

Asher Tures

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ART 208

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Annotated Bibliography

Adamov, Oleg. "Anticipations of the Ideas of Contemporary Architecture in the Russian Avant-Garde." *EDP Sciences*, Moscow State University of Civil Engineering (2021): 1-10.

Project: The primary focus of this article centers around the shared concepts and ideas western and Russian artists were working with, in addition to their interest in spatial relationships. Adamov dissects the various aspects of visual culture and analysis in the Russian avant-garde, and compares it to modern structures being built to foster firm connections between the past and the present to elucidate his point. He concludes with an overall conceptual idea that the past inspiring the present creates a new language and dialogue around architecture through time and space.

Analysis: Adamov is approaching the framework of contemporary architecture from the viewpoint of an engineer, and so this article is structured as a scientific research study rather than a historical account or an artistic analysis. The abstract of the article clearly lays out the aims of the study. The intended purpose is to study the architectural techniques used in avant-garde Russia and Russian architecture, and to study how these ideals, connected with individualism, are present in the western world and in western art and architecture.

Evaluation: This article becomes relevant to my research and specific focus on Nisbet's article, as it studies western interest in the Russian avant-garde as it was emerging in the 1960s and 1970s. Nisbet's field of study being primarily focused on the 1960s and 1970s lends another level of interest and credibility to Nisbet's interest in the topic.

Notes: This source, while most recent, is structured differently than any other source on this bibliography. It is a scientific study rather than an art historical one, but one that also examines the structure of the buildings. It has an interesting and important place on this list.

Chlenova, Masha. "0.10." In *Inventing Abstraction 1910-1925 : How a Radical Idea Changed Modern Art*, 200-226. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2012.

Project: This article from this book covers the 0.10 exhibition, and the interactions between Tatlin and Malevich. They shared a complex dynamic, as two artists fundamentally operating with a similar end goal of expansion beyond Cubism, but taking vastly different approaches.

Analysis: This article details the differences in Tatlin's three dimensional reliefs, Malevich's paintings, and the ways that sought to show a wave of renewed enthusiasm and possibility in art and the potential of abstraction. This second article serves as an interesting insight into the generalized mindset that Tatlin and Malevich worked from, and the ways that they still differed in execution and in mindset. Overall, this article allows for a firm distinction between the Suprematists and the Constructivists.

Evaluation: These ideas that Chlenova presents are further expanded upon in Nisbet's studies, but Chlenova works to study the two in relation to each other, providing exhibition context for some of Tatlin's reliefs. This would be elaborating on the context that Nisbet touches on for his first section concerning the reliefs. However, this also allows a view of scholarship presenting these narratives together, which allows for context missing in Nisbet's scholarship.

Notes: This was the second of two consecutive articles in *Inventing Abstraction*, which served as a useful source and timeline of sorts to position the knowledge that both Chlenova and Nisbet present.

Chlenova, Masha. "Early Russian Abstraction, As Such." In *Inventing Abstraction 1910-1925 : How a Radical Idea Changed Modern Art*, 200-226. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd, 2012.

Project: In this brief study, "Early Russian Abstraction, As Such", Chlenova studies and draws attention to the early uses of performance and word in the ways that abstract Russian Art practices may have been formed and conceptualized, connecting to Nisbet's further connections with Khlebnikov and the ideology of the written word.

Analysis: This article highlights the importance of language and open-ended interpretations in specific verbiage used to describe aspects of the abstract movements of the time. It also delves into some of the more specific movements of Russian Abstraction, specifically Suprematism, giving it more context as a whole for its positioning in my conversation and analysis of Nisbet's article.

Evaluation: Overall, this article speaks to some other elements of the Russian Abstract movement, which allows for a better understanding of Russian art and the thought surrounding it. This feeds into valuable knowledge concerning Khlebnikov and, by extension, Tatlin. This source speaks to historical context and gives background to ideas Nisbet expands upon.

Notes: Lastly, the article discusses the impacts of Malevich's colleagues in a broad range of disciplines, and how the pieces he was inspired to make influenced his later *Architektons*, and future practices and contributions to the field of Suprematism.

Kachurin, Pamela. "Working (for) the State: Vladimir Tatlin's Career in Early Soviet Russia and the Origins of The Monument to the Third International." *Modernism/Modernity* 19 (January 2012): 19-41.

Project: Kachurin looks to study Tatlin through a lens of his career, with a particular focus on the agency he held as an artist and a powerful figure in the transformation of the Russian culture surrounding arts. She takes a stark and honest lens to understand who he was, what his impact was, and the ways that he had agency where others may not have.

Analysis: Kachurin provides details and clarifications not present in Nisbet's research, which becomes key to understanding Tatlin and his position in the art world. In addition to these provided details and context, Kachurin uses Lodder and Kiaer's research to further her own, and delves into further detail on Tatlin's individually manufactured objects, and tenure at various institutions across the changing landscape of Russia. Kachurin's research feels like a logical extension of Nisbet's research.

Evaluation: First and foremost, I believe that it is relevant and important to highlight a comparison between this article and Nisbet's article, as both are in different volumes of the same publication. This source, published two years after Nisbet's article, tackles Tatlin's employment in a larger context of Soviet Russia, with the intent of positioning him in an overtly political role. This feels like a logical extension of research from where Nisbet's article leaves off, as it tackles specific actions and involvement in the Moscow Department of Fine Arts and the various art schools of Russia. Another interesting aspect of this article is the lens of situating Tatlin in his own decisions. The portrayal of Tatlin varies significantly from that of Nisbet's article, and I believe lends more agency and historical context to Tatlin and the financial and artistic decisions he made during the period Nisbet discusses. Overall, this source is critical to much of my understanding of Tatlin and the details of his involvement in the political structuring of the art world, especially in and around the time Tatlin was working with the IZO and the Free Art Schools.

Notes: This was also in *Modernism/Modernity*, and appeared in the volume published 2 years after Nisbet's article was published. This can be seen as a genuine extension or a similar glimpse into scholarly research about the period of Russian Abstraction and application of the political lens to Vladimir Tatlin.

Kiaer, Christina. *Imagine No Possessions: The Socialist Objects of Russian Constructivism*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005.

Project: The project of Christina Kiaer's dissertation study on the movements of the Russian avant-garde are broad, and encompass a need to see and understand the

logical intersections between varying artists and various types of art present in the field of Russian Abstraction. Some of this ranges from individual artists, to protest and propaganda art, and further throughout the years Nisbet highlights.

This is a broad study, expanding on ideas presented in Lodder's study.

Analysis: Kiaer covers aspects of the 0.10 gallery exhibition, and overall, this source gave me clearer insight into this history of Russian art, and the implications of each artist and their impact. Kiaer also delves into the concept of propaganda art in Russia, which gave my arguments and understanding of Nisbet's article further depth. Kiaer's study sheds more light on popular reception at the time, and the deeper connections between artists and political movements. She also gives further context on the art schools of Russia, which Tatlin had heavy involvement with as a professor, and this in turn, provided context that Nisbet had been lacking. These intersections allow for more solid connections to be drawn, especially to political and propaganda movements and to the art world itself.

Evaluation: This source was essential to my research and positing of Nisbet's research in a larger field of study of the movements of Russian Abstraction. Overall, Kiaer's focus is broader than Nisbet's, but provides more depth and background, and useful insight from archival sources. This is arguably due to it being her dissertation study, whereas Nisbet's was a sidebar project to his own dissertation. However, there is an element of archival research here, which gives more detail and concrete evidence about the lives of Russian artists, specifically Tatlin and Malevich being my focuses.

Notes: Overall, as a researched dissertation study and application of language understanding, historical understanding, and archival study, this 2005 work allowed me to better understand the context and research preceding Nisbet's article.

Krauss, Rosalind. "Analytic Space: Futurism and Constructivism." In *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, 39-67. Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 1981.

Project: Krauss unpacks an understanding of abstract Russian art and sculpture, as well as in Futurist and in Constructivist thought, about the use of space in sculpture and the ways that the artist and audience can present space to their viewers. This understanding of space is present in both the literal and analytical space an object can contain, as well as working with the notions of space as the viewer understands what they cannot see: the conceptual analytic space that many sculptures in this movement relied on. This chapter covers the thought processes inherent in the way artists worked to present space, and in the ways that they could display and work with their audience's inherent understanding of an object and the space it holds, as well as the unseen implications of the object.

Analysis: This chapter begins with a brief reading of the Futurist Manifesto, bringing in the primary core ideals of motion and starkly contrasts them with the ways in which sculpture seems a counterintuitive medium for this movement. These sculptures represent objects or the use of spaces that are not present or realistically presented, but that the viewer has some subconscious awareness of without the direct viewing of this space or side. This applies to the use of transparency in glass and plastic, as well as the exposing of the walls of boxes or

glasses to show the interior in a more abstract way that the viewer's understood notion of space.

Evaluation: This source is structured well and has an understanding of spatial relationships that Nisbet works with and expands upon in his research. As it covers futurism transitioning into a larger movement of abstract thought in Russia, it sets the stage for Nisbet's work with expanding space into Tatlin's reliefs and the notion of space and time inherent to the *Monument to the Third International*.

Lodder, Christine. *Russian Constructivism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

Project: Lodder is one of, if not the first scholar to delve into the world of Russian Abstraction with her in-depth and archival study of the material. She also cites interviews conducted with surviving artists and the families of deceased artists to get the most in-depth account of the movements they worked within and their motivations. Lodder's work discusses narratives existing within Nisbet's time period, and discusses individual artists and their projects.

Analysis: This book is highly relevant to any study of the Russian Abstract movements, especially with Nisbet's article. Lodder covers the broadest scholarship of the Russian avant-garde, and works to situate all movements close to each other, and takes into account the unique standpoints these artists had. She does this by consulting surviving members of the art community and their families, and works with this research to establish a basis to work from for any other scholars exploring the field.

Evaluation: While Lodder does not quite so explicitly divide Tatlin's career and connect him to existing political narratives, her work elaborates on other background elements and sources of inspiration that Tatlin would have been working with. In addition, I believe that she brings important concepts of the organic form into discussion of Tatlin. Lodder discusses much of Tatlin's work through his own words and writing, which lends her interpretation and scholarship factual merit. Her work and scholarship is core to an understanding of Russian art and artists in this time period, and provides critical insight for understanding Tatlin beyond Nisbet's scholarship.

Notes: This, in addition to Camilla Gray's scholarship, is important for the critical groundwork which is laid in the field of Russian abstraction. This scholarship is particularly relevant to me, as it is more than a singular article, and expands from the research which had once been articles in the early 1960s. It was, like Kiaer's book, a dissertation study, accounting for the expansive knowledge and research presented.

Nisbet, James. "Material Propositions on the Individual/Collective: The Work of Vladimir Tatlin." *Modernism/Modernity* 17 (January 2010): 109-134.

Project: This source covers his various reliefs, his time at the Moscow Department of Fine Arts during the restructuring of the arts enacted by Lunacharsky, and his time spent at varying universities making proposals for everyday projects. The overall thesis is primarily centered on the Bolshevik ideal of the individual and the collective, and the way that these two bodies in society feed into and inspire each other.

Analysis: This source, as a primary focus for my conversation and critical reflection, was selected for the implications of Tatlin's positioning in Russia during and throughout a series of revolutions and political crises, and how this affected the work he created and some of the major movements in his own artistic expression, drawing a common thread between three primary periods. Nisbet ties the ideas of the individual and the collective back into the principles of the structuring of his reliefs, into the ideology and utilization of the proposed *Monument to the Third International*, and to the items he would design for the manufacturing of everyday people throughout the country, as well as these reliefs. Nisbet also makes a point of mentioning the ties to the industrial and highlighting the people who would inspire and collaborate with Tatlin throughout his thesis, and the ways he would think through his creation and ideology.

Evaluation: Overall, this article is one that outlines a recent addition to the structuring of articles and research of the Russian avant garde up until this point, and provides interesting political context to a discussion of Tatlin specifically where research had been relatively scarce. It is an interesting read, and requires further elaboration on the political, in details left out or not mentioned, and could be longer and more elaborate overall. However, I would argue that the way that this article argues its points and discusses its material makes it all the more interesting as a primary source to tackle in the field of scholarly analysis of the Russian avant-garde.

Notes: The first two sections of analysis are strong, with the last faltering. This source primarily relies on Khlebnikov and some historical cross-referencing. This, to me, makes the source all the more interesting in the world of potential scholarship.

Petrova, E. N, and Gosudarstvennyĭ russkiĭ muzeĭ (Saint Petersburg, Russia). *The Russian Avant-Garde : Representation and Interpretation*. St. Petersburg: Palace Editions, 2001.

Poggi, Christine. *In Defiance of Painting: Cubism, Futurism, and the Invention of Collage*. Yale University Press, 1992.

Project: Poggi's book covers Cubism and Futurism movements, and also discusses analysis of the occupied space of these types of art. As Tatlin had been in Paris around 1913-1914, and had taken inspiration from much of the work he saw to continue the legacy of expansion into space and abstract thought and concept, Poggi's scholarship can be, in part, used as a way to interpret some of the methods Tatlin may have been seeing and considering.

Analysis: Poggi speaks to the way that audiences connect various aspects of Picasso's assemblages, and how they flow into each other, each holding their own value and merit, but also come together in a cohesive whole that is more than the sum of its parts. This is an analysis that can also be seen in Nisbet's scholarship, and in his understanding of *faktura* and the notions of the individual and collective in Russian society. This situating of Picasso's work allows for the audiences to see the process and the tenuous nature of construction, usually through archival photographs and recorded history through the artist and his critics. This overall lends to the inspiration that Russian artists may have taken to their studios, and contributed to interpretations of the notion of *faktura*.

Evaluation: As a prominent art historian, and a scholar of Cubism and of Futurism,

Poggi's article, while in most cases not directly addressing Tatlin and Malevich, provides useful context for a larger understanding of the art world during the time period abstract movements were surfacing, and how they influenced each other. In addition, there is the aspect of assemblage and impermanence introduced in her scholarship, which becomes prominent in the knowledge of Tatlin and his process, and possible intended interpretations of his work. Overall, while not directly connected to Tatlin and his work, Poggi is a valuable source of scholarship to consider when thinking about motivations, concurrent narratives in the art world, inspiration shared through artists, and the understanding of two separate artists in two separate political climates.

Notes: Poggi is one of the scholars on this bibliography who tends to be less directly associated with Russian Abstraction. Her work, in fact, nearly entirely diverges from this notion. Instead, she works with Cubism and Futurism. However, as art movements and interpretations by scholars interact and overlap in the field, her scholarly contributions are noteworthy in this case.

Sarab'ianov, Dmitrii Vladimirovich. "The Avantgarde." In *Russian Art: From Neoclassicism to the Avant Garde 1800-1917: Painting, Sculpture, Architecture*, 269-292. New York: H.N. Abrams, 1990.

Project: This source serves as more of an early overview of the Russian avant garde. Its primary relevance is within the context of Dmitrii Vladimirovich Sarab'ianov's involvement as an art historical figure in Russian art history. Sarab'ianov was known to write about Liubov Popova, Malevich, and other prominent names in

the Russian avant-garde, and lived from 1923-2013, allowing him to see this history through a first-person lens.

Analysis: In this chapter of a larger study, Sarab'ianov studies a wide range of artists from the Russian avant-garde, and provides context for many artist's versions of abstraction, and how each reached abstraction in their own unique way. Malevich and Tatlin are my primary focuses within this chapter, and Sarab'ianov gives some context as to the ways in which they originally approached art, and the sources of inspiration they drew from. Both artists ended up in completely different forms of abstract art, as Sarab'ianov notes, but Nisbet's research builds on this more, suggesting a connection between the ideology present in the two. The ways that they are introduced and explored in this work is surface level, and yet, allows for a brief history of their involvement in the field.

Evaluation: Both artists, Malevich and Tatlin are covered in this chapter, as they are situated in a larger narrative of the Russian avant-garde. As this happens, they are situated within the context of their other contemporaries and the people who would take inspiration and influence from their work. Seeing as an overview is presented, there is an inkling of the individual/collective narrative that Nisbet presents and works with. This ideology of the individual and collective, while not explicitly stated, can be glimpsed in sections of this chapter. Each artist mentioned drew from a collective of other artists within the movement, but took their own individual approach to the topic at hand. Overall, this source gives basic background context for various artists and the movements of the avant-garde in Russia from its early days to 1917.

Notes: This source is much broader in terms of the people and topics that it focuses on. I believe that it has the least of the specific information necessary, as it is situated within a book that is a broad survey of over a century of Russian art. However, the context of that previous century and the ways that it inspired Sarab'ianov's research and understanding I feel is critical to the remainder of his research.

Sharp, Jane A. "Beyond Orientalism: Russian and Soviet Modernism on the Periphery of Empire." In *Russian Art and the West : A Century of Dialogue in Painting, Architecture, and the Decorative Arts*, 112-133. Dekalb Illinois: Northern Illinois University Press, 2007.

Project: Jane Sharp's chapter is speaking to ways that "stylistic heterogeneity" is working against commonly accepted narratives within Russian art, and how the Russian Abstraction movement is breaking specifically from the expectations of Russia at the time, rather than focusing on the ways that Russian art from this period broke standards of European art at the time. It is a historical and narrative reframing that allows for the audience to think through the pluralism and diversity of the visual culture in Russia, as well as presenting the thought processes that allow for a separation between the more "civilized" Western Europe and the more "Barbaric" East, finally advocating for a view with more flexible and fluid boundaries of definition between this East and West.

Analysis: This chapter, in a book concerning a broader range of studies about Russian Art especially as it pertains to the West, discusses art typically seen in Modernism in Russia, while trying to divorce the changes being made from the typical Western presented narrative. This flexible view would allow for a better

understanding of Eastern art and the ways that artists within these movements interacted with their surroundings. This chapter's situation in a larger book allows for a context of other viewpoints and comparisons of Russian art. This situates not only the art and time period itself, but also the scholarship within a larger narrative of research and work.

Evaluation: The connection to Nisbet's article presents itself more in interpretations and receptions of work, and acts as a reframing lens for understanding Russian Abstract art. I find this source to be an interesting perspective on the primitive qualities that Nisbet mentions in his analysis of the reliefs that Tatlin does. This also allows for me to take a moment to separate the narrative of Tatlin in Paris from the narrative of Tatlin in a changing Russia, and plays a larger role in Nisbet's thesis. To elaborate, Nisbet, while presenting the historical narrative of Tatlin visiting Picasso and Paris, primarily focuses on Tatlin as a Russian citizen in a period of upheaval and change. I feel that Sharp's chapter in this book allows for the viewer to begin to untangle preconceived notions about the creation and inspiration for Tatlin's art, while also highlighting narratives about the viewpoints of Russian art in the western world.

Notes: Overall, the idea of orientalism, but focused on Russia, is an interesting one that allows audiences to reframe notions and perceptions surrounding the research and analysis of Russian abstract art. In addition, it brings unique narratives to the addition of the "oriental" and the application to Russia. As Russia is seen as either European, Asian, both, or neither, it is an interesting lens to reframe the narratives surrounding the predominant viewpoints of art and political structuring.