Rememoration or War? French Feminist Narrative and the Politics of Self Representation," *Differences* 3, no. 1. (1991): 1–19.

(105.) Hester Eisenstein, "Caliban and the Witch" (book review), *Socialism and Democracy* 20, no.2 (July 2006), 167.

(106.) Federici, *Caliban and the Witch*, 63.

(107.) *Ibid.*, 9.

(108.) Buck-Morss, *Dreamworld*.

(109.) Simon Clarke, "The Quagmire of Privatisation," *New Left Review* 196 (1992): 3–28. And Katherine Verdery, *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996), 206.

(110.) Verdery, *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?* 206.

(111.) Buchli, *An Archaeology*.

(112.) Adrian Forty, *Concrete and Culture* (London: Reaktion, 2012), 146.

(113.) Fyodor Gladkov, *Cement* (1925, Eng. transl. Moscow, 1985), 103; cited in Forty, *Concrete and Culture*, 147.

(114.) Alonso and Palmarola, *Panel*, 146.

(115.) *Ibid.*, 150.

## **Socialist Domestic Infrastructures and the Politics of the Body: Bucharest and Havana**

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(116.) “The Builder’s Song,” ICAIC Sound Experimental Group Project; cited in Alonso and Palmarola, *Panel*, 150. *Veo tu breve cuerpo estacionado; en el espacio en que mis piernas; y mis manos se movían ayer; Toco tu estructura elaborada; y pienso cuando no eras nada, y de la nada te llevamos a ser.*

(117.) Holbraad, “Cuban Housing as Revolutionary Infrastructure.”

(118.) B. Bărbulescu, *File din istoria UTC* (Bucharest: Institutul de Studii Istorice și Social Politice de pe lângă CC al PCR, 1971), 313.

(119.) The legal framework for coerced labor was set up in 1950 as a measure for the “reeducation of hostile elements.” Prisoners were obliged to work on massive projects proposed by the communist government, such as the Danube-Black Sea Canal and the Great Brăila Island.

(120.) *Comisia Prezidențială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România*, Raport final (Bucharest: Humanitas, 2008), 396.

**Iulia Stătică**

Latin American Studies Program, Cornell University