LEF LITERARY POLITICS:
A CRITICAL SURVEY OF THE JOURNAL
THE LEFT FRONT OF THE ARTS 1923-1925

by

Lawrence C. Fowler

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Slavic Studies
The University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

© June 1991

National Library of Canada
Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

Canadian Theses Service
Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-76905-X

Canada

LEF LITERARY POLITICS: A CRITICAL SURVEY OF THE JOURNAL THE LEFT FRONT OF THE ARTS 1923-1925

BY

LAWRENCE C. FOWLER

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

© 1991

Permission has been granted to the LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA to lend or sell copies of this thesis, to the NATIONAL LIBRARY OF CANADA to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film, and UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS to publish an abstract of this thesis.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Professor Myroslav Shkandrij for his insights and his considerable investment of time on this thesis.

A special thanks to my wife, Rita, for her patience, understanding, and help, without which this thesis would not have been written.

Table of Contents

Page

Transliteration Note....iii

Foreword....iv

Chapter

Introduction....1

Literary Politics....2

Influence of Futurism....5

1. The Development of Futurism....12

Avant-garde Influence....14

Emergence of LEF....24

The Seven Issues of LEF....27

2. LEF's Critique of Art....33

Marxist Orientation....33

LEF's Critique....41

3. LEF's Artistic Programme - Жизнестроение....52

The Aim....52

The Historical Foundation....53

The Cultural Battle Front....58

Language Politics....62

The Programme: Artistic Experimentation....68

Conclusion....71

Appendixes

A. English Translations....77

B. Table of Contents for LEF 1923-25....93

C. Transliteration of the Table of Contents for LEF 1923-25....100

D. "Не торгуйте Лениным!"....105

E. Statistics on LEF....106

Bibliography....107

TRANSLITERATION NOTE

The scheme below is the System III transliteration of Russian. Please refer to J. Thomas Shaw's The Transliteration of Modern Russian for English-Russian Publications (Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1967).

RUSSIAN	ENGLISH	RUSSIAN	ENGLISH
А	A	Р	R
Б	B	С	S
В	V	Т	T
Г	G	У	U
Д	D	Ф	F
Е	E	Х	X
Ё	E	Ц	C
Ж	Ž	Ч	Č
З	Z	Ш	Š
И	I	Щ	ŠČ
Й	J	Ъ	"
К	K	Ы	Y
Л	L	Ь	'
М	M	Э	È
Н	N	Ю	JU
О	O	Я	JA
П	P		

This scheme has been used for the transliteration of all names, places, and titles of books, articles and journals. The scheme will be changed when there is a standardized common usage.

Block quotations from LEF have been given in the original Russian. An English translation can be found in Appendix A.

Russian texts in the footnotes have been given in the original. A translation is available in Appendix A.

The style manuel used is: William Giles Campbell et al., Form and Style, 8th Edition (Boston: Houghton Miffin, 1990).

FOREWORD

The journal ЛЕВЫЙ ФРОНТ ИСКУССТВ, THE LEFT FRONT OF THE ARTS, commonly known by the acronym LEF, was a unique development in the history of Russian literature. Around this journal gathered a diverse group of artists: Futurists, Constructivists, Suprematists, and Formalists. The group LEF sought to perform a task for the communist state that it felt was parallel to the work of the Revolution, namely, to free the new communist state from the influence of the art of the old order, of the Czarist state. LEF combined avant-garde idealism and political commitment into a programme that would form its literary politics.

Russian Futurism first attracted my attention when taking a course in Russian Modernism. The typically idealistic avant-garde stance of Futurism possessed a quality that had not been present in preceding Russian literary movements. Instead of wishing to change or compete within the existing literary framework, Futurism attempted to effect change through a struggle against the literary canon and the 'daily-life' of contemporary society. Although this side of the avant-garde was not unique to Russian Futurism, as it has been well document in other European avant-garde movements, Futurism's revolt against the past proved to be an anticipation of its later position within LEF: the desire to remove the influence of the art of the past from the contemporary communist society. LEF offered a way out of the cultural stagnation that Russia was experiencing prior to World War I.

LEF had it roots in the Russian avant-garde Futurist movement of the pre-World War I era. Futurism was born out of a strong reaction against both classicism and contemporary Russian culture of the early twentieth-century. Futurism was at this point a narrowly defined art group,

basically apolitical and socially rebellious. Futurism's contribution to Russian literature was significant. The manifesto «Пощёчина общественному вкусу» 1912, "A Slap in the Face of Public Taste," marked that rise of Russian Futurism. While "A Slap" in itself was not remarkable, it did reveal the spirit of Futurism, which would remain at the centre of Futurism through to LEF, from 1912 to 1925, namely, a rejection of the cultural heritage, and the desire to replace it with a consciously constructed art form.

From 1912 to 1917 Futurism was not politically aligned. The success of the Revolution had a profound effect on Futurism. The Revolution gave Futurism a new lease on life as it provided the formative organizational exerpeinces (IZO) and the political orientation (Marxism) for the development of what would become LEF's literary politics.

Immediately after the Revolution, the recognised leader of Russian Futurism, Vladimir Majakovskij, was elated and very hopeful for the prospects of the movement. Futurism was the most orgaised art group in 1917, and the only group that openly supported the state. While the old Czarist Academy of Art had been abolished in 1917, the newly formed Union of Art, which was composed mainly from the old members of the Academy, refused to support the Bolshevik government. The government was faced with a dilemma: allow the Union of Art to continue to control the cultural affairs of the country even though it did not support the state and could possibly sabotage the Bolshevik cause, or, turn to the Futurist group, which unreservedly supported the state. The later option was chosen and the Futurist group, along with members from other avant-garde groups, joined the new Отдел изобразительных искусств, The Section of Fine Arts, known by the acronym IZO. The Futurist view quickly became the dominant view of IZO, and Trockij wrote in Literature and Revolution, that Futurism ran IZO virtually unchallenged. IZO had been responsible for the cultural development and education in the country, a task which had been successfully

carried out.

The political orientation that would be central to Futurism in the 1920s, and also to LEF, would be Marxism. Futurism saw the possibility to win the battle with the cultural heritage and 'daily-life' through the Revolution. IZO published two newspapers, Искусство комуны, [Art of the Commune], and Искусство, [Art]. Both newspapers presented ideas that would later develop into LEF's literary politics. In addition to continuing the battle with the art of the past, Futurism declared here for the first time that it was the art of the Revolution and that it performed a cultural role that was parallel to the role that Bolshevism had played in politics.

The most important new characteristic that was evident in Futurism during the early days of the Revolution was that it attempted to present a positive programme. Prior to the Revolution there had been lillte evidence of a constructive Futurist programme for the arts. However, within IZO the Futurists not only disseminated their artistic theories in the newspapers Art of the Commune and Art, but also acted upon a positive programme through their art purchases and education programmes.

The New Economic Policy [NEP] of 1921 brought the influence of Futurism within IZO to an end. Opposition to the Futurist influence in IZO had begun almost immediately after their installation and continued until their removal. Although NEP ushered in relaxed publishing privileges, it would not be until 1923 that the journal LEF would begin publication.

LEF was a unique journal in that its layout displayed all the developmental stages of Futurism. The journal was divided into three major sections: programme, practical, and theory. The division of the journal could be seen as corresponding to the three stages of Futurism: the narrow avant-garde years 1912-1915, the organization experience within IZO 1918-1920, and the beginning of the journal LEF itself.

LEF was the culmination of avant-gardism and political commitment.

LEF sought to present the basis for its rejection of the cultural heritage and a foundation for the construction of a new culture. For this purpose LEF used two works of Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, and An Introduction to Political Economy. The extensive use of these two works allowed LEF to anchor its opposition toward the art of the past in an acknowledged authority, namely, Marx. It also allowed LEF to claim a legitimcy of sorts for its theory of culture building, and of the necessity for the removal of one culture and its replacement by another.

With Marx as its sourse, LEF made clear the reasons for the need to remove the influence of bourgeois culture from contemporary society. LEF argued that art was political, and that the æsthetic was the politcal arm of art. In this way LEF proposed that all art was political, and that all art was the art of the ruling class of society. Therefore, the art of Czarist Russia had been that of the nobility and/or the rising bourgeoisie. The art forms, as well as the content of art itself, was bourgeois. It reflected bourgeois values, revealed a bourgeois understanding, and therefore, was unable to capture the dynamics of the new ruling class of Russia, namely, the proletariat.

The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte lent credibility to LEF on the question of the removal of an old culture and its replacement with another, as well as the effects of using artistic forms that were not the natural product of one's own time and political situation. Marx had observed that the removal of feudalism from Europe had been accomplished through the transplanting of art forms that were of another era. The borrowed forms and symbols lent meaning and gave content to the struggles at hand, but invariably they were removed when their usefulness was outlived. Thus, LEF had historical proof of both the possibility of removing an unwanted culture from society, and of having another develop upon the bones of the old.

An Introduction to Political Economy allowed LEF to attack the art of

the past with historical materialism as the theoretical foundation. LEF was able to historically place various art forms according to the economic and social development of the particular society. Thus, LEF was able to call for an end to the "cult of the past" based on the relative rudimentary economic relationships of ancient Greece, or even of Czarist Russia for that matter.

Armed with these two works of Marx, LEF attempted to justify its literary politics and to ground its avant-garde idealism in reality. However, LEF's interpretation of Marx was not shared by the state nor by other literary groups. This difference in interpretation would result in an artistic and political conflict between LEF and the government, and LEF and other literary groups.

While LEF had continually claimed itself to be the art of the Revolution, and had accepted Marx as the basis for its literary politics, the government and the nation remainded sceptical and did not support the journal. It was clear that the state did not agree with LEF's literary politics; it did not agree that bourgeois art had to be removed from a position of influence within Soviet society. The government did not want to build a proletarian culture upon the bones of bourgeois culture, but out of the fertile ground of bourgeois culture.

The journal LEF quietly died in January 1925, twenty-two months after it had begun publication. The chief editor, Majakovskij, had already departed for his trip to America, and once there declared that Futurism had died. It is unknown if he meant that statement in the same fashion as he had in 1915: "Yes, Futurism as a particular group has died, but it has poured into all of us like a flood...Today everyone is a Futurist. The people is a Futurist. FUTURISM HAS GRASPED RUSSIA IN A MORTAL GRIP!" Considering the fate of Futurism from 1925 to 1930, one can assume that in America he meant it literally.

LEF's literary politics was born out of the political climate of the

Revolution. The Revolution had offered a means for LEF to realise its dream of overcoming classicism and 'daily-life'. The articles of LEF still have relevance today. They anticipated the rise of the development of the 'political unconscious' within literary criticism, as well as continuing the investigation into the role of the æsthetic in art and its effect on society.

L. Fowler
26 June 1991

> Читающим наше Новое Первое Неожиданное. Только мы - лицо нашего Времени. Рог времени трубит нами в словесном искусстве. Прошлое тесно. Академия и Пушкин непонятнее гиероглифов.
> Бросить Пушкина, Достоевского, Толстого и проч. и проч. с Парохода Современности. Кто не забудет своей первой любви, не узнает последней.
> Пощёчина общественному вкусу, 1912.[1]

Introduction

Vladimir Markov's Russian Futurism,[2] a detailed examination of the various groups within the Russian literary milieu of the pre-Revolutionary years, paved the way for further study of the Russian avant-garde. Halina Stephan's book, „LEF" and The Left Front of the Arts[3] continued in the tradition of Markov. Stephan's work can be seen as the continuation of the history of Russian Futurism begun by Markov. Her book and articles examine the literary trends of Futurism after the Revolution and through the 1920s. Bengt Jangfeldt's book, Majakovskij and Futurism 1917-1921,[4] offers many insights into the continuity of Futurist activity from the

---

1. Русская литература: дореволюционный период, ред. Н.А. Трифонов, (Москва: Гос. учебно-педаг. министерство просвещения РСФСР, 1962) , 455. Please see Appendix A for English translations of all Russian texts.

2. Vladimir Markov, Russian Futurism: A History (Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press, 1968.).

3. Halina Stephan, „LEF" and The Left Front of the Arts (Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 1981.).

4. Bengt Jangfeldt, Majakovskij and Futurism 1917-1921 (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1976.).

Revolution to the publication of the journal, ЛЕФ - ЛЕВЫЙ ФРОНТ ИСКУССТВ [LEF - THE LEFT FRONT OF THE ARTS].

This study will examine the Futurist politico-literary theory and its development into what the LEF group felt was a new world view. The essential nature of Futurism could be summed up as a revolt against the imposed artistic methods and the values of bourgeois society. The 'revolt' against the past, a feature of the avant-garde influence within LEF, developed into both a severe critique of contemporary art and the introduction of a revolutionary æsthetic. The new æsthetic, supported by its critique of contemporary art, formed LEF's literary politics.

Literary Politics

This thesis will discuss the 'literary politics' of the Russian avant-garde as it was formulated in the journal, LEF. The LEF group, which was composed of Futurists, Constructivists, Suprematists, and Formalists among others, maintained that the æsthetic was the ideological side of the arts.[5] In LEF's view, art and culture were not independent from politics, but influenced each other and were interdependent.[6] LEF proposed that through a conscious change of the æsthetic, it could fundamentally change the social and moral values of the new Soviet citizen. Literary politics, for LEF, was the conscious

---

5. Н. Горлов, "О футуризмах и футуризме." ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 6.

6. Gleb Struve has written that the "so-called LEF (Left Front of Literature) of which Mayakovsky was one of the leaders and which united mostly Futurists, who sought a political basis for their action." Gleb Struve, Russian Literature Under Lenin and Stalin 1917-1953 (Oklahoma: Univ. of Oklahoma, 1971), 75. Struve's point of view does not take into account the essential feature of LEF's literary politics, that the social, political and cultural spheres of society are interdependent.

application of new ideological values for the social purpose of producing a new citizen, and a new culture, that would be in tune with the new Soviet state. The production of a new culture and of a new citizenry, was likened to any other form of production; innovation was the key in the arts as well as in industry.[7] For LEF there was no division between public and private values, nor between literary theory and literary politics, nor art and life;[8] LEF united politics and culture into the programme of the Left Front of the Arts.

LEF's literary politics, or the application of a literary and political theory in the Soviet culture, had two distinct features: rejection of the traditional role of the æsthetic in Russian society, and the introduction of a revolutionary new æsthetic that proposed a new role for the æsthetic, that of 'life-building' [жизнестроение - žiznestroenie]. LEF proposed a social function for the æsthetic, one that was interventionist as opposed to the notion of the æsthetic as being independent of the temporal world. The new æsthetic would be multi-dimensional: social, political, and artistic. This radical new æsthetic would be the core of its literary politics, and would find expression with its programme for the construction of a new society. LEF formulated its literary politics within the pages of the journal, LEF.

The writers, theoreticians, and frequent contributors to the journal,

---

7. Борис Кушнер, "Организаторы искусства," ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 102.

8. "Мы -- работники левой культуры -- этот чердак намерены разрушить. Дело революции не шестичасовое, не только от 10-ти до 4-х. Смешно и безобразно и невозможно; просто нельзя: обнажать прием в политике и экономике, оставляя его стыдливо завуалированным в культуре и быту... Левая политика властно требует левой культуры, левого быта." М. Левидов, "От 10-ти до 4-х и от 4-х до 10-ти." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 152.

LEF, will be referred to as LEF. As Bengt Jangfeldt noted, Futurism had been used "vaguely by the critics to denote all avant-garde artists and poets - as a synonym for 'leftist', a term that was no more exact. This meant that all 'left-wing artists' were called 'Futurists', whether they were 'real' Futurists, or Cubists, Suprematists, Constructivists, etc., or simply avant-garde artists with no special label."[9] The 'Futurists' within IZO (Отдел изобразительных искусств - Otdel izobrazitel'nyx iskusstv, the Section of Fine Arts) resigned themselves to this designation, and even began to refer to themselves by that name.[10] The two points that had united the members of IZO had been their support of the Bolshevik government and their desire to rebuild the culture of Soviet Russia.

The cultural life of Russia had been threatened by World War I, the Revolution, Civil War and famine. The main task of IZO was to organize art production and education.[11] The members of LEF were similarly united in the cause of founding a new art, and of building a communist society.

However, there is also a third reason for the use of LEF to denote the group around the journal, LEF. The chief editor of LEF, Vladimir Majakovskij, played a leading role in the journal. As the chief editor, he provided continuity and unity: the articles that appeared in LEF were either within the general literary position of LEF, or were a part of the ongoing literary discussion of LEF regarding the development of a revolutionary æsthetic.

---

9. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 11.

10. Bengt Jangfeldt, "Russian Futurism 1917-1919," in Art, Society and Revolution: Russia 1917-1921. Nils Åke Nilsson, ed. (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1979), 113.

11. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 11.

Influence of Futurism

The literary political programme formulated through LEF had its roots in the pre-1914 Russian Futurist movement. The Russian Revolution gave Futurism a new lease on life. The social and political conditions within Soviet Russia presented Futurism with a heretofore unimaginable possibility, to attain power and influence within Russia in order to realise its artistic ambitions.

Russian Futurism has rarely received the critical analysis and attention that other literary movements have enjoyed. Unfortunately the term Futurism has become too undifferentiated and sometimes pejorative, owing partly to the identification of Italian Futurism with Fascism, and of Russian Futurism with Socialist Realism. Stephan, for example, writes: "Seen historically, the poetic program of the Lef group has the questionable distinction of being the first Soviet predecessor of the later Socialist Realism. The Lef blend of technicism, utopianism, and utilitarianism was matched in its dogmaticism and its universality only by Socialist Realism."[12] In fact, there were several distinct Futurist movements in Europe and Russia: Vorticism in Britian, Italian Futurism, Russian Futurism, and Ukrainian Futurism. With regards to Russian Futurism, the focus of scholars has been continually placed on its bohemian nature, its ultra-rationalistic artistic philosophy, its lack of respect for the art of the past, and its desire to reconstruct human nature in a fundamental way.

This focus is understandable as these were the qualities that were most easily accessible. However, the focus has been misdirected: investigations of Futurism have been used by literary critics as a

---

12. Stephan, 96.

defence of Western culture against the onslaught of an avant-garde movement which had declared openly its desire to 'destroy' the old, traditional values. However, Russian Futurism was above all an artistic and literary movement, and the claims to destroy the old values and to throw over the art of the past should be taken more figuratively than literally, more in terms of going beyond [преодолеть] through assimilation [усвоение] than to destroy. LEF did not support the physical destruction of cultural or artistic artifacts. LEF sought to remove the influence they had on the nation.

After the Revolution Futurism claimed that there was a 'kinship' between Communism and Futurism:

> The Futurists insisted that, whereas Communism had offered a new political and economic frameword, Futurism would shape the culture of the new state, and the consciousness of the people.[13]

Circumstances had worked in favor of Futurism. The old czarist Academy of Art had been abolished after the Revolution. The new Union of Artists [Союз деятелей иксусств - Sojuz dejatelej iskusttv] demanded complete autonomy from the Bolshevik government, and rejected any form of control. Of all the members of the Union of Artists only one, Vladimir Majakovskij, openly supported the direct influence of the Party.[14]

The cultural crisis was considered extremely serious. The Commissar of Enlightenment, Anatolij Lunačarskij, was faced with a dilemma: either trust the Union of Artists to continue its role in the

---

13. Stephan, 2.

14. "[Нам] нужно приветствовать новую власть и войти с ней в контакт." Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 32.

centre of Soviet Russia's cultural life, even though it was openly hostile to the Bolshevik government, or to turn to the Futurists who were the only organised group that had openly supported the government.[15] If the Union of Artists remained opposed to the government they could, possibly, sabotage the development of a new culture and then in turn threaten the political power of the Bolshevik government.[16] "At this stage, Narkompros [Народный комитет просвещения - The People's Commissariat of Enlightenment] regarded the cooperation of the Futurists as important for the revival of Russian cultural life under Soviet auspices."[17] The Futurists had considerable influence, and according to Leon Trockij, they ruled IZO virtually unchallenged.[18]

The Futurists within IZO published two newspapers: Искусство Коммуны [Art of the Commune] and Искусство [Art].[19] These were not the first newspapers that the Futurists had published. On the 15th of March, 1918, appeared the Газета футуристов [The Futurist Gazette] that marked the first Futurist endeavour in the post-Revolutionary period. It was a privately funded paper, based on the assumption that the first issue would provide the necessary resources for the others to follow.[20] In this newspaper the Futurists called for a 'revolution of the spirit' and supported a rejection of the old cultural tradition.[21] The

---

15. Stephan, 4.

16. Vahan Barooshian, Russian Cubo-Futurism, 1910-1930 (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), 116.

17. Stephan, 4.

18. Barooshian, 117.

19. Art of the Commune (Petrograd: Dec., 1918-April, 1919; 19 issues) ; Art (Moscow: Jan.-Dec., 1919: 8 issues). Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 34.

20. Lev Grinkrug supplied the funds for the first issue. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 17.

21. Stephan, 3.

Revolution had presented a change in the pre-1914 Futurist programme, instead of merely rejecting the art of the past, Futurism became concerned with a positive programme of construction. Futurism had moved beyond the exclusively negative criticism of Russian culture and moved towards a positive, constructive programme. This change in Futurist thinking was first evident in The Futurist Gazette.

There were three theoretical positions that were published in The Futurist Gazette: freedom of the arts from the government, the freedom of access to the means of art [enrollment in the Academy had been restricted under Czarism], and proper funding for the arts.[22] These points are easily understandable in the context of Futurism's past under Czarism, when the Academy of Art was a czarist Institution, when Futurism had limited means to a press, and when Futurists were unable to sell their works to maintain themselves.

On the 7th of December, 1918, the newspaper Art of the Commune appeared. Osip Brik, Nikolai Punin and Natan Al'tman were editors, and Vladimir Majakovskij, Kazimir Malevič, Mark Chagal, Viktor Šklovskij, Ivan Punin and Boris Kušner were contributors. It was here that the Futurists first declared themselves the rightful representatives of the Revolution, and performing a function in cultural affairs that was parallel to the Bolsheviks in politics.[23] Art of the Commune was important in the discussion and development of the literary politics of the later LEF group. Majakovskij, in his petition for the publication of the journal, Новый ЛЕФ [New LEF] wrote that it would "continue the work begun by the newspaper Art of the

---

22. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 20.
23. Jangfedlt, Majakovskij, 36.

Commune in 1918-1919 and the journal LEF 1923-1924.[24] The major points of LEF's literary politics, rejection of the role of the art of the past, experimentation, the creation of a new world view, all made their appearance in Art of the Commune in 1918-1919.

Russian Futurism had changed in the years following World War I. It had developed from an avant-garde literary group with a narrow artistic focus into an avant-garde literary movement intent on contributing to the building a new consciousness and a new world view for the Soviet citizen. Majakovskij wrote on the changing role of Futurism as early as 1915:

> The First part of our programme of destruction we consider to have been accomplished. That is why you should not be surprised if today you see in our hands not the clown's rattle but the architect's drawing...Yes, Futurism as a particular group has died, but it has poured into all of us like a flood...Today everyone is a Futurist. The people is a Futurist. FUTURISM HAS GRASPED RUSSIA IN A MORTAL GRIP![25]

Out of the bohemian 'futurist evenings' where bombastic ultimatums were hurled forth by men with animals painted on their faces, there developed politically-directed and socially-focused builders of a new consciousness, of a new Soviet citizen.

> Russian Futurism had come a long way since the carefree days of Bohemian brawls in literary cafés and of preoccupation with 'trans-sense language'. After 1917 it had grown increasingly ideologically and socially minded,

---

24. "...продолжать работу, началую газетой 'Искусство Коммуны' в 1918-1919 гг. и журналом 'Леф' 1923-24 гг." Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 34.

25. Igor Golomstock, Totalitarian Art, trans. Robert

> intent on matching revolutionary form with an equally revolutionary content, and on participation in 'social construction'. In the neo-Futurist esthetics of Lef, passionate concern with the word, with formal experimentation, was wedded to the pragmatic slogan of the 'social command'.[26]

Futurism had become conscious of what its artistic contribution to society ought to be, and sought to implement it; and it was critical of the contribution which earlier art had made to society in the past. Futurism had come to the conclusion that the art preceeding the Futurists had proved lacking. The new art, one with a self-conscious productive role to fulfill in society, found its theoretical formulation in the journal, LEF.

In the early days of the Revolution, Futurism had an easier time effecting change in the new Soviet society than after the implementation of the New Economic Policy [NEP]. IZO allowed the Futurists to disseminate their artistic and social programmes through the journal and newspaper that it published with government funds. The Futurists within IZO reorganized art education throughout the country, and purchased art they wanted.

The unstable economic environment, partly the result of revolution and civil war, caused a shift in the government's view of both the free market and its support for the avant-garde. NEP proved to be two-fold, economical and cultural. The Soviet government opted for a removal of the avant-garde from IZO and the implementation of NEP. LEF was unrepentant in its opposition to NEP, a position that

---

Chandler (London: Collins Harvill, 1990), 8.

26. Victor Erlich, Russian Formalism, 3rd edition (London: Yale Univ. Press, 1981), 111-112.

was expressed in its journal, and which was unchanged through the 1920s.

Almost immediately after NEP Majakovskij and Brik, on 12 November 1921, sought the opportunity to publish a journal, claiming that the avant-garde did not have the same access to a journal as did other groups through the journals Красная Новь [Red Virgin Soil] and Печать и Революция [The Press and Revolution].[27] After fourteen months the journal, LEF, was approved.

LEF's literary politics focused on the development of an interventionist æsthetic that would be socially useful to the new communist state. Although its development spanned eleven years, it was presented as a complete theory of 'literary politics' in the journal, LEF.

This thesis will investigate the development of LEF's literary politics as it was formualted in the journal, LEF. Chapter One will discuss the emergence of LEF in the general history of the avant-garde and Futurism's place within that history.

Chapter Two will examine LEF's critique of art. The infamous Futurist avant-garde stand of 'rejecting the art of the past' had been given a political significance with the addition of a Marxist perspective to LEF's critique of culture.

Chapter Three will discuss LEF's literary politics and its proposed application.

---

27. О. Землякова и Е. Погорельская, "К истории выхода первого номера журнала «ЛЕФ»," Вопросы литературы, 7 (1983): 181.

> I. Отделение исусства от государства. Уничтожение покровительства привилегий и контроля в области искусства. Долой дипломы, звания, официальные посты и чины.
> II. Передачу всех материальных средств искусства: театров, капелл, выставочных помещений и зданий академии и художественных школ - в руки самих мастеров искусства для равноправного пользования ими всего народа икусства.
> III. Всеобщее художественное образование ибо мы верим, что основы грядущего свободного искусства могут выйти только из недр демократической России, до сего времени лишь алкавшей хлеба.
> "Манифест Летучей Федерации Футуристов," Газета Футуристов, 1918. [28]

Chapter One

The Development of Futurism

The journal, LEF, was one in a number of attempts to spread Futurist ideas to the public. In the short period between 1912 and the beginning of World War I, Russian Futurist activities were quite active. There were eleven publications.[29] The pre-Revolutionary

---

28. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 20. Please see Appendix A for all English translations of Russian texts.

29. The publications were: Poščečina obščestvennomu vkusu, 1912; Sadok sudej II, 1913; Sojuz molodeži, 1913; Trebnik troix, 1913; Doxlaja luna, 1913; Troe, 1913; Zatyčka, 1913; Futuristy "Gileja" sbornik Moloko kobylic, 1914; Futuristy: Rykajuščij Parnas, 1914; Futuristy: Pervyj žurnal russkix futuristov, No. 1-2, 1914; Doxlaja luna, 2d ed., 1914. Markov, 421-22.

Futurist activity had been acknowledged by LEF in 1923 and by Majakovskij in 1926 (when he applied for permission to publish Novij LEF) as an incomplete stage of Futurist development. This point had been made clear in the first issue of LEF:

> Революция переместила театр наших критических действий.
>
> Мы должны пересмотреть нашу тактику.
>
> [...] Наш прошлый лозунг: „стоять на глыбе слова. „Мы" среди моря свиста и негодования".
>
> Сейчас мы ждем лишь признания верности нашей эстетической работы, чтобы с радостью растворить маленькое „мы" искусства в огромном „мы" коммунизма.
>
> Но мы очистили наше старое „мы":
>
> от всех пытающихся революцию искусства - часть всей октябрьской воли - обратить в оскар-уайльдовское само-услаждение эстетикой ради эстетки, бунтом ради бунта; от тех, кто берет от эстетической революции только внешность случайных приемов борьбы,
>
> от тех, кто возводит отдельные этапы нашей борьбы в новый канон и трафарет,
>
> от тех, кто разжижая наши вчерашние лозунги, стараются засахариться блюстителями поседевшего новаторства, находя своим успокоенным пегесам уютные кофейные стоила,
>
> от тех, кто плетется в хвосте, перманентно отстает на пять лет, собирая сушеные ягодки омоложенного академизма с выброшенных нами цветов.[30]

LEF perceived itself to be fundamentally different from the earlier, bohemian form of Futurism. Majakovskij personally held this view. When he applied for permission to publish the journal, New LEF, he stated that the new journal was to continue the work begun in the

---

30. "В кого вгрызается ЛЕФ?" ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 8-9.

newspaper, The Futurist Gazette and in the journal, LEF.[31] The avant-garde years of Futurism represented an important developmental stage in the formulation of LEF's literary politics.

Avant-garde Influence

The avant-garde influence can be understood as the dominant force in pre-Revolutionary Futurism, and the originator of LEF's pursuit of a new role for art in Soviet Russia in the 1920s. "Out of [the avant-garde's] assumptions concerning their writing and their role in society emerges the fundamental vision of the avant-garde, its aesthetic programmes, and social vision, as well as its internal contradictions, paradoxes and limits."[32] An exact definition of the avant-garde is useful in gaining an understanding of the internal dymanics of the avant-garde within Futurism. Renato Poggioli presented an interesting view of the dialectic of the avant-garde in his book The Theory of the Avant-garde, where he divided the various stages of the avant-garde into four 'moments': activism, antagonism, nihilism, and agonism.[33]

Activism is defined as the elevation of anarchistic tendencies in a "psychological revolt" to a level of "practical and social reform."[34] This is the spirit of the avant-garde, it is the critical position of the avant-garde towards art and society. This aspect is particularly clear

---

31. "[Новый ЛЕФ чтобы] продолжать работу начало газетой 'Искусство Коммуны' в 1918-1919 гг. и журналом 'Леф' 1923-24 гг." Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 34.

32. Charles Russell, Poets, Prophets and Revolutionaries (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1985), 4.

33. Renato Poggioli, The Theory of the Avant-garde, trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1968), 25-26.

34, Poggioli, 27.

in Russian Futurism. Пощёчина общественному вкусу [A Slap in the Face of Public Taste] (1912) is considered the début of Russian Futurism. The spirit of A Slap is apparent:

> Читающим наше Новое Первое Неожиданное.
>
> Только мы -- лицо нашего Времени. Рог времени трубит нами в словесном искусстве.
>
> Прошлое тесно. Академия и Пушкин непонятнее гиероглифов.
>
> Бросить Пушкина, Достоевского, Толстого и проч. и проч. с Парохода Современности.
>
> Кто не забудет своей первой любви, не узнает последней.
>
> Кто же, доверчивый, обратит последнюю Любовь к парфюмерному блуду Балмонта? В ней ли отражение мужественной души сегодняшего дня?
>
> Кто же, трусливый, устрашится бумажные латы с черного фрака воина Брюсова? Или на них зори неведомых красот?
>
> Вымойте ваши руки, прикасавшиеся к грязной слизи книг, написанных этими бесчисленными Леонидами Андреевыми.
>
> Всем этим Куприным, Блокам, Сологубам, Ремизовым, Аверченкам, Черным, Кузминым, Буниным и проч. и проч. нужна лишь дача на реке. Такую награду дает судьба портным.
>
> С высоты небоскребов мы взираем на их ничтожество!..
>
> Мы приказываем чтить права поэтов:
>
> 1. На увеличение словаря в его объеме произвольными и призводными словами (Словоновшество).
>
> 2. На непреодолимую ненависть к существовавшему до них языку.
>
> 3. С ужасом отстранять от гордого чела своего из банных веников сделанный Вами венок грошовой славы.
>
> 4. Стоять на глыбе слова «мы» среди свиста и негодования.
>
> И если пока еще и в наших строках остались грязные клейма Ваших «Здравого смысла», то все же на них уже трепещут впервые Зарницы Самоценного

(самовитого) Слова.[35]

The manifesto was critical of the 'classics' of Russian literature, from Puškin to the contemporaries Brjusov, Kuprin and Bunin. It attacked them as conservative, unintelligible, and not relevant for contemporary society. The manifesto also promised "to honour the rights of poets to create new words, to have contempt for existing language, to forego the 'honours' attributed to poets, and to stand on the block of the word 'we'.[36] This manifesto was more than just the spirit of avant-garde Russian Futurism; it had, in a nutshell, given the essential Futurist raison d'être. Futurism would be consistent to the view outlined in A Slap until its demise, which is usually considered to be the death of Majakovskij in April, 1930. The activist tendency in Futurism strove to overcome the existing forms. Futurism accomplished its highest achievements and its most profound failures in the spirit found in the manifesto, A Slap. Futurism's critical perspective towards the literary canon propelled it forward, but was, in the end, responsible for its demise.

The activist tendency of Futurism was evident throughout its

---

35. The manifesto was signed by D. Burljuk, Aleksandr Kručenyx, V. Majakovskij, and Viktor Xlebnikov. On the cover of A Slap the name B. Livšic appeared, but apparently not as a signatory of the manifesto. Русская литература: дореволюционный период, ред. Н.А. Трифонов (Москва: Гос. учебно-педаг. министерство просвещения РСФСР, 1962), 455-56. In his book The One and a Half-Eyed Archer [trans. John E. Bowlt (Massachusetts: Oriental Research Partners, 1977)] Livšic mentioned that he had not signed and had no desire to sign the manifesto and was in general disappointed with the text. The One, 121-122; Markov, 45.

36. Markov, 46.

existence. There are several examples of Futurism's activism from 1912 through to the publication of LEF in 1923. The various manifestos of Futurism to 1923 are consistent in their impatience, in their demand for action, and their demand for breaking with convention:

> ...Мы выдвинули новые принципы творчества, кои нам ясны в следующем порядке:
> 1. ...Мы расшатали синтаксис.
> 2. Мы стали придавать содержание словам по их начертательной и фонетической характеристике.
> 3. Нами осознана роль приставок и суффиксов.
> 4. Во имя свободы личного случая мы отрицаем правописание.
> ...Мы новые люди новой жизни.
>
> (Садок судей II, 1913)[37]

> Из вышеизложенного видно, что до нас речетворцы слишком много разбирались в челевеческой «душе» (загадки духа, страстей и чувств), но плохо знали, что душу создают баячи, а так как мы, баячи будетляне, больше думали о слове, чем об затасканной предшественниками «Психее», то она умерла в одиночестве и теперь в нашей власти создать любую новую... захотим?
> ...Нет!...
> Пусть уж лучше поживут словом как таковым а не собой.
>
> (Слово как таковое, 1913)[38]

> Старый строй держался на трех китах.
> Рабство политическое, рабство социальное, рабство духовное.
> Февральская революция уничтожила рабство политическое. Черными перьями двуглавого орла устлана дорога в Тобольск. Бомбу социальной

---

37. Трифонов, 456-57.
38. Трифонов, 458.

революции бросил под капитал октябрь. Далеко на
горизонте маячат жирные зады убегающих заводчиков.
И только стоит неколеблемый третий кит - рабство
Духа.
Попрежнему извергает он фонтан затхлой воды -
именуемый - старое искусство.

(Газета футурстов, 1918)[39]

Так называемые режиссеры!
Скоро ли бросите, вы и крысы, возиться с
бутафорщиной сцены?..

Так называемые поэты!
Бросите ли вы альбомные рулады?..

Так называемые художники!
Бросьте ставить разноцветные заплатки на проеденное
мышами времени.
Бросьте украшать без того не тяжелую жизнь
буржуа-нэпии...

(ЛЕФ, 1923)[40]

The above examples display a call for action, a call that would be ever present in the history of Futurism. The earlier manifestos were emotive and focused exclusively on art. After 1917 the manifestos took on a greater social and political significance.[41] The activistic tendency became united with the social programme of Futurism.

Prior to the Revolution, Futurism had not displayed a cohesive political orientation. It had not aligned itself with the cause of the Bolshevik revolution, and indeed, among the founding Futurists the full

---

39. "Декрет No.1 о демократизации искусства," Газета футурстов, 1918. Jangfeldt, 21.

40. "Товарищи - формовщики жизни!" ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 3.

41. Golomstock, 8.

spectrum of political reaction to the Bolshevik cause could be seen.[42] Indeed, Livšic wrote, that Futurism had not joined the Revolution, but that Majakovskij joined the Revolution despite Futurism.[43] The lack of a common or shared political philosophy prior to the Revolution could be seen as one of the problems that the Bolsheviks had with LEF after the Revolution.[44] Futurism's political commitment to the Revolution, and specifically LEF's commitment, would always remain suspect. After the Revolution the Futurists were the directing force within IZO,[45] they controlled the museums, galleries and academies.[46] Majakovskij wrote that the state was more interested in the organizational and production ability of Futurism than with its definition of the æsthetic.[47]

The antagonism the avant-garde displays towards society is the second 'moment' of Poggioli's scheme. Russian Futurism had been antagonistic to the public taste which preferred the writers which LEF

---

42. For example, Majakovskij was sympathetic to the Bolsheviks prior to 1917. He had been a member of the Bolsheviks, and when still a youth had been arrested three times for revolutionary activities. [E. J. Brown, Mayakovsky: A Poet in the Revolution (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1973), 35-36.] David Burljuk left Soviet Russia after 1921 for Japan, and eventually emigrated to the United States. [Markov, 318-19.] Nikolaj Burljuk, a White soldier, appears to have died in an engagement with the Red Army, near Odessa. [Russell, 172; Markov, 318]

43. Livšic, The One, 33.

44. [Lunačarskij:] "With a person who has no convictions, or if he does have them, wishes in any case that he did not. He is an empty vessel, form, into which one may pour any desired content... In this sense LEF could easily be fascist, ultracapitalist, militarist." I. Kuznetsova, "A. V. Lunacharsky and LEF," Soviet Studies in Literature 4 (1976), 70-71.

45. Barooshian, 117.

46. Renato Poggioli, The Poets of Russia 1890-1930 (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960), 244.

47. "Я сам," В. В. Маяковский: сочинения в двух томах, т. 1 (Москва: Издательство «Правда», 1987), 32-33.

had pejoratively grouped together as the "Tolstojs" and "Kuprins" of contemporary Russian literature, and also towards the tradition in Russian literature that had made it possible for such a group to be successful. The avant-garde has been divided into two groups with regards to its 'antagonistic relationship'; it expressed itself either as an opposition to the literary tradition ('ivory tower'), or against society (bohemian).[48] Russian Futurism incorporated both trends. The dual antagonism, expressed initially as a disregard for the artistic legacy of the past and a hostility towards contemporary society, was essentially bohemian. Early Futurism was destructively critical of the literary tradition, but lacked a social or political commitment to focus its development. Later, Futurism became politically committed to the building of communism, and the urgency of the earlier Bohemian manifestoes was combined with its new political orientation.

At the core of the avant-garde antagonism is the demand that common perception and behavior, conditioned by society, should not be accepted "uncritically."[49] Antagonism is essentially a state of mind that isolates the avant-garde from the offending society while at the same time uniting the members of the avant-garde. Antagonism is "the individual revolt of the 'unique' against society," it is "showy" and the most "noticeable" of the four moments.[50] At its most basic level, the antagonism expressed by Futurism was one of a critical disposition, and disappointment, in the offical, traditional culture. It was, however, at any level, more than a juvenile rebellion against parental

---

48. Poggioli, The Theory, 30-31.
49. Russell, 26.
50. Poggioli, The Theory, 30.

authority as has been suggested.[51]

The misunderstanding of the actions of the avant-garde, and in particular of Russian Futurism, was initally due to its inability to articulate a complete critique of the art of the past and develop its objections, and to present an alternative programme. Russian Futurism, prior to 1917, had not presented a theoretical position to support its manifestos and proclamations. It had, in effect, dismissed the legacy of the artistic past, a position that would not appear reasonable. The complete dismissal of the art of the past is the third moment of the avant-garde, that of nihilism.

The nihilistic tendency of the avant-garde appeared to some as juvenile and infantile, which prompted the comparison of Futurism to the psychological disposition of a child: nihilism, wrote Poggioli, is "innate in the soul of a child."[52] An astute observation has been made by Russell, that "the avant-garde's continued envisioning of the promise of the future could only be done from their radical alienation from the contemporary values of their society.[53] While the nihilism of the avant-garde has been used for summary dismissal of the movement, it is an important component of the internal dynamics of the avant-garde. The realization of the antagonism between the artist and society (activism and antagonism, respectively) requires a resolution for action, and it is found in nihilism.

Nihilism is an extreme expression of the avant-garde's rejection of

---

51. "The escape from parental authority, a motivation no doubt germane to the entire Futurist movement, was depicted by Kruchenykh in a small poem which begins with "kpoi bogatstva begi ottsa." Evelyn Bristol, "Futurist Rejections of Sentimentalism," in Russian Literature and Criticism, ed. Evelyn Bristol (Berkeley: Berkeley Univ. Press, 1982), 20.

52. Poggioli, The Theory, 62.

53. Russell, 6-7.

social traditions, and also a window which opened towards the future. The march into the future, at all costs, and against the society which the avant-garde hoped to 'drag' forward, is truly a romantic vision. The idea that there is a mission to complete, a sacrifice to be made for future generations of artists is the last moment of the avant-garde. This moment is called agonism.[54] It is clear why Poggioli wrote that "agonism is more pathetic than tragic" as the sacrifice was seen as the destiny of the movement, representative of a "masochistic tendency" of an "avant-garde psychosis."[55] It is on this level that the avant-garde, having experienced despair and frustration in a 'blind' society, turns to a romantic desire to change society through art. It is this paradoxical situation that makes agonism pathetic, for no matter how 'futuristic' the movement may be, it lives and dwells in the present society, and eventually must return to the reality of the society against which it rebelled. Still, the avant-garde rebels and attempts to turn disaster into victory, to return to a truer time as in the past when, as in the 18th century, there was the belief that "human motivation could lead to the moral, political, spiritual, and æsthetic advance of culture as a whole."[56] Agonism would appear to be the dynamic position within the avant-garde that allowed for the political orientation of the movement, for Russian Futurism's support of the Bolshevik government.

The cultural transformation of a society is usually just a dream, but for Russian Futurism it became a real possibility with the success of the 1917 Revolution. The avant-garde's political affiliation with radical politics has proven fatal. History has shown that, when it

---

54. Poggioli, The Theory, 65-67.
55. Poggioli, The Theory, 68.
56. Russell, 6.

became attached to radical politics, the avant-garde has lost its impetus because its programme could not be realised through political means.[57] Leon Trockij noted, in 1924, that the Futurists were at their weakest when they ended as political participants [communists].[58] This was not just an observation on Futurism or on LEF, but indeed, it could be said of the avant-garde in general. Surprisingly, the reception of the avant-garde by various societies had not been what one would expect:

> The avant-garde is faced with an inimical situation that is invariably accepted - even honoured - by the societies against which it rebels, but is rejected by the revolutionary societies that it seeks to advance. The irony is intensified, yet explained, by the fact that the avant-garde's claim to social significance has been dismissed by the bourgeois culture that embraces it, even invests in it, while both communist and fascist governments agree that the avant-garde and art in general should be taken seriously. These regimes believe that art, as ideology, is too serious a monster to be left to the artists alone, and especially not to the avant-garde and malcontent artists and writers.[59]

The four moments of the avant-garde have a place within Russian Futurism. The four aspects of the movement discussed above do not necessarily work together, but are often in conflict. The agonistic tendency of Russian Futurism, namely its political committment to communism, is the key component to the development of LEF's literary politics. Agonism, it would appear, allowed for the linking of

---

57. Poggioli, The Theory, 95; Russell, 32.

58. Leon Trotsky, Literature and Revolution, trans. Rose Strutsky (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1968), 146.

59. Russell, 36.

the social, political and cultural spheres of society into an interdependent relationship. The Revolution had changed the political situation in Russia, and therefore, the social and cultural aspects of society also had to change. This aspect of LEF will be developed in chapter three.

The spirit of Russian Futurism culminated in the production of their journal, LEF.

The Emergence of LEF

On the 16th of January 1923 the journal, LEF, came into being.[60] Its publication was the latest attempt of Russian Futurism to propagate its ideas on the interdependence of the political, social and artistic. The content of the articles in LEF drew a negative response from its contemporaries; the articles had proposed a clear direction for art that was in conflict with the accepted notion of art and culture, and also in conflict with the Bolshevik government. LEF attacked the literary "Canon based on the belief in the role of literature in disseminating 'high culture,' in providing intellectual continuity, in conveying the cultural heritage."[61] LEF proposed a direction for the cultural development of Soviet Russia, and of a proletarian culture.

LEF's development of a new æsthetic marked the rise of its conscious critical position towards contemporary Soviet and Western societies.

...мы очистим наше старое „мы": от всех пытающихся

---

60. Stephan, 24.

61. Halina Stephan, "Futurism and the Social Function of Literature," Russian Literature and American Critics, Kenneth N. Brostrom, ed. (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan, 1984), 196.

> революцию искусства - часть всей октябрьской воли - обратить в оскар-уайльдовское само-услаждение эстетикой ради эстетики, бунтом ради бунта; от тех, кто берет от эстетической революции только внешность случайных приемов борьбы...[62]

The narrow view of the earlier Futurism had changed, and LEF displayed its concern with "the bigger questions of art and society."[63]

LEF's self-conscious political stand with regards to art and society took its position beyond the theory of art and literature, and into the realm of literary politics. LEF admitted the political role of all art, and proposed that its cultural influence should be of practical use to the society it served. The arts were by their very nature political,[64] the question was whether the influence of the æsthetic served the desired political direction of the state.

LEF and the various other literary groups that fought for hegemony in the post-revolutionary period had entered into a new field of literary criticism, namely Marxist literary criticism. Marx had not presented a complete æsthetic, and the battles that were being fought in the Soviet Union in the 1920s marked the early development of a systematic Marxist theory of literature. LEF's chief editor, Vladimir Majakovskij, had been involved with the Bolsheviks as a youth and had probably read Marx. The other theoreticians of LEF, Nikoaj Čužak, Boris Arvatov, Sergej Tret'jakov, and Aleksandr Cejtlin, contributed articles critiquing contemporary culture with Marx as their

---

62. "В кого вгрызается ЛЕФ?" ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 9

63. Trotsky, 126, 146; Erlich, 111-112.

64. "„Творчество новых идеологических или материальных ценностей -- вот тот единственно надежный критерий, с которым диалектик подходит к художеству"." Н.Ф. Чужак, "Под знаком жизнестроения." ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 37.

theoretical underpinning. The two works that were mentioned as forming the basis for at least one article, "Marx on Artistic Restoration," by Arvatov, were listed as The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte and An Introduction to the Critique of Political Economy.[65] Although LEF claimed to be Marxist, its literary theory was attacked by the Bolshevik government and other literary groups as 'un-Marxist', nihilistic and, according to Lunačarskij, dangerously unprincipled.[66] This assessment of LEF was due to its unrelenting insistence on its reading of Marx, which was, undoubtedly, connected to its avant-garde past. LEF insisted that Marx had paved the way for its interpretation of the new role of the æsthetic. Marx provided LEF with historical and philosophical support for its literary politics, and provided LEF with both its critique and its programme.[67]

LEF's contribution to literary criticism has yet to be fully assessed. LEF anticipated the importance of the 'political unconscious' within literature,[68] and the function and effect of the æsthetic on society. The political and social practices in contemporary society, according to LEF, were conditioned and constructed through the use of an æsthetic that served the ruling class. LEF proposed that if the æsthetic had been used for the dominant class in society to maintain hegemony, then it could also be used by the new dominant class in Soviet Russia,

---

65. Борис Арватов, "Маркс о художественной реставрации," ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 77.

66. I. Kuznetsov, "A.V. Lunacharsky and LEF." Soviet Studies in Literature 4 (1976): 63-76.

67. To be discussed in detail in chapters 2 and 3.

68. For a discussion on the political unconscious and æsthectics see: Fredric Jameson, The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act (New York: Cornell University Press, 1987); Terry Eagelton, The Ideology of the Aesthetic (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

the proletariat, to build a new art that would serve the proletariat.

The Seven Issues of LEF

The format for the journal, LEF, had been clearly laid out by Majakovskij and Brik in January 1923 when they presented an application for the proposed journal. Part 1 was to be a programmatic section which would deal with articles on LEF's programme, declarations, and resolutions. Part 2 would contain be the practical section and it would promote the works of the 'masters' of LEF. Part 3 would be the theory section, with articles of a scientific nature on the topics of literature, sociology, and especially on the theory of production and agitational arts.[69] The format was not unique. The earlier Futurist publications The Futurist Gazette, Art of the Commune and Art all had a similar format.

A shared aspect of all the Futurist publications was the opposition that they encountered. The Futurist Gazette published but a single issue, 15th March 1918. It had cost 2,300 roubles to print, and had failed to provide a financial base for further publication.[70] The climate of political uncertainty contributed to the failure of the Futurists to convince the public of the urgency of their position. The two IZO publications, Art of the Commune and Art, also ran into publication difficulties. The Futurists had an influential position within IZO, but it was also insecure.[71] It depended on the Bolshevik tolerance of the Futurists' claim to represent the government, and also upon the support of Lunačarskij within the government. Indeed, the tolerance the

---

69. Землякова, 182.
70. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 17, 118n.
71. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 37.

Bolshevik government extended to Futurism was tactical, as it immediately rallied to the Bolshevik cause after the Revolution.[72] As The Art of the Commune and Art continued to attack the enemies of the Revolution, and Futurism came under attack by the public and the government, funds for publication became unreliable and there were delays and finally a stop in publication. LEF experienced a similar publishing history.

The journal, LEF, was to have been a monthly publication. However, only seven issues appeared between March 1923 and January 1925; there were lengthy delays between the third and seventh issues, so long in fact that LEF stopped printing a publication date on its title page. There was also a considerable fluctuation in the number of issues published. The total issues published between second and third issues dropped by 2,000 and then by another 500 between the fifth and sixth.[73] Perhaps one could argue that the drop was due to the realisation by the government that there was not the demand to warrant such numbers.[74] Government disapproval was also evident in the reneged publishing agreement between the government publishing house, Gosizdat [Государственное издательство - Госиздат] and LEF.

---

72. Andrej Nakov, Avant-garde Russe (England: Data Art, 1986), 92.

73. See Appendix E.

74. One can infer from the publishing statistics from newspapers in the pre- and post-NEP period, that circulation expectations for journals may also have been grossly over exaggerated. For example, prior to NEP newspapers had been distributed free of charge, and circulation for one newspaper, The Russian Republic was 2.6 million per day for January 1922. In August 1923, after NEP and when a price had been placed on newspapers, circulation was down to 1 million. Similar trends were experienced by other newspapers, and it was not until late in the 1920s that volume of printed material returned to the pre-NEP levels. Jeffery Brooks, "Public and Private Values in the Soviet Press, 1921-1928." Slavic Review, 1 (1985): 17.

The combined disturbances around LEF, an inconsistent publishing practice (a monthly publication that appeared to be more bi-yearly), a decreased number of issues published, with a relatively high price of 9 roubles for a year or 5 roubles for six months,[75] would not make LEF an attractive purchase. The single issue prices were also very high: the first issue was 1 rouble 25 kopecks, 2 - 1 r. 15 k., 3 - 1 r. 75 k., and 4 - 2 r. 75 k.[76] The first four issues had already exceeded the half-yearly price by 2 roubles 40 kopecks. Considering that LEF never attained its monthly publishing status, LEF would be a risky and expensive subscription.[77] Unfortunately, there are, as of yet, no published records of actual sales, an essential figure to gauge the reception of LEF by its intended readership.

The publishing history of LEF provides some insight into the events surrounding the development of LEF's literary politics. There would appear to have been opposition to LEF almost immediately upon publication. The first two issues of LEF were not well received by the Party or the other literary groups of the time. While under heavy criticism, and personal attack in other journals and newspapers, LEF published its third issue. The attacks on LEF had been personal, and challenged the character and morals of the Futurists. LEF was prompted to defend their support of the Revolution, their activities during the civil war and the nature of their art.[78] Coincidently, as early as the second issue LEF displayed changes. The boundary

---

75. Н. Горлов, Футуризм и революция (Москва: Гос. Издат., 1924), 89.

76. Горлов, 89.

77. Majakovskij felt that the price was too expensive for the target readership, the younger generation. Stephan, 26.

78. О. Брик, "Сосновскому," ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 4, С. Третьяков, "Открытое письмо," ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 5.

between the various sections of the journal were loosened, and there was a migration of theory articles to the programme section.

Within the the programme sections of issues 1, 3, and 4 are sixty-seven pages that could be considered theoretical articles, as they dealt with the LEF's central position of life-building, the development of a new Soviet culture, and the position of Futurism with regards to the politics of the Bolshevik Party. The first issue had only one theory article in the programme section. However, the third issue had five articles and the fourth issue had an additional four. There is not, as of yet, any concrete documentation to advance a hypothesis of Party interference in LEF's publication; however, there is considerable circumstantial evidence to suggest a possible reason for the unorthodox composition of LEF's programme section.

The third issue is the pivotal issue in LEF's defence and dissemination of its theory. The third largest issue of the seven, with the most space devoted to theory. Out of 187 pages 113 were devoted to theory or in defence of its theory, accounting for 60 percent of the issue. The unusual publishing history of LEF's second issue, perhaps, presents a clue to the appearance of theoretical and polemical articles being published in the programme section.

The second issue was devoted to May Day.[79] As with all publications in the Soviet Union, the journal had to submit its proposed copy to the censors. For reasons unexplained, or not substantiated by hard documentation, the second issue of LEF was not initially published in its entirety. The programme and practical sections were published on time for the May Day celebrations. However, the theory section did not appear until well after May Day; and when published it was

---

79. See Appendix B or C.

accompanied by the reprints of the other sections.[80] Arvatov's highly critical article on NEP, as well as articles on æsthetics, language building and Futurism were in the second issue. Perhaps the answer is as simple as it appears: it would have been an embarassment for the Bolshevik government to have the May Day celebrations and the new programme of NEP attacked by a journal financed by the government. With the celebrations over, the journal was published in its entirety.

There are two possible explanations for LEF's placement of theoretical and polemical articles in sections of the journal other than the theory section: 1) LEF moved some polemical articles to the programme section after the second issue, to avoid losing all of their theory articles to delays by censorship, as had happened with the second issue; 2) that LEF did not strictly adhere to its definition of the theory and programme sections of the journal, just as the avant-garde assertion of the interdependence of political, social, and cultural spheres. It is not meant to imply that LEF sought to 'sneak' theoretical articles by the censors. The second issue had been published in two parts, with no theoretical articles appearing in the first published section. Had LEF placed theoretical articles in the programme section of the second issue, then a split of the issue could still allow for a 'full' presentation of the LEF's literary endeavours, declarations, literary works and theoretical articles. Nor is it meant to imply that the placement of theoretical articles in the programme section would 'speed up' the publication of the journal. It is more likely that the erratic format of LEF caused delays in publication. Any discussion on the motives for the inclusion of articles into one section or another must remain, for the time being, purely speculative.

---

80. Stephan, 35.

There are not, as of yet, any published articles on the criteria that LEF used to define the articles that would appear in the various sections.

The fifth issue of LEF is particularly noteworthy. This issue was subjected to the confiscation of the entire programme section, which consisted of a sample advertisement for the sale of Lenin busts and a single page article "Не торгуйте Лениным!", this section of the journal disappeared entirely, and it opposed to the proliferation of Lenin busts and 'keepsakes' after the death of the leader.[81] The confiscation of this section appears to have been made either as a reconsideration of the censor concerning the topic of Lenin, or very close to the approval of publication, as the confiscated section appears in the table of contents of the journal but not in the journal itself. The article was never published and survives only in one issue of the journal contained in the Lenin State Library in Moscow.[82]

The most complete and consistent formulation of Futurist literary politics was completed within the journal, LEF.

---

81. "Не торгуйте Лениным!" ["Ne torgujte Leninym!"] ЛЕФ 5 [1] (1924): 3-4. See Appendix D for original text and translation.

82. Lars Kleberg, "Notes on the poem Vladimir Il'ič Lenin." In Vladimir Majakovskij: Memoirs and Essays, Eds. Bengt Jangfeldt and Nils Åke Nilsson. (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1975), 167.

Мы боролись со старым бытом.
Мы будем бороться с остатками этого быта в сегодня.
С теми, кто поэзию собственных домков заменил поэзией собственных домкомов.
Раньше мы боролись с быками буржуазии.
Мы эпатировали желтыми кофтами и размалеванными лицами.
Теперь мы боремся с жертвами этих быков в нашем, советском, строе.
Наше оружие - пример, агитация, пропаганда.

ЛЕФ, 1923.[83]

Chapter Two

LEF's Critique of Art

Marxist orientation

Futurism was altered through the events of the Revolution. The original impetus for Futurism's criticism of art had been its contact with 'traditional' art. Russian Futurism was born out of a profound boredom with all the classics.[84] It initially manifested itself as a revolt against the existing art forms. According to LEF, the Revolution had provided both the social conditions possible for LEF's desired cultural change, and the theoretical support for the cause and means for such a change.

---

83. "В кого вгрызается ЛЕФ?" ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 9. See Appendix A for English translations of all Russian texts.

84. "От скуки рахмановской ... на всю классическую скуку ... родился российский футуризм." "Я сам." В. В. Маяковский: соченения в двух томах, т. 1 (Москва: Издательство «Правда», 1987), 32.

The theoretical underpinning for LEF's dialectical approach to the cultural development of society was based on two works by Karl Marx: The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte and The Introduction to the Critique on Political Economy.[85] LEF's interpretation of Marx was rigid and the conclusions drawn were to be closely followed because of the logic of the dialectical process. Boris Arvatov presented the LEF position in his article "Маркс о художественной реставрации." ["Marks o xudožestvennoj restavracii" - "Marx on artistic restoration."][86] The scientific analysis of culture along the dialectic approach afforded LEF the opportunity to offer a solution to the present cultural difficulties the Soviet government was experiencing.

LEF argued that contemporary Soviet society, in the 1920s, was in the midst of a cultural crisis.[87] Čužak wrote that the crisis was a serious matter to the arts, a question of "to be or not to be." This serious crisis in Russian culture had been brought about, according to Čužak, because of the failure to answer a basic question: what do we consider the art of our time?[88]

LEF offered to answer this question through an article by Boris Arvatov. The answer appeared to be straightforward: culture was a development of the social relations in society, and the content of art

---

85. "Восемнацатое брюмера Луи Бонапарта" Маркс и Энгельс. Собрание сочинений. т. III. (Москва: Госиздат, 1921); "Введение к критике политической экономии" Основные проблемы политической экономии. ред. П. Дволайцкого и И. Рубина. (Москва: Госиздат, 1922). Замеченно в статье Б. Арватова, "Маркс о художественной реставрации," ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 77.

86. Арватов, "Маркс," 79-96.

87. "Наше русское искусство, всех видов его, от поэзии до живописи и театра, переживает сейчас необычайное какое-то переломное состояние." Н. И. Чужак, "Под знаком," ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 12.

88. "что же считать искусством в наши дни?" Чужак, "Под знаком," 12.

was defined by the 'conscious aim' of the artistic form.[89] Culture does not develop into lower forms but can be seen, at times, as a comparatively lower form; but, in general, cultures, like societies, develop into higher forms.

Arvatov wrote that Marx had established the connection between the forms of art and its historical stage of development.[90] Art was historically determined and linked to the social and political development of society, and therefore, LEF maintained it was progressive. The art of earlier periods of history were the earlier, developmental stages of the current art forms. Art was to be viewed as a historical fact, and it was a natural course for art to develop into more advanced and complex forms, just as society in general progressed to more advanced forms.[91]

Greek art had been the example Marx used for his discussions of the nature of art in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, and LEF drew heavily from this example. Arvatov quoted Marx on the essential nature of Greek art:

> Греческое искусство, предполагает греческую мифологию, т.-е., природу и общественные формы, уже получившие бессознательную художественную обработку в народной фантазии. Это ее материал. Но не любая мифология и не любая бессознательная художественная обработка природы...[92]

Greek art, according to Marx, could not be separated from the Greek social foundations, its culture, and that it was connected only to

---

89. Арватов, "Маркс," 77.
90. Арватов, "Маркс," 79.
91. Арватов, "Маркс," 79.
92. Арватов, "Маркс," 80.

that society.[93] The content of its art form was historically bound to the society from which it rose, and it developed in a particular fashion due to its social development and not in spite of it.[94] Therefore, there was a normal development from one art form to another, as societies developed into more complex forms.[95] This is not to say that various art forms are linear extensions of a single form, or of a particular historical time, but that they are the result of the social relations (environment) of a particular society at a particular time.[96] The beauty and meaning (content) of art was to be understood as the result of a particular society's development and achievements. Arvatov elaborated further that:

> [Греческое искусство] прекрасно потому, что является органическим результатом, безыскуссвенным выявлением своей собственной среды, потому что ,,греки были нормальными детьми", потому что их формы ,,никогда не могут повториться снова"... [Греческие формы] прекрасны именно оттого и только оттого, что они когда-то были нормальными и никогда такими больше не будут...[97]

He maintained that art as a social and historical fact was the necessary conclusion to be drawn from Marx. It was unique and could never be

---

93. "Греческое искусство неразрывно связано с греческими общественными отношениями, и только с ними." Арватов, "Маркс," 82.

94. Terry Eagleton, Marxism and Literary Criticism (London: Methuen, 1976), 12.

95. "...то куда естественнее и логичнее было бы сказать: социалистическое общество, заменив человека высокой техникой, --заменит и человеко-подобное искусство искусством высокой техники." Арватов, "Маркс," 85.

96. Арватов, "Маркс," 83.

97. Арватов, "Маркс," 83-84.

recreated anew. The problem arose, according to LEF, when the art of the past became "the cult of past." Marx was not specific in The Eighteenth Brumaire concerning the attraction of Greek art. However, in Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökomonie, Marx addressed the apparent paradox of Greek art, he noted that:

> The difficulty does not lie in coming to understand that Greek art and the epic poem are connected with certain forms of social development. The difficulty is that they still afford us artistic pleasure and in that in certain respects represent models of perfection and unattainable standards. A man cannot become a child once again or else he will become childish. But does he not enjoy the naiveté of a child and must he not himself again try to recreate the truth of childhood on a higher level? ...Why should not the historical childhood of mankind, where it showed itself in its greatest beauty, exert an external attraction as a stage that will never recur?[98]

The influence that art exerts is through what it represents. The beauty and attraction of art are not the question, but the function of art, what it represents and how it works within society. Art was a superstructure of society, and its æsthetics was a part of ideology.[99] The social and historical forces within society gave art its class content. The question again returns to the content of art. According to LEF, the form of art determined its content, and content was "the ideological side of artistic production."[100]

In The Eighteenth Brumaire, Marx noted that the content of

---

98. Karl Marx, "Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökomonie," 1857-58, Karl Marx: Economy, Class and Social Revolution, Z. A. Jordan, ed. (London: Micheal Joseph, 1971), 197.

99. Н. Горлов, "О футуризмах," 6; Eagleton, Marxism, 5.

100. Горлов, "О футуризмах," 6.

borrowed traditions had been used by the bourgeoisie to lend legitimacy to a class struggle [capitalism versus feudalism], and also to inspire and delude itself. Once the struggle was won the borrowed traditions were removed. Marx wrote: "There [in the French Revolution] the phrase went beyond the content; here [in the nineteenth century] the content goes beyond the phrase."[101] LEF attached great importance to the quote on the phrase "beyond content," and attacked what it perceived as a misconception concerning the quote:

> "Обычно эта цитата приводится марксистами от эстетики для того, чтобы доказать, что, по Марксу „содержание определяет форму", или иначе говоря, в понятие содержание здесь вкладывается идеологическая сторона художественного произведения, его сюжет в широком смысле слова."[102]

It was neither the 'will' nor ideology which defined the form of art, but the 'notorious' content, the conscious aim of art that determined its form. Arvatov pointed out, that the term "content' used by Marx must have a broader meaning than merely that of an æsthetic interpretation.[103] As ideology had been freed from the role of establishing the content of art, Arvatov proposed another possibility. Content, according to Marx, performed a "revolutionary process" which gave rise to new artistic forms. Content was not only æsthetic,

---

101. Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels: Selected Works in Two Volumes, v. 1 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1950), 226-27.

102. Арватов, "Маркс," 91.

103."Потому очевидно, что слово „содержание" употреблено Марксом в каком-то другом, отличном от эстетического истолкования, смысле. В каком-же именно?" Арватов, "Маркс," 91.

but also social and political. Arvatov explained that:

> Из контекста видно, что под содержанием Маркс понимал содержание того революционного процесса, который создает те или иные художетсвенные формы, т.-е. социальные задачи, социальные цели этого процесса: в то время, как в эпоху буржуазных революций формы сообщают „чрезмерное значение данной задаче", скрывают „буржуазное органиченное содержание" борьбы, - в эпоху пролетарской революции они могут выковываться только в процессе самой борьбы, в процессе сознательного достижения сознательно же поставленных задач; там они были „средством самообмана", „бенгальским огнем", эстетической красоты, - здесь они будут служить социальной целесообразностью.[104]

The content of art was not merely one-sided but multi-faceted. The organizational content of art was shaped by a class politic and was influenced by social developments. All aspects of content, the æsthetic, social and political, were present in the form of art, which in turn could be used for "social expediency".[105] Definite artistic forms arise from specific social developments or systems.[106] The specific use of art defined its ideological content.

Art encompassed all areas of life: social, political, and æsthetic. This could, perhaps, justify LEF's assumption that its work was parallel to the Bolshevik's. The social and political situations within Russia had, according to LEF, changed through the Revolution to allow for the eventual disintegration of the class society within communism. The new order would necessarily require a new art form that would be

---

104. Арватов, "Маркс," 92.
105. Арватов, "Маркс," 92.
106. Арватов, "Маркс," 82.

an integral part of that new society.

It is important to note that for LEF the ideological function of art, per se, was not a negative aspect. By acknowledging the class politic of art, LEF admitted its ideological function. However, as the ideological function was an intricate part of art, LEF opposed its use in what it perceived as an ideologically inappropriate fashion, as Marx had observed its use in the French Revolution and the French Commune of 1848. Art had a specific function according to LEF, a 'revolutionary function' that was interdependent in the political, social and æsthetic spheres and was to develop new forms as society itself developed.

> "Творчество новых идеологических или материальных ценностей - вот тот единственно надежный критерий, с которым диалектик подходит к художеству."[107]

To LEF the various stages of artistic development ran parallel to the building of communism and to the develpment of the society in general. LEF's formulation of a functional definition of the æsthetic in society, which was based on Marx, attached a highly political and socially relevant role to the new art. A new understanding of the various aspects of art (their interdependence), the removal of the deceptive nature of the æsthetic, propelled LEF to a harsh critique of contemporary Russian culture.

---

107. Чужак, "Под знаком," 37.

LEF's critique

LEF's critique of the Russian cultural heritage can be seen as the culmination of its Futurist past with the theoretical political underpinning of Marxism; the application of dialectical materialism in the development of a new æsthetic. LEF specifically attacked the æsthetics of Russian culture, a culture that was recognised by the left and centre of the Soviet state as having entered a stage of crisis.[108] Futurism, prior to the Revolution, had initially rejected the role of traditional art of the past on æsthetic grounds. It had identified the æsthetic of Russian culture as the purveyor of a decrepit, foreign and regressive art form. LEF later, with a Marxist understanding, attached a political and social significance to the æsthetic that had been identified as the carrier of a class politic.

The æsthetic was not merely sublime but also an active ideological force, a force in the temporal world. Sergej Tret'jakov noted that the new active role of the æsthetic would be grounded in the real world.

> ...футуристы должны вести бой внутри этого фронта искусства [как одное острейших классовых орудий воздействия на психику] используя потребление массами продуктов эстетического производства, - бой за вкус, - противопоставляя материалистическую точку зрения идеализму и пассеизму.[109]

The essence of LEF's criticism of past art focused on its inability

---

108. For an contrary view to LEF, although agreeing with the premise of a state of crisis, see: Н. Бердяев, Кризис искусства (Москва: Госиздат, 1918).

109. С. Третьяков, "Откуда и куда," ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 199

to successfully capture the new dynamics of the proletariat.[110] The barrier between art and life, temporal and sublime, also existed between the proletariat and society. The idealism and fetishism of bourgeois culture had served the ruling class. Idealism created and perpetuated a dualism within the psyche of the proletariat and placed a barrier between the proletariat and society.[111] The ideals of bourgeois society were not those of the proletariat, nor of the worker. Idealism gave the impression that the troubles and trials of the temporal world were to be endured because they were exceptions to the ideal and to the rule. And because the ideals held up as eternal truths were not connected to the real world, to a part of the proletariat, it could not have a meaningful formative influence. The ideals were meaningful to the bourgeoisie, it affirmed and motivated them. The ideals of the bourgeoisie cannot be meaningful to the worker, because they are not the ideals of the worker. A barrier had been placed between the worker and art, the worker had been alienated from art, and art from him. This barrier extended beyond the art and into language and daily life.

LEF combined its radical perception of art with its interpretation of Marx's position on art. Through its interpretation of Marx, LEF formulated a theoretical link between art, society, and politics. In 1923 LEF rejected the 'role' of the art of the past based on a new understanding of the æsthetic, based on a new view of the function of the æsthetic, a theory which became its literary politics.

The function of the æsthetic had been adapted by LEF into its literary politics. The revolt of the æsthetic has been likened to an

---

110. Чужак, "Под знаком," 17.
111. Чужак, "Под знаком," 16.

extension of the Revolution.[112] Nikolij Gorlov wrote, in his 1924 book on Futurism, that:

> [Футуристы] начали с разгрома эстетики. Но быт и эстетика, это -- то же самое, что изба и её крыша. Когда громят крышу, это значит, что громят уже избу."[113]

Art and society [быт][114] were united in the æsthetic, and to 'smash' one would necessarily involve the smashing of the other as well. As society had been changed in the Soviet Union through a radical change in politics, it followed, argued LEF, that culture had to change through a radical æsthetic.

The political and economic revolutions were to have a counterpart in a spiritual revolution, it was to be the third revolution.[115] LEF based its position on its understanding of the new socially productive force of art versus its traditional reflective practice; the positive practical application of new art versus the negative ideological constriction of the traditional past. The productive æsthetic would create a new existence [бытие - bytie - being] through the creation of new artistic forms that would change the daily life [быт - byt - daily-life] of the Soviet citizen by eliminating the division of artistic forms and everyday life.

---

112. Vahan D. Barooshian, "Russian Futurism in the Late 1920s: Literature of Fact," Slavic and East European Journal 1 (1971): 38.

113. Горлов Футуризм, 21н.

114. Быт - "Way of life." [The Oxford Russian-English Dictionary, Marcus Wheeler. 2nd Edition, (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1984). The English equivalent of 'быт' falls short of all the implications of the Russian usage. LEF used byt in a very negative way prior to the Revolution. It was meant to encompass the tedium and mind numbing routine of everyday life.

115. Jangfeldt, "Russian Futurism," 68.

> И если программой максимум футуристов является растворение искусства в жизни, сознательная реорганизация языка применительным новым формам бытия, драка за эмоциональный трежак психики производителя-потребителя, то программой-минимум футуристов-речевиков является постановка своего языкового мастерства на службу практическим задачам дня.[116]

Boris Arvatov's article "Marx on Artistic Restoration" in the third issue of LEF established the theoretical foundation of a new æsthetic, based on Marx. It was connected to the political order, and to the society in which art developed.[117] Æsthetics was seen as an intricate part of a particular society, in a particular era it was a superstucture of a particular society.[118] Arvatov elaborated on the rise of art within specific societies:

> Великие художественные формы прошлого не воспринимаются ими, как законно и необходимо принадлежащие прошлому. Им, теоретикам, начинает казаться, что раз эти формы так совершенны, (т.-е. органичны, -иначе ведь нельзя понимать совершеннство, если, конечно, не встать на позицию метафизиков, абсолютизирующих формы), значит совершенна и эпоха, их создавшая, значит нам остается только учиться у нее, возводимой в образец для любого времени и любого народа.[119]

Arvatov identified the theoretical problem that was essential for LEF to overcome: how to coherently articulate a position which both

---

116. Третьяков, "Откуда," 202.
117. Арватов, "Маркс," 81.
118. Горлов, "О футуризмах," 6.
119. Арватов, "Маркс," 81.

rejected the role of the art of the past, while not rejecting the achievements of the past. He noted that the theoretical link of art to a particular society had a concrete historical foundation.

> Если для современного подражетеля античности греческое искусство достойно быть школой, потому что оно прекрасно, то для Маркса оно прекрасно потому, что является органическим результатом, безыскусственном выявлением своей собственной среды, потому что "греки были нормальными детьми", потому что их формы "никогда не могут повториться снова".[120]

LEF relied on the application of Marx's dialectic for its view of "going beyond" the present forms through the "assimilation" of old forms in production of newer ones; the dialectical formula, thesis - antithesis - synthesis, is clearly visible here, and was acknowledged by LEF.[121] Although LEF had aligned itself with Marx on the question of the cultural development of society, as had the other literary groups and the Bolshevik government, LEF found no support from either the Bolshevik government or other literary groups. It was clear that there was a basic misunderstanding between LEF and the Bolshevik government, and LEF and other literary groups.

The major problem LEF had to address was that of its interpretation of Marx's position towards the development of culture in pre-industrial and industrial societies. Arvatov relied heavily on Marx for the theoretical support LEF required in order to claim credibility.

LEF viewed the development of culture as progressive, improving upon and moving beyond existing forms. Cultural art forms were to

---

120. Арватов, "Маркс," 83-84.

121. Горлов, "О футуризмах," 15.

be placed both within a specific historical period and within a particular society. Art had significance within its own society and, therefore, with regards to proletarian art, Arvatov quoted Marx:

> ...чтобы придти к своему собственному искусству, пролетариату придется до конца вытравить фетишистический культ художественного прошлого и опереться на передовой опыт современности. Основной задачей пролетарского искусства является не стилизация под прошедшее, а создание, сознательное и органическое создание будущего.[122]

To understand that art had developed within the confines of a particular society meant that one had to be wary of the development of a 'cult of the art of the past.' Implicit in this warning was LEF's belief that the art of the past was perceived as superior to contemporary art. Marx's warning was brought into perspective by Arvatov when he wrote on the contemporary perception of art. Art critics turn to the various 'artistic blossomings' of various eras in the very fashion that had been warned against. Arvatov attacked the critics who regarded art of various eras as miraculous exceptions to the rule, rather than as a historical fact, or as a known natural course of social and cultural development.[123] The form of art has to be placed within its society's stage of development. Arvatov wrote:

> Формы расцвета превращаются в голове искусствоведа в формы нормативные, в авторитарно действующие образцы, и вместо того, чтобы понять, каким образом эти формы возникли в исторически изжитые нами периоды, искусствовед начинает расценивать степень художественного развития эпохи с точки зрения тех

---

122. Арватов, "Маркс," 78.
123. Арватов, "Маркс," 79.

> высоких форм, которые эта эпоха создала. Вместе с такой расценкой, превращающей формы в абсолют, немедленно теряется из вида исторический характер искусства, и анализ последнего отрывается от анализа общественных отношений.[124]

Arvatov had proposed that the function of the æsthetic within the Russian cultural past was illusory, it supposedly held an 'eternal' monoply on art, and was the means of 'self-deception' [самообман].[125] Restored æsthetic forms that were defined as illusory and passé had been made possible through the substitution of certain artistic forms for others. The need for this substitution was indicative of a "society that was not the 'conscious master' of his own fate."[126] Arvatov clarified this position through an example from the French Revolution:

> ...искусство Великой Французской Революции было иллюзорно не потому, что таково свойство самого искусства, а потому, что этого требовали общественные отношения, превратившие искусство в одно из могучих средств этой обще-социальной иллюзии.[127]

It was the product of the ruling class and perpetuated class values. The restoration of past artistic forms was an illusory artistic development, for the content of the æsthetic would not be a development of that society. LEF did not implicitly regard the ideological function of the æsthetic as a negative force. The æsthetic could have functioned in tune with its society, with its ruling class,

---

124. Арватов, "Маркс," 78.

125. Арватов, "Маркс," 88.

126. "...иллюзия нужна там, где общество не является сознательным господом своей судьбы, где оно подчиняется либо стихиям внешнего мира, либо стихиям своего собственного развития." Арватов, "Маркс," 89.

127. Арватов, "Маркс," 88

whether it be capitalist or proletarian, when it was the product of that society.

Puškin had within his own time performed a function that LEF considered parallel to its own, a literary mission. Puškin had organised the will of his class into a world-view, just as LEF thought that their programme for the cultural revolution would organise the proletariat.[128] However, while Puškin had given 'voice' to his class, LEF sought to give a 'voice' to the nation. By organising the proletariat through its programme of life-building [žiznestroenie], LEF sought to realise a revolutionary, communist æsthetic that had relevance to contemporary society. LEF sought to organize all 'left art' in the world under the banner of the Красный Искинтерн [Krasnij Iskintern - The Red International Art].[129]

The rejection of the art of the past was really a rejection of the function or role of a particular æsthetic. The Russian cultural heritage was to function as an example to contemporay artists, but not to be the 'goal' of their art.

LEF first had to make clear that it was now taking a constructive theoretical stand on the æsthetic, and not merely repeating the ultimatums of the pre-Revolution Futurist days. In the first issue LEF had stated that they 're-evaluated' their position with regards to art, and society.

> Но мы очистим наше старое „мы": от всех пытающихся революцию искусства - часть всей октябрьской воли - обратить в оскар-уайльдовское само-услаждение

---

128. Третьяков, "Откуда," 196-97.

129. "Товарищи - формовщики жизни!" ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 4.

эстетикой ради эстетики, бунтом ради бунта...[130]

No longer the wild bohemians who attacked and tried to smash everything, they sought to unite under the banner of communism, and to build a new society. The history of Futurism in Czarist Russia had determined the form that was taken. LEF maintained that the Futurists had had to fight for attention and a press, because the capitalists would not print their works.[131] Futurism had enthusiastically embraced the Revolution, as had the Revolution embraced them, and members of other avant-garde groups, when the Union of Artists collapsed shortly after the fall of the provisional government.

The experience that the Futurists received in IZO had been valuable. And although the government had sought out the Futurists to run IZO, LEF understood that the Futurist presence within IZO had been a tactical move:

> Ясно - при виде пяток улепетывающей интеллигенции, нас не очень спрашивали [большевики] о наших эстетических верованиях. Мы создали, революционные тогда, „Изо", „Тео", „Музо"; мы повели учащихся на штурм академии. ...Движение нашего искусства выявило нашу силу организацией по всей РСФСР крепостей левого фронта." [132]

There was never any official sanction or recognition given to any part of the avant-garde that had worked within IZO, nor had there had been acknowledgement of the work done within IZO.

---

130. "В кого вгрызается ЛЕФ?" ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 9.

131. "Капиталист, конечно, никогда не меценировал наши хлысты-строчки занозы-штрихи." "За что борется ЛЕФ?" ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 3.

132. "За что борется ЛЕФ?" ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 4-5.

The Futurists within IZO had tried to implement a change in the official art policy of the country. This had been the first constructive criticism of the old culture by the artists who would later form the editorial board for LEF.[133]

LEF had attached a political significance to the æsthetic. The æsthetic functioned within the daily life and not only in the sublime. LEF noted that быт ['byt'] was the front of their battle. Gorlov had correctly noted that the æsthetic and 'byt' were like "the roof of a hut, you smash the roof and you smash the hut." Gorlov had aptly grasped the intent of LEF. The negative aspect of 'byt' was negative in so much as it was not a part of the socio-political system of the new Soviet state. As with the ideological aspect of the æsthetic, LEF did not desire to eliminate the 'byt' of existence, but to eliminate the oppressive nature of the 'byt' that was a part of the czarist system. To remove the division between the political and social aspects of daily life and of the æsthetic and culture was the goal of LEF.

The dichotomy between art and life, in LEF's view, was one that had to be removed. The programme of life-building was to remove the 'cult of the past' from contemporary society, to develop a new world-view, in effect, to realise a cultural revolution that would complement the political revolution. LEF's literary politics was expressed in the development of the programme of life-building.

---

133. The editorial board of the publishing firm Искусство молодых (ИМО - IMO) under the directorship of the Нардоный комитет просещения (Наркомпрос -Narkompros), that had been set up in July 1918 was composed of: N. Aseev, D. Burlijuk, V. Kamesnskij, A. Kručenyx, V. Majakovskij, B. Pasternak, V. Xlebnikov, O. Brik, B. Kušner, D. Polivanov, B. Ejxenbaum, N. Jakubinskin, V. Školskij, and R. Jakobson. With the exception of Burlijuk, Xlebnikov, Polivanov, Jakubinskij and Jakobson, all reappeared within the pages of LEF. Stephan, 5.

This programme was to be the third revolution: the first had been the political revolution, the second had been the cultural revolution, and the third revolution would be the Spiritual revolution, a break from the oppressive and outdated organizational influences of the social, political and æsthetic aspects of art.[134] The new content would be a product of the proletariat and would be fulfilling and create a new daily life. The third revolution has been identified as a new 'myth' created by the Futurists.[135]

---

134. Jangfeldt, "Russian Futurism," 68.

135. Krystyna Pomorska, "Mayakovsky's Cosmic Myth," Myth in Literature, Andrej Kodyak, Krystyna Pomorska, and Stephen Rudy, eds. (Columbus: Slavica Publishers, 1985), 171.

Всегда требуют, чтобы искусство было понятно, но никогда не требуют от себя приспособить свою голову к пониманию.
К. Малевич, "О новых системах в искусстве", 1919.[136]

Chapter Three

Жизнестроение - Life-Building

The Aim

The new æsthetic was the essence of LEF's literary politics, and it would entail a socially productive role for the new art. In keeping with that new role, the sublimity of art would be removed; the artist as seer would be discarded, and the barrier that had been erected between art and life dismantled. The created textual artifacts of the past would remain a part of the historical past. They would not be models for contemporary art, but educational. They would not be guides for endless imitation, nor representatives of an unattainable past. They would be educational tools from which students would learn. One had to look the 'cult of the past' in the face and then go beyond it.[137] The artist would no longer have the mystical attribute of being closer to the 'truth' than anyone else. Art then would be a part

---

136. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 2. See Appendix A for English translations of all Russian texts.

137. Н. Чужак, "Плюсы и минусы," ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 28.

of life, the artist and art worker,[138] and society would attain a new world-view with Futurism as its guide.

The Historical Foundation

LEF had taken upon itself a specific task, the creation of a new culture and a new world view for the Soviet citizen. LEF took on this role because the Bolshevik government had yet to get involved in the cultural debates; officially it was neutral.[139] History had shown that, in revolutionary times, there was the possiblity of radically changing the culture of society. In its critique of traditional art, LEF had argued that the traditional reflective nature of art in bourgeois society had degenerated into psychological, mystical and escapist writings that were not useful to the proletariat. They were unable to capture the dynamics of the new situation of the proletariat as the dominant class in society.[140] The society which had given the conditions for the rise of the bourgeois art, and which had degenerated into the decadent literature of the time, was supposed to have been removed by the Revolution. LEF argued that if the infrastructure of society had changed (autocracy to communism), then the superstructures of the society (the 'arts' specifically) would also have to change. A new infrastructure would require new superstructures.

The æsthetic was to become productive and a part of the real world. It would be in stark contrast to the socially useless sublimity of the former æsthetic:

---

138. Barooshian, "Russian Futurism," 38.

139. Сергей Володин, "Перепутанные строки," ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 21.

140. Чужак, "Под знаком," 17.

> The aesthetic, in short, is socially useless, just as its philistine critics maintain: 'for beauty produces no particular result whatsoever, neither for the understanding nor the will. It accomplishes no particular purpose, neither intellectual nor moral; it discovers no individual truth, helps us to perform no individual duty and is, in short, as unfitted to provide a firm basis for character as to enlighten the understanding.[141]

LEF had reserved criticism on the social usefulness of the æsthetic in bourgeois society, that criticism had been completed by Futurism prior to World War I. LEF was severely critical of the social and political function of the æsthetic in Soviet society. LEF objected to an æsthetic that, in its view which it also felt was Marx's, was 'resurrected' and transplanted; an æsthetic that had a specific function for the benefit of the ruling bourgeoisie could not be used by the proletariat. Culture is affected by social and political influences. As the æsthetic was the ideological side of culture, it performed an organising role for the ruling class of society.

LEF addressed the 'traditional' role attributed to art, which was seen as a means of attaining an understanding [познание] of the world.[142] This aspect of art had been attacked by the Futurists prior to 1917, as æsthetically unappealing, as a decline in the level of Russian culture. Later LEF attacked the notion of 'coming to an understanding' as passive and which aimed at preserving the status quo, which served the ruling class. The introduction of dialectial materialism into Russian Futurism after 1917 allowed for the rise of a political interpretation of

---

141. Fredrich Schiller, On the Aesthetic Education of Man, eds. Elizabeth M. Wilkinson and L.A. Willoughy (Oxford, 1967), 147; quoted in Terry Eagleton, The Ideology of the Aesthetic (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 110.

142. Чужак, "Под знаком," 14.

the function of the æsthetic, and for the development of LEF's literary politics.

LEF held that the essence of art was in action. As such, it belonged to the present, and was on a path to the future. This had been the basis for LEF's criticism of the passive nature of bourgeois art. Through the new socially active æsthetic LEF proposed to create a new culture, a new world view, and in effect, a new Soviet citizen. Instead of allowing man to come to an understanding of the world, art would construct new forms that would change the consciousness of man, and so create a new world. Man would not have to acquiesce to the world as such, but would have an active role in the realization of a new culture, a new society, and a new world view. Through becoming 'conscious' of itself as a class and of the role to be played in history, the proletariat would become the master of its own fate.

This highly rational perspective had, perhaps, become clear to LEF through the reading of Marx on the rise of a bourgeois culture in France after the French Revolution. Arvatov quoted Marx on the building of a bourgeois culture upon the 'bones' of the old feudal system:

> Consideration of this conjuring up of the dead of world history reveals at once a salient difference. Camille Desmoulins, Danton, Robespierre, Saint-Just, Napoleon, the heros as well as the parties and the masses of the old French Revolution, performed the task of their time in Roman costume and with Roman phrases, the task of unchaining and setting up modern <u>bourgeois</u> society. The first ones knocked the feudal basis to pieces and mowed off the feudal heads which had grown on it. The other created inside France the conditions under which alone free competition could be developed, parcelled landed property exploited and unchained industrial productive power of the nation employed; and beyond the French

> borders he everywhere swept the feudal institutions away, so far as was necessary to furnish bourgeois society in France with a suitable up-to-date environment on the European Continent. The new social formation once established, the antediluvian Colossi disappeared and with them resurrected Romanity - the Brutuses, Gracchi, Publicolas, the tribunes, the senators, and Caesar himself. Bourgeois society in its sober reality had begotten its true interpreters and mouthpieces in the Says, Cousins, Royer-Collards, Benjamin Constants and Guizots; its real military leaders sat behind the office desks, and the hog-headed Louis XVIII was its political chief. Wholly absorbed in the production of wealth and in peaceful competitive struggle, it no longer comprehended that ghosts from the days of Rome had watched over its cradle.[143]

The above passage is important for understanding LEF's position towards the creation of a new culture. The long quotation is noteable for two reasons: it was used as an anchoring of the abstract argument for the construction of a new culture in recent history, and it also contained a warning.

The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte established the historical fact that the culture of a society had been taken apart and rebuilt anew. Therefore, one could draw the conclusion, as LEF undoubtedly had, that there exists a real possibility of creating a new culture upon the ruins of the old. Marx had not observed that there had been any progammes or formulas to accomplish the change from a feudal to a bourgois society in the course of the French Revolutions of 1788-1792. In fact, Marx had given credit to the 'great terror' that had ruthlessly eradicated the old culture.

---

143. Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, 226; the same passage appeared in Арватов, "Маркс," 87.

> The reign of terror in France was bound, therefore, to serve the purpose of magically sprinting away with its powerful blows the remnants of feudalism from French soil. The timidly considerate bourgeoisie would not have accomplished this work for decades.[144]

The great terror was a historical fact, as were its results. However, an important distinction had been made by LEF in the process of 'culture building'. While the great terror had wiped feudalism from France, it had not been accomplished by a conscious intent of the mob to reconstruct the country's culture. The political and economic situations in France had ripened to the point that it would be possible to establish a bourgeois government after the fall of the monarchy.[145] LEF sought to consciously replace the old bourgeois culture with a new communist culture, it sought to rationally institute a literary politic in the cultural sphere of Soviet society, it sought to do what had not been accomplished before.[146]

LEF writers had read The Eighteenth Brumaire very closely and were aware of the potential for disaster should the old culture survive the onslaught of LEF's programme.

> Настоящее живым - первый параграф футуристических требований. Никогда не оседать слежалым (пусть даже многоуважаемым) пластом на бегу изобретений - второй

---

144. Karl Marx and Fredric Engels, "Moralizing Critique and Criticizing Morality. A Contribution to the German Cultural History. Against Carl Herzen" in Werke (Berlin: n.p.), 338-339; in Jordan, 286.

145. Gaetano Salvemeni, The French Revolution: 1788-1792, trans. I.M. Rawson (New York: Norton, 1962), 328.

146. Anna Lawton, ed., Russian Futurism Through Its Manifestos, 1912-1928, trans. Anna Lawton and Herbert Eagle

> лозунг. Футурист перестает быть футуристом, если он начинает перепевать хотя бы самого себя, если он начинает жить на проценты со своего творческого капитала. Футурист рискует стать мещанином-пассеистом, утрачивая гибость и ударность постановки вопросов о методах и примерах боя за изобретательную, тренированную, классово-полезную человеческую личность.[147]

To fall into the old 'trappings' (in the quote above) of the artist would reduce the Futurist to the same level as the 'bourgeois-passéist'. It was imperative for the artist, for LEF, not to settle for the easy life, nor for the comfortable art form. One had to perpetually strive to push ahead. Daily-life, the old nemesis, had to be continually confronted and overcome.

The Cultural Battle Front

LEF noted that the bourgeois world-view had been individualism, idealism, dualism and nationalism. To offset this world view, LEF proposed a revolutionary world-view that was collective, materialist, monist and international.[148] LEF had written that in its battle with the old way of life [быт] its weapons would be "example, agitation, and propaganda."[149] The battle for the Left Front of the Arts was to be waged on the cultural front.[150] LEF had 'sunk its teeth into' the cultural heritage in order to free the new Soviet citizen from the remnants of the old order, to prepare for the development of a new

---

(Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1988), 44.

147. Третьяков, "Откуда", 196.

148. С. Третьяков, "ЛЕФ и НЕП," ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 72.

149. "В кого вгрызается ЛЕФ?," 9.

150. Pomorska, "Mayakovsky," 174.

culture, and a new communist society.

> Классики националиизировались. Классики почитались единственным чтивом. Классики считались незыблемым, абсолютным искусством. Классики медью памятников, традицией школ - давили все новое. ...Но мы всеми силами нашими будем бороться против перенесения методов работы мертвых в сегодняшнее искусство.[151]

LEF's critique of art had not only articulated its objection to the æsthetic as it functioned in 'traditional' art, but also had implicitly proposed the direction for its argument for a socially active function of a new art through the application of the concept of life-building. The belief in the possibility and necessity of implementing such a programme would be the source of criticism against LEF as being ultra-rational, dogmatic, and utilitarian. However, Marx had observed that the creation of a new culture was not due to the ultra-rational, dogmatic, utilitarian nature of the reign of terror, but due to the general development of society.[152] The infrastructure of Russian society had changed through the Revolution, and perhaps, conditions had ripened for a change in Russian society.

LEF had presented an interpretation of Marx that had been heavily influenced by its Futurist past. It had adapted the basic Futurist position to fit a logical, dialectic construction. LEF did not seek to eliminate the role of the æsthetic as an ideological tool, but through an understanding of its working, to align it with the Soviet state. LEF

---

151. "В кого вгрызается ЛЕФ?," 8.

152. "The bloody deed of the people merely paved the way for the bourgeoisie. Similarily, the overthrow of the absolute monarchy would have been only temporary, if the economic conditions for the domination of the bourgeoisie had not as of yet reached maturity." Jordan, 286.

proposed that it could change the popular, 'anti-revolutionary' taste in art (as represented by the decadent literature of the time and the influx of 'Western' literature after NEP) by propagating a materialistic rather than idealistic view of the arts.[153]

The new Soviet culture would develop out of a new consciousness, a new understanding of the arts, as "productive" not "reflective". "Productive" because the proletariat was seen as a class which produced values (things), as opposed to the bourgeoisie, a class that sought to reflect (justify) its reality through art.[154] For the proletatiat, argued LEF, the more natural role for the arts was productive and not reflective. This was meant to demonstrate the basic nature of both classes, active versus passive, productive versus reflective, liberating versus imitating.

Central to the idea of the productive nature of the arts and its socially active role, was the idea of the organizing influence of the æsthetic:

> ...элементы живого русского языка широких социальных слоев - получили литературную организацию, а из литературы организация эта была заимствована и образованным обществом того времени. Так, на русском языке стали изъясняться и „политика с философей" и „дамская любовь" и вместе с тем - литература.[155]

LEF maintained that bourgeois idealism had been class orientated and therefore a 'carrier' of a class politic within the arts, a position that was supported by Marx. He wrote that:

---

153. Stephan, 62.

154. Чужак, "Под знаком", 16.

155. Г.И. Виногур, "Футуристы - строители языка." ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 205.

> ...unheroic as bourgeois society is, it nevertheless took heroism, sacrifice, terror, civil war and battles of people to bring it into being. And in the classically austere traditions of the Roman republic its gladiators [of bourgeois society] found the ideals and the art forms, the self-deceptions that they needed in order to conceal from themselves the bourgeois limitations of the content of their struggles and to keep their enthusiasm on the high plane of the great historical tragedy. [156]

The programme of life-building was outlined in the article by Nikolaj Čužak, in "Под знаком жизнестроение: опыт осознания искусства дня."[157] Čužak detailed the components and direction that LEF sought to implement through its programme of 'life-building.' LEF argued that, art had been viewed as a process of coming to an understanding [познание] of the world. Art was reflective, was unable to encompass the dynamics and statics of the position of the proletariat. Realism was unable to successfully reflect the dynamics of the 'last class', the proletariat.

Reflection was to be replaced with conscious construction. LEF sought to bring forward 'ultra-realism' which, although sharing the relative notion of reality, would put reality, as it appeared to be through the prism of a 'dialectical revolt'. In this way art would attain a fervent character, like a 'taught bowstring' or a slap across somebody's face.[158]

LEF realised that art had an organizing character, one that was the service of the ruling class to maintain hegemony.

---

156. Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels, 226.
157. ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 12-39.
158. Чужак, "Под знаком", 17.

> Всякая культура - в частности искусство - постепенно и мучительно перерабатываются восходящим классом в длинном процессе его сознания себя, как класса, и продвижки к гегемонии."[159]

Puškin had performed an organizing role for his class, within that particular time of Russian history. LEF acknowledged the role of Puškin and drew a parallel between the role of Puškin and LEF (represented by Majakovskij): both were on a language mission.[160] Puškin had given language to his class, his works functioned within linguistics, philosophy and morality. Through his works, Puškin had given more than language to his class, he organised his class through his works.[161] This 'class centred' literature was seen by LEF as creating a world view [мироощущение]. LEF argued that it would be necessary to understand the function of language and its organizing character.

Language Politics

LEF maintained that language, as a social fact, was an object of a 'cultural overcoming.' LEF stressed that there was a conscious and an unconscious use of language, and noted the existence of language politics.[162] LEF's identification of the unconscious use of language revealed not only a cultural influence at the very level of formative cognitive associations, it could be said to anticipate both an 'ideology of the æsthetic' and the concept of a 'political unconscious' that is developed in Fredric Jameson's work, The Political Unconscious.

---

159. Чужак, "Под знаком", 16.
160. Винокур, "Футуристы," 207н.
161. Виногур, "Футуристы," 205.
162. Г. Винокур, "О революционной фразеологии," ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 104.

Through an understanding of form and content, one can re-construct the political underpinnings of a text, and the function of the æsthetic. LEF argued that use of the literary historical past in contemporary speech and writings perpetuated the influence or force of a particular social order upon those who used the symbols and images of a past culture.

> Как и всякий социальный факт, наш язык есть объект культурного преоделения. То обстоятельство, что в нашем быту мы пользуемся языком импульсивно, следуя заданной, внушенной социальной норме нисколько вышесказанному не противоречит. Все дело лишь в том, что язык, как средство импульсивного, несознательного пользования -- имеет свои строгие границы: речь „по инерции" -- сменяется сознательным проникновением в систему языка, как только высказывание попадает в условия, вынуждающие говорящего оперировать своими языковыми способностями рационально, целесообразно.[163]

The mechanics of speech work on an unconscious level, which could be replaced by the conscious intent of the speaker, depending on the ability of the speaker to work within the language. It becomes clear that the use of language, the organization of the elements of language by the speaker or writer, is not merely a mechanical but also has a creative function. The creative function of language is determined by the social and political environment. LEF anticipated the work of the literary critic Fredric Jameson. He noted there existed a specific relationship between the text and ideology:

> ...ideology and cultural texts or artifacts [reveal] a specification still conditioned by the limits of the first,

---

163. Винокур, "Футуристы", 204.

> narrowly historical or political horizon in which it was made. We may suggest that from this perspective, ideology is not something which informs or invests symbolic production; rather the aesthetic act itself is ideological, and the production of aesthetic or narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act in its own right, with the function of inventing imaginary or formal "solutions" to unresolvable social contradictions.[164]

Whereas LEF proposed to harness the æsthetic for the purpose of constructing a new Soviet citizen, Jameson offered no such possibility.

> The reader [of The Political Unconscious] should not, in the first place expect anything like that exploratory projection of what a vital and emergent political culture should be and do which Raymond Williams has rightly proposed as the most urgent task of a Marxist cultural criticism...A provisional conclusion to the present work will spell out some of the challenges Marxist interpretation must anticipate in conceiving those new forms of collective thinking and collective culture which lie beyond the boundries of our own world. The reader will there find an empty chair reserved for some as yet unrealized, collective, and decentred cultural production of the future, beyond realism and modernism alike.[165]

It becomes clear that language is closely related to the cultural heritage of a nation, as well as its social and political development; this aspect of language was identified by LEF as a part of language politics.[166] The images and symbols that are used by a nation reflect its history, its social and political development, but also organised the

---

164. Fredric Jameson, The Political Unconscious (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1988), 79.

165. Jameson, 11.

166. Винокур, "Футуристы", 207.

nation for a particular purpose.[167] Language was related to the social development of a nation, to its political structures, and to its cultural awareness and aspirations.

Language-creation was an element of life-building, and necessary in order to break free of the influence of the past. Arvatov's article on language-creation, "Речетворчество"[168] examined the conscious creation of new words, specifically "zaum'", and noted that it performed a dual function; it revealed the 'hypnosis' of the working class via linguistics, and also justified "zaum'" as historically sound and also socially useful.

Arvatov set out to prove five specific points: 1) "zaum'" existed before the work of Xlebnikov, 2) "zaum'" existed outside of poetry, 3) as a phenomenon, "zaum'" is not just of a phonetic order, 4) it is not a collapse of poetic language, 5) as a novelty "zaum'" has an independent organizing significance.[169]

These five points were specfic criticisms leveled against "zaum'." The first three points would seem to deal more with the history of language, while the last two, dealt with the organizing character of language within a cultural setting.

Arvatov showed that "zaum'" had existed in the nineteenth century, with the classical writers of both Russian and English, and indeed, that "„заумная" речь встречается у писателей и поэтов во все периоды

---

167. For example: "Cromwell and the English people had borrowed speech, passions and illusions from the old testament for their bourgeois revolution. When the real aim had been achieved, when the bourgeois transformation of English society had been accomplished, Locke supplanted Habakkuk." Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels, 226.

168. Б. Арватов, "Речетворчество", ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 79-91.

169. Арватов, "Речетворчество", 79.

истории".[170] Puškin, Tolstoj, Malevič and Gor'kij all displayed examples of "zaum'."

От Рущука до старой Смирны,
От Трапезунда до Тульчи,
Пушкин

Кью-ю-ю... летинатала,- де буде ба и затревагала...
Толстой

Вуй нуар не по си дьябль
сентере же се кух
пон бецима цитурнамэ
цитурнамэ цитама
Малевич

Дорога двурого, творог, недотрога,
Копыто, попыто, порыто...
Горький. [171]

The masters had displayed "zaum'" in a playfulness of speech. Thus, "zaum'" had been proven to be historically present from Puškin to the contemporary writers of the 1920s.

Not only was "zaum'" present in all periods of history, but it was also used in everyday speech. Many nickname-last names were proof of "zaum'"; the names "Кот-Васька" [Kot-Vas'ka] or "Чичиков" [Čičikov]. "Zaum'" was also noticeable in children's word games and telegraph cables. Thus, "zaum'" was placed in everyday life ['byt'].

The placement of "zaum'" outside of merely a phonetic definition removed the jibberish connotation associated with it:

---

170. Арватов, "Речетворчество", 79.
171. Арватов, "Речетворчество", 80.

> В этом смысле никакой чисто-фонетической формы нет и быть не может. Та или иная комбинация звуков непременно связывается с привычными для этих звуков и для подобных комбинации смысловыми значениями, с аналогичными морфемами и т. д. Вот от чего „заумь" не фонетическое, а фонологическое (термин Якобсона) и даже морфологическое явление.[172]

A senseless, absolute "zaum'" speech was not possible, according to Arvatov. The question lies with the level of one's understanding, qualitatively, not quantitatively.[173] "Zaum'" is the product of conscious language-building.[174] Arvatov refuted the claim that "zaum'" was a collapse of the poetic language through a demonstration of the existence of "zaum'" in all areas of speech, from words and their combinations to syntax.

"Речетворчество - положительно организующая сила."[175] Arvatov wrote that all language systems had two sides, material and forms. "Language is the living flowing energy of society," and evolves with the latter.[176] The combinations of language do not appear accidently, but are produced and give rise to meaning. The conscious production of language and its practical use would lay waste to the theory of the uselessness, or unorganizing quality of "zaum'".

"Zaum'" played an important role in the development of the argument for the creation of a new culture, and of a new life. Once "zaum'" was placed historically, its uselfullness established and its

---

172. Аравтов, "Речетворчество", 82.

173. "Все дело лишь в степени нашего понимания - в количественной, а не качественной различости (родители лучше понимают „заумь" своих детей, чем посторонние). Арватов, "Речетворчество", 83.

174. Арватов, "Речетворчество", 84.

175. Арватов, "Речетворчество", 86.

176. Арватов, "Речетворчество", 86.

innovativeness acknowledged, it allowed for the creation of a new lanaguage that would replace the old one. "Zaum'" was far from being completely explained, but a sort of respectability could be afforded it. The componentents of speech defined, the area of the battle of a new culture identified, LEF could then present the programme of life-building. The programme of life-building was ambitious, straight-forward, and clearly defined.

The Programme: Artistic Experimentation

The concept of производство [proizvodstvo] was the ultimate application of literary politics to LEF itself. The mystical and sublime nature of culture was removed and replaced with a more functional and utilitarian concept. With the 'producers' of culture placed on the same level as other producers of value [workers] it removed the possibility of placing the artist on a pedestal above the worker. LEF's determination of the artist as an artistic worker performed two functions: allowed for the possibility of going beyond the present forms for newer and more relevant art forms; prevented the placing of new 'icons' of culture in the place of those that had been removed.

Foremost was the concern of LEF that there was a possibility of merely replacing one 'icon' with another. There was to be a conscious 'worker' mentality amongst the cultural workers. Their concern would be to create new values (not moral or ethical but utilitarian) for society, to serve the new society, and not to replace the old masters.

The Futurists had primarily been a literary group concerned with the development of poetry. But as the composition of LEF demonstrated, the Futurist aspect of LEF had become concerned with the larger question of innovation in all areas of the arts, from poetry and prose to architecture and theatre. There was not an area of the

arts that had not found representation in the LEF group. The desire for innovation and experimentation had also been a component of the Futurists of 1912. The Cubo-Futurists had been primarily concerned with poetry. Yet Majakovskij and the Burljuk brothers, while having delved in poetry, where also painters, thus the name Cubo-Futurism [Cubism, Futurism].[177] In 1923 the LEF group consisted of Futurists, Constructivists, Formalists, innovators in theatre, film, photography, and architecture. The innovation in every area of the arts displayed more than a concern with the creation of values, but with breaking down the barriers between the arts and daily life. The old way of life [быт] had a distinct division between life and art. LEF sought to make the arts more utilitarian, to have art and life 'merge'.

LEF was not naïve in its expectations. It realised that there would not be a merging of life and art until the old 'byt' had been destroyed.[178] LEF had faith in its programme and that it would provide the means to create a new proletarian culture. The major problem LEF would encounter with its innovative programme would be that it was not possible for LEF to give an idea of what kind of art would indeed be created by this boundless innovation. A common joke of the time was whether the new art would be factory art, or art of the factory. The state had grown increasingly suspicious of the ardent connection LEF had attached to 'production'.

> [Lunacharskij] ...it is in vain that the comrades from LEF would assure us, they who have so recently grown accustomed to the word ["production"], that we have already learned so much on our own that we have simply

---

177. Barooshian, "The Politics," 40.

178. Б. Арватов, "Утопея или наука?" ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 16; Pomorska, "Mayakovsky," 174.

> nothing more to learn from human culture. That is [nonsense] of course, and the proletariat is not going to accept this point of view and will not agree that even quite respected figures such as Mayakovsky, Aseev, and Tret'yakov can simply black out the work of millennia performed by the human race.[179]

It was clear that in 1923 the Bolsheviks did not understand what LEF meant by 'production arts'. As LEF could not give them an answer, nor an actual product of their programme, the state remained wary of the LEF group.

---

179. Kuznetsova, 67-68.

> ...Нет поэтов и литераторов, -- есть поэзия и литература.
> ...Поэт - мастер своего дела. И только.
> Социальная роль поэта не может быть понята из анализа его индивидуальных качеств и навыков. Необходимо массовое изучение приемов поэтического ремесла, их отличия от смежных областей человеческого труда, законы из исторического развития. Пушкин не создатель школы, а только ее глава. Не будь Пушкина, ,,Евгений Онегин" все равно был бы написан. Америка была бы открыта и без Колумба.
>
> ЛЕФ, 1923.[180]

Conclusion

Russian Futurism had begun a process of thinking about culture along lines that had never been attempted before in the history of Russian literature.[181] It sought to consciously transform the culture of Soviet Russia, and in so doing to fundamentally change the nature of the citizens. LEF continued the Futurist avant-garde influence of its formative period through its fantastic pronouncements (to rebuild the Soviet culture) and ambitious goals (to consciously create a new man). However, it also continued another tendency of the avant-garde, namely, to promise more than it could deliver.

The three different periods of Futurism, 1912-1914, 1918-1921, and 1923-1925, contributed to its formulation of the socially useful

---

180. О. М. Брик, "[Так] Н[азываемый] ,,Формальный метод"", ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 213. See Appendix A for English translations for all Russian texts.

181. Lawton, 44.

æsthetic, to the development of its literary politics. The essence of Futurism was revealed in the striving to overcome the influence of the past. The essential problem of Futurism had been in the failure to produce a literature that was both socially useful and popular with the general population. Futurism had identified its obstacles (the influence of the past, and the cultural NEP) at every stage of its development, but failed to bring forward concrete literary works as exemplars of its theory.

A Slap had, at best, revealed Futurism's avant-garde 'moments' of activism, antagonism, and nihilism. It had been effective as a polemical work, but failed to provide a programme. It had identified the classics as a yoke that prevented creativity, and while calling for the throwing off of Puškin et al, could not provide anything to appeal to the public's imagination.

Markov noted that "As far as the positive program of the manifesto is concerned, it is vague and insufficient, betraying the fact that the writers were unsure of their purpose. The creation of new words was not enough for aesthetic foundation of a movement..."[182] It had neither a clear artistic programme nor a political agenda. However, it did display the essence of Futurism through its contempt for the art of the past, the Futurist demand to strive to outstrip former art forms and to develop new forms for the new society. The nature of literature is that it requires an audience. Without a wide audience the prospects of Futurism capturing centre stage in Russian literary history would seem remote.

The Revolution had given Futurism a chance to work on the development of culture, within IZO, on a scale that would not have

---

182. Markov, 47.

been possible under any other circumstances. The avant-garde had never been given such an ambitious project before, one that had so many possibilities: it was to prevent cultural stagnation, and revive the cultural education of a nation.[183] IZO also gave the Futurists access to a press. Through IZO Futurism had the opportunity to reach a broad audience as never before. With the two IZO publications, Art of the Commune and Art, the first articles on culture building appeared. As IZO came under attack as being a tool of Futurism, and Futurism came to claim that it represented the communist government, support and tolerance for the avant-garde waned. Funding for both publications became shaky, and eventually both ceased publication. Although IZO came under heavy attack for its expressed artistic views and preference in purchasing art, which happened to be mainly 'Futuristic',[184] it had been successful in the fulfillment of the government's expressed aims for IZO.[185] With the experiment in economics, NEP, the Futurists had been removed from IZO. It would take another eighteen months before the Futurists would have access to a press.

The journal, LEF, had been as ambitious as A Slap and continued the work attempted through IZO. It proposed the rebuilding of Russian culture into a proletarian culture.[186] Its critique of art, and the proposed programme of life-building had been heavily influenced by the application of dialectical materialism to the essential Futurist position to art of the past (opposition to the influence of the cultural past). Although LEF had anchored its programme of culture-building

---

183. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 47.

184. Barooshian, Russian Cubo-Futurism, 123.

185. "IZO's primary task had been to reorganize the artistic educational system, and this it had in fact done." Jangeldt, Majakovskij, 47.

186. Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 86.

in history, and obtained theoretical support from Marx for the formulation of its literary politics, it was unsuccessful in the implementation of its programme. As LEF's programme ran against the Bolshevik interpretation of the development of art and culture in general, it could expect no support, financial or otherwise, for the implementation of its programme. The publishing difficulties that IZO had experienced with Art of the Commune and Art reocurred with LEF. Except for the very first issue, all issues had parts that were chopped, confiscated or otherwise experienced interference. Every issue, with the exception of the first, had been delayed at the publishers or censors.

In fact, the programme and polemics of LEF were an important contribution to literature and literary criticism, even though it has not been successful. LEF had attempted to put into words, and into a workable programme, that which had never been consciously attempted before. The desire for the rational control of art, the conscious decision to develop culture along a particular line, and the demystification of art and the artist alienated LEF from both the government and its society.

LEF has been given the ignoble distinction of being the predecessor of socialist realism.

> Although we may find it difficult to resist the vitality and wit of the Soviet Futurists that is demonstrated in the journal LEF, we are also reminded of the dangers of their militant, single-minded pursuit of a path in art that rejected all former conventions in an attempt to make art truly utilitarian. The LEF Futurists were one of the first, if not the first, to introduce dogmaticism and intolerance

into Soviet cultural life.[187]

> Seen historically, the poetic programme of the Lef group has the questionable distinction of being the predecessor of the later Socialist Realism. ...The Lef blend of technician, utopianism, and utilitarianism was matched in its dogmaticism and its universality only by Socialist Realism.[188]

At the same time, Futurism has been associated as a part of the decadent movement against which it rebelled.

> ...некоторые лефовцы стали на позиции так называемого формально-социологического метода, пытаясь эклетически примирить буржуазные теории формулистов с марксистским литературоведением.[189]

LEF's history was short and stormy. The Futurists were acknowledged as the first conscious art movement, and one of the most consistent groups throughout its existence.[190] LEF identified what it perceived as the active force in art that worked upon society; it sought to change the reflective nature of art to a consciously contructive role that would shape society. LEF had laid bare the bourgeois forces that were working within society, and sought to overthrow it. Yet, neither the government nor other literary groups supported LEF's literary politics, and indeed were openly hostile. LEF criticized its opponents: "марксист - мол, а с Марксом несогласен."[191]

---

187. Stephan, xi.

188. Stephan, 96.

189. Большая Советская Энциклопедия (Москва: Государственный институт "Советская Энциклопедия", 1935), т. 36, 724.

190. Barooshian, Russian Cubo-Futurism, 117; Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 47.

191. Арватов, "Маркс," 76.

LEF had relied on Marx for the theoretical support for their literary politics, yet, perhaps, had it had access to the work of Marx, Moralizing Critique and Critizing Morality (1847), concerning bourgeois and proletarian revolutions, LEF would have found the following useful:

> Men do not build a new world for themselves out of the 'blessings of this world' (Erdengütern), as crude superstitions would have it, but out of the historical achievements of their crumbling world. In the course of their development they (the bourgeoisie) must first produce the material conditions of a new society, and no effort of intellect or will can liberate them from this fate.[192]

The Futurist literary politics were foreign to the heritage of Russian culture. It attempted, by force, to overcome what it perceived as the linguistic shortcomings of Russian for a new Russian language. It sought to overcome the 'fetish of the past' by initially trying to smash it, and then to discredit it. It tried to implant a socially useful æsthetic that was not understood nor wanted by the country. The Futurist heritage to Russian literature remains the essence it revealed in A Slap through to LEF, a striving to overcome the present attachment and longing for the past, a desire to reach into the future.

---

192. Jordan, 286-87.

APPENDIX A

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS TO THE RUSSIAN TEXTS

[Translations are mine unless otherwise stated.]

Introduction:

Page 1.

Epigraph: To the Readers of our New First Unexpected./ Only we are the face of our Time/ The horn of time trumpets through us in the art of the word./ The past is crowded./ The Academy and Pushkin are more incomprehensible than hieroglyphics./ Throw Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, et al., et al., overboard from the ship of Modernity./ He who does not forget his first love will not recognize his last./ A Slap in the Face of Public Taste. 1912. [Translation from Markov, 45.]

Footnote 1 [hereafter Fn.]. Russian Literature of the Pre-Revolutionary Period. N. A. Trifonov, ed., (Moscow: Government scientific pedagogical ministry of education of the U.S.S.R., 1962).

Page 2.

Fn. 5. N. Gorlov, "About Futurisms and Futurism," LEF 4 (1923): 6.

Page 3.

Fn. 7. Boris Kušner, "The Organizers of Art," LEF 3 (1923): 102.

Fn. 8. "We-the workers of the left culture-intend to destroy this attic. The work of the revolution is not a 6-hour thing, not only from 10 to 4. Its ridiculous, scandalous and impossible [that such a thing could happen to the Revolution]; it is simply impossible to uncover the method in politics and economics, and leave it shamelessly obscured in culture and daily-life...Left politics commandingly demands a left culture, a left daily-life." M. Levidov, "From 10 to 4 and from 4 to 10." LEF 3 (1923): 152.

Page 6.

Fn. 14. "[We] need to greet the new authority and enter into contact with it." Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 32.

Page 9.

Fn. 24. "...to continue the work begun by the newspaper 'The Art of the Commune' in 1918-1919 and by the journal 'Lef' in 1923-24." Jangfeldt, Majakovskij, 34.

Page 11.

Fn. 27. O. Zemljakova and E. Pogorel'skaja, "Towards a history of the first issue of the journal «LEF», Questions of Literature 7 (1987): 181.

Chapter One.

Page 12.

Epigraph: I. A separation of art from the government. Destruction of the patronage of privilege and control in the area of art. Down with diplomas, titles, official posts and ranks. II. A transference of all the material means of art: theatres, chapels, exhibition rooms and buildings of the academy and art schools-into the hands of the masters of art themselves for the equal use of them by the whole nation. III. Universal art education because we believe that the basis of the future of free art can only come out from the depths of a democratic Russia, who until that time were only hungering after bread. [This is intended to draw a reference to the popular saying that man cannot live by bread alone.] "The Manifesto of the Flying Federation of Futurists," The Futurist Gazette, 1918.

Fn. 29. A Slap in the Face of Public Taste, 1912; A Trap for Judges II, 1913; The Union of Youth, 1913; The Sickly Moon, 1913; The Three, 1913; The Plug, 1913; The Futurist's "Hylaea" Collection Mares' Milk, 1914; The Futurists: The Roaring Parnas, 1914; The Futurist: The

First Journal of Russian Futurists No. 1-2, 1914; The Sickly Moon, 2nd ed., 1914.

Page 13.

Line 5: The revolution moved the theatre of our critical actions./ We have to review our tactics./ [...] Our past slogan was "to stand on the block of the word 'we' amongst the sea of whistles and indignation."/ Now we just await recognition of the truth of our æsthetic work, in order to dissolve the small 'we' of art into the enormous 'we' of communism./ But we have cleansed our old 'we':/ from all trying to turn the revolution of art-a part of the whole October will-to the Oscar Wilde-esque self-serving æsthetic for the sake of the æsthetic, revolt from the sake of revolt; from all who take from the æsthetic revolution only outward incidental methods of the struggle,/ from those who elevate separate levels of our struggle to a new canon and cliché,/ From those who, unleashing our slogans of yesterday, try to sweeten keepers of the greying innovation, finding for their calmed-down Pegases comfortable coffee tables,/ from those who, drag along on the tail end, permanently five years behind, gathering dried berries of a rejuvenated academia with our discarded flower. "Into whom does LEF sink its teeth?" LEF 1 (1923): 8-9.

Fn. 30. "Into whom does LEF sink its teeth?" LEF 1 (1923): 8-9.

Page 14.

Fn. 31. See Fn. 24, page 9.

Page 15.

Line 4: To the readers of our New First Unexpected./ Only we are the face of our Time. The horn of time trumpets through us in the art of the word./ The past is crowded. The Academy and Pushkin are more incomprehensible than hieroglyphics./ Throw Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, et al., et al., overboard from the Ship of Modernity./ He who does not forget his first love will not recognize his last./ But who is so gullible as to direct this last love toward the

perfumed lechery of a Balmont? Does it reflect the virile soul of today?/ Who is so cowardly as to be afraid to strip the warrior Bryusov of the paper armor he wears over his black tuxedo? Is the dawn of an undiscovered beauty seen there?/ Wash your hands, you who touched the filthy slime of the books written by all those innumerable Leonid Andreyevs./ All those Maxim Gorkys, Kuprins, Bloks, Sologubs, Remizovs, Averchenkos, Chernyis, Kuzmins, Bunins, etc., etc., need only a dacha on a river. Tailors are rewarded this way./ We look at their nothingness from the height of skyscrapers!.../ We decree that the poet's rights be honored:/ 1) to enlarge vocabulary in its scope with arbitrary and derivative words (creation of new words)./ 2) to feel an insurmountable hatred for the language existing before them./ 3) to push aside in horror from our proud brow the wreath of dirt-cheap fame, which you have fashioned from bathhouse veniks ["twigs"]./ 4) to stand on the block of the word "we" amid the boos and indignation./ And if for the time being even our lines are still marked with the dirty stigmas of your "common sense" and "good taste," there tremble on them for the first time the summer lightnings of the New-Coming Beauty of the Self-Sufficient (self-centred) Word. [Translation from Markov, 45-46.]

Page 17.

Line 6: ...we propose new principles of creation, which appears to us in the following order:/ 1. ...We loosened the syntax./ 2. We have started to attach content to words according their descriptive and phonetic characteristics./ 3. We realise the role of prefixes and suffixes./ 4. In the name of free personal choice we deny proper spelling./ ...We are the new people of a new life. (A Trap for Judges II, 1913)

Line 16: From the above it is clear, that up to our time language creators have investigated too much in the human «soul» (enigmas of the soul, passions and feelings) but they knew poorly that the people who gab create the soul, and sonce we, the gabbers of the future people, think more about the word than about the worn predecessors

of the «Psyche», she died in loneliness and now it is in our power to create anything anew...will we want to?/ ...No!../ It may be better they survive by the word as such, but not themselves. (The Word as Such, 1913)

Line 28: The old order was held up by three whales./ Political slavery, social slavery and spiritual slavery./ The February revolution annihilated political slavery. The road to Tobol'sk is covered with the feathers of the two-headed eagle. October threw a bomb of social revolution under capital. Far on the horizon looms the fat asses of fleeing factory-owners. And now there only stands the unshakeable third whale, - the Spiritual slavery./ As of old, it spouts a fountain of stale water-so named-old art. (The Futurist Gazette, 1918)

Fn. 37. Trifonov, 456-57.

Fn. 38. Trifonov, 458.

Page 18

Line 8: So called Stage-managers!/ How long will you and other rats gnaw this theatrical sham?../ So called Poets!/ When will you throw away your sickly lyrics?../ So called Artists!/ Stop color patching or moth-eaten canvasses./ Stop decorating the easy life of the NEP-bourgoisie. (LEF, 1923; translation from LEF 2 (1923): 7; a minor change with the inclusion of 'NEP' in the phrase NEP-bourgoisie. The tri-lingual manifesto has the Russian word 'буржуа-нэпии' and the German text in LEF for the same manifesto (p.5) also included NEP, 'der Bourgeoisnepper, and only the English left 'NEP' out. L.F.)

Fn. 39. "Directive No. 1 concerning the democratization of the arts," The Futurist Gazette, 1918.

Fn. 40. "Comrades-formers of life!" LEF 2 (1923):3.

Page 19.

Fn. 47. "I, Myself," V. V. Majakovskij: Writings in Two Volumes, v. 1 (Moscow: «Pravda» Publication, 1987), 32-33.

Page 24.

Line 23: ...we have cleansed the old 'we': from all those trying to turn the revoultion of art - a part of the whole October will - to the Oscar Wilde-esque æsthetic for the sake æsthetics, revolt for the sake of revolt; from those who would take from the æsthetic revolution only the outward incidental methods of the struggle.

Page 25.

Fn. 62. "Into whom does LEF sink its teeth?" LEF 1 (1923):9.

Fn. 64. "The creation of new ideological or material values is the only reliable criteria with which the dialectian approaches art." N. Čužak, "Under the Sign of Live-building," LEF 1 (1923): 37.

Page 26.

Fn. 65. Boris Arvatov, "Marx on artistic restoration," LEF 3 (1923): 77.

Page 27.

Fn. 69. Zemljakova, 182.

Page 29.

Fn. 75. N. Gorlov, Futurism and the Revolution (Moscow: Government Publications, 1924), 89.

Fn. 76. Gorlov, 89.

Fn. 78. O. Brik, "To Sosnovskij," LEF 3 (1923): 4; S. Tret'jakov, "An open letter," LEF 3 (1924): 5.

Page 32.

Fn. 81. "Don't do trade in Lenin!" LEF 5 [1] (1923): 3-4.

Chapter Two.

Page 33.

Epigraph: We fought with the old way of life./ We will struggle with the remnants of that way of life today./ With those, who exchanged the poetry of private little houses for the poetry of private housing committees./ Earlier we struggled with the bullies of the bourgeoisie./ We were shocking with yellow blouses and painted faces./ Now we are struggling with the victims of these bullies in our Soviet order./ Our weapon[s] are example, agitation, propaganda. LEF, 1923.

Fn. 83. "Into whom does LEF sink its teeth?" LEF 1 (1923): 9.

Fn. 84. "Out of the boredom with Rachmaninov...that extended to a boredom with all the classics...Russian Futurism was born." V. V. Majakovskij: Writings in Two Volumes, v.1 (Moscow: «Pravda» Publications, 1987), 32.

Page 34.

Fn. 85. "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," Marx and Engels: Collected Works, v. 3 (Moscow: Government Publications, 1921); "An Introduation to the Critique of Political Economy," Principle Problems of Political Economy, P. Dvolajskij and I. Rubin, eds. (Moscow: Government Publications, 1922). Mentioned in the article by B. Arvatov, "Marx on artistic restoration," LEF 3 (1923): 77.

Fn. 86. Arvatov, "Marx," 79–96.

Fn. 87. "Our Russian art, in all of its manifestations, from poetry to painting and theatre, is now experiencing an unusual kind of crisis situation." N. Čužak, "Under the Sign," LEF 1 (1923): 12.

Fn. 88. "What do we consider the art of our day?" Čužak, "Under the Sign," 12.

Page 35.

Line 18: Greek art presupposes Greek mythology, that is, the nature and common forms, already having received unconscious artistic cultivation in the national imagination. This is its material. But not any kind of mythology and not any kind of unconscious artistic cultivation of the nature...

Fn. 89. Arvatov, "Marx," 77.

Fn. 90. Arvatov, "Marx," 79.

Fn. 91. Arvatov, "Marx," 79.

Fn. 92. Arvatov, "Marx," 80.

Page 36.

Line 12: [Greek art] is beautiful because it appears as an organic result, as an unaffected revelation of its own milieu, because the "Greeks were normal children," because their forms "can never be repeated again"...[Greek forms] are beautiful precisely because of and only because of [the fact] that at one time they were normal and never [again] will be as such.

Fn. 93. "Greek art is indissolubly connected with Greek social relations, and only with them." Arvatov, "Marx," 82.

Fn. 95. "...and how much more natural and logical would it be to say: socialist society, having replaced man with higher technology - will also replace the human-like art with an art of high technology." Arvatov, "Marx," 83.

Fn. 96. Arvatov, "Marx," 83.

Fn. 97. Arvatov, "Marx," 83-84.

Page 37.

Fn. 99. N. Gorlov, "About Futurisms," 6.

Fn. 100. Gorlov, "About Futurisms," 6.

Page 38.

Line 9: Usually this quote from æsthetics is brought forward by Marxists in order to prove, that, according to Marx "content defines form," or saying it another way, here in the understanding of content enters the ideological side of artistic production, its subject in the wider meaning of the word.

Fn. 102. Arvatov, "Marx," 91.

Fn. 103. "Because it is apparent, that the word 'content' is used by Marx in some other sense, different from an æsthetic interpretation. How exactly?" Arvatov, "Marx," 91.

Page 39.

Line 2: From the context it is clear, that under content Marx understood the content of that revolutionary process, that is, which create that or other artistic forms: in that time, as in the epoch of the bourgeois revolution, forms communicate "extraordinary meaning of a given question", they conceal the "bourgeois limited content" of the struggle,-in the epoch of the bourgeois revolution they can only be forged in the process of conscious achievement conscious of those proposed questions; there they were the means of "self-deception", a "sparkler" [Bengal candle], of æsthetic beauty, here they will serve the social purpose.

Fn. 104. Arvatov, "Marx," 92.

Fn. 105. Arvatov, "Marx," 92.

Fn. 106. Arvatov, "Marx," 82.

Page 40.

Line 12: The creation of new ideological or material value is the only reliable criteria with which the dialectician approaches art.

Fn. 107. Čužak, "Under the Sign," 37.

Page 41.

Line 17: ...Futurists have to conduct the battle within this front of art [as one of the sharpest class weapons of influencing the psyche] using the mass demand for products of æsthetic production, -battle for taste, -to put the materialist point of view opposing the idealism and passéism.

Fn. 108. N. Berdjaev, The Crisis of Art (Moscow: Government Publications, 1918).

Fn. 109. S. Tret'jakov, "From where to where," LEF 1 (1923): 199.

Page 42.

Fn. 110. Čužak, "Under the Sign," 17.

Fn. 111. Čužak, "Under the Sign," 16.

Page 43.

Line 3: [Futurists] began with a destruction of the æsthetic. But daily-life and the æsthetic, are the very same thing, as the hut and its roof. When they smash the roof, it means, that they also smash the hut.

Fn. 113. Gorlov, Futurism, 21n.

Page 44.

Line 1: And if the dissemination of art in life appears as the maximum-programme of the Futurists, the conscious reorganization of language into acceptable forms, the scuffle for the emotional focal point of the producer-consumer, then the staging of one's own language mastery to the service of the practical questions of the day is the minimum-programme of the Futurist-language-designers.

Line 16: The great artistic forms of the past are not received by them as lawfully and necessarily and belonging to the past. To them, the theoreticians, it begins to seem that if these forms are so perfect (that is, organic, -one cannot understand perfection in any other way unless of course it takes the metaphysical stand of absolute forms), therefore, the epoch that created it is also perfect, therefore it remains only for us to learn from it, erected in example for any time and for any nation.

Fn. 116. Tret'jakov, "From where," 202.

Fn. 117. Arvatov, "Marx," 81.

Fn. 118. Gorlov, "About Futurisms," 6.

Fn. 119. Arvatov, "Marx," 81.

Page 45.

Line 4: If Greek art is worthy of being a school for contemporary imitators of antiquity, because it is beautiful, then for Marx it is beautiful because it is the organic result, an unaffected revelation of its own milieu, because the "Greeks were normal children," because their forms "can never be repeated again."

Fn. 120. Arvatov, "Marx," 83-84.

Fn. 121. Gorlov, "About Futurisms," 15.

Page 46.

Line 4: ...in order to arrive at its own art, the proletariat will have to get rid of, to the end, the fetish cult of the artistic past, and operate on the progressive experience of the present day. It is not stylization under the past forms that is the basis of the mission of proletarian art, but the creation, the conscious organic creation of the future.

Line 23: Forms of a particular flowering change in the head of the art critic to normal forms, authoritative active examples, and instead of understanding how these forms arose during historical periods that were made obsolete by us, the art critic begins to evaluate the level of artistic development of an epoch from the point of view of those high forms which this epoch [antiquity] created. Together with such an evaluation, which changes forms into the absolute, the historical character of art is quickly lost from view, and analysis of the latter is torn from the latest analysis of social relations.

Fn. 122. Arvatov, "Marx," 78.

Fn. 123. Arvatov, "Marx," 79.

Page 47.

Line 15: ...art of the Great French Revolution was illusory not because such is a property of art itself, but because the social relations demanded this, having changed art into one of the powerful means of this general social illusion.

Fn. 124. Arvatov, "Marx," 78.

Fn. 125. Arvatov, "Marx," 88.

Fn. 126. "...illusion is needed here, where society is not consciously the master of its own fate, when it is subordinate either to the elements of the outer world, or to the elements of its own [social] development." Arvatov, "Marx," 89.

Fn. 127. Arvatov, "Marx," 88.

Page 48.

Line 23: See line 23, page 24.

Fn. 128. Tret'jakov, "From where," 197-97.

Fn. 129. "Comrades-formers of life!" LEF 1 (1923): 4.

Page 49.

Line 15: It is clear, [the Bolsheviks] did not ask us very much about our æsthetic beliefs, at the sight of the intelligentsia high-tailing away [fleeing]. We created the then revolutionary "Izo," "Teo" and "Muzo"[193] ; we brought to those studying in to the storm of the academy...The movment of our art revealed our strength in the organization of the left front fortresses throughout the whole of the RSFSR.

Fn. 130. "Into whom does LEF sink its teeth?" LEF 1 (1923): 9.

Fn. 131. "The capitalists, of course, were never the patrons of our whip-like lines and stinging strokes." "For what does LEF struggle?" LEF 1 (1923): 3.

Fn. 132. "For what does LEF struggle?" LEF 1 (1923): 4-5.

Chapter Three.

Page 52.

Epigraph: They always demand of art that it be comprehensible, but they never demand of themselves that they adapt their minds to comprehension. K. Malevič, "On New Systems of Art." 1919 [Translation from Jangdeldt, Majakovskij, 2.]

Fn. 137. N. Čužak, "Pluses and minuses," LEF 3 (1923): 28.

Page 53.

---

193. IZO - Otdel izobrazitel'nyx iskusstv, the Section of Fine Arts; TEO - Teatral'noe otdelenie, the Theatrical division; MUZO - Muzeinoe otdelenie, Museum section. See Christina Lodder, Russian Constructivism (London: Yale Univ. Press, 1983), 324.

Fn. 139. Sergej Volodin, "Muddled lines," LEF 3 (1923): 21.

Fn. 140. Čužak, "Under the Sign," 17.

Page 54.

Fn. 142. Čužak, "Under the Sign," 14.

Page 56.

Fn. 143. Arvatov, "Marx," 87.

Page 57.

Line 20: The present belongs to the living - this is the first paragraph of the Futurist demands. Never settle as a sedimentary layer (even if respected) in the course of innovation - is the second slogan. The Futurist ceases to be a Futurist if he begins to rehash, repeat himself, if he begins to live off the percentage of his own creative capital. The Futurist risks becoming a petty bourgeois-passéist, losing his flexibility and directness in the raising of the questions about methods and his model of struggle for the innovative, trained and class-useful individual.

Page 58.

Fn. 147. Tret'jakov, "From where," 196.

Fn. 148. S. Tret'jakov, "LEF and NEP," LEF 2 (1923):72.

Fn. 149. "Into whom does LEF sink its teeth?", 9.

Page 59.

Line 2: The classics have been nationalized. The classics were considered the only reading material. The classics were considered unshakable, absolute art. The classics were crushing everything new under the [weight] of bronze of monuments, and the traditions of schools...But with all of the strength we possess, we will struggle against the transference of the methods of work of the dead to today's art.

Fn. 151. "Into whom does LEF sink its teeth?", 8.

Page 60.

Line 17: ...the elements of the living Russian language of the wide social strata - have received literary organization, and this was claimed from a literary organization and by the educated society of the time. So both "politics with philosophy" and "womanly love" began to be explained [in the Russian language] and along with that - literature.

Fn. 154. Čužak, "Under the Sign," 16.

Fn. 155. G. I. Vinokur, "Futurists - the builders of language," LEF 1 (1923): 205.

Page 61.

Fn. 157. LEF 1 (1923): 12-39.

Fn. 158. Čužak, "Under the Sign," 17.

Page 62

Line 1: Every culture - in particular art - is gradually and painfully remade by the ascending class in the long process of it becoming conscious of itself, as a class, and as it advances to hegemony.

Fn. 159. Čužak, "Under the Sign," 16.

Fn. 160. Vinokur, "Futurists," 207n.

Fn. 161. Vinokur, "Futurists," 205.

Fn. 162. G. Vinokur, "About revolutionary phraseology," LEF 2 (1923): 104.

Page 63.

Line 6: As any social fact, our language is an object of cultural overcoming. That circumstance, that in our daily-life we use language impulsively, following the set and imposed social norm, not in the least contradicts the aforesaid [statement]. The whole point is that language as a means of impulsive unconscious use - has its own strict boundaries: "mechanical" speech gives way to conscious penetration into a system of language, as long as the expression falls upon favorable circumstances, which force speaker to operate within the

capacity of his own language rationally and expediently.

Fn. 163. Vinokur, "Futurists," 204.

Page 64.

Fn. 166. Vinokur, "Futurists," 207.

Page 65.

Fn. 168. B. Arvatov, "Language-creation," LEF 2 (1923): 79-91.

Fn. 169. Arvatov, "Language-creation," 79.

Page 66.

Note: the examples of "zaum'" on page 66 are not translatable into English.

Fn. 170. Arvatov, "Language-creation," 79.

Fn. 171. Arvatov, "Language-creation," 80.

Page 67.

Line 1: In this sense there is no purely-phonetic form and there cannot be. That or another combination of sounds are indispensably linked with the customary groupings for these sounds and for similar combinations by sense-meanings, with analogous morpheme and so forth. Therefore, "zaum'" is not phonetic, but phonological (a term of Jakobson) and even a morphological occurrence.

Line 15: "Language-creation is a positive organization force."

Fn. 172. Arvatov, "Language-creation," 82.

Fn. 173. "The matter is in the level of understanding - in the qualitative but not quantitative diference (parents understand the "zaum'" of their own children better than a stranger). Arvatov, "Language-creation," 83.

Fn. 174. Arvatov, "Language-creation," 84.

Fn. 175. Arvatov, "Language-creation," 86.

Fn. 176. Arvatov, "Language-creation," 86.

Page 69.

Fn. 178. B. Arvatov, "Utopia or science," LEF 4 (1923): 16.

Conclusion.

Page 71.

Epigraph: ...There are no poets or literary men, --there is poetry and literature./ ...The poet is master of his own work. And only that./ The social role of the poet cannot be understood from analysis of his individual qualities and experiences. The mass study of the poetic craftsmanship is necessary, their distinctions from adjacent areas of human endeavours, laws from historical development. Puškin was not the creator of a school, but only its head. If there had not been a Puškin, «Evgenij Onegin» would have been written all the same. America would have been discovered without Columbus. LEF, 1923.

Fn. 180. O. M. Brik, "The So-called «Formal Method»", LEF 1 (1923): 213.

Page 75.

Line 10: ...several Lefists [members of the journal LEF] took the position of the so-called formal-sociological method, trying ecclectially to reconcile the bourgeois theories of the formalists with Marxist literary criticism.

Fn. 189. The Big Soviet Encyclopedia (Moscow: Government Institute "Soviet Encyclopedia," 1935.), v. 36, 724.

Fn. 191. Arvatov, "Marx," 76.

APPENDIX B

Содержание ЛЕФа 1923-1925.

НОМЕР #1. [25 апреля 1923-го]

I. Программа. [3-39]

За что борется Леф. [3]

В кого вгрызается Леф. [8]

Кого предупреждает Леф. [10]

Н.Ф. Чужак. Под знаком жизнестроении. [12]

II. Практика. [40-191]

Наша словесная работа. [40]

Стихи Н. Асеева, В. Каменского, А. Крученых, Б. Пастернак, С. Третьякова, В. Хлебникова. [42]

А. Лавинский. Овеществленная утопия (рисинки). [61]

Вл. Вл. Маяковский. Про это (поэма). [65]

Свободное искусство (рисунок). [104]

А. Родченко. Работа конструктивиста (рискнки). [105]

О. Брик. Не попутчица (рассказ). [199]

Дм. Петровский. Воспонимания о Хлебникове. [143]

Н. Асеев. Завтра (рассказ). [172]

Виттфогель. Беглец (с немецк.). [180]

III. Теория. [192-235]

С. Третьяков. Откуда и куда. [192]

Г. Вниокур. Футуритсы - строители языка. [204]

О. Брик. Т.н. Формальный метод. [213]

Б. Арватов. Контр-революция формы. [215]

М. Левидов. Предостережение ЛЕФу. [231]

IV. Книга. [236]

V. Факты. [250]

НОМЕР #2. [напечатан вдвоем, I. и потом другие; май 1923-го]

I. Программа. [3-19]

Товараще! Формовщики языка!. [3]

1-ое МАЯ. Стихи Асеева, Каменского, Крученых, Маяковского, Незнамова, Пастернака, Терентьева, Третьякова. [9]

II. Практика. [20-69]

Н. Асеев. Война с крысами. [20]

Ж. Гросс. Рисунки. [27]

В. Хлебников. Ладомир. [31]

Молодняк Лефа. [42]

А. Лавинский. Киоск. [44]

М. Левидов. Американизма трагифарс. [45]

М. Каулей. Лейндекеровский портрет. [47]

С. Льюис. Мистер Беббит - американец. [55]

Варст. Костюм сегодняшнего дня. [65]

Н. Чужак. Вокруг "Непопутчицы". [69]

III. Теория. [70-152]

С. Третьяков. Леф и Нэп. [70]

Б. Арватов. Речетворчество. [79]

О.М. Брик. Услужливый эстет. [92]

Г. Винокур. Ревалюционная фраэеология. [104]

Вл. Силлов. Расея или РСФСР? [119]

М. Левидов. О футуризме необходимая статья. [131]

Влад. Блюм. Из несведенных счетов. No.1. [138]

Н. Чужак. К задачам дня. [145]

IV. Книга. [153]

V. Факты. [168]

НОМЕР #3 [июль 1923]

I. Программа. [3-40]

Леф. К бою. [3]

Брик. Сосновскому. [4]

Терентьев и Недоля. Открытые письма. [5]

Б. Арватов. Так полемизировать некультурно. [6]

Н. Асеев. Другой конец палки. [12]

Голкор. Критическая оглобля. [13]

Н. Горлов. Леф преодолевающий слово и слова преодолевающие Леф. [17]

С. Володин. Перепутанные строки. [22]

Н. Чужак. Плюсы и минусы. [28]

Коллектив. Полемсмесь. [34]

Письма в редакции газет. [40]

II. Практика. [40a-75]

Реклама (снимок). [40a]

Стихи В. Хлебникова, С. Третьякова, Н. Асеева и П. Незнамова. [41]

Варст. Работа контрукт, молодежи. [53]

Соболев и Галактионов. Модели кровати. [54]

П. Незнамов. Золотошитье и галуны. [57]

Молодняк Лефа. [69]

С. Эйзенштейн. Монтаж аттракционов. [70]

"Мудрец" в Пролеткульте. (Снимки) [72]

III. Теория. [76-164]

Б. Арватов. Маркс о художественной реставрации. [76]

Б. Кушнер. Организаторы производства. [97]

Г. Винокур. Поэтика. Лингвистика. Социология. [104]

А. Цейтлин. Марксисты и "формальн метод". [114]

Б. Кушнер. Изоповесть. [131]
Дэнга Вертов. Киноки. Переворот. [135]
С. Третьяков. Искусники из Кузницы. [144]
М. Левидов. От 10 до 4 и от 4-10. [148]
С. Третьяков. Трибуна Лефа. [154]

IV. Книга. [165]

V. Факты. [180]

НОМЕР #4 [хотя напечатанн авг.-сент. 1923, пока не вышел января 1924]

Программа. [3-28]
"Леф и МАПП". [3]
Н. Горлов. "Футуризмы и футуризм". [6]
Б. Арватов. "Утопия или наука". [16]
Леф. "Крит-халтура". [22]
"Развал Вхутемаса". [27]

Практика. [29-108]
Н. Асеев. "Черный принц" - поэма. [29]
Стихи В. Каменского, В. Катаева, П. Незнамова, Д. Петровского и А. Крученых. [36]
Фотомонтажи Л. Поповой и П. Цитроен. [41]
Вл. Маяковский. Рабочим Курска - поэма. [45]
Прозработы А. Лавинского, А. Веснина, бр. Весиных, Клуцис и С. Сенькниа. [58]
И. Бабель. Из книги "Конармия". [63]
И. Бабель. Из книги "Одесские рассказы". [76]
С. Тертьяков. "Противогазы". [89]

Теория. [109-195]
И. Гроссман-Рощин. "Социальный замысел футуризма". [109]

В. Шкловский. "Техника романа тайн". [125]
Г. Винокур. "О пуризме". [156]
М. Левидов. "Театр: его лицо и маски". [172]
Купреянов. "Полиграфия в художественных Вузах". [187]

Книга. [196]

Факты. [211]

НОМЕР #5 [средине 1924-го; точно ?]
I. Программа. [3-4]
Не торгуйте Лениным! [исчезло из журнала перед напечанием [3]

II. Практика. [5-52]
Д. Петровский. Песня червонных казаклв. [5]
В. Каменский. Гимн 40-летним юношам. [7]
Б. Пастернак. Высокая болезнь. [10]
В. Степанова. Вечер книги. [19]
С. Третьяков. Рычи Китай. [23]
А. Родченко. Плакаты. [34]
А. Веселый. Вольница. [36]
И. Бабель. Мой первый гусь. [48]
Бр. Весенины. Проэкт "Аркос"а. [51]

III. Теория. [53-148]
В. Шкловский. Ленин, как деканонизатор. [53]
Б. Эйхенбаум. Основные стилевые тенденции в речи Ленина. [57]
Л. Якубинский. О снижении высокого стиля у Ленина. [71]
Ю. Тынянов. Словарь Ленина-полемиста. [81]
Б. Казанский. Речь Ленина. [111]
Б. Томашевский. Конструкция тезисов. [140]

IV. Книга. [149]

V. Факты. [155]

НОМЕР #6 [вышел в свет 1924 ?]
Памяти Л. С. Поповой. [3]

I. Практика. [5-88]
Н. Асеев. Лирическое отступение. [5]
В. Маяковский. Александр Сергеевич - позвольте представиться. [16]
А. Крученых. Ванька Каин и Сонька маникюрщица. [24]
О. Брик. От картины к ситцу. [27]
Л. Попова. Проекты набивных тканей. [28]
В. Степанова. Проекты набивных тканей. [32]
А. Родченко. Проекты набивных тканей. [33]
Д. Петровский. Арест. [35]
Б. Кушнер. Незатухающие колебания. [55]

II. Теория. [89-151]
И. Гроссман-Рощин. О природе действенного слова. [89]
Ю. Тынянов. О литературном факте. [101]
Г. Винокур. Газетный язык. [117]
М Загорский. Как реагирует зритель. [141]

III. Книга. [152-157]
В. Шкловский. И. Бабель. [152]
Рецензиию. [156]

НОМЕР #7 [1925]
I. Практика. [3-76]
В.В. Маяковский. Владимир Ильич Ленин. [3]
С. Кирсанов. Два стихотворения. [24]

П. Незнамов. Читинский скорый. [27]
А. Крученых. 1914-1924. [30]
С. Третьяков. Москва-Пекин. [33]
А. Веселый. Страна родная. [59]
В. Шкловский. Иперит. [70]
П. Н-мов. О прозаботах. [76]
А. Лавинский. Прозаботы. [--]

II. Теория. [77-117]
К. Зелинский. Идеология и задачи советской архитектуры. [77]
Г. Поливанов. О преподавании терминологии. [109]

III. Книга. [118-138]
К. Зелинский. Книга, рынок и читатель. [118]
В. Шкловский. О Пильняке. [127]
Отзывы о книгах. [136]

IV. Факты. [139]

APPENDIX C

Transliterated Russian Language Bibliography

Primary texts:

Books:

LEVYJ FRONT ISKUSSTV [LEF]. Glavnyj redaktor, Vladimir Majakovskij. Moskva: Gosizdat, 1923-1925. Slavic Printings and Reprintings. Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970.

Articles:

Arvatov, Boris. "Kontr-revolyuciya formy." LEF - Levyj front iskusstv [hereafter only LEF] 1 (1923): 215-230.

---. "Rečetvorčestva." LEF 2 (1923): 79-91.

---. "Tak polemizirovat' nekul'turno." LEF 3 (1923): 6-11.

---. "Marks o khudožestvennom restravracii." LEF 3 (1923): 76-96.

---. "Utopeya ili nauka?" LEF 4 (1923): 16-21.

Blyum, Vladimir. "Iz nesvedennykh sčetov." LEF 2 (1923): 138-144.

Brik, Osip. "T[akl. n[azyvaemyj]. formal'nyj metod." LEF 1 (1923): 213-214.

---. "Uslužlivyj èstet." LEF 2 (1923): 92-103.

Vertov, Dziga. "Kinoki. Perevorot." LEF 3 (1923): 131-134.

Vinokur, G. "Futuristy - stroiteli yazyka." LEF 1 (1923): 204-212.

---. "Revolyucionnaya fraziologiya." LEF 2 (1923): 104-118.

---. "Poetika. Lingvistika. Sociologiya." LEF 3 (1923): 104-113.

---. "O purizme." LEF 4 (1923): 156-171.

---. "Gazetnyj yazyk." LEF 2[6] (1924): 117-140.

Volodin, S. "Pereputannye stročki." LEF 3 (1923):22-27.

Gorlov, N. "Lef perodolevayuščij slova i slova perdoltvayuščie Lef." LEF 3 (1923): 17-21.

Grosman-Roščin, I. "Social'nyj zamysel futurism." LEF 4 (1923): 109-124.

---. "O prirode dejstvennogo slova." LEF 2[6] (1924): 89-100.

Zagorskij, M. "Kak reagiruet zpitel'." LEF 2[6] (1924): 141-151.

Zelinskij, K. "Ideologiya i zadači sovetskoj arkhitektury." LEF 3[7] (1925): 77-108.

Kazanskij, B. "Reč' Lenina." LEF 1[5] (1924): 111-139.

Kolektiv. ""Polemsmec'." LEF 3 (1923): 34-39.

Kupreyanov. "Poligrafiya v khudožestennykh Vuzakh." LEF 4 (1923): 187-195.

Kušner, B. "Organizatory proizbedstva." LEF 3 (1923): 97-103.

Levidov, M. "Preostereženie LEFU." LEF 1 (1923): 231-235.

---. "O futurismte neobkhodimaya stat'ya." LEF 2 (1923): 131-137.

---. "Ot 10 do 4 i 4-10." LEF 3 (1923): 148-153.

---. "Teatr: ego lico i maski." LEF 4 (1923): 172-186.

Polivanov, G. "O prepodavanii terminologii." LEF 3[7] (1925): 109-117.

Sillov, Vya. "Raseya ili RSFSR?" LEF 2 (1923): 119-130.

Tomaševskij, B. "Konstrukciya tezicov." LEF 1[5] (1924): 140-148.

Tret'yakov, S. "Otkuda i kuda." LEF 1 (1923): 192-203.

---. "Lef i Nèp." LEF 2 (1923): 70-78.

---. "Iskussniki iz Kuznicy." LEF 3 (1923): 144-147.

---. "Tribuna Lefa." LEF 3 (1923): 154-164.

Tynyanov, Yu. "Slovar' Lenina-polemista." LEF 1[5] (1924): 81-110.

---. "O literaturnom fakte." LEF 2[6] (1924): 101-116.

Cejtlin, A. "Marksisty i «formal'nyj metod»." LEF 3 (1923): 114-130.

Čužak, N. "Pod znakom žiznestroenii." LEF 1 (1923): 13-39.

---. "K zadačam dnya." LEF 2 (1923): 145-142.

---. "Plyucy i minusy." LEF 3 (1923): 28-33.

Šklovskij, V. "Tekhnika romana tajn." LEF 4 (1923) 125-155.

---. "Lenin, kak dekanonizator." LEF 1[5] (1924): 53-56.

Èjkhenbaum, B. "Osnovnye stilevye tendencii v reči Lenina." LEF 1[5] (1924): 57-70.

Yakubinskij, L. "O sniženii vysokogo stilya u Lenina." LEF 1[5] (1924): 71-80.

APPENDIX C [cont.]

Secondary texts:

Books:

Berdaev, N. Krizis iskusstva. Moskva: n.p., 1918 g. Ann Arbor: University Microfilm International, 1976.

Gorlov, N. Futurizm i revolyuciya. Moskva: Gosizdat., 1924.

Literaturnoe nasledstvo: novoe o Mayakovskom. t. 65. Moskva: Gosizdat, 1958.

Kamenskij, V.V. Žizn' s Mayakovskim. Moskva: Gosudarstvennor izdatel'stvo «Khudožestvennaya Literatura», 1940. [München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970]

Markov, V. Manifesty i programmy russkikh futuristov.

Percov, V. Mayakovskij. Žizn' i tvorčestvo, 1918-1924. Moskva: Khudožestvennaya literatura, 1976.

Trifonov, N.A. Russkaya literatura: dopevolyucionnyj period. Moskva: Gosudarstvennoe učebno-pedagogičeskoe izdatel'stvo ministerstva prosveščeniya RSFSR, 1962.

Švesova, L. Očerki istorii: russkoj sovetckoj žurnalistki 1917-1932. Moskva: Izdatel'stbo Nauka, 1966

Articles:

Belaya, G. "O politikt partii v khudožextvennoj literature." Voprosy literatury 3 (1990): 154-187.

Belaya, T. "Èstetičeskit vzglyady A.K. Voronskogo." Voprosy literatury 12 (1980): 64-90.

Brik, O. "Mayakovskij - redaktor i organizator." Literaturnyj kritik 4 (1936): 135.

Gorinov, M.M. "Al'ternativy i krizisy v period NÈPa." Voprosy

literatury 2 (1990): 3-18.

Gusejnov, Č. "O dvuyazyčnom khydožestvennom tvorčestve: istoriya, teoriya, praktika." Voprosy literatury 9 (1987): 79-112.

Dmitriev, V. "Ideologičeskaya bor'ba i iskusstvo." Voprosy literatury 11 (1977): 3-32.

Zemlyakovaya, O. i E. Pogorel'skaya. "K istorii vykhoda pervogo nomera žurhala «LEF»." Voprosy literatury 7 (1983): 181-201.

Koleski, V. "Socialističeskij realizm i literaturnye tradicii." Voprosy literatury 6 (1984): 3-17.

Lukin, Yu.A. "Partiya i khudožestvennaya kul'tura razvitogo socializma." Voprosy literatury 3 (1982): 3-39.

---. "Ideologičeskaya èffektivnost' iskusstva." Voprosy literatury 5 (1983): 3-39.

Pacternak, B. "Mayakovskij v moej žizni." Literaturnaya gazeta 40 (1989): 5.

Sergeev, E. "Mayakovskij i Fet." Voprosy literatury 7 (1983): 135-153.

Fajn, L.E. "Social'no-èkonomičeskaya kharakteristka kooperacii v načal'noj perioda NÈPa (1921-1923)." Istoriya SSSR 5 (1968): 14-35.

Fedpakin, S.A. "Khudožestvennaya intelligenciya v pervye gody Sovetskoj Vlacti." Ictoriya SSSR 1 (1969): 8-26.

Fridlender, G. "K. Markc i voprosy sovremmenoj literaturnoj hauki." Voprosy literatury 3 (1983): 3-28.

Appendix D

Не торгуйте Лениным![194]

Мы согласны с железнодорожниками Казанский жел. дор., предложившими художнику оборудовать у них в клубе Ленинский зал без бюстов и портретов Ленина, говоря; „мы не хотим икон".

Мы настаиваем; --

Не штампуйте Ленина.

Не печатайте его портретов на пластах, на клеенках, на тарелках, на кружках, на портсигарах.

Не бронзируйте Ленина.

Не отнимайте у него живой поступи и человеческого облика, который он сохранить, руководя историей.

Ленин все еще наш современник.

Он среди живых.

Он нужен нам, как живой, а не как мертый.

Поэтому, --

Учитесь у Ленина, но не канонизируйте его.

Не создавайте культа именем человека, всю жизнь боровшегося против всяческих культов.

Не торгуйте предметами этого культа.

Не торгуйте Лениным!

ЛЕФ.

Don't Do Trade in Lenin!/ We agree with the railway workers of the Kazan railway who proposed to an artist to equip their Lenin room at their club without a bust or portrait of Lenin, saying: "We don't want icons."/ We insist:/ Don't put a label on Lenin./ Don't print his portraits on plastic, tablecloths, plates, mugs, port-cigars./ Don't bronze Lenin./ Don't take from him the living posture and the human appearance he had while commanding history./ Lenin is still our contemporary./ He is among the living./ We need him as a living being, not as a dead one./ Therefore, -/ Learn from Lenin but don't canonize him./ Don't create a cult in the name of a person who during his whole live fought against every sort of cult./ Don't do trade in the objects of this cult./ Don't do trade in Lenin./ LEF. [Trans. L.F.]

---

194. ЛЕФ 5 [1] (1924): 4.

APPENDIX E

Statistics on LEF

Column one is the issue published. Column two is the number of issues published. The third column is the total number of pages of the respective journal. The fourth column is the total number of pages in the theory section of the issue. The fifth column is the percentage of theory in each issue.

Table 1.

Issue	# of Issues Pub.	Total pages	# of pages	%
1	5,000	255	43	16.86*
2	5,000	177	88	49.72
3	3,000	187	87	46.52*
4	3,000	225	86	38.22*
5	3,000	160	95	59.38
6	2,500	163	62	38.04
7	2,500	144	40	27.78
Totals:		1311	501	38.22

The asterisk denotes that the issues 1, 3, and 4 are not complete in their representation. There are several articles in those three issues that are of a highly polemical nature, yet appeared in the programme section. These articles would add an additional 67 pages to the theory articles and would change the complection of LEF. The revised statistical table on LEF is as follows:

Table 2.

Issue	# of Issues Pub.	Total pages	# of pages	%
1	5,000	255	70	27.45*
2	5,000	177	88	49.72
3	3,000	187	113	60.43*
4	3,000	225	100	44.44*
5	3,000	160	95	59.38
6	2,500	163	62	38.04
7	2,500	144	40	27.78
Totals:		1311	568	43.33

Bibliography

Russian Language[1]

Primary texts:

Books:

ЛЕВЫЙ ФРОНТ ИСКУССТВ [ЛЕФ]. Главный редактор, Владимир Маяковский. Москва: Госиздат, 1923-1925. Slavische Propylaen: Texte in Neu- und Nachdrucken, Bd 91, I. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970.

Articles:

Арватов, Б. "Контр-революция формы." ЛЕФ-Левый фронт искусств [далше только ЛЕФ] 1 (1923): 215-230.

---. "Речетворчество." ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 79-91.

---. "Так полемизировать некультурно." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 6-11.

---. "Маркс о художественном реставрации." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 76-96.

---. "Утопея или наука?" ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 16-21.

Блюм, Влад. "Из несведенных счетов. N° 1. ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 138-144.

Брик, О. "T[ак]. н[азываемый]. Формальный метод." ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 213- 214.

---. "Услужливый эстет." ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 92-103.

Вертов, Дзига. "Киноки. Переворот." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 131-134.

Винокур, Г. "Футуристы - строители языка." ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 204-212.

---. "Революционная фразиология." ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 104-118.

---

1. See Appendix C for transliteration of Russian language bibliography.

---. "Поэтика. Лингвистика. Социология." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 104-113.

---. "О пуризме." ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 156-171.

---. "Газетный язык." ЛЕФ 2 [6] (1924): 117-140.

Володин, С. "Перепутанные строчки." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 22-27.

Горлов, Н. "Леф преодолевающий слова и слова преодолевающие Леф." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 17-21.

---. "О футуризмах и футуризме." ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 6-15.

Гросман-Рощин, И. "Социальный замысел футуризм." ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 109-124.

---. "О природе действенного слова." ЛЕФ 2 [6] (1924): 89-100.

Загорский, М. "Как реагирует зритель." ЛЕФ 2 [6] (1924): 141-151.

Зелинский, К. "Идиология и задачи советской архитектуры." ЛЕФ 3 [7] (1925): 77-108.

Казанский, Б. "Речь Ленина." ЛЕФ 1 [5] (1924): 111-139.

Колектив. "Полемсмесь." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 34-39.

Купреянов. "Полиграфия в художественных Вузах." ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 187-195.

Кушнер, Б. "Организаторы производства." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 97-103.

Левидов, М. "Предостережение ЛЕФУ." ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 231-235.

---. "О футуризме необходимая статья." ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 131-137.

---. "От 10 до 4 и от 4-10." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 148-153.

---. "Театр: его лицо и маски." ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 172-186.

Поливанов, Г. "О преподавании терминологии." ЛЕФ 3 [7] (1925): 109-117.

Силлов, Вя. "Расея или РСФСР?" ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 119-130.

Томашевский, Б. "Конструкция тезисов." ЛЕФ 1 [5] (1924): 140-148.

Третьяков, С. "Откуда и куда." ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 192-203.

---. "Леф и Нэп." ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 70-78.

---. "Искусснички из Кузницы." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 144-147.

---. "Трибуна Лефа." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 154-164.

Тынянов, Ю. "Словарь Ленина-полемиста." ЛЕФ 1 [5] (1924): 81-110.

---. "О литературном факте." ЛЕФ 2 [6] (1924): 101-116.

Цейтлин, А. "Марксисты и «формальный метод»." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 114-130.

Чужак, Н. "Под знаком жизнестроении." ЛЕФ 1 (1923): 13-39.

---. "К задачам дня." ЛЕФ 2 (1923): 145-152.

---. "Плюсы и минусы." ЛЕФ 3 (1923): 28-33.

Шкловский, В. "Техника романа тайн." ЛЕФ 4 (1923): 125-155.

---. "Ленин, как деканонизатор." ЛЕФ 1 [5] (1924): 53-56.

Эйхенбаум, Б. "Основные стилевые тенденции в речи Ленина." ЛЕФ 1 [5] (1924): 57-70.

Якубинский, Л. "О снижении высокого стиля у Ленина." ЛЕФ 1 [5] (1924): 71-80.

Secondary texts:

Books:

Бердаев, Н. Кризис искусства. Москва, 1918 г. Ann Arbor: University Microfilm International, 1976.

В. В. Маяковский: соченения в двух томах. т. 1. Москва: Издательство «Правда», 1987.

Горлов, Н. Футуризм и революция. Москва: Госиздат, 1924.

Литературное наследство: Новое о Маяковском. т. 65. Москва: Госиздат, 1958

Каменский, В.В. Жизнь с Маяковским. Москва: Государственное издательство «Художественноя Литература», 1940. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970.

Перцов, В. Маяковский. Жизнь и творчество, 1918-1924. Москва: Художественная литература, 1976.

Трифонов, Н.А. Русская литература: дореволюционный период. Москва: Государственноне учебно-педагогическое издательство министерства просвещения РСФСР, 1962.

Articles:

Белая, Г. "О политике партии в художественной литературе." Вопросы литературы 3 (1990): 154-187.

Белая, Т. "Эстетические взгляды А. К. Воронского". Вопросы литературы 12 (1980): 64-90.

Брик, О. "Маяковский - редактор и организатор." Литературный критиик 4 (1936): 135.

Горинов, М. М. "Альтернативы и кризисы в период НЭПа." Вопросы истории КПСС 2 (1990): 3-18.

Гусейнов, Ч. "О двуязычном художественном творчестве: история, теория, практика". Вопросы литературы 9 (1987): 79-112.

Дмитриев, В. "Идеологическая борьба и искусство". Вопросы литературы 11 (1977): 3-32.

Земляковой, О.; Погорельской, Е. "К истории выхода первого номера журнала «ЛЕФ»." Вопросы литературы 7 (1983): 181-201.

Колевски, В. "Социалистический реализм и литературные традиции". Вопросы литературы 6 (1984): 3-17.

Лукин, Ю. А. "Партия и художественная культура развитого социализма". Вопросы литературы 3 (1982): 3-39.

Лукин, Ю. А. "Идеологическая эффективность искусства". Вопросы литературы 5 (1983): 3-39.

Пастернак, Б. "Маяковский в моей жизни". Литературная газета 40 (1989): 5.

Сергеев, Е. "Маяковский и Фет". Вопросы литературы 7 (1983): 135-153.

Файн, Л. Е. "Соцнально-экономическая характеристка кооперации в начальной периода НЭПа (1921-1923)." История СССР 5 (1968): 14-35.

Федпакин, С. А. "Художественная интеллигенция в первые годы Советской власть." История СССР 1 (1969): 8-26.

Фридлендер, Г. "К. Маркс и вопросы совремменой литературной науки". Вопросы литературы 3 (1983): 3-28.

English language

Secondary texts:

Books:

Adams, Charles Lynford. The Search for Form: An Examination of the Literary Theory and Technique of Cubism, Futurism, Dada, and Surrealism. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms International, 1971.

Barooshian, Vahan D. Russian Cubo-Futurism 1910-1930: A Study in the Avant-garde. The Hague: Mouton, 1974.

Barron, Stephanie, and Maurice Tuchman eds. The Avant-garde in Russia 1910-1930: New Perspectives. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1986.

van den Berken, William. Ideology and Atheism in the Soviet Union. New York: Mouton de Gruyer, 1974.

Bowlt, John E., trans. and ed. Russian Art of the Avant-garde: Theory and Criticism, 1902-1923. New York: Viking Press, 1976.

Bradley, Joseph. Muzhik and Moscovite: Urbanization in Late Imperial Russia. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.

Bristol, Evelyn, ed. Russian Literature and Criticism: Selected Papers From the Second World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies. Berkeley: Berkeley Slavic Specialties, 1982.

Brooks, Jeffery. When Russia Learned to Read: Literary and Popular Literacy 1861-1917. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985.

Brown, Edward J. Mayakovsky: A Poet in the Revolution. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973.

Bürger, P. Theory of the Avant-garde. Trans. Micheal Shaw. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1984.

Calinescu, Mantei. Five Faces of Modernity: Modernism, Avant-garde, Decadence, Kitsch, Post Modernism. Bloomington and London: Indiana Universtiy Press, 1977.

Clough, Rosa. Futurism: The Story of a Modern Art Movement. New York: Philosophical Library, 1961.

Compton, Susan P. The World Backwards: Russian Futurist Books, 1912-1916. London: British Museum Publications, 1978.

Eagleton, Terry. The Ideology of the Æsthetic. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990.

---. Literary Theory: An Introduction. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

---. Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory. London: Atlantic Highlands Humanities Press, 1976.

---. Marxism and Literary Theory. London: Metheun, 1976.

Edwards, James C. The Authority of Language: Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and the Threat of Philosophical Nihilism. Tampa: University of South Florida Press, 1990.

Erlich, Victor. Russian Formalism: History-Doctrine. 3rd edition. Minneapolis: Universiy of Minnesota Press, 1981.

Ermlaev, Herman. Soviet Literary Theories 1917-1934: The Genesis of Socialist Realism. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963.

Fitzpatrick, Sheila. The Russian Revolution. Oxford and New York: Oxford Univerity Press, 1982.

Folejewski, Zbignew. Futurism and Its Place in the Development of Modern Poetry: A Comparative Study and Anthology. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1980.

Fueloep-Miller, René. The Mind and Face of Bolshevism: An Examination of Cultural Life in the Soviet Union. Trans. F.S. Flint and D.F. Tait. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965.

Futurism: A Modern Focus. New York: The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1973.

Gabel, Joseph. False Consciousness: An Essay on Reification. Trans.

Margaret A. Thompson. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975.

de George, Richard T. Patterns of Soviet Thought: The Origins and Development of Dialectical and Historical Materialism. Ann Arbor: Universtiy of Michigan Press, 1966.

Geuss, Raymond. The Idea of Critical Theory: Habermas & the Frankfurt School. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Gibian, George, and H. W. Tjalsma. Russian Modernism: Culture and the Avant-garde 1900-1930. London: Cornell University Press, 1976.

Gleason, Abbott , Peter Kenez and Richard Stites, eds. Bolshevik Culture: Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution. Bloomington: Indianna University Press, 1985.

Golomstock, Igor. Totalitarian Art in the Soviet Union, the Third Reich, Fascist Italy and the People's Republic of China. Trans. Robert Chandler. London: Collins Harvill, 1990.

Gray, Camilla. The Russian Experiment in Art 1863-1922. Marian Burleigh-Motley, ed. London: Thames and Hughes, 1986.

Hulten, K.G. Pontius. The Machine: As Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1968.

Huppert, Hugo. Majakowski. Hamberg: Rowolt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1965.

Hulton, Pontius, ed. Futurismo & Futurismi/Futurism & Futurisms. New York: Aberville Press, 1986.

Jakubinski, Franz. Ideology and Superstructure in Historical Materialism. Trans. Ann Booth. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1976.

James, C.V. Soviet Socialist Realism: Origins and Theory. New York: St. Martin's, 1973.

Jameson, Fredric. The Ideologies of Theory: Essays 1971-1986. 2 vols. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988.

---. The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act. New York: Cornell University Press, 1981.

---. The Prison House of Language: a Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972.

---. Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Cetury Dialectical Theories of Literature. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971.

Jangfeldt, Bengt. Majakovskij and Futurism 1917-1921. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell International, 1976.

Jangfeldt, Bengt, and Nils Åke Nilsson, eds. Vladimir Majakovskij: Memoirs and Essays. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1975.

Jordan, Z. A., ed. Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels: Economy, Class and Social Revolution. London: Micheal Joseph, 1971.

Kodyak, Andrej, Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy, eds. Myth in Literature. Columbus: Slavica Publishers, 1985.

Kolchevska, Natasha. "LEF and Developments in Russian Futurism in the 1920's". Berkeley: University Microfilms International, 1982. [Ph.D. thesis, 1980]

Kozloff, Max. Cubism/Futurism. New York: Charterhouse, 1973.

Lawton, Ann, ed. Russian Futurism Through Its Manifestos. Trans. Anna Lawton and Herbert Eagle. Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1988.

Lissitzky, El, and Hans Arp. Die Kunstismen/Les Ismes de L'Art/The Isms of Art. Erlenbach-Zürich, München und Leipzig: Eugen Rentsch Verlag, 1925.

Lista, Giovanni. Futurism. Trans. Charles Lynn Clark. England: Art Data, 1986.

Livshits, B. C. The One-and-a-half Eyed Archer. Trans. John E. Bowlt. Massachusettes: Oriental Research Partners, 1977.

Lodder, Christina. Russian Constructivism. New Haven and London: Yale Universtiy Press, 1987.

Mackerey, Pierre. A Theory of Literary Production. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976.

Maguire, Robert A. Red Virgin Soil: Soviet Literature in the 1920s. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1968.

Markov, Vladimir. Russian Futurism: A History. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1968.

Martin, Marianne W. Futurist Art and Theory 1909-1915. Oxford: Claredon Press, 1968.

Karl Marx and Fredrick Engels: Selected Works in Two Volumes. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1950.

Mirsky, D. S. Contemporary Russian Literature 1881-1925. New York: Alfred A Knoff, 1926. [reprt. 1972]

Nakov, Andrej. Avant-garde Russe. Trans. Jacques Gourgue. England: Art Data, 1986.

Nilsson, Nils Åke, ed. Art, Society, Revolution: Russia 1917-1921. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1979.

O'Connor, Timothy Edward. The Politics of Soviet Culture: Anatolii Lunacharskii. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1983.

Parekh, Blikhu. Marx's Theory of Ideology. Baltimaore: John Hopkins Univ. Press, 1982.

Pike, Christopher, ed. The Futurists, the Formalists, and Marxist Critique. editor. Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1979.

Poggioli, Renato. The Theory of the Avant-garde. Trans. Gerald Fitsgerald. London: Harvard University Press, 1968.

---. The Poets of Russia 1890-1930. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1960.

Proffer, Ellendrea, ed. The Ardis Anthology of Russian Futurism. Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1980.

Russell, Charles. Poets, Prophets, and Revolutionaries. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Rudenstine, Angelica Zander, ed. Russian Avant-garde Art: The George Costakis Collection. London: Thames and Hudson, 1981.

Salvemini, Gaetano. The French Revolution: 1788-1792. Trans. I. M. Rawson. New York: Norton, 1962.

Slonim, Marc. Soviet Russian Literature: Writers & Problems 1917-1977. (2nd edition) London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Sochor, Zenovia A. Revolution and Culture: The Bogdanov-Lenin Controversy. London: Cornell University Press, 1988.

Solomon, R. Futurism: A Modern Focus. New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1973.

Stepanian, Juliette. Mayakovsky's Cubo-Futurist Vision. Houston, Texas: Rice University Press, 1986.

Stephan, Halina. "LEF" and the Left Front of the Arts. München: Verlg Otto Sagner, 1981.

Streidter, Jurij. Literary Structure, Evolution, and Value. London: Harvard University Press, 1989.

Struve, Gleb. Russian Literature Under Lenin and Stalin 1917-1953. Oklahoma: Univ. of Oklahoma, 1971.

Tate Gallery. Towards a New Art: Essays on the Background to Abstract Art 1910-1920. London, 1980.

Taylor, Christina J. Futurism: Politics, Painting, and Performance. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1979.

Tisdall, Caroline, and Angelo Bozzolla. Futurism. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978.

Treadgold, Donald W. Lenin and His Rivals: The Struggle for Russia's Future, 1898-1906. New York: Fredrick A. Preager, 1955.

Trotsky, Leon. Literature and Revolution. Trans. Rose Strunsky. Ardis: Ann Arbor, 1971.

Vázquez, Adolfo Sánchez. Art and Society: Essays in Marxist Æsthetics. New York and London: Monthly Review Press,1973.

Wadley, Nicholas. Cubism: Movements of Modern Art. London, New York: Hamlyn Publishing Group, 1970.

Williams, Raymond. Marxism and Literature. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Williams, Robert C. The Other Bolsheviks: Lenin and His Critics, 1904-1914. Bloomomhton: Indianna University Press, 1986.

Articles:

Barooshian, Vahan D. "Russian Futurism in the Late 1920's: Literature of Fact". Slavic and East European Journal 15 (1971): 38-46.

---. "The Politics of the Avant-garde". Problems of Communism 19 (Mar.-Apr. 1970): 40-45.

Brooks, Jeffery. "Public and Private Values in the Soviet Press, 1921-1928." Slavic Review 1 (1989): 16-35.

Deák, František. "Two Manifestos: The Influence of Italian Futurism in Russia". Drama Review 4 (Dec 1975): 88-94.

Erlich, Victor. "The Dead Hand of the Future: The Predicament of Vladimir Mayakovsky". Slavic Review 3 (Sept. 1962): 433-440.

Fitzatrick, S. "A.V. Lunacharsky: Recent Soviet Interpretations and Republications". Soviet Studies 18 (1967): 267-289.

---. "The Bolshevik's Dilemma: Class, Culture, and Politics in the Early Soviet Years." Slavic Review 4 (1988): 599-613.

Jangfeldt, Bengt. "Russian Futurism 1917-1919." Art, Society,

Revolution. Nils Åke Nilsson, ed. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1979.

Kleberg, Lars. "Notes on the Poem Vladimir Il'ič Lenin." Vladimir Majakovskij: Essays and Memoirs. Bengt Jangfeldt and Nils Åke Nilsson, eds. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wilsell, 1975.

Kuznetsov, I. "A.V. Lunacharsky and LEF." Soviet Studies in Literature 4 (1976): 63-76.

Makarevich, M.A. "The Discussion of Party Ethics in the 1920s." Soviet Studies in Philosophy 1 (1989): 46-96.

Pomorska, Krystyna. "Mayakovsky's Cosmic Myth." Myth in Literature. Andrej Kodyak, Krystyna Pomorska and Stephan Rudy, eds. Columbus: Slavica Publishers, 1985.

Stephan, Halina. "Futurism and the Social Function of Literature." Russian Literature and American Critics. Kenneth N. Brostrom, ed. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1984.

---. "LEF and the Development of Early Soviet Prose". Slavic and East European Journal 4 (1980): 369-86.

---. "Mayakovsky's Post-Revolutionary Poetics and the LEF Concept of Art". Russian Language Journal 116 (Fall 1979): 123-33.