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Original Article

Architecture of the administrative centre of Kharkiv, the capital – laboratory for the creation of the New Man: from concept to implementation

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Abstract: The interest in addressing social and political problems through architecture entered the professional discourse of Ukrainian architects in the 1920s. The creation of a new Soviet man became one of the central ideas of the early Soviet state. As a result of the planned transformation of social and family life, there was an active search for new typologies and concepts in both residential and public architecture. The creation of "social condensers," as a means of spatially materializing the idea of shaping a new Soviet man through architecture, became one of the most significant leitmotifs in the formation of architectural and urban planning ensembles in the capital city of Kharkiv, Kharkiv is known not only as a site for creating world renowned modernist complexes, but also as a venue for implementing social experiments. This article explores an example of such a "social condenser" through the ensemble of the Dzerzhynskyj Square (now Svobody Square) district, featuring its unique residential block-combines, as well as architectural concepts that were not realized in their originally conceived form.

Keywords: metropolitan Kharkiv, administrative centre, residential block-combines, social condenser, new Soviet man

1. Introduction

The philosophy of modernism emerged as the leading discourse in the first third of the twentieth century, fundamentally altering the perspectives of professionals across various fields. Architects and urban planners of the 1920s and 1930s became translators and advocates of modernist philosophy, implementing the boldest and most radical ideas related

to socio-political transformations in society. The political dimension of modernism became one of its most significant aspects, and the idea of addressing social problems through architecture became a central theme in the professional discourse of architects in the 1920s and 1930s. The formation of the new metropolitan centre and the development of the industrial complex in Kharkiv in the late 1920s occurred amidst the unfolding of modernist narratives, infused with Soviet ideology, which inspired Ukrainian architects to shape a new man and society through architectural and urban planning methods.

The heritage of Kharkiv's early modernist architectural and urban planning complexes is of interest both from an artistic perspective and from a socio-political standpoint. The new administrative centre featuring Dzerzhinskyj Square (now Svobody Square), with its unique residential block-combines, designed and constructed in the 1920s and 1930s, serves as a prime example of the embodiment of advanced modernist ideas. Through this example, we can trace how social ideas of organizing a new way of life, or "building a new socialist life," shaped a new urban landscape and created new building typologies that became spacious containers for the formation of the new Soviet man and socialist society as a whole. It was in this setting that new life scenarios, supported by "social condensers," were attempted to be realized in new spatial realities, where architecture played a role in establishing new habits through repetition, gradually forming a new way of life.

The concept of the "social condenser" continues to evolve in contemporary academic discourse, emphasizing the design of spaces that encourage social interaction and community. This makes the study of its attempted realization in Kharkiv particularly intriguing and relevant.

Purpose. To identify attempts at implementing "social condensers," such as house-communes and residential combines, through the architectural and urban planning projects in Kharkiv, then the capital of the USSR, and to demonstrate the structural and functional components of these architectural and urban planning formations.

Analysis of the literature and methodology. The publications of researchers examining the specifics of professional work during the architectural avant-garde and modernism period are significant for this paper. Notable among them are the works of V. Alyoshyn [1], S. Smolenska [2], K. Cherkasova [3], and K. Didenko [4], which focus on the architectural ensembles of Kharkiv as the capital and the peculiarities of their formation. The articles by O. Buriak and I. Kreiser [5] also contribute to this discourse. The architectural and urban planning heritage of Kharkiv during the interwar period is detailed in the works of O. Gella, L. Kachemtseva [6,7], O. Deryabina [8], N. Khoroyan [9], and O. Shvydenko [10]. Research conducted by Kharkiv authors addresses this phenomenon more broadly (O. Buriak, S. Smolenska, O. Chabaniuk) [11] or focuses on analyzing some of the most significant monuments (O. Deryabina, N. Khoroyan, O. Shvydenko).

This paper utilizes proposals and materials from discussions on the development of a new way of life in the Ukrainian SSR, as covered in publications by A. M. Ginzburg [12], G. Georgievsky [13], O. Polotsky [14], among others, as well as sources devoted to the construction of major urban planning projects in Kharkiv during the 1920s and 1930s [15]. This includes photographs taken by K. Dedoyard during a study tour of the European delegation to the RSFSR and the Ukrainian SSR, organized by André Bloc, editor of the French magazine "L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui," in September 1932 [16].

The research of B. Sazonov [17], which analyzes architectural and social experiments of the 1920s, is particularly significant. Additionally, foreign studies of the Soviet avant-garde, which emerged in the 1970s -and early 1980s, under the influence of Western sociology (K. Popper, E. Toffler, P. Berger and T. Luckmann, F. Hayek) [18-21], are referenced, where architecture began to be seen as a tool for managing social processes, and

new building types and urban planning models were viewed as a "transition from the social to the material".

Recent research has focused on reconsidering the concept of the "social condenser" within contemporary urban studies, exploring how architectural and urban design can influence social dynamics and foster community engagement. Topics include the political implications of social condensers in post-socialist contexts [22], the intersection of art and architecture in facilitating social interaction (Phillips), critiques of contemporary urban design [23], theoretical and historical studies [24], and the impact of design on social behavior and integration [25]. These discussions often highlight the relevance of the social condenser concept in addressing contemporary urban challenges and the aspiration for inclusive and sustainable communities.

The research methodology is based on the principle of a systematic approach to architecture, allowing for the integration of sociological aspects into the historical and theoretical study of architectural and urban solutions. The study draws on an analysis of publications from professional journals and periodicals of the 1930s, as well as graphic materials, and information from literary and historical sources. A comparative analysis of design materials and photographs of architectural objects is conducted. Additionally, the research involves collecting, systematizing, and introducing materials from archival documents into scientific circulation.

2. Research results

In the early 1920s, a new awareness of architecture's functions began to emerge among architects. This realization questioned many traditional prototypical design models, whether in the form of designs or existing buildings. These models were criticized and rejected mainly because they preserved and perpetuated social relations that were alien to the new societal order. Neither workers' huts nor the palaces of the "rich" were suitable for the emerging society. One could either wait for the spontaneous emergence of new projects and constructions, which, once tested by life, would join the ranks of accepted models, or actively seek ways to create such models. The latter approach was adopted.

Moisey Ginzburg defined the era of constructivism as a period of intensive "life-building." The hypothesis that architecture could influence human behaviour in society was embodied in the idea of a "social condenser," introduced in 1927 by Ivan Nikolaev and Moisey Ginzburg when they developed a new type of house-commune as a "rational technology of everyday life." The task of life construction and the organization of new life forms, which constructivism set before architects, was to shape new domestic and labour processes through the materialization and design of architectural objects spatial receptacles for these new life forms [26,27]. In his opening speech at the first conference of the OSA group (Association of Modern Architects) in 1928, Ginzburg asserted that "the main goal of constructivism... was to define the social condenser of the epoch," emphasizing that the architect's role was to invent a new "social condenser," and that true creativity begins at this foundational level. According to Ginzburg, the task of life-building through the creation of "social condensers" is realized only when it takes concrete material form, "clothed in flesh and blood," and embodies architectural features that influence the human psyche and are sensually perceived [28]. Thus, Soviet constructivist theory framed the social condenser as a spatial concept that not only found embodiment in architecture, but also played a role in shaping models of human behaviour in the future.

This idea was to be practically embodied in the design of individual industrial structures, public buildings, and new types of housing, which were intended to serve as

condensers of new socio-social relationships [29]. Considering the active role of the architect in the process of life formation, as developed in the 1920s, the transition in design from knowledge of the social world to the material means of embodiment (condensation) of the social became acceptable. The principles of this transition from the social to the material constituted the essence of the constructivist method.

In 1928, the Association of Modern Architects of Ukraine (AMAU) was established in Kharkiv, led by J. Shteinberg in 1928–29. AMAU served as the Ukrainian branch of the Moscow OSA (Association of Modern Architects) with branches in Odessa and Kiev. This organization promoted the slogans of constructivism and functionalism, advocating the use of new designs and materials, as well as the typification and industrialization of construction. The official publication of AMAU was the left-wing magazine "Nova Generatsiya," published in Kharkiv from 1927 to 1930, which featured articles and works by K. Malevich, A. Rodchenko, V. Tatlin, the Vesnin brothers, M. Ginzburg, and others. It is not surprising, therefore, that some of Ginzburg's ideas were experimented with in the capital of Ukraine [7].

The idea of creating a New Life and a New Man was understood dialectically, considering the given moment, the prevailing economic situation, and specific economic relations. The emerging way of life required the maximum generalization of everyday practices to uphold the spirit of collectivism and establish new rituals for the communist society, aiming to unite people from different social strata with diverse interests and needs, fostering a sense of a unified Soviet people. The extensive educational, social, cultural, political, and enlightenment efforts, which involved not only cultural and educational institutions but also party, youth, and trade union organizations, were geared toward forming common cultural and behavioural stereotypes among Soviet citizens from personal hygiene rules to political thinking. It was essential, through instilling the desired political culture in the population, to create a society with a shared social identity and a unified perspective on cultural and spiritual values.

The main ideological transformations affected the family structure and the roles traditionally assigned to women. The triad of labour-living-rest found a new expression in the model of socialist society. Consequently, the key functions of the family were redistributed among new specialized institutions: child upbringing was transferred to nurseries, kindergartens, and schools, while women's domestic duties were shifted to newly established institutions such as factory kitchens and laundries. Freed from domestic responsibilities, women were expected to become full-fledged labourers. In the realm of education, a system was established to prepare generations of young people for their roles in industrial society, creating a unified labour force needed for production lines. Literacy promotion and cultural enlightenment were actively pursued. The leisure system was designed to engage the entire population during their free time, involving them in the active construction of communist society. It was essential to integrate all citizens into the emerging narrative to materialize these ideas, which required a new typology of architecture that could accommodate these modern functions. The idea of socializing everyday life and promoting cultural propaganda became central in creating new building typologies and functional spaces. For adult citizens, clubs, club-dining rooms, factory kitchens, hut-reading rooms/libraries, and Lenin rooms were established. For children, nurseries, kindergartens, and schools were developed, often incorporating similar elements. Special attention was given to children's upbringing and education since self-identity, attitudes, beliefs, cultural norms, and moral values are most deeply ingrained during childhood, and upbringing within the space of collective everyday life had the most significant impact on shaping emerging personalities within social institutions (primary institutionalization according to Berger) [20]. The search for new typologies particularly influenced residential structures and complexes,

which, in addition to their residential function, needed to accommodate all the functions of generalized everyday life described above. Thus, the concepts of the house-commune, residential combine, and socialist city were formed [30]. At that time, other types of public buildings existed, including leisure facilities like clubs and educational institutions such as nurseries, kindergartens, and schools. However, an examination of these types falls beyond the scope of this study.

In this paper, in line with the objectives, we consider two new typologies: the house-commune and the residential combine.

In the concept of the house-commune, collectivism, as one of the ideological-political and organizational features of the proletariat, formed the foundation for the material and spatial organization of all domestic and cultural processes. This concept represented an extreme form of realization within the discourse of social projection and the redistribution of the social order.

The functional components of this model were as follows:

- a living cell for 1, 2, or 3 people, containing only beds, occasionally kitchen niches and a bathroom, as well as storage spaces;
- a common block of social, cultural, educational, and service premises.

The concept of the house-commune has its roots in the ideas of Utopian socialism [31]. The primary objective behind the house-commune was to create a living and working space that would promote collectivism and foster the development of a communist society. Key features of house-communes included collective living arrangements, enhanced social interaction among residents, and a reduction in personal space in favor of shared functionality.

It is important to distinguish between the house-commune and dormitory types, as they represent two distinct forms of collective housing. Their differences are evident in ideology, levels of collectivity, architectural and planning features, and socio-cultural aspects. The house-commune was developed as part of the socialist experiment of the 1920s and 1930s, aimed at creating a society founded on collectivism [32]. Unlike a house-commune, a dormitory serves a practical purpose by providing temporary housing for specific groups of people.

Thus, the main differences between the house-commune and the dormitory lie in their ideological foundations, levels of collectivity, architectural features, and cultural aspects.

The attempt to implement house-communes in Kharkiv was not very successful, and the idea of house-communes didn't take root there. Between 1922 and 1925, there were 242 residential communes, but most of them were housed in nationalized buildings not originally constructed for this purpose. Only two buildings were specifically conceived as house-communes, both designed by architect Trotsenko. In 1925, a competition was announced for the design of a house-commune on Tolkachevska Street, in which Trotsenko also participated. He became the author of the realized project on Studentska Street, 4. A separate phenomenon—the Felix Dzerzhinskyj Children's Labor Commune (FED) — created as a complex of residential, educational, and industrial premises, remains outside the scope of this discussion [33].

Initially, house-communes were designed to be built at state expense, with free accommodation provided for commune members. However, the introduction of rent in 1923 abolished free housing, even for workers. Due to the acute housing shortage, a decision was made to populate the residential complexes being created with a different focus than the original exploitation program, delaying the implementation of the socio-cultural component. Another approach to addressing the housing issue involved reducing the area of non-residential premises in apartments and consolidating these spaces, thereby maximizing the

number of residential units within the same area. This approach later attracted criticism toward the concept of the house-commune.

The lack of funds for government housing programs led to a revival of the pre-revolutionary practice of share and cooperative construction. This approach aimed to meet the needs of future residents as closely as possible, providing them with maximum comfort within the limits of available funds [33]. This allowed future residents of these houses to reject social experiments. For example, the Residential House "Slovo" was originally conceived as a house-commune, but its design was altered during construction due to appeals from cooperative members.

The solution to the issue of people's unpreparedness for life in collective living conditions was seen through the development and construction of specially adapted new forms of residential complexes with public spaces. Thus, from the spring of 1928, a new idea of “block development” emerged, along with the concept of the house-block as a form of transitional housing. The term "block development" referred to a type of development in which a house-block (a multi-storey, block building) was perceived as a single, indivisible estate with a communalized, undeveloped yard space and a more or less communalized internal organization of housing.

The concept of the residential combine was an architectural solution that evolved and transformed the idea of the house-commune, making it more livable while still retaining the characteristics of a "social condenser." Compared to the house-commune concept, the residential combine incorporated more humanistic features. In one building, or a complex of buildings that sometimes occupied an entire block, there were:

- full-fledged flats, each necessarily equipped with a bathroom and kitchen (sometimes the kitchen was shared with the bathroom, and the sanitary unit was separate);
- a block of social or service premises, such as nurseries, kindergartens, schools, laundries, etc. [4].

In the case of Kharkiv, it is notable that the "Regulations on the Types of Houses for Housing Construction in 1930-32" proposed three types of housing:

1. Type A: A residential area consisting of 20 apartments with a minimal set of shared facilities, including a laundry room, gymnasium, hall for meetings and physical training, rooms for club activities, children's rooms (nursery and garden), a common kitchen, and a dining room (with the condition that not all apartments have individual kitchens).
2. Type B: A residential combine designed for 1,000 or more inhabitants, also known as a house-block, featuring full public catering, comprehensive childcare facilities such as nurseries and kindergartens, complete food distribution services for residents, and facilities for motorcycles, bicycles, and cars.
3. Type C: A house-commune designed for extensive communal living, including a hall for general meetings, rooms for various clubs, a gymnasium, library, canteen, factory-kitchen, laundry, crèche, and kindergarten, as well as an isolation room, disinfection room, medical station, department store, barber shop, garage, and other amenities [13].

Hence, it can be observed that, within this context, the house-block became equivalent to a type of residential combine.

It is also important to separately examine the differences between the residential combine and the income (cooperative) house, which existed before the 1917 revolution, to confirm that the residential combine was indeed a new type of housing. Income houses of the

late 19th and early 20th centuries and residential combines of the 1920s to early 1930s represent different social and architectural approaches to the organization of living space.

The late 19th and early 20th-century income houses targeted different social strata, offering apartments of various sizes and comfort levels. These buildings were often multi-storey constructions with apartments equipped with individual kitchens and bathrooms. The ground floors contained commercial spaces such as stores and cafes, and the buildings often included shared amenities like laundry rooms and storage basements. The architecture of the income houses was diverse and ornate, emphasizing the status and attractiveness of the dwellings.

In contrast, the residential combines of the late 1920s and early 1930s were oriented toward collectivism and equality. They featured minimalist housing units with extensive common spaces. Besides individual kitchens and bathrooms, the design included communal dining rooms, laundry rooms, and bathhouses. An essential element of the residential combines was the inclusion of social and cultural facilities such as clubs, libraries, and kindergartens, which contributed to creating a collective environment. The architecture of these buildings was functional and standardized, reflecting the pursuit of economic efficiency and the rationalization of construction. The primary distinctions between these typologies lie in their social orientation and design. Income houses were intended for different social classes and offered comfortable, privately designed apartments. In contrast, residential combines were created for workers and other segments of the population, oriented towards collective living, with a focus on common amenities and social functions. The architectural designs of income houses featured decorative elements and a variety of styles, while residential combines were characterized by their functional architecture. These differences reflect shifts in social and political ideology and urban planning approaches between the two periods.

History of the creation and functional arrangement of the new capital centre of Kharkiv. In 1923–1924 competition was held for the planning of the territory of the new administrative centre of the capital, Kharkiv, along with its residential quarters. The proposal by V.K. Trotsenko was selected for implementation, with a project that established the structure of a large square stretching from east to west, ending in a circular form, and a system of radial-ring streets in the area between Klochkivskyj downhill, the slopes of Shatylivskyj gully, and the future New Avenue—Lenin Avenue (now Nauky Avenue). The layout of the new district was based on the radial-ring principle of E. Howard's garden city. The system of streets emphasized the compositional significance of the circular part of the square and the spatial relationship between the House of State Industry building and the development of the surrounding territories. Residential blocks were separated from the new business centre by a wide green boulevard. A large strip of botanical garden, zoo, and park enclosed the slopes of the block to the west. The project implemented the idea of a circular square adjacent to the city park along Veterinary Street (now Svobody Street), with radial development of administrative buildings and residential quarters organized around its perimeter. The main thoroughfares divided the new residential area into separate blocks that extended northwest from Dzerzhinskyj Square (now Svobody Square), forming radial sectors. Three main buildings formed the perimeter of the round square: the House of State Industry (designed by architects S. Serafimov, S. Kravets, M. Felger, and engineer P. Rottert), the House of Projects (designed by architects S. Serafimov, M. Zandberg-Serafimova), and the House of Co-operation (designed by architects A. Dmitriev, A. Munz). These buildings were intended to concentrate all the republican ministries and institutions scattered throughout the city. The construction of the new administrative centre began in 1925. It was evident that the presence of such a large number of institutions required housing for their employees, and due to the high concentration of the above-mentioned points of attraction, the housing was located within both the historical and new administrative centres. The territorial boundaries of the

residential facilities and complexes that were part of the capital centre program were defined by the new idea of a fifteen-minute walking distance to the workplace. Consequently, the residential complex behind the State Industry Building became a logical continuation of the new administrative and business centre of Dzerzhinskyj Square, providing the entire ensemble with compositional completeness. The construction of these residential complexes continued from 1926 to 1937 (Fig. 1).

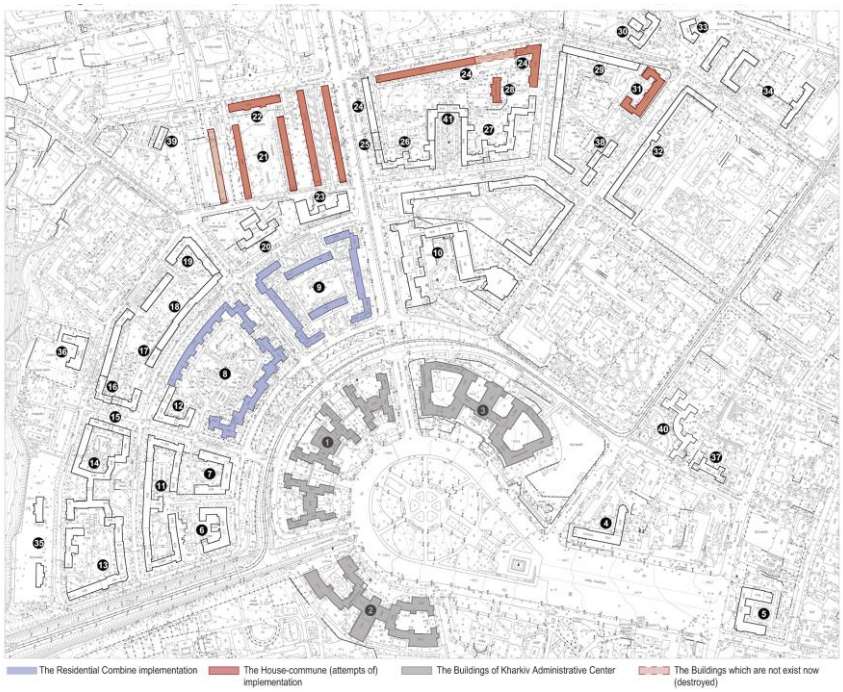

Fig. 1. Kharkiv governmental complex and its residential area (1924-1939). *Source:* diagram by K. Didenko

(1) State Industry Building (Derzhprom), 1925-1928, arch. S. S. Serafimov, S. M. Kraviets, M. D. Felger, engineer P. P. Rottert; (2) House of Projects, 1935, arch. S. S. Serafimov, M. A. Zandberg-Serafimova; (3) House of Cooperation, 1932-1954, arch. A. I. Dmitriev, O. R. Munts; (4) "International" hotel, 1932-1935, arch. G. A. Yanovitskyj; (5) The building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Ukraine, 1932, arch. J. A. Shteynberg; (6) Tabachnik-Knygar (Tobacconist-Bookman) residential house, 1926-1931, arch. A. Z. Kogan, P. I. Frolov; (7) Voenved (Defense Ministry) residential house, mid 1930s, arch.V. N. Petit; (8) Chervonyj Promyslovets (Red Industrialist) residential complex, 1929-1930, arch. S. M. Kravets; (9) Budynok Spetsialistiv (House of Specialists) residential complex, 1934-1936, arch. L. S. Lemysh; (10) Morphological body of Medical Institute, 1937, arch. V. A. Estrovich; (11) Chervonyj Drukar – Dim Profrobitnyka (Red Printing Worker – House of Trade Union Worker) residential house with a club building, 1930s; (12) Chervonyj Khimik (Red Chemist) residential house, late 1920s, arch. Yu. V. Ignatovskyj; (13) Voenved (Defense Ministry) residential house, 1937-1938, arch. P. Ye. Shpara, consultated by A. N. Beketov; (14 Shveynik (Sewing Industry Worker) residential house, 1930s, arch. A. Z. Kogan; (15) Residential house of municipal operational part, 1930s; (16) Chervonyj Partyzan (Red Partyzan), mid. 1930s, arch. A. V. Mezherovskyj; (17) Teacher's residential house, 1930s; (18) Lypnevyi Plenum (July Plenum) residential house, early 1930s, group of architects under the supervision by prof. P. K. Chernyshev; (19) Residential house, 1938-1939, arch. M. L. Movshovich, G. I. Lebedinskyj; (20) Novyj Pobut (New Life) secondary school, 1936; (21) Novyj Pobut (New Life) residential complex, 1930-1932, arch. N. F. Pokornyj; (22) Residential house, late 1930s, arch. L. G. Lyubarskyj; (23) Kitchen-factory of Novyj Pobut (New Life) residential complex 1930-1932, arch. N. F. Pokornyj; (24) Pyat za Try (Five Years Plan in Three) residential house, late 1920s; (25) Residential house, 1927, arch. A. V. Linetskyj; (26) Chervonyj Brodilnyk (Red Fermenter) residential house, 1926-1928, arch. P. Z. Krupko, G. D. Ikonnikov; (27) Kofok (abbreviation for October Confectionery Factory), 1928, arch. P. Z. Krupko, G. D. Ikonnikov; (28) Day-care centre, 1930s; (29) Residential house, 1938, arch. A. A. Shumilin, N. A. Shyshkina; (30) Secondary school, 1938; (31) Slovo (Word) residential house, 1927-1930, arch. M. I. Dashkevych; (32) House of Pilots, residential house, 1930s; (33) House of Artists, residential house, 1930s; (34) Chervonyj Professor (Red Professor) residential houses, 1930s; (35) Two day-care centres, 1930s; (36) Secondary school, 1938; (37) Residential building, late 1920s - early 1930s, Nezalezhnosti Avenue 17; (38) Chervonyj Donets (Red Donets) residential house, 1927-1928, Danylevskoho St. 8; (39) Kindergarten, 1930s; (40) Institute of Workers' Medicine, architect V.A. Estrovych, 1935; (41) Residential building, late 1930s.

The residential blocks included in the ensemble of Kharkiv's new administrative center in the 1920s–1930s were envisioned to become a "social condenser" for creating a new society and a new Soviet person. Spatial innovations and new typologies of residential and public buildings served as tools for implementing and transmitting mental structures within the emerging Soviet society. Consequently, the primary components of the "social condenser" were intended to be the new urban landscape structure, including the functional layout, new types of housing, and new architectural typologies for socio-cultural, educational, and domestic purposes. The district's functional structure was planned to follow the scenario: housing – work – socio-cultural activities – catering/public services – housing. Introducing new housing typologies, such as the house-commune and residential complex, along with incorporating new domestic, educational, and socio-cultural facilities, such as clubs, factory kitchens, kindergartens, and schools, became essential components of this vision.

When examining the structural and functional aspects of Kharkiv's new administrative center from a broader perspective, encompassing architectural and urban planning concepts, it becomes clear that there were attempts to implement the ideas of the "house commune" and the "residential combine," as well as elements of the "garden city" urban concept. The district's planning was based on the garden city principle, with a clear separation of residential areas by radial streets and circular boulevards from the central administrative and business centre (Fig. 2). Despite abandoning the full implementation of the garden city concept, the idea of a garden block was introduced, featuring four and five-storey residential buildings integrated into collective public spaces for residents. However, in the context of our focus on social condensers embodied in architecture, it is appropriate to further explore the implementation of the house-commune and residential combine concepts, which are discussed below.

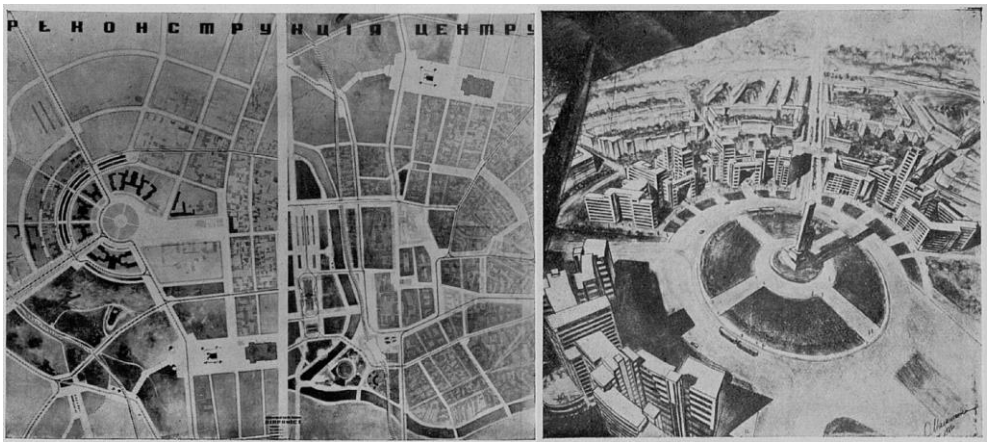

Fig. 2. The scheme of reconstruction of the New Kharkiv Administrative Centre and 3D visualisation. *Source:* Authors` archive, picture is from L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui. 1932. No. 8. P. 49-96

At the design stage, the buildings of the residential blocks were functionally zoned for different purposes to serve the population. In 1930, it was planned to allocate plots for buildings such as schools for 1,500 children throughout the residential block. In Block 5, delineated by B. Chychybabin, Danylevskyj, L. Kurbas, and J. Zoifer Streets, the residential buildings "Red Partisan", "Teacher," and "July Plenum" are located today. In the same block,

it was planned to erect a polyclinic, and indeed, City Children's Polyclinic No. 4 is located there now. Within Block 1, the residential buildings "Tabachnyk-Knygar" and "Voenved" were constructed, while Block 3 was occupied by the "House of Specialists" complex. In the residential area behind the House of State Industry, there were plans for a nursery and kindergarten, three pharmacies (one intended for the "Red Industrialist" residential building and another for the House of State Industry), and administrative buildings that were to be located on the ground floors of residential buildings (including facilities for the police, State Bank and savings bank offices, a local postal and telegraph office, fire service, central food market, and even a hotel). There was no provision for a separate club in the district, as the club and cinema were part of the House of Cooperation complex. Thus, the inhabitants of this block were to be provided with everything they needed within the territory of the new serviced housing estate (Fig. 3).

Let us consider the process of implementing the concepts of the house-commune and the residential combine using the example of the residential blocks behind the State Industry Building.

House-commune and residential combine. The idea of the house-commune did not take root in Kharkiv, but a partial realisation of this concept can be seen in the late 1920s residential complex "New Life." However, it is worth mentioning two other buildings. In the case of the residential buildings "Five-Year Plan for 3 Years" ("5 for 3") and "Slovo," several issues arose in both design and implementation. The initial concepts and reasons for altering the original intentions were different — let's examine them.

Fig. 3. House-Commune and Residential Combine complexes behind the Kharkiv governmental complex (1920s-1930s). *Source:* diagram by K. Didenko on base of German aero photo of 1941 http://www.etomesto.com/map-ukraine_kharkiv_aero-photo/

The residential building "Slovo" was built according to the design of architect M. Dashkevych at the corner of Kultura and Galan Streets (now Literaturnaya Street). The northeastern facade faced Kultura Street, while the southeastern facade faced Galan Street. The development and supervision of the project realisation were carried out by the institute "Ukrtsivilbud" between 1927 and 1930 [34]. At the concept formation stage, it was intended to create a house-commune with room-by-room occupancy, with regulations that prohibited married couples from combining their separate rooms into family rooms or transferring furniture to create a bedroom and study [35]. However, later, according to the initial design assignment and following a government order, architect Dashkevych was "recommended" to design larger apartments (3–4 room apartments), allowing writers to share these apartments with "production strikers and proletarians," effectively creating communal apartments. This idea was eventually abandoned. The intention was for writers to learn from proletarians how to increase productivity, as proletarians were meant to serve as role models for the Ukrainian intelligentsia. The building eventually included a canteen and a kindergarten in one of the apartments (though the original project did not plan for this), as well as a solarium with showers on the top floor.

The outcome was not a house-commune, but a residential building for writers and artists with separate, comfortable flats. The building's layout resembles the printed letter "C." It stands five storeys high, has five entrances, and contains 66 flats, each with three or four rooms. According to the original project, the entire building was to be equipped with electric lifts, but this was not implemented immediately; lifts were installed later in only a few entrances. The side wings of the building contain three-room flats, while the central part and corner volumes have four-room flats [36].

"New Life" residential complex. Discussions on the topic of house-communes continued into the early 1930s. The rigidity of the constructivist structure intended to build a new way of life proved to be complex and required rethinking. In May 1930, a debate titled "New Life – New Man" was held in Kharkiv at "Depo-October." The response to this was the complex of buildings "For New Life," or "New Life," as it would later be called (1930–1932, architect M. Pokornyj).

The complex is located within the block bounded by modern Danylevskogo Street (formerly the XIV Congress of Soviets of the Ukrainian SSR Street), Kultura Street (formerly Barachny Lane, which bordered the Shatylivskyj ravine to the north), and Nauky Avenue (formerly Novy Avenue or Lenin Avenue). The site had a shape resembling a trapezoid with a curvilinear base on the side of the Shatylivskyj ravine slopes. In its north-western part stood a tram traction substation building (1928) and a two-storey building housing a kindergarten and nursery school. Most of the block to the north and east was occupied by residential development, while in the south, the buildings for the district factory-kitchen and secondary school were planned (Fig. 1, Fig. 2, Fig. 4 and Fig. 5).

Originally, the "New Life" residential complex consisted of several slab-style buildings arranged in parallel rows, representing a new approach to block development. The five residential buildings were aligned in parallel rows from Nauky Avenue, adhering to requirements for sunlight exposure and sanitary ventilation (Fig. 4). The quarter also included separate buildings designated for a district factory-kitchen, a school, a kindergarten, a bathhouse, a boiler house, and a garage for bicycles and motorcycles.

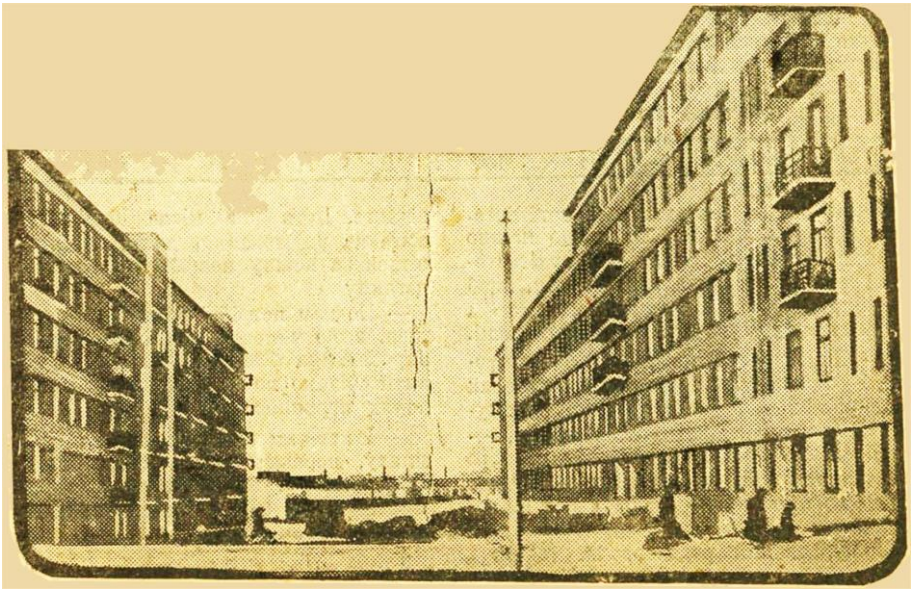

Fig. 4. Residential Complex "New Life". *Source:* Chervonyj Shlyakh, 1930, No. 7-8, p. 192

Within the residential buildings, public spaces were provided in the basement and on the technical floor, including a store-distributor, rooms for club activities, rooms for young children, a dining room, and laundry facilities. The second through fifth floors housed small two- and three-bedroom apartments grouped around stairwells. These apartments were equipped with bathrooms, although most did not have individual kitchens. The design envisioned replacing these kitchen spaces with comprehensive communal services. For example, a four-story factory-kitchen capable of producing 6,000 meals was planned to supply the entire block with semi-finished or ready-made meals. Products from the factory-kitchen were to be distributed to in-house kitchens, finished, and served in communal dining areas. It was assumed that the time saved from cooking would be used by residents for the benefit of the country.

The layout of the upper (sixth) floor was significantly different—rather than apartment blocks, there was a long gallery with rooms equipped with bathrooms and small storerooms, as well as communal spaces for classes and shared kitchens. The communications were vertical tunnels with stairways and elevators. This floor was intended to function as a dormitory for singles.

The "New Life" complex project was a unique combination of a house-commune, house-block, and dormitory. It featured public spaces, the absence of kitchens in some apartments due to the planned factory-kitchen within the same block, and the integration of residential sections with a gallery-style layout on the top floor designated as a dormitory.

The subsequent redevelopment of this complex has supported the notion that public spaces do not play a crucial role in transforming family life and can be eliminated without negatively impacting the occupants of such a complex. As a result, many aspects of the original plan were not realized. For example, the school building was completed only in 1936, and it was constructed according to the standard design by architect E. S. Kodnir. Instead of the planned factory-kitchen, a different standard school building was erected in 1938, which then served as an educational facility for an aviation school. Additionally, the building originally designated for a kindergarten was repurposed into an orphanage [37].

Fig. 5. Residential Complex "New Life" (on the left) and "Red Fermenter" Residential House (on the right). *Source:* Chervony Shlyakh, 1930, No. 7-8, p. 192

"Five-Year Plan in 3 Years" residential complex. The plot of land for the housing and construction cooperative "Five-Year Plan in 3 Years" was allocated on Lenin Avenue (now Nauky Avenue), the future main and most beautiful thoroughfare, just a stone's throw away from Dzerzhinskyj Square (now Svobody Square). The project assignment included five residential buildings, each with 60 flats, as well as a communal building that housed a kindergarten and nursery for 130 children, a large summer playground for 150 children, a hairdressing salon, a meeting hall (red corner), a canteen, a spacious room for the house management office, an in-house radio station, repair shops for small repairs, garages for bicycles and motorbikes, and a laundry room for washing and drying. The promotional project was represented by the façade of the future building, featuring an eye-catching polychrome colour scheme. Staffage and entourage accompanying the image included branching ferns not seen since prehistoric times, aeroplanes floating in the air, and Buicks, Cadillacs, Lincolns, and other wonders of automotive technology gliding along the shiny, ground-glass-like pavement (Fig. 2, Fig. 6]).

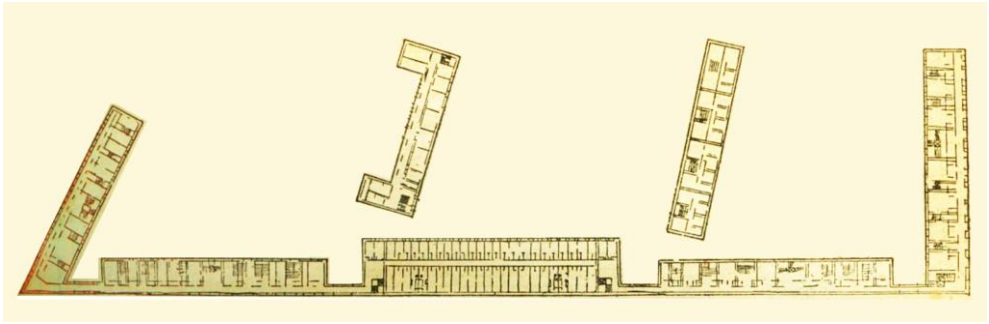

Fig. 6. The design project of "Five-Year Plan in 3 Years": building plans. *Source:* diagram by K. Didenko and O. Gella on base of photo from Chervonyj Shlyakh, 1930, No. 7-8, p. 192

The project was accepted for execution; however, a scandal broke out during the construction of the complex, which received widespread media attention. The cause of the

scandal was the collapse of the "soaring" roof over building No. 5 and the generally poor quality of construction. Delegates from the founding meeting of the cooperative, residents of the first completed buildings, builders, city architects and planners, journalists and photographers, representatives from state control bodies, regional housing cooperatives, the city council, and the People's Commissar of Municipal Economy, V. Polyakov, participated in an extended meeting held in one of the construction barracks [38]. The construction inspection revealed numerous deficiencies and significant deviations from the project, including staircases raised at a 45-degree angle, structural beams laid directly into the chimney openings, posing a fire, hazard, and numerous holes, gaps, and cracks in the walls, windows, and doors, along with crooked front lines.

In comparison, other shortcomings appeared minor:

- The lack of a technical design and working drawings.
- The main facade, oriented to the south, faced the courtyard, while the windows of the toilets and kitchens faced the street, and the windows of the living rooms faced the courtyard.
- The complete absence of necessary communal and domestic premises, as another building for housing was erected instead of the planned domestic building by an unknown order.
- The visualisation did not correspond to the facade of the main project, and none of it matched the terrain. The facade itself was a dreary grid of windows, doors, and partitions.

The scandal surrounding the house became a topic for discussion at the plenum of the Organisational Bureau of the Union of Soviet Architects of Ukraine and served as a basis to criticise formalism (and constructivism) in architecture. Additionally, government decrees issued in the early 1930s cancelled radical forms of work aimed at transforming everyday life. The practice of communal houses was condemned by a special decree from the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks (b) on 16 May 1930, titled "On the Work on the Restructuring of Everyday Life."

Nevertheless, the house was completed with reduced domestic functions: one of the planned detached service buildings was omitted, and the garages, dining room, and meeting room were replaced by a modest red corner, among other changes. Of the maintenance buildings, only the day-care facility was constructed. Commissioned in 1935, the buildings still exist today. Ultimately, this resulted in a residential house rather than a true house - commune, lacking household services, featuring an impractical layout, and functionally reduced apartments without individual bathrooms; instead, a bath was located in the mini-kitchen area.

The situation was different with the introduction of the concept of the residential combine. In Kharkiv, the capital, this concept was embodied quite extensively, both within the new administrative and residential district and point by point in the central and peripheral parts of the city. After 1928, when the housing cooperative society was permitted to spend 5% of the funds allocated for construction on the building of cultural and domestic institutions, cooperatives began to commission architects to design houses with a developed public section—residential combines. Within the boundaries of the new capital centre, the concept of the residential combine was most fully realised in two residential complexes: "Red Industrialist" and "House of Specialists," as they concentrated most of the public, educational, social, and cultural functions, in addition to those mentioned above.

The "Red Industrialist" residential complex is located in the first strip of residential quarters; according to the 1930 master plan for the entire residential area, it is designated as block 2, directly opposite the State Industry Building (Fig. 2). The complex occupies almost

the entire large block along the arc of Independence Avenue between the radial streets of Yura Zoifer and Les Kurbas. The block has a trapezoidal shape with sides measuring 150 metres, a long side of 260 metres, and a short side of 170 metres. The building itself covers almost the entire block, with an area of approximately 0.42 hectares. The development was proposed to be perimeter-based, leaving a large green courtyard-garden to accommodate children's and sports grounds, a small swimming pool, and green spaces. According to the project, the courtyard was intersected by a pedestrian path, which separated the first and second phases of the development, corresponding to the first and second buildings of the complex. Thus, the "Red Industrialist" residential complex consists of two buildings, separated by entrances to a large courtyard-park. The facades of one building face Independence Avenue, Yura Zoifer Street, and Les Kurbas Street (formerly R. Rolan Street), while the other – faces Les Kurbas and Boris Chychybabin Streets. The complex features different storeys: the sections located at the corners of the block are seven storeys high, while the others facing Independence Avenue and B. Chychybabin Street are five storeys high. Lifts are provided in the entrances of the seven storey sections. According to the project, lift shafts were also included in the other five-storey blocks, but they were intended primarily for storage facilities [39].

Inside the square formed by the two buildings of the Red Industrialist and the eight-storey building of the Red Chemist (Y. Zoifer St. 6), there is a large courtyard-park, which includes emergency exits from 17 stairwells.

The first building of the "Red Industrialist," complex, facing Independence Avenue with its long facade, has a symmetrical "U"-shape. The central part of the long facade is recessed, and the sections create a dynamic plasticity due to the rhythm of recessed and extended parts, culminating in seven-storey towers at the corners, which continue with six- and seven-storey sections on L. Kurbas and Y. Zoifer Streets. The building has a stepped structure in plan, and the rhythmic alternation of recessed and extended sections creates a plastic and expressive silhouette.

The second building of the complex faces Chychybabin Street with a long five-storey facade and L. Kurbas Street with a short seven-storey facade. This part of the building features a different compositional structure. While the previous section exhibited rhythmic plasticity on both the outer and inner courtyard facades, here we see the rhythm of the extended parts of the building only on the facade facing the courtyard. On Chychybabin Street, the facade is completely smooth, with vertical glazed openings only for the stairwells, the entrances to which were designed as through entrances, creating a rhythmic effect. Incidentally, the entrances to the first building of the complex were also through- entrances. This rhythm of the facades is clearly supported by its similarity to the State Industry building from the square side, as if maintaining the rhythm established by this building from one angle. The ground floors of the buildings on the perimeter of the complex, located on Independence Avenue and L. Kurbas Street, included elements of consumer services: on the first and second floors, there were nursery and kindergarten facilities, shops, and other public amenities. Within this residential area, it was planned to include three pharmacies, one of which was to be situated in the block of the "Red Industrialist" residential building, as well as district administration offices, which were intended to occupy the ground floors of the residential buildings (including police stations, branches of the State Bank and savings banks, a local postal and telegraph office, a fire station, a central market, and even a hotel). Thus, the residents of this block were to be provided with everything they needed within the territory of the new serviced housing estate, with the "Red Industrialist" residential complex also being part of this extensive functional arrangement. It is known that in the post-war years, the

ground floor even housed School No. 105, which was later relocated to a separate building on Danylevskyj Street.

The first building was designed to include a cellar. In the above -ground portion, it was planned to house a temporary kindergarten until the second building was erected, with a usable area of 97.30 m². It was also intended to accommodate the house management office and the Red Corner — covering an area of 70 m² — until the clubhouse in the area behind the State Industry building was constructed. On the same floor, it was planned to arrange a dormitory for singles for 23 persons, with a living area of 186.60 m², a small temporary canteen with an area of 303.4 m², and a flat for watchmen with an area of 31.6 m². In the basement, it was planned to place a central boiler room and storage rooms for institutions with a total area of 1,175.20 m². The ground floor was designated for various offices, while the upper floors were designed to contain flats with a total living area of 8,616.4 m². Regarding the residential component of the complex, the flats were full three- to five-room apartments, each with a kitchen and one bathroom. The area of the rooms varied from 15 to 20 m², and there was a total of 292 flats in the building, with two or three on each landing. The ground floor of the second building of the Red Industrialist was originally intended for public use; however, changes were made during construction in 1930, resulting in part of the ground floor being allocated for living quarters.

The "House of Specialists" residential complex was situated in the first strip of residential blocks and, according to the 1930 master plan for the entire residential area, it is designated as block 3 (Fig. 2). The residential house was designed and built between 1934 and 1936, initially intended for the employees of the House of Projects. However, the construction concept later changed, and the house became home to the professional elite, including scientists from various fields: doctors, lawyers, artists, physicists, and others. In May 1934, the first building of the House of Specialists was completed, followed by the completion of the last three buildings in 1935–1936.

This building occupies a large block between the radial streets — Nauky Avenue (formerly Lenin Avenue) and L. Kurbas Street (formerly R. Rolan Street) — and the circular streets — Independence Avenue (formerly Pravda Avenue) and B. Chychybabin Street. The two buildings of the "House of Specialists" are shaped like the letter "C" and are oriented with their long sides along Nauky Avenue and L. Kurbas Street, between which two linear plate buildings are situated parallel to each other. These intra-block plate buildings are seven storeys high, in contrast to the "C"-shaped buildings, which have only five storeys. The five-storey buildings are designed so that their corner sections facing Pravda Avenue, Nauky Avenue, and L. Kurbas Street are rounded and consist of only four floors, creating their own rhythm and accentuating the exclusivity of these corners. It is here, on the first floor with high ceilings and wide glazed windows, that the sculptors' studios are located. The inner ends of these "C"-shaped buildings on Independence Avenue are cylindrical and compositionally support the aforementioned rounded four-storey corner sections. From the side of the ring street B. Chychybabin, the geometry of the "C"-shaped buildings lacks cylindrical or rounded parts; the corners facing the intersection of Nauky Avenue and B. Chychybabin Street and L. Kurbas Street have a stepped form with expressive plasticity. These corner solutions compositionally engage in dialogue with the "Red Industrialist" building.

The "C"-shaped building is situated along L. Kurbas Street and features one additional storey due to the lowering of the relief towards the corner of B. Chychybabin Street and L. Kurbas Street, resulting in a six-storey building at this corner.

Thanks to the free and unenclosed compositional-spatial structure of the quarter, the area is well ventilated. Additionally, because the quarter is oriented at 15–20 degrees relative to the north, all flats benefit from good sunlight exposure.

The residential complex includes 26 entrances: the plate blocks have three entrances each, while the "C"-shaped blocks have ten entrances each. Lifts were installed in the entrances, and a lift operator was on duty. The stairwells, illuminated by natural light, typically have two flats, each with through-ventilation, and an insulated bathroom and sanitary unit. In total, there are 291 flats, each with four to five rooms each, with the five-room flats including a maid's room [37].

The ground floor of the buildings, facing Independence Avenue, included grocery and food shops, while along the same avenue and L. Kurbas Street, there were entrances to consumer service enterprises. The buildings of the "House of Specialists" housed a library with a reading room, a music school named after L. Beethoven, and a club where various events were held, including a Christmas tree celebration and film screenings. Additionally, the ground floors featured a cash desk, a branch of polyclinic No. 26, shops named "Bread" and "Grocery Store," an industrial goods shop, and an enterprise called "Domestic Kitchen." A laundry, a dry cleaner, and a kindergarten were also located within the complex.

3. Conclusions

1. In the early 1920s, Soviet architects developed ideas that envisioned architecture as a tool for human transformation. This led to the criticism and rejection of traditional housing models, which were deemed incompatible with new social relations. Architecture began to be viewed as a means of shaping new social and domestic processes. The task of forming a New Man encompassed all spheres of life, including work, leisure, and everyday activities for adults, as well as education for children through kindergartens and schools. In each of these areas, efforts were made to reformat individuals both ideologically and materially by creating a new everyday life and lifestyle. Restructuring this sphere of daily life proved to be the most challenging.
2. The concepts of "house-commune" and "residential combine" were attempts to create collective living spaces. House-communes were ideologically based on collective living, social interaction among residents, and the minimization of personal space and functionality, while the residential combine offered somewhat more humane conditions with individual apartments and public services. The psychological unpreparedness of society for a seamless transition to life in house-communes necessitated the creation of a transitional type of housing that allowed for the gradual collectivization of daily life.
3. Architectural projects in Kharkiv during the 1920s and 1930s sought to create a "New Soviet Man" through new building typologies and public spaces that promoted social interaction and collectivism. These architectural experiments reflected the ideological and social changes in Soviet society, as well as the desire to create a new way of life and a new social identity. This paper examines typologies such as the house-commune and the residential combine.
4. The realization of the house-commune and residential complex concepts aimed at fostering collectivism and advancing a communist society was not widely accepted in Kharkiv. Many of these new typologies were either never implemented or underwent significant changes during their development due to economic and social factors. For instance, the residential house "Slovo," originally conceived as a house-commune, was transformed during construction into a residential building for writers and artists, featuring separate apartments. Similarly, the innovative "New Life" complex underwent numerous modifications throughout its design,

construction, and operation. The residential complex "5 Years in 3 Years" was completed with a significantly reduced scope of household functions. In contrast, the residential combine concept was more fully realised, as exemplified by the residential complexes "Red Industrialist" and "House of Specialists."

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