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Domestic Space in the Times of Change: the Collapse of the USSR, 1985-2000s

Kateryna L. Malaia
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

DOMESTIC SPACE IN THE TIMES OF CHANGE: THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR, 1985-2000s

by

Kateryna Malaia

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ABSTRACT

DOMESTIC SPACE IN THE TIMES OF CHANGE: THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR, 1985-2000s

by Kateryna Malaia

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This dissertation examines the ways urban domestic spaces transformed under the pressure of social upheaval related to the collapse of the USSR in 1991. The collapse of the Soviet Union has been examined from a standpoint of spatial changes, but existing studies are limited to public spaces and city-scale transformations. In other words, the collapse of the USSR remains a virtually uninvestigated event from the perspective of ordinary places integral for the study of social change in everyday life, such as apartment homes, courtyards, and residential streets. Between the late 1980s and 2000s, an unprecedented remodeling and home improvement boom took place inside Soviet standardized apartments. As a result of these changes in apartment layouts and functional zones, there were also dramatic shifts in identities, cultural practices, and attitudes towards domestic spaces.

My work relies on archives, interviews, building codes, and field studies done in Kyiv, Ukraine in order to demonstrate that the demand for change seen in everyday life and domestic architecture predated the 1991 collapse of the USSR. Chapters are organized under domestic practices, such as eating and sleeping, rather than room-labels or apartment building types. This approach embraces a great variety of apartment buildings that existed in the late- and post-Soviet period without extensive focus on differences, but rather explores the overwhelming similarities in the spatial thinking of apartment dwellers and professional architects alike.

My research demonstrates that despite their fascination with the West, post-Soviet urbanites did not produce domestic spaces that resembled their Western counterparts, nor did they reproduce the Soviet understanding of home despite the persistence of Soviet infrastructure. Instead, they created their own model of apartment living. The newly acquired freedom to transform one's home became a characteristic trait of the post-Soviet urban life, while the practice of domestic remodeling determined the everyday life experiences of post-Soviet urbanites.

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INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL CHANGE, HOME AND SPATIAL HISTORY

> "The social importance and acuteness or the housing problem have predetermined a serios attitude to it. To provide every family with a separate flat or house by the year 2000, is, in itself, a tremendous but feasible undertaking.
>
> —Mikhail Gorbachev, *Political Report of the CPSU Central Committee to the 27th Party Congress*, 1986

The first post-Soviet decades were accompanied with a near pathological desire for home improvement. Domestic upgrade advertisements were everywhere;[1] domestic gadgets were given to the winners of popular television shows;[2] architecture and construction professionals shifted from large-scale state commissions provided through their institutions to small-scale private remodeling and construction services.[3] It was as if the entire metropolitan population decided to fix up their apartments on a scale from modest, do-it-yourself renovations to the majestic gold and marble-finished homes of the 'New Russians'.[4] Building and finishing material stores, as well as fancy furniture salons, started popping up around urban centers to satisfy the needs of the remodeling clientele. Residential interior designers also emerged as a profession that had not existed in the Soviet Union but came to a quick fruition after the state fell apart.[5] The 1990s, just

[1] For instance, V.P. Kolomiets claims that in 1994 furniture and home goods were the third most advertised category of products at the Russian television, while in 1995 the second place was occupied with domestic appliances. V.P. Kolomiets, "Televizionnaia reklama kak sredstvo konstruirovaniia smyslov," *Mir Rossii*, No1, (1997), p.34-35.
[2] For example, see *Pole Chudes* TV show (1990-present), an analogy of the Wheel of Fortune show, where players had to compete to receive prizes such as a car, a television set, a VHS player, a microwave oven.
[3] An in-detail explanation for this trend can be found in Chapter 1 "Remodeling."
[4] See Caroline Humphrey, *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies After Socialism,* (Ithaca, N.Y.; London: Cornell University Press, 2002), pp.182-185.
[5] Since a regular Soviet urbanite could not privately hire an architect or a designer to work on their home design (just like they could not legally hire any private specialist), the profession of a home interior designer simply did not exist until the late 1980s and the beginning of the *remont* era. Prior to that, the term was predominantly used for

like the decades after the 1917 Revolution, had its newspeak, such as *evroremont*—remodeling done according to European standards as envisioned by post-Soviet populations,[6] and *pereplanirovka* or re-planning—change of apartment layout, and many others.[7] For a while, domestic remodeling seemed to be the new blue jeans of the post-Soviet: the ultimate buzz and one of the defining cultural trends of the era.[8] Inevitably, homes went through substantial transformations, often invisible through the uniform facades of the urban apartment blocks. This dissertation argues that such seemingly chaotic transformations followed clear spatial and cultural principles and were strictly characteristic of the post-Soviet condition: for apartment dwellers domestic change was among the ways of becoming post-Soviet.

This dissertation about urban apartment homes during Perestroika (1985) and the first post-Soviet decades (1991-2000s) asks: how does a dwelling transform along with and under the pressure of historical upheaval? And how does a dwelling help in understanding large-scale changes, that may be otherwise difficult to comprehend? Despite its interest in the dissolution of the USSR, this dissertation does not focus on the dramatic events of 1990-1991, such as the secession of republics from the Soviet Union or the removal of the Communist Party(ies) from governance. Rather it is concerned with the everyday space transformations and continuities that took place in the years leading to the collapse of the USSR and after.

This work argues that domestic spatial transformations of the 1990s and 2000s were an inseparable part of the grand-scale social upheavals of the collapse of the USSR, just as changes in the architecture of homes were an inseparable part of individuals becoming post-Soviet.

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object and industrial design in publications such as *Design v SSSR:1981-1985* issued by Vserosiyskiy Nauchno-Issledovatel'skiy Institut Tekhnicheskoi Estetiki (VNIITE) in 1987.

[6] Tatiana Butseva, *Novye slova i znacheniia: slovar'-spravochnik po materialam pressy i literatury 90-kh godov XX veka v dxukh tomakh*, (Sankt-Peterburg: Institut lingvisticheskikh issledovaniĭ, 2009), p. 563.

[7] A vocabulary of remodeling-related terms can be found in Chapter 1.

[8] See "Chapter 1: Remodeling".

"What does it mean to be post-Soviet?" Madina Tlostanova asks in her book on post-Soviet art and its role in the deconstruction of Soviet colonial modernity.[9] Tolstanova suggests that a post-Soviet individual never fully parted from the idea of the radiant future. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the radiant future simply no longer required Communism. But the old Soviet principle of the 'New Man' for the new times made a comeback after the collapse of the USSR.[10] In order to become post-Soviet one had to eradicate Soviet routines, sensibilities, and commodities from their persona, which includes the closest material extension of oneself, such as attire, modes of transportation, and dwelling. The omnipresent post-Soviet home improvement newspeak—*evroremont*—explicitly indicated that this change of home had to be done in the image of Western domestic interiors, the way a post-Soviet person understood them.[11]

On a different level, the post-Soviet remodeling boom signified an emergence of a new spatial freedom (some would say chaos), difficult to compare to Western-apartment living. Apartment residents vigorously changed their homes, even in mass-constructed buildings, including such seemingly inflexible structures as prefabricated concrete block and panel apartments. Here is where this work's findings contribute to a surprisingly little studied, yet extremely important topic in the context of growing housing insecurities around the world: user-generated transformations of state-built urban homes.[12] User-generated change in public spaces has already gained significant scholarly attention and has been examined from several

[9] Madina Tlostanova, *What Does It Mean To Be Post-Soviet? Decolonial Art from the Ruins of Post-Soviet Empire*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2018), p. 9.
[10] The early Soviet 'New Man' had to be capable of communist selflessness and ruthless to the enemies of the revolution. See Mikhail Geller, *Mashyna i vintiki: istoriia formirovaniia sovetskogo cheloveka,* (London: Overseas Publications Interchange, 1985).
[11] This is further discussed in Chapter 1 "Remodeling."
[12] For scholarship on global housing crisis see Ray Forrest and Ngai-Ming Yip, *Housing Markets and the Global Financial Crisis: The Uneven Impact on Households*, (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2011). Powerful accounts of housing insecurity in the US can be found in Matthew Desmond, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, (London: Penguin Books, 2017).

methodological standpoints.[13] At the same time, housing transformations have remained virtually unexamined, except for Graham Tipple's volume on user-initiated housing extensions in developing countries that hoped to "establish a basis" for housing-transformation studies and a few articles on post-Soviet apartment home extensions.[14] This dissertation argues that studying changes in urban housing on an individual apartment scale is not only important for the future of sustainable housing production, but also crucial to understanding emerging social and individual identities in times of a political rupture.

My goal is to understand the joint between the collapse of the USSR and the everyday architecture of urban homes immediately highlights a number of issues. First, speaking about historic change at large does not provide a meaningful understanding of what that change was like, just as the "economic downturn" in no way suffices to express the extent and diversity of change produced during the Great Depression. Besides, large scale studies of the post-Soviet built environment have already been done to some degree and include great examples such as Gentile's and Tammaru's article "Housing and ethnicity in the post-soviet city: Ust'-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan" (2006); Andrusz's, Harloe's, and Szelenyi's (ed.) *Cities After Socialism: Urban and Regional Change and Conflict in Post-Socialist Societies* (2011); Stanilov's *The Post-Socialist City: Urban Form and Space Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe After Socialism* (2012); and Hirt's *Iron Curtains: Gates, Suburbs, and Privatization of Space in the Post-Socialist City* (2012). While sociologists have widely used an urban scale of inquiry, anthropologists and Slavic historians have addressed the building scale of

[13] See for example, an edited volume by Jeffrey Hou, *Insurgent Public Space: Guerrilla Urbanism and the Remaking of Contemporary Cities,* (New York: Routledge, 2010).
[14] Graham Tipple, *Extending Themselves*, p. 2; Stefan Bouzarovski, Joseph Salukvadze, Michael Gentile, "A Socially Resilient Urban Transition? The Contested Landscapes of Apartment Building Extensions in Two Post-communist Cities*," Urban Studies,* Volume: 48 issue: 13 (2011): 2689-2714.

the modernist apartment blocks in works such as Buchli's "De-Stalinization and the Reinvigoration of Marxist Understanding of the Material World" in *An Archeology of Socialism* (1999), Harris's *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life after Stalin* (2013), and Varga-Harris' *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years* (2015). This dissertation suggests zooming in even further and looking at an apartment as a structural cell of late-Soviet and post-Soviet urban everyday life.

The much smaller grain of inquiry—the apartment—chosen for this work allows changes and details to be seen that, despite being apparent, eluded the scope of previous studies. The case of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, just like many cases of a seemingly overnight political change, has presented a curious dilemma to researchers. It is clear, that *a lot* has changed, yet, it is difficult to define what exactly since many elements of Soviet, and perhaps even pre-Soviet times, have remained present and formative to post-Soviet urban everyday life. While "little appears to have changed, at least in the overall quality of the housing stock and its distribution"[15] through Jane Zavisca's urban scale lens, the change appears undeniable through the microscale lens of an individual apartment. In other words, from a large-scale sociological standpoint housing conditions such as dwelling sizes and family member numbers have stayed the same. Yet on a small scale, the everyday life of a family may have changed dramatically due to massive home improvements. An apartment, in this sense, is a perfect allegory of this change: the outside load-bearing walls have largely remained the same, and even the internal partitions may have remained intact, but the space and the way of life have changed dramatically. In her work on the nature of food-related spaces in American homes, Elizabeth Cromley suggests that

[15] Jane Roj Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 2012), p. 90.

users of residential buildings should be considered equal to architects in shaping their homes.[16] This study further argues that unlike architects, users continue shaping buildings throughout their lifecycle and are at the forefront of spatial and architectural transformations at the times of social change. In other words, the buildings may stay largely intact in outlook, but the homes inside of them will not remain the same. This is the sort of change within the seeming and factual continuity that this work hopes to capture and explain.

The changes that occurred in the homes and the ways in which they took place are important manifestations of the changes in Perestroika and post-Soviet society. If social structures are internalized and embodied through daily cultural practices, what would be a better place to study how social structures transform than the home?[17] Looking at the physical and functional organization of a home to investigate the qualities of the society at large and its attitudes to the privacy and publicity is not new.[18] However, often times the stability of the superstructure of urban apartment buildings may be mistaken for a sign of the stable and uninterrupted continuity of domestic practices, and hence the social structures that they embody. That is, of course, not the case: the behaviors of apartment occupants change, and so do their domestic spaces, their functions, spatial rituals, rhythms and practices. These small changes in everyday spaces go hand-in-hand with the transforming social structures, in the case of the Soviet Union exemplified with the changing conditions of labor and

[16] Elizabeth Cromley, *The Food Axis: Cooking, Eating and the Architecture of the American Houses*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), p. 4.
[17] Jeffrey Alexander, *The Meanings of Social Life: A Cultural Sociology*, (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 4.
[18] For instance, see Celine Rosselin's study of the spatial practices of visiting a home in "Ins and Outs of the Hall: the Parisian Example," in Irene Cieraad (ed.), *At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2006), pp. 53-59. For an example of such studies in the post-socialist cities see Krisztina Fehérváry, *Politics in Color and Concrete: Socialist Materialities and the Middle Class in Hungary*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013)

consumption (Chapter 1 “Remodeling”), as well as the post-Soviet retreat of the state from domestic affairs, and the changing demands for individual privacy (Chapter 2 “Sleep”).

Second, this study would be impossible without rethinking common typological and formal characteristics of post-Soviet apartments, such as the belonging of apartment buildings to a particular period (type) of housing (*stalinka*, *khrushchevka* or prefabricated panel housing) and the number and function of separate apartment rooms. This approach embraces a great variety of apartment building types comprehensively, without extensive focus on differences, but rather exploring the overwhelming similarities in spatial thinking of apartment dwellers and professional architects alike. While in this work this approach is used in the specific case of the late-Soviet and post-Soviet apartments, shifting focus away from apartment types is relevant far beyond the post-Soviet region.

Many transformations of post-Soviet apartment homes are impossible to analyze using the usual conventions of modern apartment description and naming. Take for example the so-called ‘bedrooms.’ The vast changes that have taken place with the post-Soviet emergence of a specialized monofunctional ‘bedroom’ are impossible to describe without the realization that although ‘bedrooms’ may have formally existed in the Soviet residential design theory and apartment planning documents (for instance, in apartment building series design blueprints) they were barely ever used according to the formal function—just sleep. In this way, the established term ‘bedroom’ itself limits the ability to conduct a detailed scrutiny into a housing situation. To avoid this problem, this work replaces conventional room names with ‘spaces related to sleep’ or ‘spaces related to eating.’ Additionally, this allows for a more flexible view of apartment architecture and spatial structure: the walls of separate rooms are not seen as an absolute definition of space, but rather as just one of the dimensions that determine space use.

Between 1985 and the 2000s, late and post-Soviet cities had five major types of urban apartment housing, including post-Soviet-built apartment blocks, second and third generation prefabricated apartment blocks (Brezhnev-era until 1991), first generation apartment blocks (Khrushchev-era), Stalin-era apartments, and pre-1917 Revolution apartments.[19] With a multiplicity of types in mind, this dissertation does not focus on each individual type of apartment buildings, but rather investigates the tendencies which are shared among all these different types of urban apartment housing, namely changes in spatial practices: how interior spaces have been used, experienced, and reproduced by the residents of these dwellings. Therefore, chapters organized around domestic functions and practices such as eating, sleeping, hygiene, and socialization help to convey the physical and ephemeral changes over time that may not be evident in an analysis of particular rooms, their number, size, or type of fabrication. Additionally, this organization makes it possible to speak about functional and spatial overlaps inside the home. Finally, this structure enables this work to consistently explain the continuity and change that happens along with the elimination or construction of walls, and hence, rooms. Rooms, walls, or spatial zones inside the homes may change, but the basic domestic functions remain and offer an effective narrative structural model.

The next issue organically grows out of the previous one. Besides abandoning naming conventions, the scope of this work is not limited to the physical characteristics of space but instead speaks to spatial practices in De Certeau's terms: routines, movements, actions, and other performances[20] that changed along with the collapse of the USSR. However, unlike in De

[19] Although this study concentrates on individual, rather than communal apartments, the pre-1917 buildings that predominantly hosted communal apartments need to be mentioned for two reasons. First, many patterns of everyday life in the Soviet Union were found in both individual and communal apartments. Second, these same pre-1917 buildings were frequently converted into individual apartments, starting as early as the 1970s along the state capital reconstruction program, as well as both privately and under a state initiative after the collapse of the USSR in 1991.
[20] Michael de Certeau, "Part III: Spatial Practices," in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 91-130.

Certeau's writing, this work stays in the field of architectural history and, hence, concentrates heavily on the materiality of apartment homes: the rooms, the walls, the windows, the doors, and their dimensions, as well as the pieces of furniture that populate them. In this way, this work leans towards the explanation of practice offered by Shove, Pantzar, and Watson: that a practice does not only consist of knowledge and meaning, but also of "materials—including things, technologies, tangible physical entities, and the stuff of which objects are made."[21]

This work chooses five domestic practices to analyze: sleeping, eating, hygienic practices, socializing, and remodeling. This set of practices addresses different forms of domestic ephemera, from actions repeated multiple times a day to performances that only take place once in several years if not decades; some last for minutes while others last for days, months, or years. Despite this great range of temporalities of the practices in question, they are all nonetheless characteristic of almost any domestic space.[22] Hence, they open a possibility to transpose the narrow post-Soviet apartment discussion onto any dwelling place at large.

With all the above, this study does not intend to supplement the traditional grand narrative of the end of state-socialism and its replacement with democratic political systems and neoliberal economics, but rather suggests an alternative microhistory of the two decades in question—1985 to the mid-2000s. The grand geopolitical narrative of the collapse of state socialism has faded into the background, while the narrative of apartment life is read as the definitive history of the

[21] Elizabeth Shove, Mika Pantzar, Matt Watson, *The Dynamics of Social Practice: Everyday Life and how it Changes,* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2012), p. 14.

[22] For instance, Jordan Sand speaks about the departure from "sleeping, working and playing" all at the same place—a tatami—and into different spatial modes of the table, chairs, and westernized kitchens, along the construction of modern Japan in the end of the 19th century. In other words, the description of spatial change is effectively conducted through the constant of common domestic spatial practices. Jordan Sand, *House and Home in Modern Japan: Architecture, Domestic Space and Bourgeois Culture 1880-1930,* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), p. 91. While Sand focuses on a historic case of domestic change, another scholar Sahar Pink suggests the necessity of understanding the current day challenge of sustainable living through the everyday life and domestic practices of environmental activists. Sarah Pink, *Situating Everyday Life: Practices and Places,* (London; Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE, 2012.), pp.14-29.

period. A quotidian interior contains a multiplicity of meanings and no political narrative remains intact when observed from a standpoint of everyday life.[23] A home may simultaneously carry a narrative of hierarchic power, counter-narrative of resistance, and a multiplicity of other narratives visible at different scales of historical inquiry. And yet, a home is not a thing-in-itself;[24] it does not stand outside the rest of the historic context, but rather enriches the context with another dimension. Therefore, an apartment home in this work is presented as both a scene and a locus of change, both the predicate and the subject of politics and society, in a hope to add a spatial dimension to the everyday life of late-Soviet and post-Soviet cities.

Microhistory

> "Were there any changes in the approaches to housing design with the beginning of Perestroika?" I asked an architect, who has been active in apartment building design since the Soviet 1970s.
>
> "Changes where?" he responds sarcastically, "In the mentality of people who wanted to enjoy comfortable housing? Or state-level changes in relation to building norms and regulations?"[25]

How does one speak of the changes that took place along a major political rupture? Is simply identifying the change of a ruling ideology or an economic system enough to explain a historic upheaval? In other words, there is a methodological question: do we know change according to grand ideological affirmations, or is it through on the ground shifts in the patterns of everyday life? And if it is through the study of everyday life, where exactly are the limits of what

[23] Charles Rice, "Rethinking Histories of Interior," *The Journal of Architecture*, vol 9 no 3 (2004), pp. 282.
[24] *Thing-in-itself* or *noumenon*—(in Kantian philosophy) a thing as it is in itself, as distinct from a thing as it is knowable by the senses through phenomenal attributes .Oxford English Living Dictionaries, *s.v.* "noumenon," accessed July 5th, 2018, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/noumenon>
[25] Personal Interview with an architect Jaroslav D., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 11th, 2017.

comprises everyday life? To paraphrase Olga Shevchenko's critique of James Scott, does everyday consist solely of resistance,[26] or is it rather a balance between compliance, resistance and opportunity presented on a multiplicity of historical scales?

This study suggests that a reading of the collapse of the USSR solely through the grand political gesture of the end of state socialism obscures the changes and continuities that have constituted the everyday reality of post-Soviet populations. Instead of large-scale politics, this dissertation offers a look at the small-scale transformations inside Soviet homes as an integral element of the social reality after 1991. The apartment home, as it entered the post-Soviet period, is seen as both the formative product of socialist state engineering, social knowledge of navigating the communist state, and an internal enclave of personal freedom and difference within a totalitarian society.[27] To paraphrase Egmond and Mason, similar to the antithesis of the mammoth and the mouse, the faces of both individuals and the state become visible under the microscopic lens of an individual dwelling.[28]

The social conditions that resulted from the collapse of the Soviet Union are currently loosely defined. The narratives in existence, such as the transition to market economy or democratic elections, are typically determined through a binary opposition with the previous period: planned economy/market economy, communal property/private property, dictatorship/democracy, and such. [29] These binary categories do not withstand a close scrutiny.

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[26] Olga Shevchenko, "Resisting Resistance: Everyday Life, Practical Competence and Neoliberal Rhetoric in Post-Socialist Russia," in Choi Chatterjee, David L. Ransel, Mary Cavender, Karen Petrone (ed.), *Everyday Life in Russia Past and Present*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), pp. 53-54.

[27] See Susan Reid, "The Meaning of Home: "The Only Bit of the World You Can Have to Yourself"' in Lewis Siegelbaum (ed.), *Borders of Socialism: Private Spheres of Soviet Russia,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 145-170.

[28] Florike Egmond and Peter Mason, *The Mammoth and the Mouse: Microhistory and Morphology*, (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 1-2.

[29] Alexey Yurchak writes about the dangers of these binaries as reproducing "the master narratives" of the Cold War and the opposition between "the first world" and the second world." See Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation*, (Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 9.

For instance, the communal/private property binary fails to describe the sense of ownership that Soviet citizens developed towards their apartments in the later decades of the Soviet rule, despite the state being a formal owner.[30] The case of the collapse of the USSR is not the only example of when grand binaries prove useless in understanding the trajectories of change and the everyday life conditions that emerge in conjunction.

The scope of subjects appropriate for micro-historical research is enormous, however, looking at quotidian practices and domestic spaces in relation to change over time makes up a particularly fruitful part of the existing research. John Foot provides an eloquent definition of the micro-historic approach in his study of memory in a Milanese neighborhood:

> The particular, the everyday and the ordinary are used to try and explain the general, the extraordinary and the exceptional. The scale of research is reduced to a housing block, individual life stories, families, events and places.[31]

In Foot's case, the study of memory, or rather of change and forgetting in Milan's urban fabric, is only possible through oral history and a micro-scale of inquiry, since economic and urban change have erased the physical traces of past landscapes.[32] Similar to Dolores Hayden's "Invisible Angelenos,"[33] he speaks to the invisible experiences in Milan's past and their importance for the understanding of Milan's palimpsest, unique among all Italian cities.[34] Unlike the inquiry into Milan's forgetting, centered on one neighborhood, Nancy Stieber, an architecture

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[30] Despite the common assumption that the absence of private property was among the most important characteristics of the Soviet Union, forms of private property existed throughout Soviet rule. Even more importantly certain forms of urban housing property created a sense of ownership strikingly similar to the Western conception of private ownership. See Mark B. Smith, "Individual Forms of Ownership in the Urban Housing Fund of the USSR, 1944-64," *Slavonic and East European Review*, 86:2 (2008): 283-305.
[31] John Foot, "Micro-history of a House: Memory and Place in a Milanese Neighborhood, 1890-2000," *Urban History*, 34, Part 3 (2007): 431-452, p. 435.
[32] Foot, "Micro-history of a house," p. 432.
[33] Dolores Hayden, "Invisible Angelenos" in *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), pp. 82-96.
[34] Foot, "Micro-history of a House," pp. 450-452.

and urban historian, studies a micro-scale of social interactions inside a reform that led to large-scale housing construction in early 20th century Amsterdam.[35] This approach helps Stieber avoid the discussion of architectural style that, in her own words, "has been ably described" in other studies.[36] This also helps her hint at the controversial role of architects and politicians in urban and social change.[37]

In the study of late-and post-Soviet history, reliance on grand narratives creates an epistemological trap: the large-scale economic and political events on their own cannot explain the changes in everyday life of urban populations, obscuring the very presence of change itself.[38] Furthermore, reliance on large-scale political history creates a risk of attaching all change to the overnight event of the collapse of the USSR, without a recognition that a lot of the processes that became apparent after 1991 were rooted deep in the late Soviet decades.[39] Many revolutionary transformations preceding and following the collapse of the Soviet Union appear questionable, if not invisible, from the bird's eye view of large-scale analysis. This challenge of post-Soviet historiography is similar to what French historians address as the "Invisible Revolution," a period between 1946 and 1975 when a tremendous amount of social and cultural change took place, but little formal change of political course was declared.[40] An illustrative extrapolation for the understanding of late- and post-Soviet change can be made by looking at the responses to political unrest in France during the mentioned period.

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[35] Nancy Stieber, *Housing Design and Society in Amsterdam: Reconfiguring Urban Order and Identity, 1900-1920,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
[36] Ibid., p. 2.
[37] Ibid., p. 3.
[38] In Yurchak's *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More* this problem is expressed in the surprising preparedness of the Soviet people for the collapse of the new reality after the collapse of the USSR despite it's previous seeming steadfastness. Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), p. 1.
[39] See Chapter 1 "Remodel".
[40] Nicole Rudolph, *At Home in Postwar France: Modern Mass Housing and Right to Comfort,* (New York, N.Y.: Berghahn, 2015), p. 1.

In a short essay titled “May 68 Never Took Place” Gille Deleuze and Felix Guattari write about the non-normative causes of the iconic 1968 protests in France. The protests were not reducible to a simple set of social reasons,[41] nor did they coincide perfectly with left or right political ideas. These manifestations did not focus on traditional political binaries—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, or the oppressor and the oppressed—nor were these protests reducible to a social class. Instead of social or economic equality *per se* the protesters desired the seemingly impossible: a revolutionary cultural change “as if a society suddenly saw what was intolerable in it and also saw the possibility for something else.”[42]

Deleuze and Guattari define the 1968 unrest as a "series of amplified instabilities and fluctuations,"[43] in part because the elements of dissatisfaction leading to the famous motto “it is forbidden to forbid”[44] were found outside of the apparent public relations, embedded in the quotidian lives and private spaces of 1960s France. In their disappointment with the outcomes of these protests Deleuze and Guatarri go as far as stating that May ‘68 “Never Took Place,” since the demands and aspirations of the protesting crowds never caused a structural transformation of the state system.[45] This is when Nicole Rudolf refers to an “Invisible Revolution” to support her argument that change did in fact take place, even if there was no formal change of regime. Unlike Deleuze and Guattari, Rudolf argues that change should not be tracked in the formal discourse of public politics. According to Rudolf, in the case of French postwar society, change had to be studied inside of the urban lived spaces and in modernist housing projects in particular.[46]

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[41] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, “May 68 Never Took Place,” in *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews, 1975-1995*, (New York: Semiotext(e), 2007), p. 233.
[42] Ibid., 234.
[43] Ibid.
[44] “It is forbidden to forbid” [fr. Il est interdit d'interdire] is a famous motto of May 1968 protests in France.
[45] Deleuze and Guattari, “May 68 Never Took Place.”
[46] Rudolph, *At Home in Postwar France*, p.1.

The example of postwar France, however specific, is not the only case where change is hard to comprehend in the public space and yet is perfectly visible in the private lives of individuals. "Invisible revolution" is a trope much broader than postwar France, perhaps broader than current day political systems altogether. A "revolution" in this sense does not refer to definitive events, showcased with an overthrown government or a refusal to pay taxes. It rather refers to a sense of changed life, the sense that *everything has changed*, when it is difficult to tell what exactly that *everything* is.[47]

The pitfall is that most of this change is incredibly difficult to see from a planner's view point—a bird's eye over the city with statistical numbers in hand. Moreover, in a post-Soviet city this change is barely visible even looking at a single building, mostly unchanged except for the patchy balconies poking through uniform residential facades. Besides balconies, not much reveals the diversity of homes found inside of a building. To illustrate this diversity, an interviewee for this study, an architect prolific in residential building design, recalled a case when, upon entering an apartment in a building of his own design, he could not find his way through because of the radical changes performed by the apartment's residents.[48] Almost three decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union not even BTI—Bureau of Technical

[47] Historians Melanie Ilič and Dalia Leinarte in *The Soviet Past in the Post-Socialist Present: Methodology and Ethics in Russian, Baltic and Central European Oral History and Memory Studies* claim that the inability of an interviewee to make sense of an event and clearly explain it to others is not necessarily a failed interview, but rather an opportunity to observe the missing public discourse that would provide a narrative framework for the interviewees own story. The omnipresence of the indefinite pronoun everything in the post-Soviet discourse in no way means that change did not take place; on the contrary, it indicates the lacking framework to speak about the grandiose change in the life of the late Soviet and post-Soviet population. Melanie Ilič and Dalia Leinarte, *The Soviet Past in the Post-Socialist Present: Methodology and Ethics in Russian, Baltic and Central European Oral History and Memory Studies,* (New York, London: Routledge, 2016), pp.13-15.

[48] Personal interview with an architect Jaroslav D., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 11th, 2017.

Documentation, an institutional beholder of urban transformation—is fully able to comprehend the exact changes that took place inside of apartment buildings.[49]

That is because in order to structurally observe change one must descend to the ground, or rather onto the floor of an urban apartment. This change may not be shown directly in the large, urban scale statistics that indicate access to private housing, neither is it shown distinctly in the number of people populating post-Soviet apartments."[50] Instead, it is visible in the spatial practices, choreographies, and rhythms of late-Soviet and post-Soviet apartments.

Standardization and Imploding the Type

Much of Soviet urban housing was standard, and if it was not standard to begin with it was gradually standardized to match the many rules that the Soviet state established. Many people are familiar with images of modernist Soviet urban neighborhoods made up of uniform apartment blocks geometrically composed along vast avenues. These apartment blocks were designed, engineered, and constructed to a standard with the maximum possible reduction of panel production variety, and hence construction price, in mind. Of course, most Soviet cities were not limited to the modernist apartment blocks; in many historic centers, such as those in Moscow or Kyiv, pre-1917 apartment housing dominated the cityscape all the way until the arrival of the grand housing project in 1955. These apartment buildings continue to exist and house large portions of urban populations to date in places such as Saint-Petersburg. These urban homes were built long before prefabricated, standardized construction and varied dramatically among themselves depending on the social and economic standing of their occupants, not to mention the

[49] See for example, an interview with the Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobianin to a television program *Mestnoe Vremia. Vesti-Moskva. Nedelia v gorode* listed under official interviews at the Moscow Mayor's Office, September 24th, 2011, accessed July 7th, 2018 < https://www.mos.ru/mayor/interviews/95214/> and other documents related to the Moscow administrative reform in regards to apartment re-planning started in 2011.

[50] Jane Zavisca provides statistic comparison of the housing space per capita in young Russians (21-40) from 1995 to 2009. This number has grown by 2 square meters in 14 years (from 14 square meters in 1995 to 16 square meters in 2009). Jane Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), p.89.

historic technology at the time of their construction. And nevertheless, these homes also experienced standardization under Soviet rule. Starting from Lenin's 1918 decree establishing the normative area of nine square meters per person, even the broad variation of pre-revolutionary apartments had to be brought to a standard. This resulted in the infamous communal apartments, where rooms or partitioned portions of former rooms were occupied by unrelated families. All urbanites, except for a very small social strata of political or cultural elites, had to adhere to these standards, making Soviet urban apartments a perfect case study in standardized domestic environments.

In the case of the strict institutional control over housing conditions, it is very tempting to assume that the Soviet citizens functioned within these homes according to the rules established by the state. However, an assumption like this would not be accurate. Instead, their ways of living both adhered to and undermined the state's agenda and power, projected through the standardization of housing conditions. A home presents a perfect view of de Certeau's "discipline"—a structure imposed by an institution, state, or political system—and "antidiscipline"—"the dispersed, tactical and makeshift activities" that modify the imposed structure.[51]

The repetitive, tactic,[52] and rhythmic[53] spaces of everyday life are the locus of inherent liberty, solutions, and decisions produced by the users, rather than by the engineers, with domestic spaces being a crown jewel in this everyday user subversion. Although public spaces host numerous tactical activities as well, including de Certeau's own examples of cutting corners

[51] De Certeau terms, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, p.xv.
[52] In Michel de Certeau terms, *The Practice of Everyday Life,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p. xix.
[53] In Henri Lefebvre terms, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time and Everyday Life*, (London; New York: Continuum, 2005)

at strategically established city grids and James Scott's public resistance to the high modernist landscape of Brasilia,[54] a home offers a prime view of the societal compliance and noncompliance within a given structure. Dell Upton, speaking of Henri Lefebvre's sense of power in quotidian life and space, writes: "Everyday life is both a colonized setting of oppression, banality, routine, passivity, and unconsciousness as well as the locus of an ultimate reality and a source of potential liberation."[55] Following Upton, this dissertation argues that change—the clash between past structures and present opportunities—should be studied through the most quotidian architecture, in other words, within the home. A Soviet and post-Soviet urban apartment does not adhere to the space-defining conventions of an architectural blueprint or the vocabulary of a classic apartment home-making manual. In the Soviet Union a room—a cornerstone of architectural convention—served as a unit of measurement for a home: apartments were labeled as one-room, two-room, three-room, and such. Yet despite the importance of a room for apartment measurement and definition, domestic functions transcended the physical limits of rooms, putting the importance of a room to question. The formal room nomenclature used in the architectural profession is very easy to follow through the design documents issued for *apartment building series*—the backbone of mass housing, apartment buildings constructed according to serially designed standardized projects. In a typical blueprint from an apartment series booklet, a two-room apartment was portrayed with a bedroom, living room, kitchen, bathroom (joint or separate), and an entry space [Fig.1.1]. In reality, none of these rooms would have served just one function, such as sleeping or socializing. Instead spatial

[54] James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, (New Haven, Conn. Yale Univ. Press, 1999), pp.130, 309.
[55] Dell Upton, "Architecture in Everyday Life," *New Literary History*, Volume 33, Number 4, Autumn 2002, pp. 707-723 (Article), p. 712

overlaps between functions produced complex daily choreographies—patterns of movement—inside of these urban homes.

Fig.1.1 Apartment building panel Series 84, designed by TsNIIEP zhylishcha, built starting 1970.[56]

The problem with viewing a room as a primary, indivisible unit of an apartment household becomes evident when developing a thick description[57] of late Soviet domestic life: a context for interpretation of the many commonplaces of the late- and post-Soviet home. The room names or their images in blueprints do not offer much help in understanding how these spaces were rendered habitable or why urbanites eagerly plunged into changing them as soon as a chance

[56] Illustration from the *Seriia 84: Krupnopanel'nye doma I blok-sektsii*, (Moskva: TsNIIEP zhylishcha, 1979), p. 16.
[57] Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" in *Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz*, (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p. 3-32.

arose in the late 1980s and 1990s.[58] While room names only generally outline qualities of a space, the performances, acts, and routines that took places in these spaces offer a perfect framework for decrypting the common knowledge and symbols of the Soviet and post-Soviet home.

While not relying on a room as a primary unit inside of a home, this work does use rooms, or more precisely walls, to illustrate one dimension of change. According to the treatment of wall layouts, the apartments analyzed in this work is divided into three categories:

1. those homes where the wall outline and, hence, original rooms are preserved;
2. those where walls are demolished;
3. and those where new walls are built.

Although the physical layouts of domestic spaces may be very different in each of these three cases, the pattern of changes in space use and domestic practices appear to have a lot of similarities. These similarities, such as the emergence of private sleeping spaces or the overlap between socializing and eating spaces within the home, cannot be described in terms of rooms, but only in terms of the activities that took place in these areas. This is important, because it means that the patterns of change were similar across incomes, class lines, and apartment types and sizes.[59] The change that took place in the home appeared to be a universal socio-historic tendency, rather than an isolated post-Soviet idiosyncrasy. In this work, the universality of outcomes presents the sought-for link between the micro-historic evidence and the tremendous omnipresent change, as well as the persistent continuities of the post-Soviet era. Something as small as a construction of a new partition to separate and privatize a previously walk through

[58] See "Chapter 1: Remodeling."
[59] Olga Shevchenko argues that there is a collective shared experience of the early 1990s across class lines despite the different effects the collapse of the USSR had for different social groups.

room in the post-Soviet apartment provides a reflection of a tangible sense of post-socialism, where the grand communism/capitalism binary does not.

In his 1961 Congress of the Communist Party speech, Khrushchev announced that building communism was supposed to be finished in twenty years.[60] Instead of communism, the Soviet state succeeded in constructing modernist housing and dramatically modernizing a domestic life of an urban citizen.[61] Just like with the rest of the modernist housing experiments, this one also created controversial results.

A modern, "functional" interior is "destructured, fragmented into its various functions."[62] Despite the revolutionary-scale 20th-century effort to rethink and restructure domestic space, materialized in the quintessential modernist home—an apartment block, a home still does not abide to the meticulously structured scenarios established by its creators. It transcends the pre-existing conventions—of a dining room/ bedroom dichotomy, of a room altogether, of privacy, of a family—to a much larger degree than expected by its advocates. Take for example, a Frankfurt Kitchen: the grand rethinking of food preparation and housework space and technology, intended to simplify and expedite domestic labor by locating all cooking processes in one room.[63] It was later blamed for isolating women from the rest of the household,[64] only to be resolved by Charlotte Periand in Unite d'Habitation through partially opening the kitchen to the living room and, hence, liberalizing space use, a couple decades later.[65]

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[60] William J. Tompson, *Khrushchev: A Political Life*, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), p. 238.
[61] See Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years*, (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2015)
[62] Jean Baudrillard, *The System of Objects*, (London; New York: Verso, 2005), p.15-29.
[63] Frankfurt Kitchen is a commonly used name for the modernist fitted kitchen designed by Margarete Schutte-Lihotsky for the Frankfurt housing projects in 1926-27. *Modernism:1914-1939, Designing a New World*, edited by Christopher Wilk, (London: Victoria & Albert Publications, 2006), p. 180.
[64] Sarah McGaughey, "5 Kitchen Stories: Literary and Architectural Reflections on Modern Kitchens in Central Europe," in Carrie Smith-Prei and Helga Mitterbauer (ed.), *Crossing Central Europe: Continuities and Transformations*, 1900-2000, (Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2017), pp. 103-104.
[65] Marcia F. Feuerstein, *Architecture as Performing Art*, (Burlington: Ashgate Pub. Co., 2013), pp. 67-71.

Soviet apartments, even the ones constructed prior to the reinstatement of socialist modernism as a primary Soviet architectural ideology in the 1950s, exemplify the same modernist problem, something that Marcuse and Schumann in their 1992 assessment called "very good on paper" but falling "short of its stated objectives in reality."[66] In short, modernist experiments with layouts and functional zones led to unpredictable outcomes for domestic practices and hierarchies, not unlike the unforeseen alienation of women in the Frankfurt kitchens.[67] In the Soviet Union this problem was further accompanied by the discrepancy between the architectural aspirations and the state- and local-level bureaucratic procedures, such as the number of occupants outnumbering rooms and a strict square footage limit per occupant. Furthermore, starting from the second generation of standardized mass housing (1958-1963),[68] Soviet architects consistently drafted mono-functional furniture into the designs of standard apartments, suggesting that each room was to be meant for one particular domestic function: sleeping, eating, socializing, and such. Beyond the professional language of blueprints, the choice to depict monofunctional furniture could have been influenced by a plethora of factors, including the overall drafting aesthetics and conventions. By the 1970s, Soviet architects advocated for the necessity of an isolated individual space for every family member (or in other words, at least a room per person) in their professional publications, which if realized would have partially justified the monofunctional furniture in their drawings.[69] In reality, this was

[66] Peter Marcuse and Wolfgang Schumann, "Housing in the Colours of the GDR," in Jozsef Hegedus, Ivan Tosics, Bengt Turner (ed.), *The Reform of Housing in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union,* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 76.
[67] Sarah Bonnemaison, "Performing the Modernist Dwelling: The Unite d'Habitation of Marseille" in *Architecture as Performing Art*, ed. by Marcia Feuerstein and Gray Read, (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), p.64.
[68] Philipp Meuser; Dimitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR 1955-1991*, Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015), p.163.
[69] Anna Alekseyeva, "Constructing Soviet Domesticity and Managing Everyday Life from Khrushchev to Collapse," in *Material Culture in Russia and the USSR: Things, Values, Identitie*s, ed. Graham H. Roberts, (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), p. 59.

virtually impossible, since apartments were distributed by the state using an established mathematical formula. This equation, called the *k*=*n*-1 formula, where *k* was the number of rooms and *n* was the number of apartment occupants, meant that in the majority of homes every single room had to accommodate more than one use. For instance, a living room during the day had to become someone's bedroom at night because the number of rooms in a home was less than the total number of inhabitants. Another room, shown as a bedroom with a double bed in the apartment building series booklet, in reality would have served as a nursery, a sleeping space for a grandparent, and an office, while young children were in kindergarten. The functional zones inside of the house overlapped and changed over the period of a day, week, or even the time of the year, particularly for those not blessed with a Soviet country house, or a dacha.[70]

As a result of all of the above, in the very beginning of the writing process, I found myself facing a puzzle: how does one speak of the changes in domestic spaces in segments/chapters, if the physical domestic partitions—walls—and the formal domestic units—rooms—appear to be overstepped in the process of inhabitation? In other words, what if a wall inside of an apartment is not a rigid physical or perceptional border, but rather can be physically removed or moved, or challenged with placement of functional zones and movement flows? What if a room does not contain a precise function, but changes its physical outlines and performances based on the needs and desires of apartment occupants? The problem I faced is not unheard of: this problem has been rich grounds for anthropological and architectural inquiries into vernacular models of domestic living for decades. For instance, Dell Upton determines that in the mid-18th century

[70] Dacha – a Soviet summer house, see Stephen Lowell, *Summerfolk A History of the Dacha*, 1710-2000, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003). For the Soviet "consumer triad" see Vera V. Ageevaa, Ilya A. Ageev, Anastasia M. Nikolaevaa, Zoya N. Levashkinac, "Was a Soviet Man a Socialist? The Dichotomy of Consumerist Ideals and Socialist Values in Late Soviet Society (1945-1990)," *The European Proceedings of Social & Behavioural Sciences EpSBS, II International Scientific Symposium on Lifelong Wellbeing in the World WELLSO* 2015, 18-22 May 2015.

Virginia-home, room naming may have been assigned prior to the actual function of the space.[71] Lizabeth Cohen, describing an early 20th century American working-class home, demonstrates how cooking, dining, labor, and socializing often overlapped in the same space of a "kitchen."[72] Elizabeth Cromley suggested questioning the boundaries and limitations of the terms "kitchen" and "dining room" in her work on food spaces in American homes.[73] Lindsay Asquith, summarizing conceptual frameworks for the study of vernacular architecture, pointed out that "room functions need to be examined in relation to domestic routine and ritual,"[74] since simply "the existence of many rooms in the house"[75] does not tell a story in its own right.

Following the scholars above, this work takes on practices such as sleeping, eating, hygiene, socialization, and domestic remodeling to categorize and organize interior spaces of late- and post-Soviet homes. In doing so this project focuses on everyday domestic acts, or spatial performances, steering away from traditional room nomenclature found in architectural and planning vocabulary.

No less importantly, this dissertation aims to write about homes across different apartment types. This is because the changes tracked by this project are not specific to a type of building or original construction time. To date, there exist two different models of looking at apartment homes: the categorization of apartments through building type and the categorization through themes and chronological progression. The former, illustrated by Gwendolyn Wright's *Building*

[71] Dell Upton, "Vernacular Domestic Architecture in Eighteenths Century Virginia" in *Common Places: Readings in American Vernacular Architecture,* ed. by Dell Upton, John Michael Vlach, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1985.), p.321.
[72] Lizabeth Cohen, "Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes 1885–1915," J*ournal of American Culture*, January 1980, Vol.3(4), pp.763-764.
[73] Elizabeth Cromley, "Transforming the Food Axis: Houses, Tools, Modes of Analysis," *Material Culture Review / Revue de la culture matérielle* [Online], Volume 44 Number 1 (6 June 1996), p.10
[74] Lindsay Asquith, "Lessons From the Vernacular" in *Vernacular Architecture in the 21st Century: Theory, Education and Practice,* Taylor & Francis, 2006, p.133.
[75] Ibid.

the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America, has a problem typical to the discussion of the early American apartments and tenements: Wright speaks of the different types of homes separately, almost as counterstatements, with a tenement portrayed as having nothing in common with earlier, fanciful upper-class apartment buildings.[76] Although the economic differences between these homes are undeniable, such approach obscures the fact that all urban homes had fundamental functions in common, such as sleeping or eating. Furthermore, it directs the attention of the reader to class difference as definitive to the differences in domestic life, although living in an apartment, rather than a stand-alone home, may be more definitive of the domestic life than class identity.

In American home studies, underplaying housing type for the sake of a discussion of deeper ties and similarities between homes of different economic and social standing is visible in two cases. The first case is the studies of slave and slaveowner homes; the second are those of the emerging American working class. One example of the former is Mechal Sobel's *The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-century Virginia* where she portrays the lives of slaveowners and slaves as inseparable from one another in the settings of their homes.[77] Slave quarters are as much an organ in the domestic organism of the slaveowner estate as a kitchen or the bedrooms of the "big house," since without the different effects of slave presence during the day and at night, the functioning of the entire system would be undermined.[78] Another seminal work on homes in North America, Elizabeth Cromley's *Alone*

[76] For instance, a concern with ventilation mentioned by Wright to show the problems with the early apartments, is illustrated with a quote from American Architect praising modern (1879) tenement buildings over the Fifth Avenue apartments; this part never better indicates the shared concern with ventilation transcending type boundaries and class boundaries. Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), p.142.
[77] Mechal Sobel, *The World They Made Together: Black and White Values in Eighteenth-century Virginia*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), p. 127-153.
[78] Gwendolyn Wright, *Building the Dream: A Social History of Housing in America*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981), p.41-57.

Together: The History of Early New York Apartments, provides an exhaustive account of the early apartments, both working and middle class. Unlike Wright's book that concentrates on type, Cromley writes about apartment's thematically and chronologically. This model works, particularly because Cromley traces the evolution of new types of apartments from a set of common antecedents.[79]

The focus on a theme, more specifically a domestic practice, is further developed in Cromley's later book: *The Food Axis: Cooking, Eating, and the Architecture of American Houses.* The focus on food allows Cromley to go past the type of home and the class standing of its residents and speak about food-related spatial practices inside of American domestic spaces at large: not just iconic one-family houses, but apartments and tenements as well.[80]

Cromley's chronological model does not work as perfectly for this dissertation on late- and post-Soviet homes, since this work is looking at the changes that took place in already existing apartments. Thematic organization, on the contrary, appears very helpful. The themes are chosen from a simple standpoint: if the rooms have changed, both physically and functionally, and this change has taken place in apartments of different types, what holds these changes and apartment homes together and speaks of consistent change over time? Domestic practices: sleeping, eating, hygiene, and socializing allow this work to speak of changes in domestic organization, even when the buildings did not change and only very few new approaches to apartment housing design have been added.

In the subfield of Soviet and post-Soviet studies, the necessity of transcending the type of an urban home has been long present but not consistently formulated. Most existing scholarship

[79] See Nicole Rudolph, *At Home in Postwar France: Modern Mass Housing and Right to Comfort* and Kenny Cupers *The Social Project: Housing Postwar France*.
[80] Elizabeth Cromley, *The Food Axis: Cooking, Eating and the Architecture of the American Houses,* (Charlotsville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), p. 1

uses the categories of two or more types of apartment homes: communal apartments,[81] rare Constructivist experiments,[82] Stalin-era buildings,[83] or Khrushchev-era (first generation) apartment blocks.[84] Limiting an inquiry to a single type or a relationship between a couple of types might allow for a detailed exploration of a particular architectural and public discourse, yet obscures many of the everyday life mechanisms that are pertinent to all forms of urban homes and domestic architectures. On an urban-scale level, typical studies of the post-Soviet social reality examine a particular neighborhood, micro-district [rus. *mikroraion*], or other kind of agglomeration. Type is crucial for such studies, since housing types host the many changing, post-Soviet socio-economic realities. At the same time, these articles are of no use in establishing the commonality that post-Soviet apartments may have (and do have) beyond type and micro-district. There are only a few powerful exclusions from this pattern on an urban scale of inquiry, most prominent being Steven Collier's *Post-Soviet Social* that observes the qualities of post-Soviet infrastructures that are pertinent to all types of urban apartment homes. From a micro-historic perspective, the situation looks promising with Christine Varga-Harris' *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years* and Steven Harris' *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life After Stalin.* Yet even they concentrate on transition from one model of living (communal apartment, Stalin-era apartment) to another (prefabricated block), while there is still a lot to be said about the correlation between these different lifestyles after the modernist buzz of the 1950s mass housing plan became a habitual everyday reality.

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[81] Paola Messana, *Soviet Communal Living: An Oral History of the Kommunalka*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years*, (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2015); Steven Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life After Stalin*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).
[82] Victor Buchli, *An Archeology of Socialism*, (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2000.)
[83] Varga-Harris *Stories of House and Home;* Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street.*
[84] Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home;* Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street.*

While Elizabeth Cromley's work sets an ambitious goal to question the role of the user in shaping domestic space from the perspective of a vernacular architecture historian, this dissertation expands the matter beyond what is traditionally considered vernacular into the land of standardized housing, strict institutional rules, and bureaucratic limitations. The case of late-Soviet and post-Soviet apartments—spaces constructed according to strict building codes and then transformed beyond recognition by the users—offers numerous opportunities to question the role of the user in the shaping of domestic space. The post-Soviet apartment dwellers did not erect the physical structure of the apartment building, but they liberally moved walls, transformed balconies, changed room functions, and most importantly, unpredictably populated standard apartments offered to them by the state. The home of a Soviet urbanite, first seen by the authorities as a perfect device for the creation of a proper, 'happy and healthy' Soviet citizen,[85] by the late 1980s became a grey zone of desired Western commodities, DIY partition walls, and dusty carpets on the walls to fix temperature and sound isolation problems characteristic of the prefabricated apartments.[86]

Soviet apartment homes and their dramatic transformations along the collapse of the Soviet Union are of course not the only case where the study of home through domestic practices promises pervasive results. Stripped of the Soviet and post-Soviet specifics, methodological emphasis on practices can be helpful in any environment where social and cultural change can be read through the physical and performative changes in the home. For instance, one of the most

[85] Christine Varga-Harris' *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years,* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2015); Steven Harris, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013), p.208.
[86] Natalya Chernyshova, *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era,* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 83; Steven Harris, "I Know all the Secrets of my Neighbors": The Quest for Privacy in the Era of the Separate Apartment," in Lewis Siegelbaum (ed.), *Borders of Socialism: Private Spheres of Soviet Russia,* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US : Imprint: Palgrave Macmillan ; 2006), p. 184; Olga Gurova, "Consumer Culture in Socialist Russia," in Olga Kravets, Pauline Maclaran, Steven Miles, and Alladi Venkatesh (ed.), *The SAGE Handbook of Consumer Culture,* (London : SAGE Publications, 2018), pp. 116-117.

critical current day discussions revolves around globalization, migration, and the conditions migration produces for both the migrants and the receiving societies. As a result, the last decade has seen a rise in the studies of immigrant homes: the ways in which immigrants adjust pre-existing domestic spaces to their needs, identities, and practices. Upon arrival to a receiving society, immigrants face domestic layouts and facilities different from those back home. Immigrant apartment dwellers transform these new places, if not physically, then ephemerally. Although many researchers have clearly acknowledged the conflict between existing residential spaces in receiving and sending environments, not all of them have accounted for the possibility of such transformations.

For instance, in a study of Somali, Iraqi, and Turkish immigrant homes in Denmark, interviewees were asked "whether the physical framework of the Danish dwelling in any way conflicted with the their routine lives and traditions."[87] Despite being a valid interview question, this approach has certain limitations, most importantly the absence of the active agency of the space user. In other words, the question suggests that the physical setting of a Danish apartment is not changeable, and so is the predicated everyday choreography of such an apartment. Another study, investigating the adaptations of Asian-Indian homes in Toronto, suggests a more comprehensive approach that accounts for domestic practices and the possibilities in which these practices transform domestic layouts, yet does not recognize the practice as central to this spatial thinking. The study uses three categories of adaptations produced by the immigrants: "structural modification, public symbolic modification and private symbolic modification."[88] "Public symbolic modification" implies a layout change that "depicts how residents use interior space"

[87] Kirsten Gram-Hanssen and Claus Bech-Danielsen, "Somali, Iraqi and Turkish Immigrants and Their Homes in Danish Social Housing," *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 27:89-103, (2012), p. 97.
[88] Sandeep Kumar Agrawal, "Housing Adaptations: A Study of Asian Indian Immigrant Homes in Toronto," *Canadian Ethnic Studies/Etudes Ethniques au Canada* Vol. 38, Iss. 1, (0, 2006): 117-130, p. 127.

and “private symbolic modification” implies the way residents think about their spaces, for instance seeing a part of their house as “an ideal space for worshipping” even if worshipping does not take place. These latter two categories—adaptations in layout and attitude—both come with a difference in performance of domestic practices that immigrants bring with them into existing houses.

The questions answered by the interviews in this study do not explore the change in practice that may have occurred as the result of the new, unfamiliar layout. The questionnaire does not account for the new spatial choreography having elements of both the old and the new, since the spatial organization of the Danish homes informs spatial practice, while the spatial practice may, to some degree, affect the spatial organization. This dissertation on the contrary, strives to study the symbiosis of the old and the new, post-Soviet domestic life built on Soviet foundation.

In order to do so, the semi-structured interviews conducted with apartment dwellers for this study included questions such as: Has your home changed since the 1980s? Did you renovate, acquire new furniture, or change the use of rooms/spaces? Where did each age group spend most of their days? How was the space used for different daily needs (dining, studying, watching television, hosting guests, and such? How was the furniture laid out in different rooms? Finally, how did you decide on how you were going to remodel? Did you do it yourself? These interviews, similar to the plans, illustrate different perspectives on apartment housing before and after the collapse of the USSR.

For the group of architects, engineers, and construction workers questions asked included: When did you first hear about apartment remodeling?[89] In what context? Who/what brought you

[89] All architects interviewed for this project described the social development of kitchen similarly: in the early 1990s their customers were typically foreigners or the representatives of freshly established nouveau riche. By the end of

into the industry? Were construction materials available at that time? Were there construction professionals willing to remodel apartments prior to/after 1991? Who were your typical clients? What did they typically commission? Although the interview questions for architects were originally designed to study existing apartment transformations, during the interviewing process it became apparent that many architects were willing to speak about their experiences designing housing both during the late Soviet years and the first post-Soviet decade. As a result, a question was added to the questionnaire elaborating on the issues and changes architects detected during their professional practice in designing apartment buildings: Were you involved in housing design/construction prior to/after 1991? How did residential design practices differ prior to and after the collapse of the Soviet Union?

A total of twenty three interviews were collected, out of which ten are with professional architects who practiced apartment-housing design or remodeling in the last decade of the Soviet Union and the first post-Soviet decades, nine are with apartment dwellers who conducted remodeling in their apartment homes before or after the collapse of the USSR, and four are with construction workers and construction business owners who participated in apartment housing construction before or after 1991. Some of those interviewed doubled in more than one role.

With domestic practices in mind, the chapter structure of this dissertation is as follows:

The first Chapter, "Remodeling" introduces the late Soviet aspirations and post-Soviet materialization of the grand structural domestic subversion: dweller-performed remodeling of a standard apartment in a hope to create a space of one's own. This chapter has a double goal.

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the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s the dynamics changed, and commissions started appearing for smaller apartments and smaller kitchens. Another important date, the start of the widely popular TV show on domestic remodeling named *Kvartirnyi Vopros* in 2001 matches this timing. Yet, despite the seeming consensus in dating the beginning of mass remodeling only reflects the newly emerging financial ability to hire or subcontract hire professionals to work on their domestic spaces.

First, it introduces apartment remodeling as an inalienable part of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the early post-Soviet years. Second, it questions the stereotype that the urge and practice of transforming one's everyday life was related to the widespread apartment privatization that occurred after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Chapter 1 introduces an alternative claim that the beginning and the roots of the process were deep in the Soviet reality, and the processes began while the Soviet system was still standing.

The second chapter analyzes the everyday practice of sleeping and the ways in which this practice transformed between the beginning of Perestroika (1985) and the second post-Soviet decade. This chapter further breaks down the category of privacy, present in every study of domestic space, in order to locate the distinct peculiarities of Soviet and post-Soviet sleep. Unlike, for instance, the United States, where the number of delineated spaces in a home is measured by the number of "bedrooms," in the Soviet Union a bedroom was a rarity, rather than a rule. Chapter 2 tracks the steps in the rise of the bedroom in the late 1980s and early 1990s through media, apartment plans, and construction regulations, as well as the oral histories of the study's interviewees.

The third chapter analyzes the transformation of eating and cooking spaces during the same period. The importance of kitchens to clandestine political and cultural life in the Soviet Union between the 1950s and 1990s is a known fact.[90] Eating and cooking *per se* have often been lost in the giant shadow of Soviet intelligentsia kitchen lifestyles, perhaps in part because the possibilities for cooking and eating in the last decades of the Soviet Union were available, yet desperately lacked diversity.[91] This chapter attempts to restore justice for eating and cooking by

[90] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia,* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 147-148.
[91] For instance see Anya Von Bremzen, *Mastering the Art of Soviet Cooking: A Memoir of Food and Longing*, (New York : Crown Publishers, 2013).

tracking how these processes took place in the late Soviet home and how they transformed along the lines of political change. This entire work is written from a perspective of spatial micro-history, but eating spaces benefit the most from the sense of politics in micro-spaces—seemingly personal or utilitarian spaces within homes, whose modest appearance may be deceptive of their political importance.

Chapter 4 is a mini-chapter that addresses the spaces of hygiene: bathrooms, water closets, and kitchens in late Soviet and post-Soviet apartments. This chapter highlights the discrepancy between the late Soviet institutional programming of homes, the aspirations of professional architects, and the desires of homeowners when it came to spaces of hygiene. The chapter also addresses the invisibility of the bathroom in the Soviet world of images, and its powerful entry into post-Soviet reality in the form of artistic installations, fiction writing, and socio-economic anecdotes of the first post-Soviet decade.

Besides summing up the entire investigation, the Conclusion to this work speaks about the changes in domestic socialization that took place alongside the collapse of the USSR. Unlike the previous chapters, this chapter is not limited to the urban apartment, but expands to the apartment building hallway and its courtyard. Yet, like the previous chapters, it does not speak of just one kind of room, instead it tracks the shifts in social life from the kitchen to one of the rooms and from the living room to the hallway stairs and the courtyard, and back. Finally, it argues that changes in domestic spaces and practices were a key to the creation of post-Soviet subjects.

Fieldwork Geography, Sources, and Reservations

Fieldwork for this study was performed in Kyiv, Ukraine, a perfect site for a study of metropolitan post-Soviet apartment housing. Fieldwork involved collecting several different types of evidence:

1. blueprints of apartment buildings, produced by architectural and planning institutions during the Soviet years and independent architects in the years after the collapse of the Soviet Union;
2. blueprints of individual apartments produced by BTI [rus. *Buro technicheskoi inventarizatsii*]—state or municipal organizations responsible for real estate record and stocktaking, like the Recorder of Deeds in the US;
3. interviews with apartment dwellers, architects, construction workers, and engineers.

While the geography of the actual collected material is quite localized, many of the documents and interviews collected apply to geographies much broader than Kyiv. The reason is that throughout Soviet history the state aspired to standardize housing conditions, starting from establishing a nine square meter standard of housing lived area [rus. *zhylaia ploshchad'*] per person in 1918 and ending in the standardized spatial organizations and furniture produced between the 1950s and the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Although this pursuit of standardization did not result in all urban housing being exactly the same, it did facilitate the creation of several very distinct categories: communal; Stalin-era apartments; Khrushchev-era, prefabricated or panel apartment blocks; and the so-called improved-plan or second and third generation apartments.[92] These categories of urban homes were widespread throughout the entire Soviet Union, with some reservations as to the quantitative relationship between these three apartment housing types in different regions and modifications of these homes according to

[92]For a timeline of prefabricated apartment building generations see Philipp Meuser and Dmitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR, 1955 – 1991.*

regional specifics.[93] For instance, it is safe to say that the majority of the apartment building series designed between the 1950s and 1991 were built in multiple cities and republics. The pre-1917 housing also became standardized through establishing the same room size norms inside of buildings that may have previously differed.

While the urban Soviet housing funds entered the post-Soviet period in a relatively similar state, further divergences took place after the collapse of the USSR. Besides regional differences in the social composition of apartment dwellers, and resulting differences in their home improvement projects, it is important to note that housing legislature and institutions that oversaw housing varied in different post-Soviet states. This subject is explained in the discussion of the *Buro Tekhnicheskoi Inventarizatsii* found in the Conclusion of this dissertation. Yet, despite these variations, all of them grew on the basis of a shared Soviet infrastructure. Nevertheless, with regional specifics in mind, it is still possible to speak of major similarities across apartment housing in different cities and different republics, as well as different former republics after 1991, particularly in the first decades after the collapse of the USSR. Therefore, although this dissertation's findings are particularly relevant to urban housing in Kyiv, the trends, milestones, and causation detected are structurally similar to the processes that took place in other metropolitan urban areas across the former Soviet Union and former socialist bloc.[94] This can be further seen in the development of institutions responsible for documenting apartment layout changes in different post-Soviet states; although there are time discrepancies between the years when such functions were monopolized by existing or new institutions in

[93] For instance, some former Soviet republics had higher number of large families resulting in more 4-6 room apartments and sometimes more than one sanitary block per one apartment. Philipp Meuser and Dmitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR 1955-1991,* (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015), p.419.

[94] It should be noted that there are several exclusions. Some of the post-Soviet urban populations, particularly those in Tajikistan and Chechnya, experienced extreme hardship, that may have prevented them from concentrating their resources and efforts on individual home improvement in the first decade after the collapse of the USSR.

different states, in most post-Soviet megacities registration procedures were established no later than the 2000s and the process of recording apartment changes has been centralized since.[95]

The second reservation for this study is about the geographic breadth of the secondary sources. There is a number of secondary sources used in this project: (1) popular magazines and books concerned with domesticity; (2) popular television shows on home remodeling; (3) professional magazines and books on interior design; (4) movies containing or commenting on domestic spaces. All four categories of these sources appear to have been trans-republican in Soviet times and largely transnational in the 1990s and 2000s.[96] For example, a television show named *Apartment Question* [rus. *Kvartirnyi Vopros*], produced by the Russian television channel NTV, aired in Ukraine and Belarus as well as other post-Soviet states among many other Russian television products.[97] A German franchise magazine with a section on interior design advice, *Burda Moden,* started being published in the Soviet Union in 1987,[98] while the regional Ukrainian branch of the magazine did not start until 2006.[99] Until the latter, the Russian version of *Burda Moden* was widely circulated in Ukraine, creating a shared sense of domestic interiors between these two post-Soviet republics.

As a result, spatial transformations described in this dissertation are not limited to just Kyiv or Ukrainian megacities; instead, the findings of this dissertation appear to varying degrees relevant to apartment dwellings in many other post-Soviet megacities throughout the former Soviet republics.

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[95] For the discussion of these institutions see Chapter 5: "Socializing and Conclusion."
[96] Joanna Szostek, "The Mass Media and Russia's "Sphere of Interests": Mechanisms of Regional Hegemony in Belarus and Ukraine," *Geopolitics*, 2018,
[97] Natalya Ryabinska, "The Media Market and Media Ownership in Post-Communist Ukraine: Impact on Media Independence and Pluralism," *Problems of Post-Communism* 58, no. 6: 3-20 (2011), p. 12.
[98] *Burda Moden* in Russian, (Spring 1987)
[99] For information on Russian-published media in Ukraine see Stephen Velychenko, "Introduction," in *The EU and Russia: History, Culture and International Relations*, (Basingstoke [England]; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 1-26.

The third reservation has to do with the nature of Soviet architectural and popular writing. On multiple occasions, this dissertation takes time to point out the critical discrepancies between the Soviet formal, architectural, and public media discourse and the reality of urban apartment housing on the ground. Of course, the differences between discourse and reality are not exclusive to Soviet or post-Soviet housing; and yet, the scale of those discrepancies reached a particularly impressive degree when it came to Soviet residential architecture. An illustration of this phenomenon can be found in the abundance of Soviet unrealized or unrealizable architecture from the 1920s Constructivists, who almost exclusively produced "paper architecture," to the 1988 exhibition of the new Soviet "paper architecture" as an aesthetic statement at the Frankfurt Deutsches Architekturmuseum.[100]

The awareness of the differences between the discourse and reality is of extreme importance in the subject of housing. Looking at the discourse on its own, without considering actual apartment plans and construction norms and regulations, leads to problems, such as claiming the existence of open plan interiors in the Soviet standardized housing of the 1960s,[101] which, as this dissertation will show, never existed widely in reality, only in discussion.[102] On the other hand, looking solely at plans, sections, and layouts is misleading as well, since blueprints are often silent or partially silent as to the intentions behind the design, even if they are not realized exactly as conceptualized.

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[100] Joseph Giovanni, "A Funny Thing Happened to Soviet," *New York Times*, May 28, 1989, <https://www.nytimes.com/1989/05/28/arts/architecture-design-funny-thing-happened-soviet-architecture-photo-ascencion.html>

[101] For example in Anna Alekseyeva, "Constructing Soviet Domesticity and Managing Everyday Life from Khrushchev to Collapse," in Graham Roberts (ed.), *Material culture in Russia and the USSR: Things, Values, Identities*, (London, England : Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), p. 59; Victor Buchli, *An Archeology of Socialism*, (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2000), pp.142, 144-145.

[102] See Chapter 3 "Eat."

Methods

Central to this inquiry are architectural plans and other blueprints. When it comes to housing in micro-scale, except for a number of historic studies, architectural blueprints play a secondary role in everyday-life analysis.[103] At the same time, architectural blueprints present a rich and multifaceted type of research source. In the Soviet context, the absolute majority of housing was developed or transformed by state institutions or under the very strict regulations developed by the state. Therefore, an apartment plan and its accompanying documents[104] appear to be a precious source of information on the institutional attitude toward the production of home, but even more importantly on the controversies inherent to the Soviet state housing agenda. Architectural blueprints help understand a gap that existed between the architectural discourse, the state rhetoric, and the realization of housing projects on the ground. The many architectural competitions handled by Soviet state agencies often compartmentalized and, enjoying some element of modernist freedom, produced numerous apartment housing proposals that may never have been realized but clearly pointed out the problems of the existing housing, sometimes more honestly than the official rhetoric.[105]

The use of architectural and engineering plans is in no way exhausted with the state agenda and architectural discourse: another facet of their use opens up with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of an individual apartment design plan and a Recorder of Deeds-type plan. These plans speak to the two major elements of everyday domestic life in post-Soviet

[103] For instance, a 2017 edited volume on *Material culture in Russia and the USSR: Things, Values, Identities* provides a chapter titled "Constructing Soviet Domesticity and Managing Everyday Life from Khrushchev to Collapse" written on the soviet home without a single blueprint.
[104] Such as Sanitary Norms and Regulations [*rus.* Sanitarnye Normy I Pravila] and apartment series booklets.
[105] These competitions were organized by Gosstroi or other institutions, and typically did not lead to actual construction. For more information on the Soviet "paper architecture" tradition see Inez Weizman, "Interior Exile and Paper Architecture," in Florian Kossak, Doina Petrescu, Tatjana Schneider, Renata Tyszczuk, Stephen Walker (ed.), *Agency: Working With Uncertain Architectures,* (London: Routledge 2010).

urbanity: the popular image of an apartment home and how this image has evolved in the decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as the cases of on-the-ground transformation of these domestic spaces.

An architectural plan, hence, appears surprisingly all-encompassing and rich in comparative data: the three types of plans illustrate the Soviet reality all the way from the state-level construction of everyday life through the standardized apartment design, to the professional discourse concerned with theoretical problem solving in the 1980s and practical marketing in the 1990s and 2000s, and finally, to the everyday resistance and change performed on the grassroots level by the apartment-dwellers themselves.

And yet, despite their historic richness, plans do not speak. This dissertation provides voices to its subject by employing interviews collected in Kiev in summer 2017. These semi-structured interviews conducted with apartment dwellers, architects, and construction professionals are used as evidence sources and illustrations for the multiple avenues of domestic transformation during the studied era. They add a final touch to the inquiry on home: without the voices from within the homes, inhabited and under construction, this take on the historic era would not be fair or possible.

The fieldwork for this dissertation is a mix between easily available sources that have been previously and effectively used by other scholars, such as *Rabotnitsa* magazine, and sources that the author has reasons to believe have not been previously used for scholarly research, like the Recorder of Deeds-type plan and the oral histories, collected exclusively for the study.

Relevance: Microhistoric Observations and Broad Historic Conclusions

In their take on developing an orderly method for a study of an everyday domestic practice, Mylan and Southerton note that "there is a tendency within empirical studies towards descriptive accounts of the micro with limited critical analysis of broader social processes."[106] Indeed, this inherent microhistoric challenge—that of transition between scales—is just as relevant for this dissertation. In order to understand the larger stakes of this project, it is necessary to look at yet another dimension of cultural practices, that of social identity.

This work argues that, despite the fascination with the West and the persistence of Soviet infrastructure, post-Soviet urbanites did not produce domestic spaces that resembled their Western counterparts nor the standard Soviet understanding of home, but rather created their own spatial model of apartment living. In other words, it claims that the spatial transformation of the home was a necessary step for an individual to transition from a Soviet to post-Soviet subject. In the final and early post-Soviet years, home remodeling became an important part of social identity; important to a degree that the interviewees in Jennifer Patico's ethnographic study of the transforming notion of post-Soviet middle class mentioned home improvements to be a class-defining trait:

> Anya, who was in her twenties, divorced, and living with her mother, talked about herself and her friends as *srednie* [rus. for average, in the middle] and said that she thought that these srednie were people who had what they needed but could not often afford traveling abroad or completing significant renovations in their apartments.[107]

[106] Joesphine Mylan and Dale Southerton, "The Social Ordering of an Everyday Practice: The Case of Laundry," *Sociology* 52, no. 6 (December 2018): 1134–51, p. 1136.
[107] Jennifer Patico, *Consumption and Social Change in a Post-Soviet Middle Class, p. 68.*

Domestic transformation established one's relevance to the post-Soviet reality. This becomes especially striking when looking at the opposite example: those homes that experienced little change since the collapse of the Soviet Union. There is a slang word for such apartments—*babushatnik*—that can be loosely translated as a "grandma's den." Despite its reference to grandmothers, it is a derogatory, rather than endearing term. Babushatnik is used to describe an apartment that has elements of the former Soviet well-being, such as carpets on the walls and on the floors, a varnished chest of drawers or *komod* [rus.], china set and old-fashioned souvenirs so graphically described by Svetlana Boym.[108] Despite its clear ties to the lack of renovation and to former rather than present, economic prosperity, babushatnik does not just define the homes of the poor. Neither does it characterize the chic habitats of Soviet elites. Instead it specifically describes an attachment to the old Soviet signifiers of *srednie*—middle class—prosperity, that have become irrelevant in the new time with its own signifiers of relative well-being.

Post-Soviet popular culture only knows one solution to the problem of an old-fashioned apartment—a remodeling, either massive or modest, yet merciless to the signs of the previous epoch. Even when post-Soviet home improvement magazines offer advice on reusing or restoring elements of Soviet domestic interiors, they first and foremost offer to rethink these pieces through the lens of Scandinavian style or Western Mid-Century Modern.[109]

The transformations of domestic spaces described in the following chapters are a key to understanding the post-Soviet condition. Whereas in the United States, homeownership describes one's economic standing and class identity,[110] in the early post-Soviet decades it was domestic

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[108] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 132, 150-157.
[109] Anastasiia Dubrovina, "Kak soedenit' sovetskoe retro I sovremennyi inter'er," *Idei vashego doma*, January 30th, 2019, accessed on February 26th, 2019, < https://www.ivd.ru/dizajn-i-dekor/kvartira/kak-soedinit-sovetskoe-retro-i-sovremennyj-interer-36821>
[110] Jeffrey M Hornstein, *A Nation of Realtors: A Cultural History of the Twentieth-Century American Middle Class*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), p. 202.

remodeling or *remont* that positioned an urbanite in post-Soviet societies. The next chapter of this work provides a detailed investigation into late-Soviet and post-Soviet remodeling and elucidates why this domestic practice became popular in the late 1980s and after the collapse of the USSR.

CHAPTER 1: REMODELING

> Citizens of the USSR have a right to housing. This right is provided for by the development and protection of the state and communal housing fund, assistance to cooperative and individual housing constructions, fair distribution of housing area under the public control, provision of housing along the realization of comfortable housing programs, and low apartment and utility fares. The citizens of the USSR must treat the provided housing with care.
>
> —Excerpt from the Soviet Constitution, 1977

Among the scholars of the Soviet and post-Soviet fields there exists a common understanding that the late Soviet and post-Soviet term *remont* [rus. for repair, remodeling, renovation], referring to domestic remodeling, has a meaning quite different from its analogies elsewhere. Yet, only a few studies investigate the nature of remont, mostly in the form of sociological or ethnographic studies. These studies predominantly analyze the remont boom of the 1990s, the large-scale outcomes and attitudes, and only a few follow the development of remont over time or the reasons it took such a peculiar form. This chapter analyzes the birth of the contemporary understanding of remont through popular sources and legal documents in the years of Perestroika reforms and its transformation due to the opening of the labor and commodity markets in the late 1980s and early 1990s. By doing so, this chapter introduces a view of remont other than as a symbolic breakaway from Soviet past and speaks to the continuity of domestic transformations from the Soviet to post-Soviet era in the context of a society that may not have been expecting the USSR to collapse, but was inherently prepared for it to happen.

What is *Remont*?

First, what is *remont*, if not just remodeling? What differentiates remont from an ordinary home make-over in any other time or place?

The roots of the word remont in post-Soviet languages go back to the French term *remonte* – the change or the secondary equipment of horses. According to the *Explanatory Dictionary of the Live Great Russian Language*, by the second half of the 19th century, remont was already used to identify repair, mending, remodeling, and only secondarily to refer to its French-inherited meaning.[1] The evolution of the term did not stop in the 1800s; in 1926, the early era of the Soviet Union, remont captured the attention of a western visitor—Walter Benjamin—as one of the most omnipresent words and concepts to be found in post-revolutionary Moscow. Svetlana Boym retrospectively wrote about Benjamin's *Moscow Diaries*:

> In Moscow, Benjamin mastered two words in Russian: remont and *seichas*. One characterizes the perpetual transformation of space, a process of endless repair that had neither beginning nor end. Remont may indicate a major construction, or else a mirage, a pretext for doing nothing. The Moscow visitor is familiar with signs that indicate that a store or an office is "closed for remont," most often an indefinite period of time.[2]

Between the 1920s and the 1980s remont preserved its indefinite nature described by Boym; it also remained a public affair so accurately noticed by Benjamin:

[1] Vladimir Dal', *Explanatory Dictionary of the Live Great Russian Language,* (Olma Press: Moscow, 2001), t.3, *remont*
[2] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia*, (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 96

> Shortly before Christmas, there were two children on Tverskaia always sitting in the same spot against the wall of the Museum of the Revolution, covered in rags, whimpering. This would seem to be an expression of infinite misery of these beggars, but it may also be the result of clever organization, for of all the Moscow institutions they alone are reliable, they alone refuse to be bugged. Everything else here takes place under a banner of remont.[3]

By the late 1980s and 1990s, the formerly public never-ending remont became no less omnipresent in private domestic spheres. During the late Soviet decades, domestic remont, just like any activity requiring commodities and labor, was complicated by commodity deficit and sluggishness of the officially available labor. The story of the Soviet commodity deficit is well known.[4] A Soviet citizen could not simply buy the wallpapers due to the absence of variety or the lack of an entire commodity type altogether. Yet, a late Soviet citizen was often able to encounter those commodities in film, magazines or by visiting other households. The comparative category of speed and quality of remont services did not come out of nowhere, it rather developed as a response of an average Soviet urbanite to the known existence of better quality survives and trendy household interiors. The 1985 article in the Soviet women's magazine *Rabotnitsa* claimed that remodeling services and remodeling consumer goods offered by the state were delivered with a very long time lag and were of low practical and aesthetic quality.[5] This Perestroika outcry, belated by more than two decades of gradually developing

[3] Walter Benjamin, *Moscow Diaries*, (Mass: Harvard University Press, 1986), p.36
[4] See, for example, Susan E. Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev," *Slavic Review* 61, no. 2 (2002): 211-52
[5] V. Poluboiarinov, "Zona *remonta*," *Rabotnitsa*, Vol.4, (April 1985), p.28. This article in *Rabotnitsa* specifically cites 8 months long wait and that the state agencies offering remodeling services could only supply customers with only one or two types of wallpaper.

consumer goods deficit, reflected less on the shortage of goods and labor and more on the growing ability of the individual to hire private construction workers for their apartment remont.

Except for very rare examples, existing academic literature tangential to remont imprecisely treats it as a practice that emerged solely out of the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the following new socio-economic possibilities.[6] The remont fever of the late 1980s and 1990s has not yet become a popular topic for academic inquiries altogether, but even when remont is discussed, it is predominantly discussed in the context of previously state-owned housing privatization and the exposure to the West, forcing people to rethink their lived environments.[7] The major argument in many studies is that Soviet citizens, being only nominally in possession of their state-owned apartments, may have been significantly energized to remodel their homes after they received the right to turn their apartments into private property. However, if one were to track the emergence of the concept of the Soviet and post-Soviet remont, it appears that it predates the earliest legal precursors of mass housing privatization and even the broad acceptance of the imaginary Western home making practices as a definition of quality and affluence. Remont is broader than these immediate consequences of the collapse of the USSR; domestic remont is a form of habitus, that developed through the decades of patently problematic housing conditions and lack of means for their improvement or alteration.

Without a doubt, housing privatization, and exposure to the Western understanding of domestic spaces are among the most important consequences of the collapse of the USSR. At the same time, no less important is the continuity of the Soviet infrastructure and means of

[6] A rare example of analysis that deals with the continuity of *remont* throughout the Soviet and post-Soviet times can be found in Catherine Alexander, "*Remont*: Works In Progress," in the *Economies of Recycling: The Global Transformation Of Materials, Values and Social Relations*, (London: ZED Books, 2012).
[7] See for instance Krisztina Fehérváry, "American Kitchens, Luxury Bathrooms, and the Search for a 'Normal' Life In Postsocialist Hungary," *Ethnos* 2002 67(3):369-400.

governance that lasted long into the post-Soviet decades. Scholarly works on privatization, Western exposure, and the continuities of the Soviet infrastructure started to appear in the mid-1990s and continue into the present day. Their specific topics range from the socio-economic effects of privatization, which turned the status of Soviet apartment dwellers into home-owners, and simultaneously solidified the homelessness of those who did not own housing before 1991;[8] the consequent creation of ghettos for the urban poor;[9] and the new understanding of home that may or may not have emerged from privatization.[10] Finally, anthropologists and sociologists published studies concerned with privatization in the context of the state-socialist infrastructures, apartment buildings, and housing managing institutions. The most prominent example of such works, a study by Stephen Collier, argues that despite neoliberal reforms after 1991, the Soviet housing infrastructure such as state-operated communal gas, electricity and heat networks, persisted, sustaining life in small post-Soviet towns in the times of economic decline.[11] In other words, while the neoliberal reforms at the corporate level insured a stable extraction or import of natural gas, the state-owned communal urban engineering structures continued supplying this gas to the local boiler stations, even if the local apartment population had chronic debt on their energy bills. This revelation that socialist infrastructure and neoliberal political organization were not mutually exclusive once again reinstated the view that many scholars are now taking on the post-Soviet era, namely, that the continuity between the Soviet and post-Soviet times has

[8] Jane Roj Zavisca, *Housing The New Russia*, (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 2012)
[9] Michael Gentile, "The Post-Soviet Urban Poor and Where They Live: Khrushchev-Era Blocks, "Bad" Areas, and the Vertical Dimension in Luhansk, Ukraine." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 105 (3, 2015): 583-603.
[10] Lynne Attwood, "Privatisation of Housing in Post-Soviet Russia: A New Understanding of Home?" *Europe - Asia Studies.* 64 (5: 2012): 903-928.
[11] Stephen Collier, *Post-Soviet Social: Neoliberalism, Social Modernity, Biopolitics*, (Princeton [N.J.]: Princeton University Press, 2011); Sasha Tsenkova, *Housing Policy Reforms in Post-socialist Europe: Lost in Transition*, (Heidelberg: Physica-Verlag, 2011); Stuart Lowe and Sasha Tsenkova, *Housing Change in East and Central Europe: Integration or Fragmentation*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003) and many others.

been greater than accounted for by *transition* theorists and that this continuity was especially prominent at the scale and through the lens of everyday life and its structures, rather than through large scale rhetoric of a break up with the socialist past.[12]

The continuity of everyday practices and structures to no extent denies change. On the contrary, it reinforces knowledge about change by tracing its roots, often before the boiling point of the collapse of the USSR, throughout Soviet history and the politics of everyday life prior to 1991. The ground for the remont boom of the 1990s was laid years prior to the collapse of the USSR through multiple shifts in Soviet legislation, attitudes, and everyday practices. In the 1990s the practice of remont exploded and developed into a matter of tremendous social and cultural importance. Remont occupied such a large space in the post-Soviet consciousness, that it even gained some notoriety and comedic representations.[13]

In this chapter, remont is first analyzed through the public ideas about apartment housing and remodeling found in late Soviet and post-Soviet magazines, TV shows, and movies. The analysis of popular sources helps date the increase in interest in apartment remont and track the characteristic issues of Soviet housing that remodeling was aimed to remedy. Second, this chapter will address an issue of supply required for the practice of remont: access to construction knowledge and materials and the newly emerged late-Soviet and post-Soviet mobility of labor. Demand, somewhat counterintuitively, yet necessarily, is addressed last. Soviet urban apartment housing has for a long time experienced a lack of maintenance and has often been constructed

[12] Olga Shevchenko, *Crisis and the Everyday in Postsocialist Moscow*, (Bloomington:: Indiana University Press., 2009)

[13] Obsession with apartment remont, the ineffective approaches to remont and the social and gender patterns in relation to remont have become a usual subject for satire. For instance, in 1996 Ukrainian *Dovgonosyky Show* premiered an episode (No.15) about *evroremont*; in 2001 a Russian comedy show *Gorodok* dedicated an entire episode (No.89) to remont; in 2007 Russian ska-punk band Leningrad released a song titled "Remont."

under low quality standards, leading to a stable increase in demand for better living conditions throughout most of the history of the Soviet Union. From this perspective, it is not the demand that emerged during the last Soviet and first post-Soviet years, but rather the supply that, for the first time since the relatively market oriented New Economic Policy (1921-1928), was able to catch up with the demand. Finally, this chapter speaks of the 1980s and 1990s remont as a social practice and a form of habitus. Backed with the continuity of demand and the shifts in supply for remont, the last section shows how these circumstances affected the way of life, the system of social interactions, and the bodily and spatial practices of post-Soviet apartment dwellers.

Remodeling in Popular Sources

The first part of this research traces the narrative of remont in the popular sources of the late-Soviet era. Domestic spaces were rather peripheral to the mainstream Soviet media with a powerful exception – *Rabotnitsa* [The Woman Worker] magazine – the major women's magazine read all over the former USSR. In the "country of the victorious socialism" domestic spaces and the domestic sphere were predominantly of interest to women's magazines, *Rabotnitsa* in particular. Prior to 1985, remont was not a typical topic for major or minor articles in this magazine. However, on the eve of Perestroika, *Rabotnitsa* suddenly started publishing articles on remodeling. At first, they were short articles on fixing or constructing pieces of furniture. Soon, articles on remont took over major magazine spreads and acquired large photographs representing fashionable domestic spaces, or in other words, fashionable remont. In 1984, there were several articles about the home in *Rabotnitsa*, describing among other issues the difficulty faced to receive individual apartment housing for a typical Soviet family.[14] However,

[14] "Pod kryshey doma svoego," *Rabotnitsa,* Vol. 10, (October 1984), 28.

throughout all twelve monthly issues there was not a single article or reader-response letter about remont. The situation changed rather dramatically in 1985 and 1986: *Rabotnitsa* published two major articles boldly titled "Remont Zone" and the "Price of Remont" dedicated exclusively to remodeling and the troubles of doing it through the municipal institutions taking care of urban infrastructure – Residential Maintenance Office or ZhEK [rus. *Zhilishno-Ekspluatazionnaia Kontora*]. The articles specifically uncovered the deficiency of construction materials that were supposed to be received from these institutions, the yearlong waitlists, and the powerlessness of the residents in making remodeling decisions. For instance, the "Price of Remont" (1986) called for at least some quality accountability for state executed remont.

Several general articles on housing in 1987 and 1988 were followed by an explosion of coverage – between 1989 and 1991, *Rabotnitsa* published seventeen articles on housing and remont with two permanent monthly headings dedicated specifically to these subjects. In 1989, one of them, "The House Where We Live" [*Dom v kotorom my zhivem*], dedicated a page to remodeling; another one, "Home Kaleidoscope" [*Domashnii kaleidoscop*], published articles on small home improvements, such as furniture construction. Besides these two permanent rubrics, *Rabotnitsa* published numerous articles on choosing colors, materials, and interior design elements for home remodeling. For instance, an article "10 Meters for 100 people" gives advice on how to make a small kitchen bigger:[15]

> The second solution—in coordination with an architect you can move walls, expanding the kitchen and reducing the size of a room. Third option: the wall

[15] Many individual apartment kitchens in the Soviet apartment block buildings were rather small and typically ranged from 53 square feet to 75 square feet.

does not move, but niches are made in it for the shelves, drawers and the fridge and all this furniture is placed flush with the wall.[16]

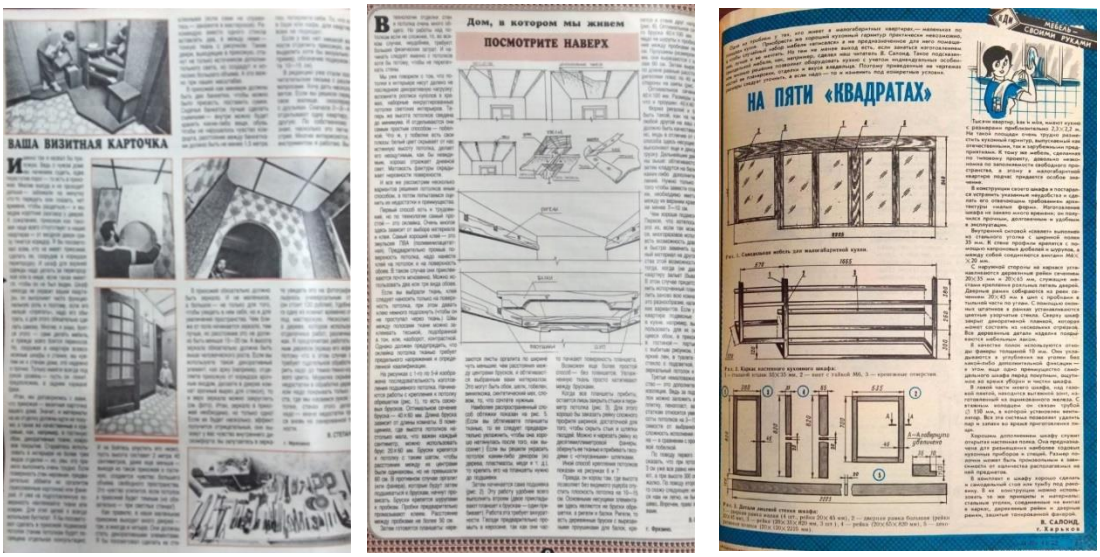

Fig.2.1. *Rabotnitsa and Modelist-konstruktor* articles on *remont* in the late 1980s

Rabotnitsa was not the only popular gendered magazine with articles about remont. *Burda Moden,* an extremely popular magazine entered the Soviet media scene in spring 1987 and at first did not publish articles about home interior or remodeling.[17] However, by winter 1988 *Burda* already had a permanent rubric titled "Our Home" that suggests interior design improvements. Pictures used to illustrate these design ideas were clearly taken from outside of the USSR, and the interiors were created with construction materials unavailable to the Soviet reader.[18] Not only magazines, but also many books of the time were dedicated to remont. For instance, *Home Academy Volume 1* issued in 1990 with an intention to publish more issues in the future, was planned to be one of three volumes on domestic remodeling. Remont in this book is

[16] V. Stepanishev, "10 Metrov na 100 chelovek," *Rabotnitsa*, Vol.3, (March 1989), p. 8.
[17] *Burda Moden* in Russian, (Spring 1987)
[18] "Interesnye idei oformleniia okon" and "Komnatnye rastenia," *Burda Moden*, (1:1988), 60-63.

presented as a private endeavor, also suggesting that patient and skilled apartment dwellers can conduct remodeling on their own, without even hiring the newly emerged "firms" or construction cooperatives.[19] Even those sources that simply informed Soviet citizens about homemaking practices without a direct mention of massive remodeling, carefully addressed the issue, indicating its importance. In the late 1980s, central architectural and construction publishing *Stroizdat* published translated books on homemaking. A 1988 example of such publications, a book on domestic interiors originally published in Serbo-Croatian, starts with a Soviet-added preface.

> Contemporary multi-story residence buildings almost completely rule out the possibility of [layout] planning changes (moving partitions, making openings and such). Therefore, only those recommendations should be used that do not require such changes.[20]

This preface strongly affirms that loadbearing walls and partitions should not be moved, even along the promise of a better apartment organization. A seemingly sound statement, it loses its credibility in the face of all the partitions moved and walls modified in later years. Rather than expressing the reality of the Soviet apartment housing, it reinstates the predictable interest of the state and institutionalized architects in keeping things as they are.

Rabotnitsa continued publishing articles on remodeling throughout the early post-Soviet years but was no longer unique in its efforts. Multiple interior design magazines came to post-

[19] M.V.Bakiev, *Domashaniaia Academiia*, Vol.1, (Ufa: Bashkirskoe oblastnoe pravlenie Soyza nauchnyh I inzhenernyh obshestv SSSR, 1990), introduction.
[20] Radmila Milosavlevich, *Interier Zhilogo Doma*, (Moscow: Stroizdat, 1988), p. 4.

Soviet markets, this time not to suggest DIY remont techniques, but to offer different aesthetic choices for post-Soviet citizens able to hire professionals to make their remont work. The most notable of these magazines first started being published in the 1990s and early 2000s: *Idei vashego doma* [rus. *Ideas for Your Home*] first published in 1995, the Russian version of the *Architectural Digest* and *Krasivye kvartiry* [rus. *Beautiful Apartments*] first published in 2002 and 2001 respectively, and many others.

In 1999 *Idei vashego doma* magazine dedicated an entire issue to the *re-planning* strategies—moving, demolishing or constructing walls—for the P-44 apartment housing series.[21] These 17- to 25-story panel apartment blocks, first developed in the 1970s, were built throughout former Soviet cities. It also happened to be a rare housing series that kept being built after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Apartment layouts in these series were commonly considered relatively spacious[22] (unlike, for example, early Khrushchev era series); additionally, the series were updated in the 1990s to better respond to contemporary requirements, such as having bigger kitchens. *Idei vashego doma* magazine published its special issue due to the communality of P-44 buildings around the former Soviet Union and the relative ease of re-planning in these panel apartment buildings. And, of course, most importantly the magazine dedicated an entire issue to a particular case of re-planning because of the extreme popularity of remont and re-planning in the post-Soviet 1990s. This issue, just like many other printed materials at the time, indicated a

[21] "Pereplanirovka dvukhkomnatnoi kvartiry v dome serii P-44," No.1 (14) January 1999, accessed August 1st, 2017, *Idei vashego doma*, < https://www.ivd.ru/custom_category/custom_subcategory/pereplanirovka-dvuhkomnatnoj-kvartiry-v-dome-serii-p-44-4094>

[22] Kitchens starting at 8 square meters (86 square feet) and rooms starting at 11 square meters (118 square feet).

major trend that took place in post-Soviet remodeling—the displacement of walls and the introduction of the open apartment plan, virtually absent from earlier existing Soviet housing.[23]

During the 1990s and early 2000s, post-Soviet television premiered multiple remont-centered shows. The format for these shows is similar to widely popular American remodeling television shows: homeowners let a team of designers and construction specialists remodel their outdated or unmaintained housing and are later presented with their radically changed, professionally designed dwelling. However, a major difference between the American and the post-Soviet television shows of this kind is that US shows predominantly focus on the most stereotypical unit of the US housing, a single-family house, whereas post-Soviet shows first and foremost deal with an apartment and even more often with just one room. These shows, such as *Kvartirnyi vopros* [rus. *Apartment Question*] beginning 2001 or *Shkola remonta* [rus. *Remodeling School*] beginning 2003 rarely featured re-planning, since re-planning often had to be legally reported and was bureaucratically complex. Instead, they usually approached a given room-sized space with a cosmetic remont strategy and zoning a small room differently, to comfortably fit more functions and visually or perceptually expand the space. These shows raised two major housing problems leading to the tremendous popularity of remont: the dilapidated state of apartment housing interiors and the small areas of apartment spaces.

The omnipresence of remont in the late-Soviet and post-Soviet media is a reciprocal phenomenon. On one hand, it indicated the overwhelming public interest in remont; on the other

[23] For the history and meaning of open plan see Judy Attfield, "Bringing Modernity Home: Open Plan in the British Domestic Interior," in Irene Cieraad, *At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2006), pp. 72-83.

hand, it instigated even broader interest and desire for remont as a necessary marker of access to resources and labor, and the ability to keep up with the changing .

Supply: Hands, Experience, and Drywall

While the boom of remodeling-related magazine articles and books is a rather clear indication of the topic's popularity, it does not explain why remont became an issue of interest in the first place. The roots of the fashion for remodeling could be found amongst the shifts in everyday life circumstances, which led to the growing interest and growing possibility of remont.

The first legislation allowing USSR citizens to privatize their apartments came out in 1988.[24] Together with the 1991 collapse of the USSR, it is typically analyzed as the historic threshold effecting the late and post-Soviet understandings of home.[25] However, even prior to 1991, Soviet society experienced certain shifts that led to the fast increase in interest to home remodeling, as illustrated in the previous section of chapter paper. Where there is demand, there should be supply. The late Soviet supply for apartment remodeling can be broadly divided into two categories: the labor and the construction knowledge.

The first one, skilled labor was determined by a set of late Soviet circumstance. On November 19, 1986, the Supreme Soviet passed the law "About Individual Labor Activity" [rus. *Ob individualnoi trudovoi deiatel´nosti*] that, for the first time since the 1950s, legalized private labor outside of state employment during citizens' free time. This law effectively legalized the pre-existing unofficial construction method nicknamed *shabashka. Shabashniki* were

[24] Gregory D. Andrusz, "A Note on the Financing of Housing in the Soviet Union," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Jul., 1990), 555-570, p. 564.
[25] For instance, see Lynne Attwood, "Privatization of Housing in Post-Soviet Russia: A New Understanding of Home?" *Europe - Asia Studies.* 64 (5: 2012): 903-928.

construction workers who hired themselves out informally during their vacation time to do quick construction work. This practice existed in the USSR prior to the passing of the private labor law, yet after the law was passed hiring shabashniki no longer required special knowledge or connections and was no longer looked upon as informal or illegal. The laws concerning private cooperation shifted from less to more restricting a couple of times in between 1986 and 1991, but despite these formal norms, the legalization of cooperatives established an official positive precedent for private labor in the USSR. As the formal economy of the USSR gradually collapsed, workers shifted their efforts to informal private jobs, which had earlier had a deficit of skilled or motivated manpower. Apartment remodeling was a sphere where motivated workers were particularly valued.

The inept performance of official institutions—Residential Maintenance Offices or ZhEK—in remodeling services was ubiquitously understood. An interviewee for this study, an apartment owner, who over the years initiated several remodeling projects, mentioned that her family had to use a public restroom by her house for several weeks, because the construction brigade disappeared after dismantling an old toilet but before installing a new one.[26] The rest of the interviewees, when asked about their attempts at remont before Perestroika, reported minor changes, such as new wallpaper, and habitually doing these superficial renovations nicknamed 'cosmetic remodeling' on their own, without any input from the formally responsible institutions. Construction workers, available through the Residential Maintenance Offices in theory, were either unavailable or absurdly unreliable in practice. Considering the incapability of municipal institutions to provide quality remodeling services, the demand for privately employed

[26] Personal Interview with apartment dweller Alina E., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, June 24th, 2017.

construction workers must have been very high. As soon as this demand was met, every Soviet citizen who had enough cash could receive a relatively fast and acceptable quality remont.

No less important than the legal basis for the labor of private workers is the question of who were these *shabashniki*? A profound and detailed overview and the history of shabashniki can be found in *Broad is My Native Land* by Siegelbaum and Moch.[27] In this book shabashniki are defined as "temporary workers earning money 'off the books' in the late-Soviet Period."[28] The heyday of shabashniki happened along with the Great Soviet constructions in the 1960s and 1970s. At the end of the Great Soviet Construction projects and the opening of symbolic Baikal-Amur Mainline in 1984, shabashniki predominantly shifted their labor into the private sphere [29] Many former state-hired construction workers were now able to offer their labor and skills to the informal construction market.

Shabashniki exploited one of the newly emerged types of late-Soviet mobility: the growing formal and informal porousness of the Soviet borders with Socialist Block countries and the West. Shabashniki were the carriers of experience and knowledge from outside the late USSR; this knowledge, after entering the Soviet reality, became fashion trends in the understanding of domestic interior remaking aesthetics. While it is hard to find official statistics on border crossings between the Soviet Union and its neighboring states, border crossings clearly took place, and a large part of it was due to temporary labor migration. To Soviet propaganda,

[27] Lewis H. Siegelbaum, and Leslie Page Moch, *Broad Is My Native Land: Repertoires and Regimes of Migration in Russia's Twentieth Century*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014). The name of the book on the Russian and Soviet migration, *Broad is My Native Land*, refers to the Soviet song *Broad is My Native Land* celebrating the vastness of the Soviet territory and the supposed freedom of the Soviet citizens.
[28]Siegelbaum, and Moch, *Broad Is My Native Land*, Russian Terms and Abbreviations.
[29] Baikal-Amur Mainline (BAM) is a railroad traversing through most of the territory of the Russian Federation, from Eastern Siberia to the Russian Far East. Active construction lasted between the 1930s and the 1980s. Prior to Stalin's death in 1952 BAM and other Great Constructions were conducted by prisoners. See Christopher J Ward, *Brezhnev's Folly: The Building of BAM and Late Soviet Socialism*, (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009).

seasonal workers were a "foreign element," just like the experiences and knowledge they carried from abroad. Temporary workers migrated following demand for labor, carrying the newly acquired knowledge of new construction methods and materials. The populations of the Soviet border zones could cross borders under a simplified procedure, creating labor traffic between Western Ukraine, Belorussia and Poland; Finland and Leningrad Oblast;[30] and Belarus, Russia, and Baltic states. An illustration of the scale of border crossing can be seen in the introduction to the 1990 Soviet law about the regulations for Soviet citizens crossing state borders:

> In the context of international cooperation development in humanitarian sphere, the Cabinet of Ministers of the USSR notes that there is a growing number of foreign private and touristic trips conducted by Soviet citizens and visits to the Soviet Union by international citizens. The trips in near border regions of the USSR and the nearing countries have become particularly active.[31]

By 1991 the number of people who, according to polls, wanted to do unskilled work abroad reached 33% of respondents.[32] In 1990 Vladimir Sherbakov, the Minister of Economy of the USSR and the first vice-prime minister, claimed that thousands of Soviet citizens already worked abroad illegally, in Scandinavia in particular.[33] Returning back home from receiving countries, these migrant workers carried resources for the reconstruction of their living environments, and

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[30] Petty trade practices at the Soviet-socialist camp borders increased significantly in 1989. See Krystyna Iglicka, "The Economics of Petty Trade on the Eastern Polish Border" in *The Challenge of East-west Migration for Poland, (*New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 120-144.

[31] "About the ordering of the state border crossing by the citizens of the USSR and the additional measures on export of the consumer goods." The Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the USSR from March 12th, 1990 No. 261 [Об упорядочении пересечения гражданами государственной границы СССР и о дополнительных мерах по регулированию вывоза за границу товаров народного потребления Постановление Совмина СССР от 12.03.1990 N 261]

[32] William Moskoff, *Hard Times: Impoverishment and Protest in the Perestroika Years: The Soviet Union 1985-1991,* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1993).

[33] William Moskoff, *Hard Times.*

new knowledge about methods of construction, agriculture, and other industries. Moreover, in 1991, at the time when new construction materials entered the markets of the former Soviet Union, these former shabashniki were already familiar with these materials and knew how to use them for apartment remodeling. To paraphrase Alexei Yurchak, these construction workers were utterly prepared for the collapse of the Soviet Union through their experiences of private labor and construction technologies outside of the USSR.

Besides shabashniki who traveled abroad, local populations and internal migrants were increasingly more involved in the construction industry. The last years of Soviet rule were characterized by a rapid change in the dynamics of job security, income, and respectability. The sharp economic crisis of 1989-1991 and the complete demolition of the Soviet centralized economy after the collapse of the USSR in 1991 led to the devaluation of income and jobs in previously respectable or at least stably paid professions.[34] The late Soviet and early post-Soviet military conflicts created large numbers of refugees. This caused two different, yet related outcomes: internal migrations of workers from villages, small mono-industrial towns, and cities to metropolitan centers where new types of jobs and resources were more readily available than at the periphery and the shift of the labor force to professions other than their original occupation.[35]

Besides migration, another form of mobility, namely re-qualification, characterized the late Soviet working-class occupations. Professions such as coal mining, previously seen as economically and politically prestigious working-class occupations, no longer had much value or

[34] Moskoff, *Hard Times*, pp. 169-171 and pp. 183-186.
[35] Moskoff, *Hard Times*, p. 169-171.

stability.[36] A similar process took place in the post-Soviet armies, particularly among army professionals. Mykola N., a current-day owner of a construction business interviewed for this project, reported on giving up a military career in 1991-1992 to pursue construction jobs, since he did not see any chance of worthy development in the contemporary army. By 1993 he worked as a foreman with construction brigades conducting apartment remodeling in Kyiv, Ukraine. He explained:

> When the Soviet Union fell apart, I had to have some job. Since the army was shrinking, I wrote a discharge request. By the will of fate, I ended up here in Kyiv. My relatives were here, mom was also here. My sister with her husband was leaving for New York. Volodia [brother in law] worked as an architect; during the collapse of the Soviet Union, he started working with firms that entered the market to do *evroremont* [rus. neologism for a remodeling done to new post-Soviet standards in the westernized style, typically with the use of imported materials]. […] This was 1993. He recommended me to his partner, left and I stayed with this partner. We worked together for a while. That is when I started working with real estate – remodeling and construction.
>
> [What were the commissions like?] Typically remodeling, rarely reconstruction. There were cases of cosmetic remodeling, but also cases of re-planning.[37]

[36] Coal miners played a crucial role in the dissolution of the USSR through their economic and political strikes in the late 1980s. The early economic reasoning for strikes came from the slowdown in the distribution of benefits and raise in salaries that coal-miners (unlike other workers) regularly enjoyed earlier in the late Soviet history. More information on the subject can be found in Filtzer's *Soviet Workers and the Collapse of Perestroika* or Siegelbaum's and Walkowitz's *Workers of the Donbass Speak.*

[37] Personal Interview with construction business owner Mykola N., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, April 28th, 2017.

From another perspective, the Soviet draft army could have prepared men for entering the construction job market. Another respondent Ivan G. clarified that he first did construction work while a soldier in a construction battalion in 1976-1978. After the army, he did not pursue a construction career until the late 1980s, when he switched jobs from being a driver to doing construction work for government-sponsored and private projects. This respondent mentioned working on a small number of governmental commissions, such as cosmetic remodeling of schools and kindergartens, private domestic construction work, and several private business commissions as early as the late 1980s.[38]

Professional construction worker Vitaliy F. explained that after the collapse of the Soviet Union he shifted to privately hired construction labor. Just like the earlier respondent Mykola N., he explained that many construction jobs in the early 1990s were commissioned by foreigners. Mykola N. mentioned his first apartment remodeling experiences were predominantly commissioned by foreigners who could not find housing acceptable to their standards and, hence, decided to remodel existing desirable housing for themselves.[39] Standards of quality expected by foreigners made a big impression on Mykola N. and his partner architect Aleksey R. In the interview, Aleksey R. mentioned that this first experience was a shock, and that the knowledge he gained during the first foreign-commissioned project served him well in his next apartment interior designs.[40] Construction professional Vitaliy F. also discussed several cases of remont where foreign construction professionals hired local brigades to work on project commission by foreign investors.[41]

[38] Personal Interview with construction brigade head Ivan G., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, June 26th, 2017.
[39] Personal Interview with construction business owner Mykola N., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, April 28th, 2017.
[40] Personal Interview with architect Aleksey R., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 4, 2017.
[41] Personal Interview with construction worker Vitaliy F., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 28th, 2017.

By the late 1980s, despite the Perestroika reform efforts, the rate of officially accountable construction in the USSR declined. Despite the never-ending Soviet housing shortage and the arrival of an additional 200,000 troops and their families from their former disposition in Eastern Europe,[42] housing construction rates in 1990 decreased by almost 10% even in comparison to the previous, already unsuccessful year.[43] At the same time, multiple private enterprises emerged that were capable of securing the means to hire construction workers for their purposes. Construction specialists interviewed for this study, who were active during Soviet and post-Soviet times, reported abandoning governmental sponsored construction and shifting to the private sphere, where commissioners happened to have money and a stable supply of jobs.

The collapse of the USSR further secured the position of private labor in the newly emerging post-Soviet economies and opened markets in the former USSR to free trade. The prices skyrocketed, along with an accumulation of consumer goods previously unseen in Soviet consumer reality. Construction materials from abroad entered the former Soviet markets, shocked the population with their quality and functionality, and transformed the mass idea of what was possible in private apartment remodeling.[44] Certain remont methods, such as moving partition walls, had already appeared in mass media during *Perestroika*. Construction materials necessary to move those partition walls or to make openings in load bearing walls, such as metal beams with drywall on the surface became much more readily available after 1991.

[42] Soviet troops were relocated back to the USSR after the fall of the Berlin Wall.
[43] William Moskoff, *Hard Times: Impoverishment and Protest in the Perestroika Years: The Soviet Union 1985-1991*, (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), p. 65.
[44] A curious example can be found in the widespread 1990s and 2000s fashion for creating arched openings between apartment spaces. The readily available high-quality drywall was easy to bend; as a result, an arched doorway, earlier an element perceived as Western and luxurious, became readily available for post-Soviet citizens.

Demand: State of Emergency

Just like with the hibernating consumerism for goods and services that seemingly came out of nowhere in the 1990s, the Soviet people were very well prepared, if not starved for a chance at making changes to domestic interiors. By the mid-1980s, interiors of Stalin- and Khrushchev-era housing were partially worn out, and many pre-1917 apartment buildings were in a nearly dilapidated state. It had been 30 years since the Decree of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union "On elimination of excesses in design and construction" and the beginning of *Khrushchevka* apartment block construction (1954-1957). It had also been 50 years since the beginning of the construction of Stalin-era apartment buildings. These buildings and individual apartments had only seen a very limited number of changes in those 30 and 50 years. Some partition walls had been transformed in Stalin-era buildings to accommodate communal style, multi-family living, and some cosmetic renovation procedures, such as wallpaper renewal or tile replacement, were done in Khrushchev-era apartments. But that was the typical limit of change taking place in individual apartments until the mid-1980s.

The pre-1917 buildings require a separate explanation. Until today in many post-Soviet languages there exists a stable expression for dilapidated, yet still occupied housing – *avariinyi dom*, literally an "emergency house" or more accurately "a building in a state of emergency." In American English, the closest synonymous expression is found in architectural practice: "a building in precarious condition." However, unlike the Soviet and post-Soviet analog, this phrase is widespread within professional architectural and construction practice, but is less frequently used in everyday conversations about housing conditions. An analogous case with idiomatic expression usage in relation to housing is a widespread American expression "foreclosed home" that does not have any widely used synonyms in Eastern European post-Soviet languages. "A

building in the state of emergency," a dilapidated, yet occupied house, is commonplace in many post-Soviet languages, just like a "foreclosed home" is common place in American English. Svetlana Boym raised an argument of cultural and linguistically untranslatable terms in her 1995 *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*. Boym's "commonplaces" are incomparably more monumental: she speaks of the word *byt*, everyday life with a special Russian sense of stagnation and routine, and *bytie*, the spiritual and philosophical being. "A building in the state of emergency" can be read as a small fraction of the large *byt* category so carefully analyzed by Boym.[45]

"A building in a state of emergency" largely defined the domestic life of the Soviet populations residing in the pre-1917 housing in the second half of the 20th century. The pre-1917 apartment buildings that, prior to the Khrushchev construction boom, compiled the largest type of available urban housing consistently deteriorated through the 20th century. In the 1920s and 1930s the pre-1917 apartments were massively turned into communal apartments, where a portion of a room, a single room, or a group of rooms were occupied by unrelated tenants, and kitchens and bathrooms were used communally. Soviet communal apartments are relatively well studied in many academic works,[46] art forms,[47] and popular projects.[48] Yet, the buildings that contain these communal apartments are often given less attention.

[45] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 29-40.
[46] Boym, *Common Places;* David Crowley and Susan Emily Reid, *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*, (Oxford: Berg, 2002).
[47] Joseph Brodsky, "Room and a Half," in *Less Than One: Selected Essays*, (London: Penguin, 2011); *Pokrovskie vorota*, directed by Mikhail Kazakov, (Moscow:Mosfilm, 1982).
[48] "Kurs No.15: Antropologiia kommunalka", Arzamas.Academy, http://arzamas.academy/courses/6 (accessed October 10th, 2017)

These buildings may or may not have experienced reconstructions after World War II, if they happened to be located in the cities affected by war. Many of them, not seriously damaged during the war, only went through cosmetic maintenance. The tenants of these apartments only maintained their personal spaces and only to a degree possible considering Soviet deficit of construction materials. Common areas were typically used with regular cleaning but without other maintenance.

Although the state recognized the problem with poorly maintained housing at the highest level, its efforts to solve the problem were not entirely successful. In 1964 the State Committee of Construction of the USSR issued a decree specifying the terms and timelines of use and repair for different types of housing.[49] Despite this new legal framework for reconstruction and repair, by 1978 the state of Soviet housing was still unsatisfactory to the degree that the Cabinet of Ministers of the USSR had to issue another decree prompting housing repair and reconstruction.[50] By that time, repair and reconstruction efforts were no longer just about dilapidated pre-1917 housing, but also about fixing construction defects and shortcomings of the new housing built in the previous two decades. Both of these documents abounded with the term "capital reconstruction" [rus. *kapital remont* or *kapremont* for short]. The situation had not changed by the end of the 1980s, when another decree on the framework and quality of reconstruction came out in 1989.[51] Right after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, William Moskoff described the scale of the problem as following:

[49] State Committee for Construction of the USSR Decree from September 8th, 1964 "Provision on the carrying of the Planned Prevention Remodeling of the Residential and Public Buildings."
[50] Provision of the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR from September 4th, 1978 No. 740, "On the measures for further improvement of exploitation and repair (remont) of the housing resources."
[51] Provision of the State Committee of Construction of the USSR from June 30th, 1989 No 113 "On the recognition of the decree of the State Committee of Construction from September 8th, 1964 No.147 'About the regulations on carrying a planned and preventive remont of the residential and public buildings' as no longer valid."

> While the housing shortage was not a new problem, it got worse as Perestroika wore on. The predicament was so bad, that in a 1990 nationwide poll of a hundred rural and urban areas housing was rated as the most severe socioeconomic problem in the country. At the end of 1989, some eleven million people were living in dormitories, more than five million were living in what the Soviets regarded as dilapidate housing, and ten percent of all urban families were living in rooms in communal apartments. Almost fifty percent of the population lived in housing with less than nine square meters per person, an amount considered below sanitary standards.[52]

The problem of run-down housing has continued past the Soviet Union; for instance, in 2017 Ministry of Construction of the Russian Federation stated that fifty one percent of apartment housing in Russia required capital reconstruction. This term in the USSR was used to identify a type of reconstruction that involved repair with possible and typical replacement of the structural parts of the building without changing the function of the building. The state of the older apartment buildings was often such, that by the 1970s a typical method was to demolish everything inside of the building skin – historic facades – and replace it with metal frame and monolith slabs in place of historic brick load bearing, wooden or metal beams and wooden floors.

When capital reconstruction was approved by the city, the dwellers of the dilapidated buildings were offered two choices: either to move to new apartments offered to them by the city or to temporarily move into the so-called "maneuver fund" housing.[53] Both options had

[52] William Moskoff, *Hard Times: Impoverishment and Protest in the Perestroika Years: The Soviet Union 1985-1991*, (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), p. 64-65.
[53] Housing Code of the Russian Federation, Section 106 "Provision of the Residential Spaces of the Maneuver Fund." December 19th, 2004.

shortcomings: new apartments were located at the outskirts of the city, unlike the old dilapidated, yet very centrally-located buildings; temporary housing was typically represented by dormitory-style apartment buildings with shared kitchens. Additionally, a Soviet style capital reconstruction could last for years, so those residents who chose temporary dormitories could have been stuck there for a very long time. And yet, no matter how problematic, capital reconstructions offered some kind of change from the deteriorating housing.[54]

Although most acute in the pre-1917 communal apartment buildings, a lack of maintenance, shortage of space, and lack of functional space separation led to the majority of the Soviet population living in the conditions other than desirable. The grand Soviet modernization project, the mass construction of functionalist apartment block buildings under Khrushchev and Brezhnev, was not exception.

Khrushchev era apartments, the first truly mass Soviet solution to the housing crisis, had very small square footage. If to compare the 1950s typical home plans from the United States, it will turn out that a typical 1950s American home had three bedrooms, while a typical Soviet apartment had two rooms. Take, for example, National Plan Service catalogue homes. An American single family two-bedroom house from the 1952 catalogue had eight hundred sixteen feet of living area.[55] At the same time, an early Khrushchev era apartment from the I-434 series built in 1958-1964 had 290 square feet of living area.

[54] Additionally, capital reconstructions offered a shift from the shared communal apartment occupancy, where many family members had to all share one room, and multiple unrelated families had to share utilities with no functional separation or privacy possible whatsoever. Analysis of the Soviet communal apartments may be found in Katerina Gerasimova, "Public Privacy in the Soviet Communal Apartment," in David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, *Socialist Spaces. Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*, (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2002), p., 207—230; or Steven Harris, "I Know all the Secrets of My Neighbors": The Quest for Privacy in the Era of the Separate Apartment" in Lewis Siegelbaum, *Borders of Socialism*, (Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006), pp. 171-189

[55] *Homes of Moderate Cost*, (Chicago, Ill: National Plan Service, 1952).

A detailed account of the minimalist dimensions of the Soviet apartment housing can be found in the two recent books *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life After Stalin*[56] and *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life During Khrushchev Years*.[57] The former starts with an investigation into the reasons for Khrushchev era apartments being so small. In particular, in the very beginning of his *Khrushchevka* study, Steven Harris brings up a letter to the Third All-Union Congress of Architects specifying that life in the standardized apartments is darkened with their small dimensions making it impossible to normally perform daily functions.[58]

Khrushchevka apartment eat-in kitchens were even more notoriously small than the apartments themselves – 4.7 to 7.1 square meters or fifty three to seventy six square feet respectively, while typical kitchens of small 1950s American houses reached one hundred sixty six square feet [Fig.2.2].[59] Already by the 1980s these kitchens were perceived as largely problematic, which can be seen in a *Rabotnitsa* article suggesting their expansion at the expense of loss of space in the next room. While this was often impossible in the prefab concrete block apartments, the article still insists that improvements were possible even for those "five-square meter" kitchens. The popular dream of a bigger kitchen did not start out of nowhere: by the 1970s early prefab apartment series with small kitchens and rooms gave way to the "improved plan" apartments with slightly bigger kitchens and rooms. This newer housing was readily available to observe for the residents of older Khrushchev-era apartments, demonstrating that better residential conditions were possible and making them even more desirable. Most studies of

[56] Steven Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life After Stalin*, (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013).
[57] Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life during the Khrushchev Years*, (Cornell University Press, 2015).
[58] Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street*, p. 41.
[59] *Homes of Moderate Cost*, (Chicago, Ill: National Plan Service, 1952).

Soviet elites specify that regular Soviet urbanites were aware of the lifestyles of the *nomenklatura* (bureaucrats) or other petit Soviet elites (highly ranked scientists, artists, and military). For example, a 1978 study of Soviet elites specifies that the émigré respondents of the book reported visiting these luxurious or even more luxurious political elite dwellings at some point in their Soviet lives.[60] Through this yet another form of social mobility of direct interactions with elites, Soviet citizens were able to firsthand experience the possibilities of domestic comfort in better apartment layouts.

In addition to the personal experiences of visiting elite housing, Soviet citizens were exposed to the knowledge of better housing through popular culture. The 1981 Soviet blockbuster *Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears* introduced a Soviet viewer to an elite apartment setting of so-called "generals' apartment houses" on Mosfilmovskaia Street in Moscow. More large domestic spaces that could have easily provoked jealousy in an average *Khrushchevka* dweller were demonstrated to the public in another cult Soviet movie from the 1970s – *The Irony of Fate*. *The Irony of Fate*, a very broadly cited document of the era, also illustrated a major zeitgeist element of late Soviet lifestyles – the broad dissatisfaction of Soviet citizens with the sameness of consumer goods offered to the public. In *The Irony of Fate* this sameness is shown through the two main characters confusing their homes in different cities—Leningrad and Moscow—due to the fact that their neighborhoods, buildings, apartments, and even furniture and decoration looked exactly the same. Besides Soviet movies providing the general public with a critical perspective of their everyday spaces, the late Perestroika TV audience was also exposed to foreign, particularly Brazilian and later Mexican soap operas, which are often believed to have

[60] Mervyn Matthews, *Privilege in the Soviet Union: A Study of Elite Life-Styles Under Communism*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1979), p. 45.

had an effect on the ideas of the look and the spatiality of home.[61] The constructed interiors of these soap opera movie sets exposed very large groups of the Soviet population to a rather univocal definition of what an affluent house was supposed to look like, among other reasons possibly causing the notorious love of the early post-Soviet nouveau riche to historicized architectural styles.[62]

Even the official Soviet architectural discourse was saturated with ideas about better housing conditions. During the 1980s and particularly the second half of the decade, Gosstroy [(rus. abbr. for the State Construction Committee] held multiple architectural competitions in order to develop better types of residential housing, often on the basis of the Khrushchev era apartment buildings. A detailed scrutiny of these competition projects will be given in the following chapters. At this point, however, it is important to note that the problem of unsatisfactory housing conditions, both in old and in modern buildings, was recognized at the highest level of the Soviet ministries. Attempts were made to find solutions for the problematic housing of the early prefab apartment block series, if not in practice than at least in theory.[63]

Besides the Soviet indigenous demand for remont, it is important to separately mention the Western expats who entered the Soviet reality in the early 1990s. This rather small group of people, together with the newly forming post-Soviet elites, propelled the creation of the first

[61] A reflection on the role of soap operas in the late-Soviet and early post-Soviet everyday life can be found in Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), 247-249.
[62] See Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Things Under Socialism: The Soviet Experience," in Frank Trentmann, *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 464-467.
[63] In the late 1970s and 1980s State Committee of Construction (rus. Gosstroy) of the USSR held multiple architectural competitions for Khrushchev-era housing modernization and reconstruction projects. For instance, two competition catalogues published by Gosstroy in 1981 and 1987 respectively: *Illustrirovannyi catalog proektov otkrytogo konkursa na razrabotku proektnykh predlozhenii po novym tipam maloetazhnykh zhilykh domov I prinzipov plotno-nizkoi gorodskoi zastrojki* and *Illustrirovannyj catalog proektov otkrytogo konkursa "Modernizatsiia i rekonstruktsiia zhilykh domov pervykh massovykh serii."*

premium construction services and interior design firms, as well as imported furniture and construction materials stores. Available housing did not satisfy the standards of these Westerners, while the high salaries they received were enough to invest into apartment re-planning and remodeling.[64] One of the earliest firms offering such services was *Skanflot* (a shared initiative of *Aeroflot*, Dutch *Scanior Design* and local *Avangard* cooperative). In their 1991 commercial Scanflot claimed to only work with "large businesses and wealthy entrepreneurs" specifying a minimal sum and square footage of a commission.[65] Construction and furniture business that first came to fruition thanks to Western expats and local nouveau riche, soon opened to the general public in the form of construction material and furniture supermarkets, such as *Epitsenter* in Kyiv or *Ikea* in Moscow.[66]

Fig.2.2. Plans of two typical early Khrushchev era apartments, floor area in square meters

[64] Personal Interview with an architect Aleksey R., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 4, 2017. Additionally, see Mariia Boyarova article for *Houzz*, 23 November 2016, "Istoriia dizaina inter'era postsovetskoi Moskvy v 1990e gody," <https://www.houzz.ru/ideabooks/76622145/list/istoriya-dizayna-interyery-postsovetskoy-moskvy-v-1990-e-gody>

[65] Anastasiia Romashkevich, *Kommersant*, December 12, 1991, accessed June 18, 2018, <https://www.kommersant.ru/doc/1815>

[66] Epicenter is a construction materials and furniture store that first opened in Kyiv in 1996 as a small business and by 2003 opened the first superstore. Roman Mal'chevskiy, "Aleksandr Gerega—o pervykh den'gakh I o tom kak sozdavalsia Epitsentr," *Forbes Ukraina*, September 23, 2013, accessed June 18, 2018, <http://forbes.net.ua/business/1358461-aleksandr-gerega-o-pervyh-dengah-i-tom-kak-sozdavalsya-epicentr> ; IKEA opened its first store in Russia in 2000. "*IKEA* v Rossii," *IKEA* in Russia official website, <https://www.ikea.com/ms/ru_RU/about_ikea/ikea_in_russia/ikea_in_russia.html>

As demonstrated above, the post-Soviet urban population, long dissatisfied with commodity and services deficit, eagerly plunged into remont as soon as the necessary qualified labor became available on a private basis and actively continued remodeling in the 1990s with the arrival of foreign construction materials. “Do not take your apartment [layout] for granted!” calls the late 1980s *Rabotnitsa* heading “The House Where We Live,” echoing the *remont* craze of the last Soviet and the first post-Soviet decades.[67]

Remont as a Domestic and Social Practice

This chapter started with Walter Benjamin’s observation of remont as a state and social practice in the beginning of the 20th century and briefly after the dramatic changes of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. It is nothing but logical to end it with an observation of remont as a social practice at the end of the 20th century, during Perestroika and after the collapse of the USSR.

Once again, late and post-Soviet remont was nothing like a regular remodeling. First, since remont was predominantly undertaken in apartment housing, it inevitably led to cooperation, negotiation or conflict between the dwellers of the house. Although the same would be true for the rest of apartment housing elsewhere, in the post-Soviet cities it was aggravated by the omnipresence of remont. Second, these relationships were in most cases aggravated by the continuity of remont, that may have taken months, years, and in some extreme and often caricaturized cases, decades.

In the second half of the 1990s and, particularly, after the recovery from the 1998 financial crisis in the Russian Federation that has also largely affected the surrounding countries, not just quotidian repair, mending and repurposing, but massive apartment remont became a form of

[67] “Dom v kotorom my zhivem” monthly heading, *Rabotnitsa*.

post-Soviet *habitus*—a physical embodiment of the social and economic hopes and insecurities of the first post-Soviet decades, or, in Edward Casey's words, that what "ties the self and the place together."[68] The population of the post-Soviet countries went through a radical socio-economic downshift after the collapse of the USSR in 1991. Throughout the 1990s the economies of the European post-Soviet countries, still largely dependent on the Russian economy, experienced many up and downs that were followed by a relative stability between 1999 and 2008. This period of relative economic safety was the time when remont practice extended past the limits of the upper and upper-middle classes and became a popular affair among the rest of the urban population. The relative economic stability allowed for saving, but the resources were still limited. This led to apartment dwellers often continuing to live in the apartment during remodeling, whether they remodeled themselves or invited professional construction workers. This also led to remont taking extended periods of time. Apartment owner Natalia S. reported that her and her family stayed in their three-room apartment during the remodeling and re-planning of the kitchen and the bathroom, explaining that there was nowhere else to live.[69] Another respondent, Oksana G., said that their resources were limited, so they worked on each area of the apartment as soon as they had enough money to get to it.[70] This meant that remont could virtually last forever, until all tasks and complications that may have come along the way were done. Even those residents that were able to live outside of their permanent homes during remodeling, reported remont taking a very long time. Marina D., an apartment owner, who together with her partner purchased a newly built apartment in 2000, did

[68] Edward Casey, "Body, Self, and Landscape: A Geophilosophical Inquiry into the Place-World," in Paul Adams (ed.), *Textures Of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*, (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2004), p. 409.
[69] Personal Interview with an apartment dweller Natalia S., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 2nd, 2017.
[70] Personal Interview with an apartment dweller Oksana G., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 14th, 2017.

not live in the home during remont. Yet it took an entire year.[71] Remont that lasted for years became a way of life, rather than a finite remodeling of a living space.[72] Curiously, the term remont in many post-Soviet languages not only defines a process of remodeling, but also the state of the domestic space. For instance, one could say that an apartment has a very high quality remont, echoing remont not only being a process, but a form of habitus—a stable prism for the perception of reality. The inadequate housing conditions, the availability of labor and commodities and the desire to fit the new reality, created the state of permanent remont, when the desire for renovation appeared to be more powerful than the ability to ever finalize the process. The lasting quality of late and post-Soviet remodeling, also known as "eternal remont," has inspired several scholars to address it as the perpetual resourceful mechanisms continuously present prior and after the collapse of the Soviet Union.[73]

Besides it's infiniteness, late and post-Soviet apartment remont possessed another quality of interest: its sensual component, its element of conspicuous consumption, and the social implication of those two factors. Remont was loud, and both early Khrushchev-era apartment series and the later panel housing had imperfect sound isolation. While the dwellers of brick buildings were relatively lucky, concrete panels of the apartment housing series transmitted sounds perfectly. This problem is not unique to the USSR and the post-Soviet world; apartment buildings everywhere in the world are notorious for poor sound ecology in comparison to their

[71] Personal Interview with an apartment dweller Marina D., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 6th, 2017.
[72] A comparison can be drawn between permanent remont and Olga Shevchenko's permanent crisis in *Crisis and the Everyday in Postsocialist Moscow*, where she addresses the sense of crisis as a "the postsoviet hysteresis of habitus."
[73] See Ekaterina Gerasimova, and Sofia Chuikina, "The Repair Society," *Russian Studies in History, Vol.* 48, No.1 (2009), pp. 58-74; Catherine Alexander, "Remont: Work in Progress" in Catherine Alexander and Joshua Reno, *Economies of Recycling the Global Transformations of Materials, Values and Social Relations*, (London: Zed Books, 2012); Wladimir Sgibnev, "Remont: Do-It-Yourself-Urbanism in Post-Soviet Tajikistan," (presentation paper, RC21 Conference, Berlin (Germany), August 29-31, 2013).

single-family home counterparts. Yet, it was in the post-Soviet cities where apartment dwellers massively went into remont, a highly acoustically toxic activity. Imagine the sound of a drill hitting the wall a couple of floors above you being transmitted by concrete walls into your own home. Now imagine that it is not just one apartment that is undergoing remont along yours or a neighboring staircase, but several apartments. As soon as this one is done, somebody else is going to pull together their courage and finances and plunge into their round of remodeling. Remont, in this way, became a part of daily life, not only for the owners of the apartment under remodeling but for the entire population of the hallway, staircase, and even the entire apartment block.

The problem of remont noise is reflected in the changes of legislation meant to control acceptable sound levels in residential buildings. Section 24 "Prevention and Elimination of Noise" of the 1969 Soviet law on sanitary norms and healthcare fundamentals is a two-paragraph general statement that it is the responsibility of both citizens and authorities to prevent and eliminate excessive noise.[74] Section 24 of the post-Soviet Ukrainian law on the same subject is a multi-page document that, besides everything else, specifies:

> Holding construction (remont) works at the protected objects [apartment housing and other buildings] that is accompanied with noise is forbidden on workdays between 9 pm and 8 am, and at all times on weekends.
>
> An owner or a renter of the space, which will go under remodeling, must inform the dwellers of all contiguous apartments about the beginning of these works. Under an agreement with all the contiguous apartment dwellers remont and construction works

[74] Section 24. "Prevention and Elimination of Noise," The Law of the USSR from December 19th, 1969 About the Fundaments of the USSR and Republican Healthcare.

> can be also undertaken on holidays and weekends. Noise that occurs during construction works should not exceed the sanitary norms at any time of day.[75]

On one hand, remont noises still frequently caused conflicts between neighbors, who thought that noise exceeded the norm. On the other hand, apartment remont often led to collaborations between neighbors deciding to perform it simultaneously. One apartment resident, who undertook a re-planning and remodeling effort in the mid-2000s, reported collaborating with their neighbors and doing remont simultaneously, since part of their effort was to privatize and connect the building's attic to their last-floor apartments. There were three apartments on the floor and the third apartment's owners decided not to participate. Throughout the process, when the two neighboring families shared common construction brigades and legal repercussions, the third neighbor wrote complaints about the remont noise.[76] Whether the neighbors argued or collaborated and whether it was them or others taking on a remont endeavor, remont ended up being heavily present in everyone's life for a long time. Space use was orchestrated through the gradually moving remont with some rooms or home functions being unavailable, becoming available again, or being heavily limited due to the remodeling works. It is safe to say that remont limited the already modest apartment spaces even more as the possessions and everyday practices of the apartment dwellers had to be relocated away from the remodeled area. For instance, a three-room apartment undergoing remont in the kitchen and bathroom and having things stored in one of the rooms temporarily became a two room with limited kitchen and bathroom functions, while the number

[75] Section 24. "Protection of the Population from the Harmful Influence of Noise, Non-ionizing Emissions and Other Physical factors." The Law of Ukraine from April 8th, 1994 "About the Provision of Sanitary and Epidemical Wellbeing of the Population."

[76] Personal Interview with a last floor apartment dweller Anton Ch., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 10th, 2017.

of occupants typically remained the same. All of this created semi-permanent spatial relationships and altered the way individuals and families performed in those apartments. Remont, in this way became something bigger than just a spatial and aesthetic change, but rather a new mode of apartment living that could last long enough to be accounted as a new type of living condition that emerged on a fracture between the late Soviet Union and post-Soviet times and persistently continued into the post-Soviet reality. Remodeling was not something that was just supposed to pass by in a limited period of time. It became a habitus, a special social condition, defined less so by the finality of remodeling or its final results, but by the participation in the continuous remont craze. As the Saint-Petersburg countercultural band Leningrad sang in their 2007 song dedicated to remodeling: "Remont has settled in my home." Furthermore, for the protagonist of this song, just like for the millions of post-Soviet urbanites, remont did not just determine their home, but also their identity. Fehérváry describes the juxtaposition of socialst concrete grayness and capitalist color in the Hungarian accounts of displeasure with socialism and demand for capitalist consumption and stylistic freedoms.[77] This work argues that it is not the West-inspired stylistic or aesthetic choices that made a person and a home post-Soviet, but rather the shifts in the spatial organization and the cultural practice of domestic remodeling itself that allowed an apartment dweller to leave their sense of Soviet self in the past.

[77] Krisztina Fehérváry, *Politics in Color and Concrete: Socialist Materialities and the Middle Class in Hungary,* (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 2013), p.1.

CHAPTER 2: SLEEPING

Under the Soviet system bedrooms are not permitted.
—Mikhail Bulgakov*, Zoyka's Apartment*

Sleep, arguably the most important function of a home, in many cultures is typically associated with a special space—the bedroom. This common understanding, however, has been frequently undermined by reality of urban living, apartment homes in particular.[1] The late- and post-Soviet spaces for sleep were not an exclusion. In Russian and many other Slavic post-Soviet languages, the naming for a 'bedroom' is ambiguous: *spalnia*—the word that takes its root from the verb *spat'*—to sleep—does not specify whether it is a *room* or some other sort of space. The fluidity of the word spalnia is, of course, coincidental to late-Soviet urban living conditions, yet it accurately defines them. A space for sleep did not have to be a room; this space did not even require a bed; it happened where and when sleep was possible and acceptable. The understanding of a space suitable for sleeping drastically transformed into several trajectories after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. This chapter undertakes a task to track the precursors, process and outcomes of this transformation. `

The chapter begins with the story of the late-Soviet and post-Soviet sleeping spaces through the brief account of the urban bedroom's rise and fall through the 20th century. Through an inquiry into the normative square footage numbers, daily practices, and rhythms, this chapter will explain the spaces of sleep typical for late-Soviet urban apartments. This chapter will then

[1] For information on apartments without bedrooms in the United State see John Hancock, "The Apartment House in Urban America," in Anthony King (ed.), *Buildings and Society; Essays on the Social Development of the Built Environment*, (London: Routledge, 2003), pp.92, 96.

demonstrate how the desire for private sleeping space became normalized, and how private space for sleep turned from dream to reality in the post-Soviet re-planning projects.

Soviet housing politics produced a heavily regulated urban household: it had to strictly adhere to the upper limitations of floor area and room number per person. While these rules were no longer relevant after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, some of the formal Soviet tendencies, (such as multifunctional rooms) persisted. However, the similarities in form, such as the same number of people in the apartment) should not be perceived as an ultimate sign that nothing has changed. Dependent on their economic and social standing, post-Soviet urbanities took different paths in transforming their housing: there emerged a divergence in apartment housing form unseen prior to 1991. Finally, despite the many formally opposite tendencies that emerged after 1991, these tendencies converged in terms of space use. In the case of sleep, one such similarity was a pursuit of sleeping space privacy that could have been executed both through a construction or a removal of a wall. This chapter will first investigate the pre-conditions for the rise in the plurality of the post-Soviet approaches to apartment form and then look at the similarities among different apartment spatial organizations that emerged after 1991.

Sleeping Space in the 20th Century

The seeds for many of the housing tendencies that surfaced after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 were planted decades prior to this historic rupture; the same can be said about the housing transformations after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. Soviet apartment housing is a relatively known subject: there exists a substantial amount of scholarly and popular explorations into the nature of the Soviet communal apartments, modernist experiments in the 1920s by

Russian Constructivists, Stalin-era and Khrushchev-era apartment housing.[2] But what did those Soviet apartments evolve from? Prior to 1917 revenue houses represented a large portion of the urban apartment housing. This type of housing was spread all over Europe and the Russian Empire, with apartments found in the Russian Empire cities not being drastically different from those in the West. A modest apartment that would have housed a typical bureaucrat in St. Petersburg at the end of the 19th century consisted of a master's block – an entry space, a living room, an office space, a dining room, a bedroom and a bathroom – and a servants' block – a small bedroom and a kitchen. Those with lower incomes rented separate rooms or even "corners" – a space within a room occupied by multiple unrelated people. The situation with corners was particularly typical for St. Petersburg, the capital of the Russian Empire. A picturesque description of a poor and dilapidated rental room in a pre-revolutionary St. Petersburg can be found in Dostoevsky's description of his protagonist, Raskolnikov and his housing situation:

> It was a tiny cupboard of a room about six paces in length. It had a poverty-stricken appearance with its dusty yellow paper peeling off the walls, and it was so low-pitched that a man of more than average height was ill at ease in it and felt every moment that he would knock his head against the ceiling.[3]

Although this example of pre-Revolutionary housing in St. Petersburg clearly shows that the Soviet communal apartments did not come out of nowhere, the Soviet communal apartment took shared apartment living to a completely different level. After coming to power, Bolsheviks attempted to relocate most of the housing resources from the middle and upper class to the workers, turning the majority of urban apartments into communal living settings, similar to

[2] For example, Steven Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life After Stalin,* (Washington: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013); Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years*, (Cornell University Press, 2015).
[3] Fedor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment,* (Oxford: Benediction Classics, 2016), p. 28

earlier rooms and "corners." These communal living apartments, or *kommunalki*, consisted of unrelated families or individuals occupying separate rooms or partitioned half rooms of the former single-family apartments and sharing amenities, such as a single kitchen and a bathroom. Three factors caused overpopulation to aggravate after 1917: rapid industrialization along with the mass migration of rural populations to cities and the reluctance of the early Soviet state to allocate money and resources to housing. The creation of communal apartments must have been the main factor that saved Soviet cities from mass homelessness.

Communal apartments were essential to early Soviet urbanites in the first half of the 20th century until the beginning of the mass housing project launched by Khrushchev in 1957 and were meant to provide every family their own personal apartment. Despite the state policy shift from communal to individual living, the lifestyles and domestic settings consolidated in the early communal apartments persisted through the rest of the 20th century and above and beyond the communal apartment type.[4] A typical 1960s three-member family domestic setting in communal apartments is described in Yuri Trifonov's short story "Exchange":

> [His] daughter slept behind the folding screen in the corner. Her desk, where she did her homework at night, was also there. Dmitriev made her a bookshelf, put it above the desk and conducted an electric wire for a desk lamp. He put together a special room behind the screen, "solitary unit" [rus. *odinochka*], as the [jokingly] called it in the family. Dmitriev and Lena slept on a wide Czechoslovakia-made couch that they were lucky to buy three years ago and that since then has caused jealousy of their acquaintances. The couch stood by the window and was separated from the "solitary unit" with a decoratively carved oak cupboard; a grotesque object that Lena inherited

[4] Most importantly this includes fluid space use, rather than identifiable room functions.

from her grandmother and that Dmitriev frequently suggested to sell. Lena agreed, but his mother in law was against it.[5]

While set in a communal apartment, a similar overlay of domestic functions would have persisted into a one- or two-room private apartment that this family would have been assigned according to Soviet regulations.[6] In a home described by Trifonov, functions could not have been spatially separated since the home of the family of three was limited to one room. Similar to many types of domestic spaces throughout human history—a yurt, a hut, or a rented apartment room in an industrializing city— it stayed un-prescribed and changeable, limited only by the pressure of the outside world and the square footage inside of its walls.

It was a family like the one from "Exchange" that was meant to move to a new personal apartment in a modular "Khrushchevka" house,[7] where they would have been no longer limited to one room, but would have enjoyed the luxury of two rooms and private amenities: kitchen, bathroom and some storage space.[8] Khrushchevkas, without a doubt, greatly improved the conditions of life of the Soviet urbanites; yet, the fluid use of space characteristic of their prior communal apartment existence remained.

Numbers and Bureaucracy

The story of the Soviet sleeping space should continue with numbers. "The citizens of the USSR have a right for housing" stated article 44 of the Soviet Constitution (1977). A simple and

[5] Yuri Trifonov, "Obmen" in *Moskovskie povesti*, Litres, 2017. (written in 1969) translation by Kateryna Malaia.
[6] The Soviet and post-Soviet conventional meaning for a room is a separate domestic space other than the kitchen, bathroom or an entry way. The quality of a home is not defined by the number of bedrooms like in the United States, but rather by the number of rooms. In this chapter the term is used accordingly.
[7] Early modular (composed of panel) apartment series, nicknamed after Khrushchev, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR between 1953-1964.
[8] According to Soviet housing regulations a family of three could not have received more than a two-room apartment.

seemingly straightforward statement on paper, in practice it took the form of a mathematical problem.

The major principle in Soviet housing distribution grew from the early days of housing requisition after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. According to Bolshevik logic, housing resources had to be allocated by the state. Starting from its early days and throughout the rest of Soviet history, housing allocation by the state remained the predominant way to get housing. In August 1918, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee finalized the legalization of apartment or room requisition by canceling private property on real estate in cities.[9] According to Lenin an apartment was subject to compaction "if the number of rooms in this apartment equaled or outnumbered the number of persons."[10] In 1919 The People's Commissariat of Healthcare developed sanitary norms of ten square meters of housing for an adult person with an additional five square meters for two to twelve-year-old children.[11] This norm shifted within a range of a couple of square meters throughout the Soviet history, but the logic of a limited floor area per person remained the same.

By Brezhnev's times the Housing Code of the Russian Federative SSR specified that an adult citizen had a right for seven square meters (1970s) and nine square meters (1980s) of housing and that an adult citizen was only eligible for state-initiated relocation if they were limited to less than 5 square meters of area in their already existing housing.[12] In addition, Soviet legislation specified that an apartment should be given to a family based on a k=n-1 formula,

[9] Deirdre Harshman, "A Space Called Home: Housing and the Management of Everyday in Russia, 1890-1935," (PhD Diss., University of Urbana-Champaign, 2018), pp. 40.
[10] Vladimir Lenin, *Polnoe Sobranie Sochineniy,* Vol 54, (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Politicheskoi Literatury, 1975), p. 350.
[11] A.N. Fedorov, "Zhylische v poslerevoliutsionnoy Moskve kak ob'ekt politiki i povsednevnoi zhizni," *Vestnik RUDN: Istoriia Rossii* 1 (2008), pp. 56-57.
[12] This number had varied at different times in different republics but has never gone above nine square meters per person. See Katherine Zubovich, "Housing and Meaning in Soviet and Post-Soviet Russia," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, Volume 16, Number 4, (Fall 2015), p. 1007.

where k[13] symbolized the number of rooms and n–the number of people to live in the apartment. For instance, based on this simple formula, a family of three—two parents and a child—would have received a two-room apartment. A family of four—a grand-parent, two parents and a child—had a right for a three-room home. Another family of four, with two parents and their two children could have expected a three-room apartment as well.

A former dweller of a Soviet apartment, architect and author Vladimir Papernyi, describes this quality of Soviet Housing in his book *Kul'tura Dva*: "In this [Lenin'] formula… there essentially is everything that is later going to create such an acute condition of a communal apartment, since this formula fixes an impossibility for each person to have a separate room."[14] Papernyi supports his point with a famous and archetypal quote from Mikhail Bulgakov's 1920s *Heart of a Dog* novel, where an apartment dweller—a respectable medical professor Philip Philippovich—is approached by the newly assigned communist House Committee:

> "…this is precisely what we have come to talk to you about—the dining room and the examination room. The general meeting asks you voluntarily and by way of labor discipline to give up your dining room. Nobody has a dining room in Moscow."
>
> "Not even Isadora Duncan," the woman cried in a ringing voice.[15]
>
> ….
>
> "And the examination room too," continued Shvonder. "The examination room can perfectly well be combined with the office."
>
> "Uhum," said Philip Philippovich in a strange voice." And where am I to take my meals?"

[13] k stands for "komnata" – a room in Russian. A room in this case is any separate livable space, other than the kitchen, the bathroom and the entryway. A room had to be separated with walls and had windows.
[14] Vladimir Papernyi, *Kul'tura Dva*, (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2011), p.103.
[15] Isadora Duncan (1877-1927) – famous American dancer, who resided in Moscow 1921-1924.

"In the bedroom," the four answered in chorus.

The purple of Philip Philippovich's face assumed a grayish tinge.

"Eat in the bedroom," he said in a slightly chocked voice, "read in the examination room, and examine patients in the dining room. It is very possible that Isadora Duncan does just this. … But I am not Isadora Duncan!..." he barked out suddenly, and the purple of his face turned yellow. "I shall dine in the dining room, and operate in the surgery!"[16]

Although fictional Philip Philippovich wins the fight over rooms as far the Soviet 1920s go, the non-fictional former and contemporary proletarians and elites of the Soviet Union soon discovered themselves stripped of precisely what is questioned in Bulgakov's passage: room identity. While the concept of a communal apartment soon proved to be problematic, and an official program for a separate apartment for every family was launched in the 1950s,[17] apartment rooms largely did not regain their identity until the collapse of the Soviet Union.[18] Moreover, the meaning of a room itself, as a unit of lived space, became compromised through the Soviet approach. The Soviets introduced a new form of thinking about housing conditions: not by rooms, not even by corners, such as before the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, but by square meters. This type of thinking virtually disregarded walls, did not speak of the necessity of the housing to perform certain functions, but rather only of the square footage offered to every Soviet citizen. Just one room of a communal apartment could have now hosted most of the

[16] Mikhail Bulgakov, *Heart of a Dog*, (New York: Grove Press, 1987), pp.26-27.
[17] "In the next three five-year plans every family will have a separate apartment!" Nikita Khrushchev claimed at the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956.
[18] Although many contemporary apartments now have functional room divisions similar to those in the US or Western Europe, many other apartments still have more occupants than rooms, preserving the functional overlay characteristic of the Soviet urban living.

domestic functions at once, sometimes even including cooking and hygiene. A room, as a container for separate functions or old forms of bourgeoise privacy, was no longer to be found.

In the Soviet Union *Sanitarnye normy i pravila* [rus. for Sanitary Norms and Regulations] or *SNiP* for short were a set of documents equivalent to the Building Code. They defined the upper and the lower area limits for each apartment of the forthcoming apartment block. These norms, typically developed by the Central Research and Design Institute for Residential and Public Buildings (TsNIIEP Zhilisha), approved by the State Committee for Construction (Gosstroi) and published by Stroiizdat (Building Publishing), meticulously defined the way Soviet housing had to be designed, constructed and used.[19] The absolute majority of Soviet housing, other than housing built for elites, was built according to social norms and could not go below or over the limit established by these Sanitary Norms and Rules. Besides, the Soviet *SNiP* differentiated between the so-called living area [*zhylaia ploshad'*] and effective area [*poleznaia ploshad'*] where the first one only represented the floor area of the rooms, excluding kitchen, bathroom, toilet room (if any) and hallways and the second one represented the floor area of the entire apartment.[20] The limits of the living area for a typical urban housing unit during different time periods were as following:

[19] The format of the Sanitary Norms and Regulations was first introduced in 1954, to replace the previous scattered rules. See *SNiP II-V.10-58 Zhylie zdaniia,* (Moscow: Stroizdat, 1954).
[20] Jane Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, p.30.

Year when SNiP was adjusted	1 room apartment (studio with a separate kitchen)		2 room apartment (one bedroom)		3 room apartment (two bedroom)		4 room apartment (three bedroom)		5 room apartment (four bedroom)		6 room apartment (five bedroom)	
	min	max	min	max	min	max	min	max	min	max	min	max
1971 (1978 edition)	12	36	23	48	36	63	46	74	56	91		
1985		36		53		65		77		95		
1989		36		53		65		77		95		108

Table 1.1. Upper and lower limitation for apartment floor areas according to *SNiPs* of different years.

In addition, *SNiP* specified that in 1985 and 1989 an area of a room had to be no less than eight square meters. This regulation number grew throughout the Soviet history, originally starting at six square meters in 1962.

Starting from Khrushchev's 1955 manifesto "On elimination of excesses in design and construction" austerity[21] and construction went hand in hand. Housing was no longer supposed to make an impression, but rather house as many families as possible in modest but private apartments. The Sanitary Norms and Regulations defined the lower and the upper limits for the apartment floor areas, but since housing design and construction had to be frugal, real life apartment square footages rarely reached the upper limits. Since housing was predominantly

[21] Or would frugality be a better term?

designed in prefabricated series, it is possible to talk about the typical square footages and apartment layouts. A typical Khrushchev era apartment belonging to one of the popular series (1-335, 1-434, 1-464, I-480 reached 31-33 square meters for a 1-room, 46-48 square meters for a 2-room and 56-58 square meters for a 3-room home.

Brezhnev's famous formula "economy has to be frugal," first presented at the 1981 26th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, signified the continuation of earlier Khrushchev floor area and materials thriftiness into the 1970s and 1980s. Since the problems with the tiny spaces of early modular apartments were already recognized, the 1970s apartment series were built with slight increase in the overall square footage, but with a tangible increase in life quality due to slightly bigger kitchens, higher ceilings, and better temperature and sound proofing. The tendency for the enlargement of kitchens, ceiling heights and overall floor area of the apartments continued through the 1980s. However, the logic behind the distribution of apartments along the k=n-1 formula did not change. The size of rooms grew, but the functional use remained the same due to the same number of rooms offered to families of the same composition.

Keeping in mind the number of rooms had to equal the number of occupants minus one, a typical Soviet family had a manner of household spatial organization rather different from that of the Western European or US situation. The number of functions in a typical household – sleeping (bedroom), eating (kitchen), entertainment and rest (living room), homework or household work, ex. sewing (work space) – inevitably outnumbered the number of available rooms. In practice, this meant no room could ever have one single function. A room that hosted sleeping at night would host entertainment and represent the functions of a living room during the day. Although such situation was not exclusively possible in the late Soviet Union, unlike in most other cities

around the world, in the Soviet Union it was a prescribed norm covering the entire population, except for the extreme elites.

In the late 1970s and 1980 Gosstroi [State Construction Committee of the USSR] hosted multiple architectural competitions for the development of Khrushchevka modernization solutions and new types of urban apartments. These conceptual competitions showed expanded footages, bigger rooms and less utilitarian plans. They casually included double beds—a characteristic sign of a monofunctional room—but they still followed the k=n-1 rule. For instance, a two-room[22] apartment had one room shown as a bedroom with a double bed, and another room shown as a living room with a sectional couch, yet the same apartment was supposed to be suitable for three people [Fig. 3.1].[23] If such an apartment was ever built, those three occupants would have a couple different options: to sleep in one room altogether, which would make a double bed virtually impossible, or to have one or two people sleep in the walk-through room.

[22] Not a two-bedroom, but a two-room, since apartments were never measured by the number of bedrooms, but by the number of rooms.
[23] *Illustrirovannyi catalog proektov otkrytogo konkursa na razrabotku proektnykh predlozhenii po novym tipam maloetazhnykh zhilykh domov I prinzipov plotno-nizkoi gorodskoi zastrojki, (Gosstroy SSSR, 1981),* p.24

Fig. 3.1. Published architectural projects from the "Modernization and Reconstruction of the Early Series Apartment Housing" contest catalogue, Gosstroi, 1987.

The closest analogy to this living situation one can think of is a friend staying on the living room couch. The walk-through room typically preserved its social and entertainment functions: the TV and the couch, as well as the glass cabinet with occasion tableware or book shelves.[24] The person(s) allocated in this quasi walk-through living room would have to unpack their bedding at night and hide or cover it in the morning for the daytime social, rest and domestic work functions. Their clothes would need to be stored elsewhere or a wardrobe would need to be placed in the living room. Most importantly, everybody needing to get to the kitchen or bathroom at night would need to pass by their sleeping area. The rhythms and the space of the household would need to be orchestrated in accordance to the sleep of the person staying in the walk-through room. Similar to Trifonov's characters from the "Exchange," an occupant of the

[24] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 150-159.

far room in a walk-through apartment had to first check whether the person in the walk-through room was asleep, and then quietly sneak to wherever they were going without turning on the light.

The functional overlap within a small room (ca.16 square meters) of a Soviet apartment forced the Soviet furniture industry to produce convertible or adjustable furniture for sleep, rest, entertainment and social functions. The rise of the furniture industry in the USSR followed the end of World War II, Stalin's death in 1952 and the shift to mass "compact" housing.[25] Panel apartment block small domestic spaces required furniture smaller than that of the pre-war period. The overlap of functions required for this furniture needed to be extra resourceful. This meant smaller dimensions and lighter materials: a piece of furniture that could have been easily taken up the stairs of the five-story Khrushchev-era buildings with no elevators. A typical panel apartment from 1-464 series (first introduced in the late 1950s and built until late 1970s) had two rooms – one was 3.20 meters wide and another one was 2.60. The latter one was an isolated room with no through traffic seemingly well suited for a bedroom. However, the dimensions and the layout of this room did not allow for comfortable placement of a full size double bed – the room was 2.60 m wide along the wall axes and contained a 1.80m to 2m wide bed that would have left an apartment dweller with only several dozen centimeters to walk around it. A wall closet at one end of the room and a door at another end made it impossible to put a double bed into the room's dead end and climb onto it without walking. In other words, a regular double bed, as we think of it today simply would not have fit. Although this situation changed with the later apartment series, the convertible furniture was already acquired and the number of family members per room typically did not decrease.

[25] Compact housing [rus. *malogabaritnoie zhyl'ie*] is a term typically used to define Khrushchev and post-Khrushchev time Soviet apartments due to their small dimensions.

A perfect piece of compact apartment furniture could also perform more than one function - such as sleep, entertainment and socialization. This is why a convertible couch or a day bed became Soviet consumer ideals. The characters of Trifonov's novel "Exchange*"* claim their Czechoslovakian convertible couch as the subject for their acquaintances jealousy despite its squeakiness.[26] The Soviet PBS-style film *The Time of the Great Housewarming*, dedicated to the successes of mass housing construction in the 1950s and promoting panel apartment living, demonstrates a species of furniture earlier unseen in the Soviet domestic interiors: a single folding bed, similar to a horizontal Murphy Bed familiar to Americans.[27] A folding bed, however, lost in popularity to a convertible couch or day bed, quite possibly due to it being a part of a sectional piece that not every Soviet family could afford or find among the limited supply of Soviet stores. A 1972 Soviet brochure authored by Boris Merzhanov— a major authority in the area of residential architecture—suggests an interior for a 'common' room of an apartment,[28] that at night hosts sleep of a couple: "the two sleeping spots— two couches placed at an angle— create a well isolated zone for rest;" an illustration for this setting shows a television set in front of one of the couches that helps clarify Merzhanov's "rest" as a space that will not only be used for sleep, but socialization [Fig. 3.2]. The abundance of convertible or multifunctional furniture in the late-Soviet home inspired Material Culture scholar Victor Buchli to speak about it as a new mode of everyday life, a new *byt*,[29] enforced by the state as an attempt to fight the petite bourgeoise Stalin-era domestic aesthetics.

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[26] Yuri Trifonov, "Obmen" in *Moskovskie povesti*, Litres, 2017. (written in 1969)
[27] *Pora bol'shogo novoselia*, directed by Nebylitskiy B., (Central'naia Studiia Dokumental'nykh Filmov: Moscow, 1959)
[28] Merzhanov describes an intensively used common room as having "a dining and a living room zone" and at night "transforming into a bedroom, say, for a young couple." Boris Merzhanov, *Inter'er Zhylishcha*, (Moscow: Znanie, 1970), p.21.
[29] *Byt* – mode of everyday life, particularly everything that has to do with home. For an in-depth exploration into the Soviet byt see Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 29-40.

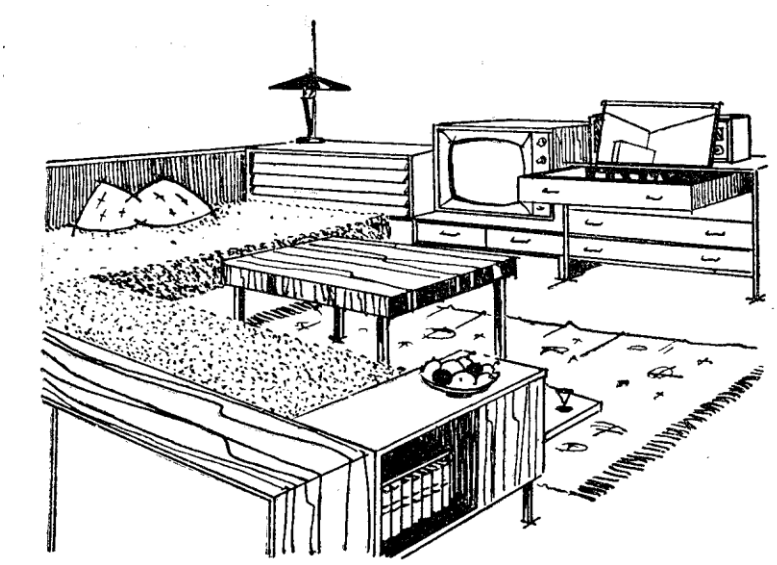

Fig. 3.2. An illustration from Boriz Merzhanov's *Residential Interior* [rus. *Interier Zhylishcha*] illustrating the use of multifunctional or convertible furniture (p.1970).

Despite the authoritarian effort to modernize domestic spaces, Soviet *byt* persisted, if not all together then partially through the rest of the 20th century and into contemporary time. Svetlana Boym writes that the powerful Pierre Bourdieu argument that taste is a product of class and education, loses its force in the face of the Russian cultural life that "survived not only the disappearance of the servants but even the rise and the disappearance of a variety of sociological approaches to art and to everyday living."[30] In other words, Boym saw the Soviet Union as a case proving that cultural life is not derivative, but a primary quality, while class lines and education are secondary qualities of a given society. The class and education context of the Soviet Union was nothing like that of the Russian Empire, yet elements of cultural life persisted, calling Bourdieu's formula of culture and taste resulting from class and education to question. The same can be said about *byt* [rus. for everyday domestic life]. Soviet domestic spatial organization shifted to a private apartment, where this organization transformed, but did not go

[30] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places*, p. 157

extinct. In the same way, as the Soviet Union collapsed, these spatial organizations evolved but did not disappear without a trace. Multifunctional rooms remained and so did the "k=n-1" households, with the number of occupants outnumbering the number of rooms.[31] Although the post-Soviet housing dream partially crystalized in the idea of a separate private home for a core family or a single individual, the search for a private monofunctional sleeping space within this home remained, and significantly intensified after the collapse of the Soviet Union.[32] Instead of one typical model of living determined by the Soviet system of controlled housing mobility, after the collapse of the Soviet Union there emerged multiple models reflecting a number of social and personal circumstances and spatial choices available to individuals in their contexts.

An interview with two generations of the same family who now live separately and differently, addresses the construction of their sleeping space and perfectly illustrates the plurality of sleep space models that have emerged after the collapse of the USSR. Oksana G. is in her mid-fifties and is a current-day resident of a four-room apartment in an apartment series building (c. late 1990s). She shares her experiences of bedroom settings throughout her life before her present housing situation (moved in 2000s). Currently, she lives with her husband and younger son; her older daughter has moved out of her parent's place and has an apartment of her own. She explains:

[31] The collapse of the Soviet Union was followed by a growth in economic disparity, and as the result, access to housing. Since the mechanism of state-supplied housing for the most part no longer functioned after 1991, families who were unable to afford bigger homes continued living and growing in small apartments. Until this day, it is common for several generations of the same family (more than one core family) to live together in homes, where occupants outnumber rooms. For more information on economic disparity see B. Milanović and L. Ersado, "Reform and Inequality During the Transition: An Analysis Using Panel Household Survey Data, 1990-2005", *UNU-WIDER*, 2010/62 and Jane Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012). Tsenkova and Turner provide the following numbers for Latvian and Ukrainian Households in 2002: 33, 5% of families of 3 lived in 2 or fewer rooms, while in Ukraine the same parameter reached 44.1%. Another 25,5% of 3 family member families lived in 3-room apartments in Latvia, while 23,7% of 3 family members lived in 3-room apartments in Ukraine. Sasha Tsenkova & Bengt Turner, "The Future of Social Housing in Eastern Europe: Reforms in Latvia and Ukraine," *European Journal of Housing Policy*, 4:2 (2004), p. 141.

[32] Jane Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), p.106-111.

[Before this current apartment] I only had my private bedroom once, when my brother was in the army and I still stayed with my parents for some time. It was literally a half a year. That was the only time when I had a personal bedroom.
But what really matters to me is not even bedroom *per se*. As I sew at home, I need a space to put a sewing machine. When we [two adults and two children] lived in the dormitory in one room, the sewing machine was in the kitchen. It was impossible to move in there [due to the lack of space]. Now when there is a room, I can at least place the sewing machine and not have to disassemble it. It is always standing there, and I can sit down and sew [anytime]. I don't have to pack it and hide it anywhere.
[So, your bedroom is not just a bedroom, but also a workspace?]
Yes, an office. Children have it the same way too–everything is in their rooms.[33]
Her daughter is in her early thirties and lives with her partner in a two-room apartment. She has a different setting:
Our bedroom is just a bedroom. We sometimes come home at different times. Because of this our workplace is in the living room; while one of us is asleep another one can keep working.[34]

The Rise of the Bedroom

The rise of the post-Soviet separate bedroom can be traced from 1991, the last year of the USSR and the final year of "The Parade of Sovereignties"—successive departures of the former

[33] Personal Interview with an apartment dweller Oksana G., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 14th, 2017.
[34] Personal interview with an apartment dweller Oleksandra G., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 14th, 2017.

republics from the Union. The first legislation establishing unlimited private property rights appeared in the USSR in March 1990 and continued appearing in the former Soviet republics in 1990-1991.[35] The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic enacted a new property law on January 1st, 1991.[36] The same law also contained a statement on property privatization.[37] The Supreme Council of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic passed the new "About Property" law in April 1991.[38] Similar laws were passed by the lawmaking institutions of the other republics. The umbrella law of the USSR and the local laws enacted in separate republics all introduced private property and general mechanisms for privatization of property, as well as the legal right to sell or buy private property and use private property for profit. This ultimately meant that the k=n-1 rule became obsolete. The citizens of the still standing USSR could now formally privatize and, hence, buy housing with the number of rooms only based on their desires, needs, and financial abilities.

This does not mean that the entire population of the USSR or the heir states immediately raced into the business of privatizing, buying, and selling housing. But the possibility produced a fundamentally new arrangement of housing opportunities unseen before. Besides the direct outcome of simply selling or buying housing, this also meant the possibility to rent or lease housing. And, most importantly for this study, these changes meant a potential room function separation in nearly every former Soviet apartment, larger than one room, based on the lower occupancy.

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[35] Zakon SSSR "O sobstvennosti v SSSR" ot 6 marta 1990 g. "Russian Property Law, Privatization, and the Right of "Full Economic Control," *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 107, No. 5 (Mar., 1994), p.1044.
[36] Zakon RSFSR ot 24 dekabria 1990g. "O sobstvennosti v RSFSR," Ibid.
[37] Statia 25 zakona RSFSR ot 24 dekabria 1990g. "O sobstvennosti v RSFSR," Ibid.
[38] Verkhovna Rada URSR, *Zakon URSR "Pro vlasnist'" (697-12) z 15 kvitnia 1991 roku*, (Kyiv: Vidomosti Verkhovnoi Rady URSR, 1991), accessed October 20th, 2018, < http://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/885-12>

In reality it did not happen immediately, nor did it happen in every apartment. While a large part of the population went through extreme economic hardship resulting from the crash of the centralized economy and rapid inflation, the post-Soviet urban environment became saturated with money.[39] Unlike the money of the previous regime, that had to be earned consistently in small increments over large periods of time, and most importantly had very limited buying power, this new money in sufficient amounts could buy anything. During the Soviet era, prior to the 1990-1991 shift in property laws, simply buying an apartment was a nearly impossible task. A person in need of housing during the late Soviet decades had two typical ways to go: to apply for state housing and stay in a housing line for years or decades. Or become a member of a housing cooperative, invest money and effort into construction and hopefully become an apartment resident within a couple years. Cooperatives, however, had their own problems, including price, loss of a spot in a state housing line and a necessity to receive a permission from neighbors to exchange the apartment. After the collapse of the Soviet Union a person who had one way or another accumulated a necessary amount of money could simply buy an apartment from its previous owner and dramatically change their living conditions at will.

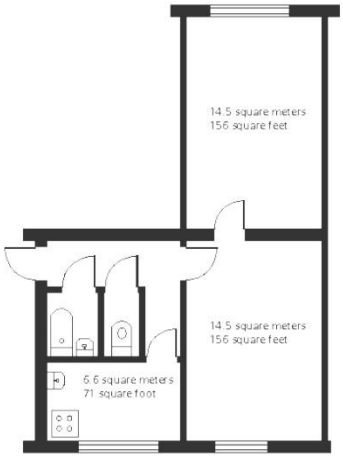
The gap between the richest and the poorest parts of the post-Soviet societies grew dramatically in all former republics in the early 1990s.[40] This led to what may be called, for the sake of argument, post-Soviet style gentrification. People whose income and life quality lowered dramatically in the 1990s could sell their apartments to those whose income dramatically grew. There was very little new construction in the first post-Soviet years.[41] Instead, many construction professionals shifted to remodeling existing apartments. In particular, in the early 1990s, those

[39] See Filip Novokmet, Thomas Piketty, Gabriel Zucman, "From Soviets to Oligarchs: Inequality and Property in Russia, 1905-2016," (NBER Working Paper No. 23712, August 2017).
[40] Ibid.
[41] Personal interview with an engineer Arseniy R., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 18th, 2017.

were the apartments either purchased by foreigners, or nouveau riche, or purchased for the purpose of renting them out after improving their condition.

Besides buying an apartment, late-Soviet and post-Soviet urbanites broadly practiced remodeling existing apartments. In Chapter 1 “Remodeling” I examine the late-Soviet and post-Soviet remodeling practices, so I will not expand on those here. I will, however, provide a very brief glimpse in relation to the subject of a bedroom. Due to the availability of new materials and construction labor, apartment dwellers could remove walls and construct new ones, substantially changing preexisting layouts of their apartments. This type of remodeling, referred to as re-planning, could go in several seemingly opposite, yet inherently related directions. Those directions can be most effectively illustrated with the case of a typical two-room Khrushchev-era apartment from the 1-434 apartment series (c. mid-1950s to mid-1960s). The layout of the apartment is characteristic of all Khrushchevkas – you first enter a tiny 4 square meter vestibule with doors to a bathroom, separate toilet and kitchen ahead of you and a door to a pass-through room on the side. Through this first room you make your way to the second smaller room.

An apartment like that was originally meant for three people. The demographics of those occupying this apartment could have ranged from a core family – two adults and a child – to several generations, such as a mother, a grandmother and a child, or an adult couple with one of their parents. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the dwellers of this apartment no longer had to be three. Let us look at several scenarios that happened to this apartment type and its bedroom with the advent of re-planning and change in the housing mobility.



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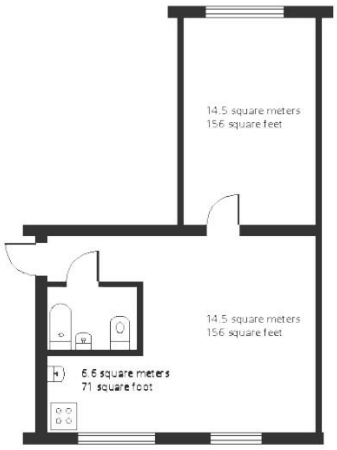
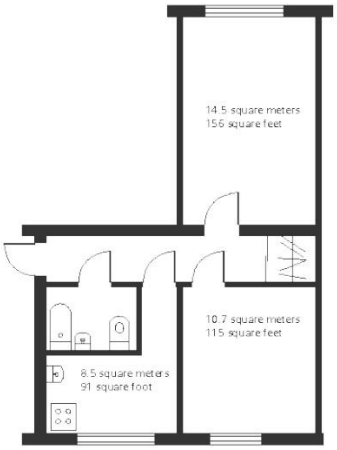




2) 3)

Fig. 3.3. 1-434 apartment plan transformations from Soviet (left) to post-Soviet (two on the right).

If the apartment population decreased to one or a couple of adults, they could have chosen to remove a wall between the kitchen and the walk-through room to expand the extremely small kitchen area (typically 5.8 square meters) [Fig.3.3, 3)]. This update could have resulted in two repercussions for functions of the remaining spaces: the second room, left untouched could have accommodated the function of sleep, while the rest of the overlapping functions could have been moved to the now open-plan living room/dining room/kitchen [Fig. 3.4.]. This example of re-

planning is widely illustrated in the post-Soviet sources on domestic interior design, such as *Idei vashego doma* [Ideas for your home]. Re-planning articles regularly appear in media. For instance, an article from 2003 titled "In a Khrushchevka" the magazine sets an example of a single young professional who removed all the internal non-loadbearing walls in a 2-bedroom Khrushchev era apartment in order to create a "studio" with an open plan.[42] Only in 2005 does kitchen wall removal for just one type of a two-room 1-335 series apartment appear in *Idei Vashego Doma* twice.[43] Besides magazines, books on re-planning offer their own general advice:

> To get a large space for hosting guests, you can disassemble the wall between the existing kitchen, the small and the large room. Dining alone or with the family is more pleasant, when in a spacious rather than a jammed room.[44]

Fig. 3.4. Before and after apartment plans provided by *Idei vashego doma* magazine in "Prevraschenia khrushchevki" [Khrushchevka Transformation] in 2005.

[42]"V khrushchevke," *Idei vashego doma*, No.4 (61) April 2003, accessed December 30th, 2017, <https://www.ivd.ru/custom_category/custom_subcategory/v-hrusevke-4463 >
[43]"Prevraschenia khrushchevki," *Idei vashego doma*, No.2, 2005, accessed December 30th, 2017, <https://www.ivd.ru/custom_category/custom_subcategory/prevrasenia-hrusevki-5411>; "Nemnogo sveta i tepla," *Idei vashego doma*, No.2, 2005, accessed December 30th, 2017, <https://www.ivd.ru/custom_category/custom_subcategory/nemnogo-sveta-i-tepla-5413>
[44] T.A. Korostleva, *Pereplanirovka kvartiry*, (Moscow: Gammapress, 2000), p. 23

As for the sleeping space, in the former two room apartment it is placed at a convertible couch, while a former 3 room apartment offers a separate room with a full bed. In this separate room there is no indication of functions other than sleep.

This type of re-planning is illustrated in an interview with Anna F. conducted as a part of this research. Her sister's family of two adults and one young child re-planned their two-room 1960s apartment in 1998. Originally, the apartment used to have an entry space with doors to all available spaces: two separate rooms, a kitchen and two doors to the bathroom and the toilet. Since the kitchen was considered small, it was decided to demolish the wall between the kitchen and the close by room. After the renovation, the newly created large space was used as a living room and a kid's room. The other isolated room became a bedroom. In this case, a bedroom was used for rest and occasional home work. Anna stated:

> They are a family that did not watch television. Perhaps they had a TV at that point, but most likely it was in that room that was joined to the kitchen. But the bedroom was just the bedroom, because he [the husband] either slept or rested there or he worked there on his computer. In general, this was the parent's zone. [45]

However, even in this case, when one room was dedicated predominantly to the function of sleep, there were ways to quickly transform it upon necessity:

> They had convertible furniture. They had one more convertible couch and they had a convertible bed built-in to a closet. You know, one of those beds that you can lift and hide away. It used to be always folded out, but in case of necessity it could have been hidden away, so the room could have been transformed into a living room.[46]

[45] Personal Interview with an architect Anna F., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 15th, 2017.
[46] Ibid.

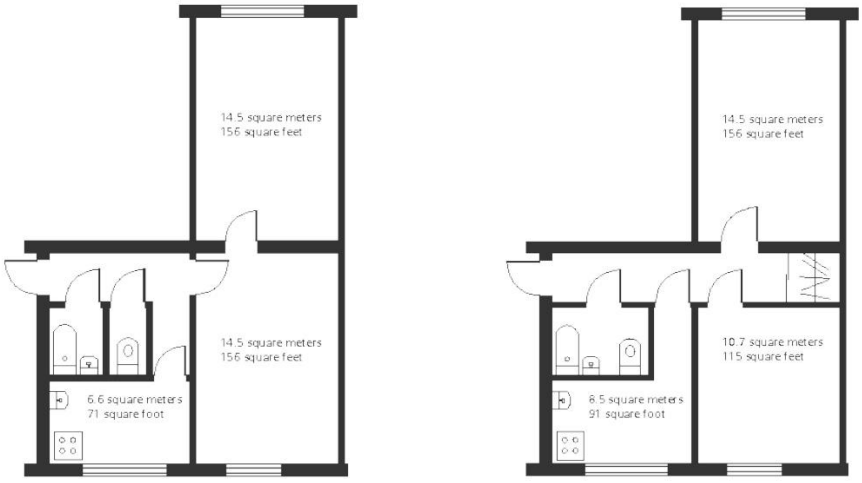
Another type of re-planning in the same initial layout is the creation of a new wall and a small corridor to isolate the former walk-through room [Fig.3.3., 3)]. This way both rooms acquire separate entries. This type or re-planning is characteristic of multiple generation or multiple family occupancy of the two-room apartments. During this research only one respondent reported on this type of re-planning done at their two-room apartment building. In his case, this was done due to the apartment being occupied by two adults—both himself and his mother were willing to sacrifice some of the already modest square footage to achieve more privacy through the construction of a new wall.[47] After the renovation, each room incorporated multiple functions: sleep, socialization and entertainment following the pre-existing Soviet rather than the newly emerged standard of spatial and functional separation. Although such a case only emerged once during the interview process, archival research resulted in more results. The Recorder of Deeds materials show that isolating a formerly walk-through room to create more privacy was among the most wide-spread renovations in the Khrushchev-era mass housing series [Fig.3.4.]. In Kyiv, where the Recorder of Deeds research was done, engineers who recorded apartment layout changes particularly noted that transformations like this were done to create private spaces for households composed of several core families. At the expense of the former Soviet walk-through room, occupants of those apartments created separate spaces with more privacy for separate families or adults.

The choreographies of these apartments changed dramatically. In the second case, the walk-through room was now isolated. Fig. 3.5. shows an example of this transformation: the room that used to be a walk-through room, is cut off with the help of a newly created corridor that now has entrances to both rooms. This meant that the room was no longer accessible to the

[47] Personal Interview with apartment dweller Valeriy M., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, April 27th, 2017.

extended family or friends in the same easy manner it used to be, when it doubled as a social space. In an original layout a walk-through room like that used to be perceived predominantly as a living room, rather than somebody's bedroom, even if it hosted somebody's sleep at night.[48] However, when it lost its walk-through quality, it became equal to the rest of the rooms in the apartment: the undetermined rooms, where functions were allocated arbitrarily, according to the number of family members and their needs. If an apartment was occupied by two or three generations and more than one core family, such re-planning would have led to a creation of separate family microcosms in each isolated room, with both sleep and socialization functions present in each of these rooms separately for separate core families. The same can be said about the second, non-walk-through room. Although the wall and the door, separating this room from the rest of the apartment space have always been there, they have not previously isolated the room from the entirety of the apartment population or even guests.[49] When the spatial functions no longer overlapped throughout the apartment, but rather doubled in each private room, there was no longer a need for the rest of the apartment population to access this far room.[50]

[48] See Chapter 5 "Socializing and Conclusion."
[49] Personal Interview with apartment dweller Valeriy M., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, April 27th, 2017.
[50] This analysis, indicating the changes in social life of an apartment due to the shifting physical boundaries, is in tune with Kemeny's concern with the "neglect of housing as a dimension of social structure" and Hillier and Hanson's Spatial Syntax Theory. Spatial Syntax Theory argues that physical layout of spaces affects social relationships that take place in them. Jim Kemeny, *Housing and Social Theory*, (London: Routledge, 1992), p.153; Bill Hillier and Julienne Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1984).



1) 2)

Fig 3.5. Plans based on recorder of deeds blueprints of a transformed two-room apartment: 1) Before; 2) After.

The objects in the spaces of these apartment dwellers also transformed in a couple of distinct ways, rather than following one route. The two most notable distinctions in the materiality of the post-Soviet bedrooms followed commodity consumption models: the "poverty culture" of reuse and maintenance, and the consumption economy of the newly rising commodity market.[51] Commodity deficit and the very narrow choice of available goods caused Soviet urbanites to repair and reuse rather than throw away old or broken things. At the same time, the limited yet powerful introduction to capitalist and socialist camp goods induced a consumerist culture, different in details yet similar in nature of consumerism to the one emerged in the capitalist societies as the result of mass production.[52] Within the same average household, pieces of furniture could have been repaired for decades, yet other pieces could have been vigorously

[51] Ekaterina Gerasimova and Sofiia Chuikina, "Obshestvo remonta," Neprikosnovennyi zapas, No.2 (34), 2004.
[52]See Natalya Chernyshova, "Philistines on the Big Screen: Consumerism in Soviet Cinema of the Brezhnev Era," *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema*, 5:2 (2014), 227-254; and Natalya Chernyshova, "Consuming Technology in a Closed Society: Household Appliances in Soviet Urban Homes of the Brezhnev Era." *Ab Imperio*, vol. no. 2 (2011), pp. 188-220.

"obtained"[53] from the limited sales, through bribing or through the informal economy. The 1991 introduction of the free market and unlimited commodity import invigorated and complicated naïve Soviet consumerism with the wide choice of product options. But most importantly, the border between poverty and consumerist cultures became much more evident. Repaired furniture became widely seen as a sign of low economic standing.[54] On the other hand, relatively affordable new furniture became readily available through international retailers like IKEA[55] and JYSK[56], or emerging local sellers. Repaired and new furniture could still coexist in one household, if the dwellers of this household both had resources and found repairing old furniture appealing for aesthetic, habit or hobby reasons. This meant that the international furniture types, such as a full bed or kitchen cabinet sets, entered the post-Soviet households, but did not completely replace convertible couches or single beds. Just like with a room for sleep there was no one single route of physical transformation. The sleeping furniture was now orchestrated according to the needs and resources of a household, rather than offered with very little alternatives by the state.

Objects other than furniture populating post-Soviet apartments also changed. That is not to say that Soviet-made objects became replaced with the globally produced ones. It is more so that the social purpose of these objects changed dramatically. The Soviet spaces for sleep were populated with conspicuous setups and objects: the carefully orchestrated setups of tableware, travel souvenirs, books, decorative figurines and gadgets meant to signify the social position of

[53] Because of consumer goods deficit many goods could not be bought freely, but had to be obtained through contrivances. For information about consumer goods deficit see Steven Sampson, "The Second Economy of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe". *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science.* 493 (1): 2016, p. 120-136.
[54] Gerasimova and Chuikina, "Obshestvo remonta," Neprikosnovennyi zapas, No.2 (34), 2004.
[55] first opened in the Russian Federation in 2000.
[56] first opened in the Russian Federation in 1996 and in Ukraine in 2004.

the apartment dweller(s).[57] These Soviet objects in Soviet homes virtually followed the model formulated by David Stea based on the Mexico City dwellings in the 1990s. Since all spaces of a middle-class home, other than spaces occupied by servants, were permeable for all members of the extended family, there were very few private objects.[58] Instead, most objects to be found were to represent the social status of the core family.[59] In a Soviet apartment, in a completely different social and spatial setting, the material culture consequences of the permeable walls appeared similar: little to no private objects were left on display and the nature of these private objects were highly dependent on social norms. The individual separation of space after the post-Soviet re-plannings let the personal objects populate private rooms, be it an apartment turned into an open plan one-bedroom or a walk-through room apartment turned into several private rooms with equal functions.

Space and Rhythms

Most importantly, what kind of implications did these changes have for a post-Soviet sleeping space? In place of the old spatial performances and rhythms of average Soviet apartments, there emerged several new types of spatial organizations and dwelling routines. According to their new income, apartment dwellers were either able to isolate sleep from the rest of domestic functions by locating it in a separate room; or complicate a spatial overlap by stuffing even more functions and people into one separate former walk-through room. On a surface level these two ends of a typical apartment transformation spectrum look opposite to

[57] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 150-159.
[58] David Stea, "House and Home: Identity, Dichotomy or Dialectic?" in Chiara Briganti and Kathy Mezei, *Domestic Space Reader*, (Toronto, Ont: University of Toronto press, 2012), p.48
[59] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places*, pp.155-157.

each other. However, under a closer look they are not that different in their motivation and conceptual outcomes. Both sleeping space scenarios revolve around the concept of privacy.

A Soviet apartment changed every night and every morning to accommodate sleep, in the absence of places designated to be sleep-only. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the popularization of apartment re-planning, as well as the introduction of new property laws, there emerged a number of households, where the apartment dwellers were able to designate a separate space only to sleeping—a bedroom in a familiar Western sense of the word. This room, empty during the day, only became populated during the night. It also provided a space perfectly separated from the representative part of an apartment: no longer did this room have to be transformed in order to host guests; a bedroom brought a sense of privacy rarely present in Soviet apartments—a space with entrance only limited to one or two bedroom occupants, rather than anybody permanently or temporarily occupying the apartment space. For an average post-Soviet adult, this meant an unprecedented control over their personal space and the added ability to regulate their time, independent of the daily rhythms of others.

Another scenario, that of multiple related families living in the same apartment, occurred simultaneously with the former one, due to the end of governmental housing supply and the growing income inequality.[60] When a new wall was built to separate entrances into two adjacent rooms, the dwellers of these rooms lost the former shared socialization and representational space— their day time living room and night-time quasi-bedroom. Instead they gained more privacy within their own personal rooms—no longer did one have to walk past somebody sleeping at night to get to the far away room. No longer did the occupant of the walk-through room have to hide elsewhere to gain the privacy of a closed door—the room was now isolated in

[60] A detailed account of the growing housing inequality after the collapse of the Soviet Union can be found in Jane Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), p.89.

the same way the other one was from the very beginning and the occupants of different rooms appeared equal in their spatial settings. Furthermore, the social space, formerly located in the walk-through room, did not disappear, it relocated; this relocation will be described in the further chapter on the social function of a home.

If there has been more than one avenue in which the spaces for sleep transformed after the collapse of the Soviet Union, is there any precise conclusion that can be made on the nature of this transformation? Yes, there is. Despite the multiple transformation strategies and the growing material and economic stratification of the post-Soviet apartment dwellers, there is something all of these transformations, instigated by both poverty and wealth, have in common. The two most important categories shared by all transformed sleep spaces are their newly emerged privacy and the changed everyday rhythms.

The spatial privacy part is simple: whether or not post-Soviet apartment dwellers succeeded in gaining more privately occupied sleep space, by constructing new walls or removing old walls and acquiring full beds, the intent was the same in all cases: to gain a space of one's own, where sleep would happen on one's own terms. Several studies of the pre-mass housing era everyday life agree: sleep of the Soviet citizen was not a private affair.[61] Unlike the bourgeoise bedroom, where a body of a sleeper was to be separated from the rest of society with walls and doors, the body of a Soviet sleeper was seen, heard and regulated by the other members of society. The shame attached to nighttime sleep that Norbert Elias described in his *Civilizing Process* fell victim to the earliest Soviet attempts to eradicate everything old, capitalist, and bourgeoise.[62] The fight on shame in the first Soviet decade sometimes took bizarre and radical forms, like the

[61] Aleksander Kuliapin and Olga Skubach, *Mifologiia Sovetskoi Povsednevnosti,* Iazyki slavianskoi kul′tury (IaSK), 2013, p.128

[62] Norbert Elias, excerpt from *Civilizing Process* in Chiara Briganti and Kathy Mezei, *Domestic Space Reader*, (Toronto, Ont: University of Toronto press, 2012), pp. 227-229.

radical nudist *Down With The Shame!* Society active in mid-1920s. The society's activities included naked marches through the streets of Soviet cities, Moscow in particular, to encourage communists to abandon bourgeoise shame of the naked body. Its activities were not met with much enthusiasm either by the general public, or by the state. [63]

Removing clothing may have been too much for the early communist state, but removing the isolation of a bedroom was a universal state strategy, as the Soviet backbone proletariat class was not unused to the "corners" in rental apartments. Sleep had to be undertaken as a collective and it had to be ideologically correct, thus performed in spaces where no private misbehavior could escape the socialist public view.[64] The Stalin-era collective sleep of a communal apartment fell out of favor in the late 1950s; yet, the sleep of an individual in mass-built apartments did not become private either. Sleep rather shifted from a collective to a core family group, where members were still to participate in building socialism, if not in the entire state than within each given apartment.[65]

Perestroika and the fall of the USSR changed this dynamic, with spatial imagination no longer rotating around a collective or a core family, but an individual. The dream of an individual space led Soviet urbanites to all kinds of contrivances. In 1992 *Rabotnitsa* magazine published an article eloquently titled "Your Dream: A Private Bedroom." The article suggested

[63] It seems that out of all bourgeoise habits, shame of the naked body was not the one the Soviet society was ready to abandon: radical nudists were physically interrogated, taken off public transport, and finally condemned by the Communist state itself. The Soviet People's Commissar of Healthcare, Nickolay Semashko published a statement in a major Soviet newspaper *Izvestiia* stating that "when such capitalist ugliness as prostitution and hooliganism, are not yet outlived in the Soviet society, nudity only promotes immorality, and not good morals."

[64] Vladimir Paperny on Konstantin Melnikov's house in *Kul'tura Dva*, (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2011), p.148.

[65] Socialism in a One Country – a theory, broadly accepted in the Soviet Union after the defeat of socialist revolutions in European countries. Formally introduced by Nickolay Bukharin in 1925. "Communism in One Apartment" was a running Soviet joke that originated from the above, meaning the promised communist paradise created in a single apartment, often obtaining commodities through the informal economy and bribery.

separating a corner of the room with a specially constructed podium and a frame with a curtain, promising that even in a small apartment a dream of a private bedroom can come true.[66]

As one of the interviewees for the project put it while explaining the separation of a wall-through room that he and his mother undertook in their two-room apartment: "we both simply wanted to have our own space."[67] Like in this interviewee's case, a new wall and a new door to a former walk-through room may have not secured this young adult a home separate from his parents, but it did provide a much broader ability to manipulate his own space the way he wanted to. In addition, it allowed him to adjust the daily rhythms within his individual room and the rest of the apartment, since there were no longer an inhabited walk-through room in between him and the shared utilities.

[66]"Vasha mechta—sobstvennaia spal'nia," *Rabotnitsa*, Vol.3-4, (1992), 8/11.
[67] Personal Interview with an apartment dweller Valeriy M., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, April 27th, 2017.

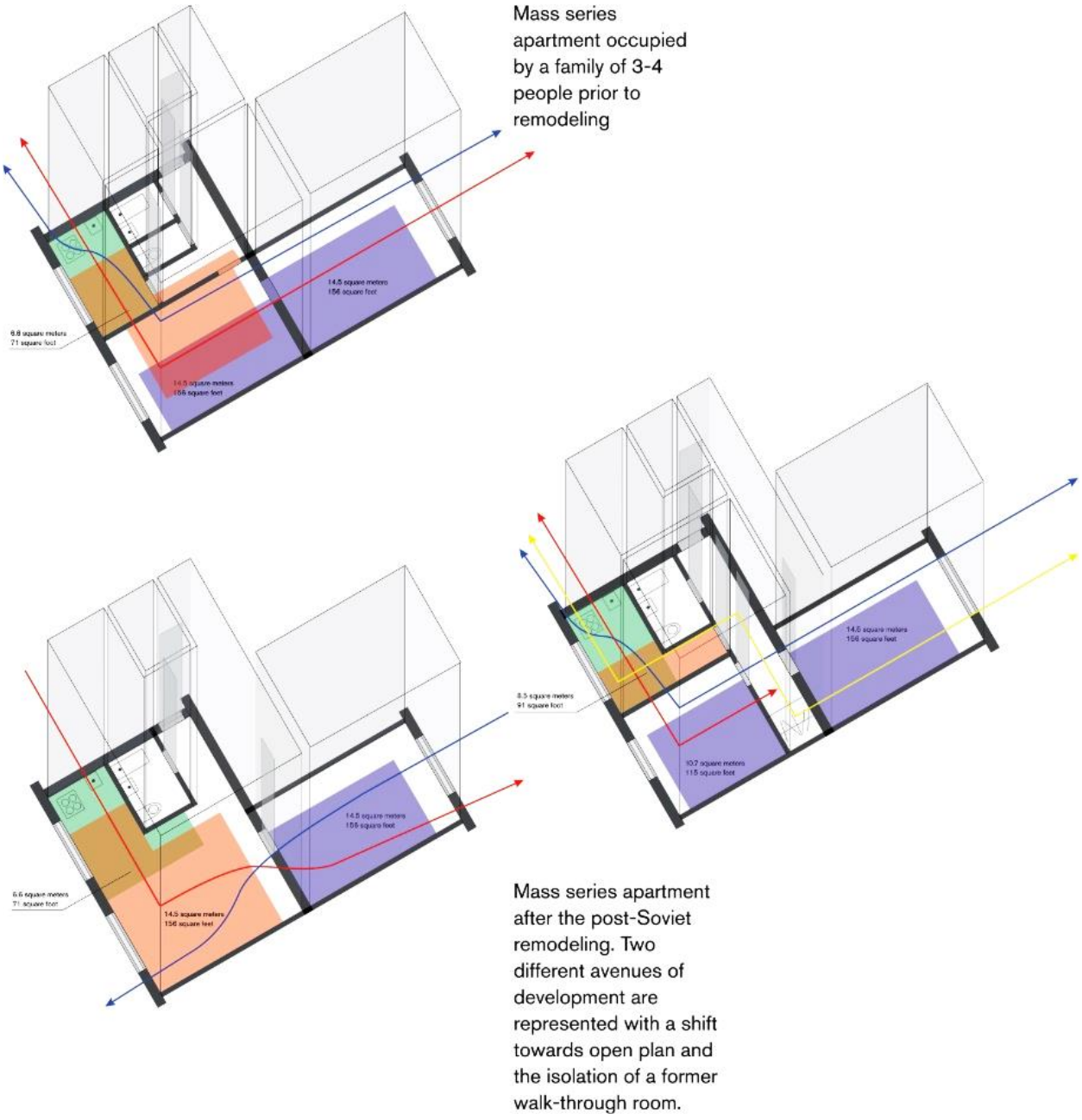


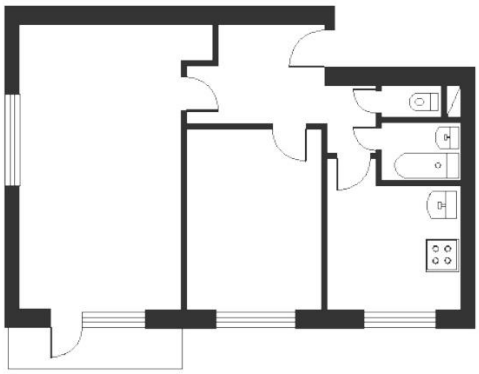
Fig. 3.6. Soviet and post-Soviet spatial functions and daily rhythms in a typical apartment series home.

The change in daily rhythms and choreographies is no less important for the understanding of apartment transformation than the physical walls of the apartment *per se*. Questioning everyday rhythms in scholarly analysis was first consolidated in Henri Lefebvre's late work *Rhythmanalysis.* In the post-Spatial Turn disciplines, already dominated by Lefebvre's social

construction of space, rhythmanalysis is frequently applied to understand the ways in which "the so-called natural rhythms"—the rhythms of the human organs, circadian rhythms, daily and seasonal repetitions in nature— "change for multiple, technological, socio-economic reasons."[68]According to Lefebvre, capital and capitalism has in many ways modeled everyday rhythms of an individual. While in agreement with Lefebvre, this study states that socialist organization has modeled everyday rhythms of its subject no less than the capitalist one.[69] The sleep-awake rhythm of a Soviet apartment dweller locked in a k=n-1 rule, appeared co-dependent on the rest of the apartment collective. Only if the entire population of the apartment agreed to respect the sleep of the occupant(s) of the walk-through room, could that sleep take place in comfortable circumstance. Even beyond personal relationships and agreements, different apartment dwellers may have had different requirements to their everyday rhythms: a younger generation would have left and returned early, adults would have left early and returned late, while the retired older population would have no need to wake up early or stay until late if not for the overlapping presence and non-matching rhythms of the other two generations. The younger generation would have often been allocated to the private, rather than walk-through room(s), so that adults and older generation could enjoy some afterhours entertainment: watching television while the younger generation was already asleep in an isolated room. The spatial functions of sleep, entertainment, nursing, socialization and the daily rhythms of different family members overlapped forcing the necessity of collective agreements and action.

[68] Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), p.83

[69] While rhythmanalysis did appear in the field of post-Soviet studies, it was only used in a couple studies and applied predominantly to public space. Wladimir Sgibnev, "Rhythms of Being Together: Public Space in Urban Tajikistan Through the Lens of Rhythmanalysis," *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, Vol. 35 Issue: 7/8, pp.533-549.



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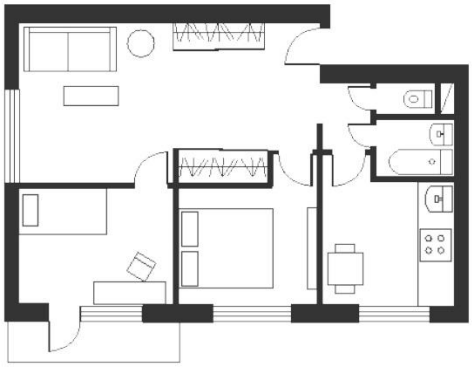

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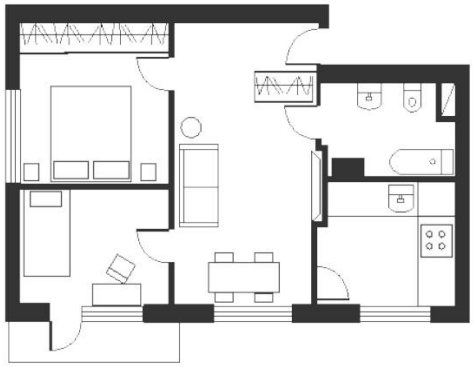

3)

Fig.3.7. 1) A plan of a two-room apartment (I-515/5 series) before remodeling and re-planning; 2) and 3) plans of the same apartment re-planned to have two isolated bedrooms and a separate living room space.[70] Both of these re-planning options indicate a separation between night time and date time spaces. Both suggest direct access to each bedroom from a communal space.

Post-Soviet rhythms and post-Soviet sleep changed dramatically. Whether a young adult able to afford an individual apartment or a family of two allocated in a separate room, the post-Soviet apartment dwellers removed their sleeping space from the daily routine of social functions formerly happening in the same space that had hosted sleep at night [Fig.3.6., 3.7.]. The space of a separate room no longer had to be competed for; the television and other forms of

[70] Ruslan Kirnichanskiy, "Pereplanirovka: Modernizatsiia dvukhkomnatnoi kvartiry v khrushchevke I-515/5," *Houzz*, September 3, 2015, accessed on April 25, 2018, <https://www.houzz.ru/ideabooks/52262255/list/pereplanirovka-modernizatsiya-dvuhkomnatnoy-kvartiry-v-hrushchevke-1-515-5> .

entertainment now existed privately in separate rooms, or in the still shared spaces, such as the kitchen. But even more importantly, there was no longer any through traffic through the spaces of post-Soviet sleep and no group accord necessary for a healthy sleep to be sustained. [71] Individual sleep shifted from the realm of collective to the realm of private, with the daily rhythms no longer defined with the k=n-1 rule, but solely with the desire of an individual apartment dweller to privately orchestrate their sleep.

[71] Beyond the general collective agreement of living in an apartment building, such as quiet regime at night.

CHAPTER 3: EATING

Crowded, but not aggrieved [rus. *V tesnote da ne v obide*].
—Russian idiom

"The kitchen was eight [square] meters. When we brought in the furniture, I had a choice: either to have a fridge or a table. After the stove and the sink were put in place, both a fridge and a table would not have fit simultaneously,"[1] Oksana remembers, while showing me the plan of her apartment before its layout was re-planned. We are seated at the dining table in her living room, overlooking her kitchen through a large opening in the wall. The dining zone is a continuation of the kitchen area; the rest of the living room is taken up by a separate 'den'—couches, armchairs and a coffee table—as it is often called in American homes. Although Oksana's original kitchen layout was already up to three square meters bigger than that of the smallest apartment building kitchens,[2] her concern was that it would have been impossible for her family of four to comfortably cook, store food, eat and spend time together all on 8 square meters (86 square feet).

In 2001 Oksana knew that everything having to do with food—cooking, storage, dining and socializing over a meal or tea—had to fit into the kitchen, and if not, she was willing to move the kitchen walls rather than change her expectations of the space. That is why as soon as her family was able to move into their new apartment, they started remodeling, or more specifically re-planning to adjust their food-related spaces to their vision, even though they did not have enough resources to do it all at once and had to take months, if not years to accomplish the entire project. An expert in the quotidian spaces, Elizabeth Cromley, wrote that "food axis" of a home—spaces related to cooking, food storage and eating—"change with time, region and climate, ethnicity,

[1] Interview with an apartment dweller Oksana G., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 14th, 2017.
[2] The smallest kitchens looked at in this article are the ones starting at 4.5 square meters found in the early prefabricated panel apartment building series from the 1950s and 1960s.

gender, class, and household economics."[3] The persistent infrastructure of an urban apartment block together with the rupture of the collapse of the Soviet Union facilitated a creation of a new model of domestic food-related spaces, often informed, but not identical to its contemporary Western counterparts. Inspired by the many post-Soviet urbanites who sacrificed their orderly life for months and sometimes years for food space transformations, this chapter tracks how these apartment dwellers formed their understanding of food-related spaces within the home, and how this sense changed on the eve and after the historic rupture—collapse of the USSR in 1991.

In order to speak about the changes in food spaces effectively this chapter is structured under three themes: the late-Soviet domestic food spaces and practices, the late Soviet and post-Soviet remodeling boom and the transformation of domestic food-related architecture along the collapse of the USSR in 1991. First, this chapter will explain the peculiarity of the late Soviet spaces of eating, determined both by the institutional construction of a proper Soviet home, and the grassroots level everyday practices going along, tangentially, or even against the effort of the state.[4] Second, it will speak of the increasing popularity of domestic remodeling in the late 1980s and the full-blown remodeling boom of the 1990s to provide the context for physical transformations that took place in many domestic spaces for food consumption. Finally, this study will show that in the late-Soviet and post-Soviet years there grew a trend to combine

[3] Elizabeth Cromley, *The Food Axis: Cooking, Eating and the Architecture of the American Houses,* (Charlotsville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), p. 3.

[4] The late-Soviet housing stock, a product of 7 decades of the Communist rule, predominantly consisted of pre-Revolutionary communal, Stalin-era, prefabricated Khrushchev-era (first generation generation) and Brezhnev-era (second and third generation) apartments. The intention of the state into the apartment life of the Khrushchev-era is described in Victor Buchli, "Khrushchev, Modernism, and the Fight against "Petit-bourgeois" Consciousness in the Soviet Home," *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 10, No. 2, *Design, Stalin and the Thaw* (1997), 161-176, p. 162. The relationship between the home and the state in the Brezhnev-era is described in Natalya Chernyshova, "Closing the Door on Socialism: Furniture and the Domestic Interior," *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era,* (London: Routledge, 2015).

previously separate spaces of everyday and celebratory eating that accompanied the shifting attitudes of the post-Soviet urban populations to food consumption.

From Round to Orthogonal Tables

The majority of Soviet and post-Soviet urbanites had access to a kitchen in their dwelling.[5] At the same time, the majority of Soviet homes had no dining room.[6] With a small number of exclusions, such as early Constructivist experimental apartment buildings, Soviet urbanites cooked their food in the kitchen.[7] The question of where food was consumed requires a more complex explanation: existing dining rooms in urban homes fell victim to *compaction* [rus. *uplotnenie*], while the newly built apartments followed k=n-1 formula, a rule that determined that the number of residents (n) was to outnumber rooms (k) by 1, making a separate dining room virtually impossible.[8]

[5] Throughout Soviet history there existed a couple of urban housing types with no kitchen access, one such examples being some of the barracks [rus. *baraki*], a type communal housing not necessarily equipped with kitchen or hygienic facilities, and some communal apartments, if they were established in previously non-residential buildings. The rest of urban housing had a kitchen, even if shared between many residents of a communal apartment.

[6] Victor Buchli in his *Archeology of Socialism* writes that the elimination of a dining room took place along the de-Stalinization effort and with the introduction of the utilitarian prefabricated housing in the late 1950s. According to Buchli it was not until the 1950s that a Soviet apartment shifted towards multifunctional, rather than monofunctional spaces. This theory, however, is debatable. It is possible to argue that a Soviet apartment shifted towards multifunctional spaces in its very beginning, with the introduction of k=n-1 rule 1918 decree "O vselenii semei Krasnoarmeitsev i bezrabotnykh rabochikh v zhyl'e burzhuazii i normirovke zhylykh pomeshchenii." Rooms remained multifunctional most Soviet urban households until 1991, excluding only the elites of the Soviet society, meaning that the number of people always exceeded the number of rooms in the apartment. A dining room, hence, was impossible for the absolute majority of urbanites throughout the Soviet history. What Buchli identifies as a dining room was rather a multifunctional area in one of the available rooms, used for different purposes throughout the day. Despite Buchli's examples drawn from a Soviet domestic interior advice book, the actual apartments constructed in the 1960s were too modestly sized for an open plan or for Buchli's illustration to be realized. The rooms remained as segregated as they used to be before. A transformation shown by Buchli could have only taken place in a large communal apartment room, which made this scenario practically impossible due to the necessity to replace all furniture at once for no real reason in the society of an omnipresent commodity deficit. *An Archeology of Socialism* refers to the formal modernist discourse in Soviet domestic architecture without a realization that this theory took a very different form in practice.

[7] In some experimental Constructivist housing, Narkomfin apartment building in particular, architects abolished apartment kitchens in favor of a communal canteen that was to feed the entire population of the building. The experiment largely failed: apartment dwellers establishing and expanded individual kitchenettes inside of their apartments.

[8] Compaction—confiscation of housing space above the established nine square meter norm from homeowners in the first years after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

To identify where the late-Soviet urbanites ate in the absence of a dining room, it is first necessary to look at the types of late-Soviet urban housing, with the communal and individual housing being the largest two categories. In communal housing, food preparation spaces—kitchens—were shared between multiple unrelated individuals and families, while an individual apartment dwelling had its own separate food preparation space. A typical kitchen in a communal apartment contained several stoves, a work station and some storage. While there could have been seating at a communal kitchen, food was rarely consumed in this shared space where it was cooked.[9] This is because apartment dwellers perceived a kitchen as a utilitarian labor space, rather than the cozy hearth of a home.[10] Communal apartments were a form of a social experiment; unrelated families and individuals from different social groups were placed in one apartment to live together. Conflicts were frequent, theft and food spoiling were not unheard of.[11] Excessive use of the shared spaces could have been perceived as antisocial, with alcoholics drinking at the communal kitchen or sleeping in the communal corridor, or neighbors taking over the bathroom for too long being typical examples.[12]

A communal kitchen may appear to be anything, rarely even a space of voluntary, rather than forced socialization, but never a place of food consumption. Where did the cooked food go from the kitchen? From the kitchen this food "spread into apartments [rooms] as the secondary signs of offenses, spiteful looks, greetings and sweet patty gifts…"[13] The food was then

[9] See Paola Messana, *Soviet Communal Living: An Oral History of the Kommunalka,* (New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 117 or Ilya Utekhin, Alice Nakhimovsky, Slava Paperno, Nancy Ries, *Communal Living in Russia: A Virtual Museum of Soviet Everyday Life* Project, <http://kommunalka.colgate.edu/cfm/essays.cfm?ClipID=250&TourID=910>

[10] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), p.147.

[11] Lynne Attwood, *Gender and Housing in Soviet Russia: Private Life in a Public Space,* (Manchester, GB: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp.224-226.

[12] Attwood, *Gender and Housing in Soviet Russia,* p.223.

[13] Dmitriy Prigov, *Zhivite v Moskve. Rukopis' na pravakh romana,* (Moskva: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2000), p. 96.

consumed at a corpulent round or rectangular table, with the round one being particularly iconic for the communal and Stalin-era apartments.[14] That is because a family room(s) in a communal apartment or an individual apartment built prior to the late 1950s was typically big enough to make a round table work. All kinds of domestic practices took place at the round table: meals, homework and ironing to name just a few. Many of these domestic practices are vividly documented in the Soviet film of the late 1950s and 1960s: during these decades the Soviet filmmakers, similar to their French New Wave counterparts, expressed interest in realistic portrayals and everyday life, shifting away from studio shooting and into the real streets and homes of the Soviet citizens. For instance, in the 1957 retrospective movie *The House I Live In* round or large tables are found across class lines: both Soviet elites, technical intelligentsia and working class are portrayed owning tables like that; the latter ones are particularly often shown eating food at a large table with the entire big family present.[15] That is how Soviet family domestic life is typically portrayed in still images as well: using the table in the room one way or another [Fig.4.1.a and b].

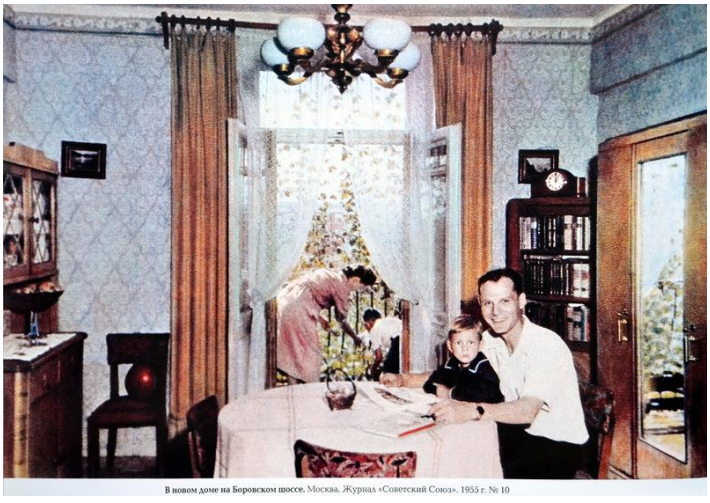

Fig. 4.1. a) An illustration (October, 1955) and a b) cover of the *Sovetskiy Soyuz* magazine [rus. for the *Soviet Union*] (December 1954).

[14] For instance, in a movie *Dobrovol'tsi*, directed by Yuri Egorov, (Moscow: Gorky Film Studio, 1958) and a painting *Utro*, (1954) by Tatiana Iablonskaia.
[15] *Dom v kotorom ia zhivu*, directed by Lev Kulidzhanov and Jakov Segel', (Moscow: Gorky Film Studio, 1957).

No less important than everyday practices *shown* in the Soviet mid-century realist cinema, are the practices and spaces *not shown*: utilitarian spaces, kitchen included, remained invisible to the camera. This circumstance was not due to the specific communal kitchen inconveniences, but rather due to the general understanding of a kitchen as a utilitarian work space, in all types of apartment housing. The understanding of a kitchen lasted all the way up to the late 1950s and the spread of prefabricated housing with radically different approaches to kitchen organization. Soviet media did not meet reality until the 1960s: movies barely showed kitchens, even when they concentrated on domestic life and family relationships.[16] With nothing that Soviet mid-century artists and filmmakers found worthy of portrayal, food preparation spaces remained behind the scenes all the way until the change in kitchen practices upon Khrushchev's housing reforms. Food practices of a mid-century Soviet urban apartment, therefore, existed somewhere in-between what Sarah Bonnemaison defines as the "traditional patterns of cooking, eating and living in a single room"[17] and a former bourgeoise apartment kitchen, that used to be a space of servant labor and living, and became the space of housewife's labor after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.[18]

It is only with the arrival of the prefabricated mass housing and the accompanying furniture production that kitchens surmounted their utilitarian past, and became used not only for cooking,

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[16] In *The House I Live In* the kitchen is only briefly shown one single time, when a mother of one of the newly moved-in families glances into the kitchen and turns on the faucet to check the running water. *Dom v kotorom ia zhivu*, directed by Lev Kulidzhanov and Jakov Segel', (Moscow: Gorky Film Studio, 1957).

[17] Sarah Bonnemaison, "Performing the Modernist Dwelling: The Unite d'Habitation of Marseille" in *Architecture as Performing Art*, ed. By Marcia Feuerstein and Gray Read, (Burlington: Ashgate, 2013), p.64

[18] Susan E. Reid, "The Khrushchev Kitchen: Domesticating the Scientific-Technological Revolution" *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 40, No. 2, Domestic Dreamworlds: Notions of Home in Post-1945 Europe (Apr., 2005), 289-316, p. 289. The effects of the disappearance of servant labor from the kitchen are relevant far beyond just Soviet geographies. However, the effects of this labor disappearance vary and have taken different spans of time to unwrap. For instance, Elizabeth Cromley associates the merging between the cooking, dining and living room spaces in the American homes with the "change towards the servanatless household evident since 1910." Elizabeth Cromley, *The Food Axis: Cooking, Eating and the Architecture of the American Houses,* (Charlotsville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), p. 204.

but also for consuming food. Khrushchev's course towards an individual apartment for every family, implied a separate set of auxiliary spaces—kitchens, bathrooms and storage—for every apartment. However, instead of simply transferring the old practices of cooking and eating in new apartments, the Soviet urbanities had to largely adjust to their new reality.[19] The conceptual model of a home chosen by Soviet architects, engineers and politicians was not unlike its Russian Constructivist and Western, particularly French, functionalist counterpart. A model Khrushchev-era kitchen in many ways resembled the Frankfurt kitchen:[20] its organization was supposed to be as efficient as possible in order to alleviate the burden of everyday domestic labor. The modernist qualities of the new Soviet residential design "included the use of reinforced concrete; the harmonization of internal spaces, as well as of interiors with natural landscape; a striving for a sense of openness; and the conformity of form to function in terms of structure, furnishing and décor"[21] At the same time, there existed a major difference between the Soviet prefabricated housing and examples elsewhere, namely that the Soviet apartment designs had to follow a strict set of rules titled *Sanitary Norms and Regulations* [rus. *Sanitarnye normy i pravila* or *SNiP*], which determined precisely how small or large each lived room[22] and each auxiliary space had to be. Additionally, formally starting from 1958 and practically starting with the second generation of prefabricated housing (1963-1971),[23] *Sanitary Norms and Regulations*

[19] Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home: Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015), p.64.
[20] Frankfurt Kitchen is a commonly used name for the modernist fitted kitchen designed by Margarete Schutte-Lihotsky for the Frankfurt housing projects in 1926-27. *Modernism:1914-1939, Designing a New World*, edited by Christopher Wilk, (London: Victoria & Albert Publications, 2006), p. 180.
[21] Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home*), p.27.
[22] Soviet bureaucracy divided domestic space into the so-called "lived" and "auxiliary" space, with auxiliary spaces being kitchens, bathrooms, lavatories, hallways, and storage, and lived space being everything else.
[23] Plans from Philipp Meuser and Dmitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR 1955*-1991, (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015), p. 267.

strictly prohibited open kitchen design due to the safety regulations for gas stoves.[24] Therefore, the modernist striving to openness may have persisted in the concept, but only made it to select examples of the first generation prefabricated housing on the ground. Khrushchev's housing campaign was supposed to be economical:[25] together with the persisting normative of housing area per person (nine square meters 1918 to 1983 and twelve square meters 1983 to 1991 in Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic)[26] and the spacing between the concrete slabs at 3.20 meters, these apartments were quite small. This meant that an all-purpose large table could no longer fit comfortably in the small rooms. Besides, these small rooms already had to host a number of functions: sleeping, homework, watching television, and all of that for the number of residents that mandatorily outnumbered the rooms.[27] Space for family meal consumption was no longer found in the rooms and had to relocate somewhere else.

The spatial layout and performance of a kitchen changed dramatically: in the late 1950s instead of just work stations, there appeared a table with chairs used for eating. Daily meals relocated to the kitchen despite the tightness of these newly re-imagined spaces. The tightness of a prefabricated Khrushchev-era kitchen deserves a separate explanation. Since the majority of housing in the USSR was supplied by the state and, hence, considered social housing, area limitations were prescribed by the building codes at both the lowest and the highest possible size. By the time Nikita Khrushchev announced his housing campaign in 1957, existing housing was not enough to house urban populations.[28] Besides, a lot of the existing housing was damaged

[24] *Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila*, II-B.10-58 *Zhylie zdaniia.*(Moscow: Gosudarsvennoe izdatel'stvo literatury po stroitel'stvu, arkhitekture I stroitel'nym materialam, 1958), p.20.
[25] Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home*, pp.26-28.
[26] Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home*, p. 150 and "Norma zhyloi ploshchadi" in *Zhilishchnyi kodeks RSFSR*, (Moskva: Iuridicheskaia literatura, 1986).
[27] Due to the distribution of housing according to k=n-1formula, where k was the number of rooms and n was the number of apartment occupants,
[28] Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home,* p.2.

during World War II and only quickly and superficially repaired in the next decade.[29] Khrushchev's campaign emphasized providing every family with a separate apartment, rather than any form of communal living.[30] In practice constructing millions of separate prefabricated panel apartments in the Soviet ideological environment of austerity meant that apartments had to be small.[31] The buildings codes (*Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila* or *SNiP*) were changed to prescribe smaller maximum areas for apartment spaces. Under the 1958 change in the Soviet building codes the lowest overall permissible area of an apartment dropped down to 16 square meters of residential area[32] and kitchens went from the minimum of seven square meters (seventy five square feet) down to four and a half (forty eight square feet) [Fig. 4.2].[33] Due to this same tightness the round table was left behind and replaced with a small orthogonal table instead. A lot of times these new kitchen tables were collapsible to fit the limited space.[34]

[29] Ibid., p.20
[30] Ibid., p.2.
[31] The two theories that Steven Harris suggests explaining the small dimensions chosen for the first generation of prefabricated apartments are the economic theory—that of small dimensions allowing to build apartments at small cost, and that of the ideological austerity, namely imposing modest housing dimensions on the population as a particularly proper Soviet and modernist living environment. Steven E. Harris, *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life After Stalin*, (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2013), p. 28-29.
[32] *Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila* II-B.10-58 *Zhylie zdaniia.* (Moscow: Gosudarsvennoe izdatel'stvo literatury po stroitel'stvu, arkhitekture I stroitel'nym materialam, 1958), p.20.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Victor Buchli, "Khrushchev, Modernism, and the Fight against "Petit-bourgeois" Consciousness in the Soviet Home," *Journal of Design History*, (Vol. 10, No. 2, Design, Stalin and the Thaw (1997), pp. 161-176), p. 166.

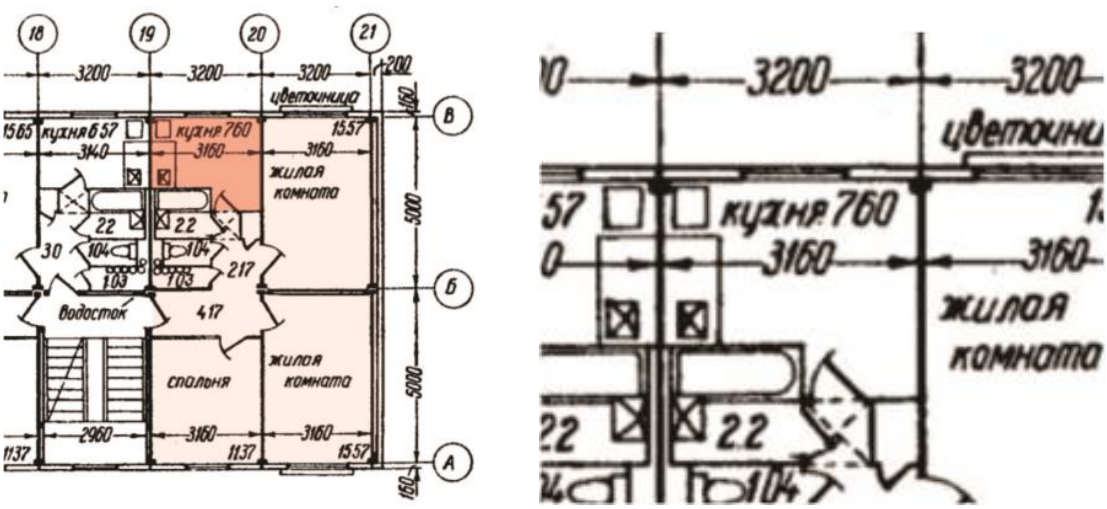

Fig. 4.2. K-7 prefabricated apartment series: three-room apartment (left) and a close-up of the 6 square meter kitchen (right).[35]

The Soviet furniture industry, sluggish like the rest of the Soviet consumer goods production, switched its design standards and sped up furniture production together with the introduction of prefabricated apartment homes. Besides, the famous "Kitchen Debate" between Khrushchev and Nixon fueled a publication of the many domestic manuals, domestic technology instructions and generally enlivened the interests to the formally utilitarian space of the kitchen.[36] Although demand for domestic technology grew faster than the level of its production, kitchen technology, refrigerators in particular, became visible to the public eye.[37] With the arrival of new furniture and technology designs in the 1950s and 1960s strategically developed for the new, smaller apartments, a kitchen entered the world of Soviet images [Fig.4.3].[38] An image from the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* illustrates a showroom with new examples of modern furniture, meant to transition the problematic communal apartment life of a Soviet person into the sterile

[35] Plans from Philipp Meuser and Dmitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR 1955*-1991, (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015), p. 167.
[36] Susan E. Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 61, no. 2 (2002), 211-252, pp.223-228.
[37] Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home*, p.65.
[38] Buchli, "Khrushchev, Modernism, and the Fight against "Petit-bourgeois" Consciousness in the Soviet Home," pp. 167-168.

and ‘civilized’ interiors of the new individual apartments and the never-ending project of women’s liberation from “kitchen slavery.”[39]

Fig.4.3. This image, used in the last edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* to illustrate the word “Kitchen,” was titled “A.M. Shevchenko (All Soviet Project-Construction and Technology Institute of Furniture [*rus.* Vsesoyzno proektno-konstruktorskiy i tekhnologicheskiy institute mebeli]), 1967.

Despite the modest size of the Soviet kitchens constructed in the 1950s and 1960s, urbanites still consumed their daily meals at the kitchen table. According to Soviet research in the 1980s:

> During weekdays 100% of single people and couples ate in the kitchen and so did 80% of families with three-, four- and more family members. During weekends almost ¾ of the overall number of interviewed families also ate in the kitchen. Eating in the family room [obshchaia komnata] has episodical character and happens mostly during holidays and while having guests.[40]

[39] “Down with the kitchen slavery! Let there be new *byt* [rus. for everyday life]!” is a Soviet political poster promoting female liberation widely used in the 1920s and 1930s.
[40] O.Ia. Smirnova, “Vliianie bytovykh processov na formirovanie zhyloi iacheiki,” *Stroitel’stvo i arkhitektura*, 22 (1986), p.13.

Food Spaces of the Late Soviet Home

A kitchen was no longer an ancillary space meant only for meal preparation, now after the new construction and the "Kitchen Debate" brought it into a political and public spotlight in the 1950s, it became a desirable place to be.[41] In the last three Soviet decades—the 1960s through 1980s—eating and spending time in the kitchen became the unquestionable norm. In 1984 *Rabotnitsa* magazine illustrated that guest's visits were taken seriously by saying that in this guest's presence the family dined in the room, not in the kitchen as usual.[42] Another *Rabotnitsa* article "10 meters for 100 people" claimed that: "Even if a family lives in a large apartment that has a living room, still they only gather there 3-4 times a year when they have guests [referring to formal gatherings]. At other times we all spend our nights at the cozy kitchen where a TV never goes dark, never-ending conversations with friends are held, sometimes until morning, and dekaliters of tea are consumed…"[43] In this case, eating in the kitchen is simply assumed as obvious, and being presented as important are the secondary functions of a social space. The article follows: "Perhaps our housing conditions—the minimal square footage gave birth to this tradition: the hearth of the apartment is the kitchen. Here we like to write, read, draft, knit and even do homework…"[44] The contrast with the kitchen in the 1950s is striking. The articles make

[41] Unlike the communal apartment kitchens of the 1950s, the small kitchens of the new modernist housing were widely showcased in film. Only a decade after the virtual absence of kitchens in the *House I Live In* (1957), the 1966 Marlen Khutsiev's film *July Rain* [rus. *Ijul'skiy dozhd'*] illustrated the ongoing shift in the status of a kitchen and the transition of eating and social functions away from the room and into this formerly ancillary kitchen space.[41] Around the time the characters of *July Rain* (1966) gather and play guitar in the kitchen, the protagonists of another widely popular movie *Operatsiia Y i drugie prikliucheniia Shurika* [rus. *Operation Y and Shurik's Other Adventures*] (1965) still dine in the room. Less than a decade later the same protagonist under the command of the same director eats in the kitchen in *Ivan Vasilievich: Back to the Future* [rus. *Ivan Vasil'evich meniaet professiiu*] (1973).
[42] Yuri Poliakov,"Podruzhka: Moi Milyi Chto Tebe Ia Sdelala," *Rabotnitsa*, Vol.6, (June 1984), 28.
[43] V. Stepanishev, "10 metrov na 100 chelovek," Rabotnitsa, Vol.3 (March 1989), 8. Although this example is of a consumer ideal of a late Soviet urbanite—two television sets in an apartment, one of them in the kitchen—this does not mean that every single family had two television sets in their home. Nevertheless, this description would appear familiar and relevant to general public.
[44] Ibid.

it sound as if the disregard for the kitchen as a lived space never existed. In the last three decades of the USSR the social functions of the kitchen became elevated to what Svetlana Boym described as "kitchen culture": a trend that started among the Soviet intelligentsia in the 1960s to informally gather in the kitchens and "occasionally" eat.[45] By the 1980s, kitchen culture took over the rest of Soviet society; *Rabotnitsa* stated that a kitchen "has to combine two functions: of a kitchen block and a living room [Fig. 4.4]."[46]

Departure from a utilitarian kitchen further progressed with the Brezhnev-era resurrection of belief in domestic comfort. Domestic advice manuals of this period suggested decorating kitchens with sentimental, rather than just functional objects like in the minimalist Khrushchev-era *byt*.[47] In addition, kitchens were first called to become "aesthetically expressive and distinctive," reinstating the cultural and social importance of kitchen interiors.[48]

Fig. 4.4. "A Gathering… in the Kitchen" article title in *Rabotnitsa,* Vol.1, 1988.

[45] Boym, *Common Places,* p.142.
[46] V. Stepanishev, "10 metrov na 100 chelovek," Rabotnitsa, Vol.3 (March 1989), 8.
[47] Anna Alekseyeva, "Constructing Soviet Domesticity and Managing Everyday Life from Khrushchev to Collapse" in Graham H. Roberts (ed.), *Material Culture in Russia and the USSR: Things, Values, Identities,* (London, England: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), pp.61-63.
[48]Alekseyeva in Roberts (ed.), *Material Culture in Russia and the USSR*, p. 63.

This is not to say that in late Soviet apartments eating only happened in the kitchen, but that is where casual eating took place. Formal dining with extended family or an extended group of friends on a special occasion always took place in one of the rooms designated to have living room functions. Formal dining with an extended circle required a large table; no regular Soviet family could afford to keep a large table like that in one of their rooms at all times, since it would have consumed all of the available space. Instead, they would have a collapsible table that would only be fully unfolded on a couple of important occasions a year and whenever domestic work, like sewing, required a large work surface [Fig. 4.5]. Those gateleg tables that came to replace the former round tables of the communal apartments were nicknamed "table-books" for their ability to unfold and were a highly desirable piece of domestic interior.[49]

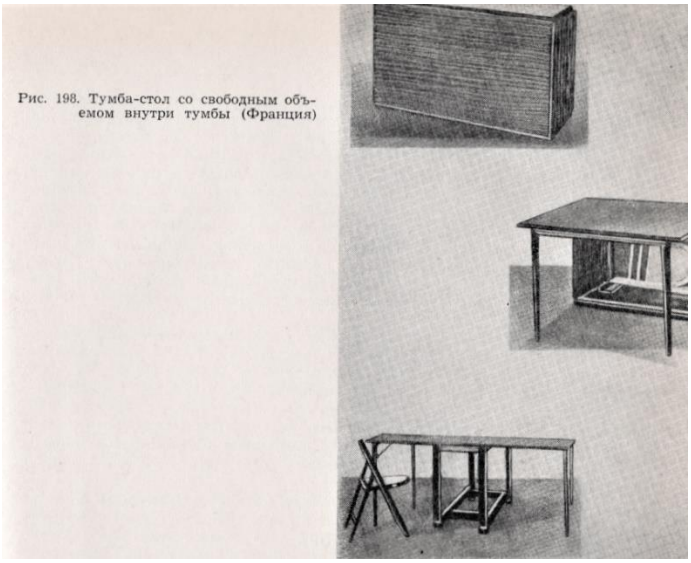

Fig. 4.5. Collapsible "table-books" or gateleg tables from a 1960s Soviet publication on contemporary furniture at home and abroad.[50]

[49] See Buchli on transformable furniture Victor Buchli, *Materializing Culture: An Archeology of Socialism,* Oxford/New York: Berg, 1999), p. 143.
[50] Valentina Delle and Yuri Somov, *Sovremennaia bytovaia mebel'*, (Moskva: Lesnaia Promyshlennos't, 1966,) p. 219.

An individual Soviet apartment kitchen could not possibly accommodate a large group of people to actually eat, rather than solely socialize comfortably. Moreover, many Soviet celebrations were tied to television, for instance a Soviet New Year's Eve show *Goluboi Ogonek* [rus. for *Blue Light*]. Since a typical late-Soviet family only had one television set (and a dream to have another one in the kitchen), the room where formal eating would take place, would also be the room with the television.[51] In the absence of affordable restaurants or quality casual dining places, celebrations were held at home. During those gatherings special foods were consumed that were prepared in the kitchen but bore too much meaning to be consumed in an everyday setting.[52] By late Perestroika many types of food were difficult to find in free sale. These foods were nicknamed "deficit." Dependent on the region different food could have been in deficit, but typically those would be quality meats and meat products.[53] And, of course, there existed complex or expensive recipes that were only used at occasional celebrations. During different time periods and for different social strata these foods ranged from luxuries or ethnic and regional foods, such as red or black caviar, gefilte fish and haroset[54] to the affordable Soviet celebratory classics: Oliv'e salad.[55] The deficit foods, luxury foods, or imported versions of familiar foods (such as *Pepsi Cola*, instead of regular Soviet soda water with syrup) would only

[51] Owning a television was an important element of the late-Soviet idea of prosperity (Andrey Trofimov, Marina Klinova, "Sovetskiy potrebitel'" v otechestvennom gumanitarnom diskurse 1950-1980kh godov," *Izvestiia UrGEU,* 4(54) (2014), p.110), while owning a second television set in the kitchen was a sign of particular comfortable living (for instance, a late-Soviet movie *Samaia obaiatel'naia I privlekatel'naia (*1985) uses a second kitchen television set to illustrate the well-being of a secondary character Susanna). The growing late-Soviet consumerism is described and explained in Natalya Chernyshova's monograph *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era.*

[52] On celebratory food and its meaning see Albert Baiburin, Alexandra Piir, "When We Were Happy: Remembering Soviet Holidays," in Marina Balina and Evgeny Dobrenko (ed.), *Petrified Utopia: Happiness Soviet Style*, (London: Anthem Press, 2011), p. 247.

[53] William Moskoff, *Hard Times: Impoverishment and Protest in the Perestoika Years: The Soviet Union, 1985-1991,* Armonk, London: Sharpe, 1993), p. 28-43.

[54] Adrianne Jacobs, "The Many Flavors of Socialism: Modernity and Tradition in Late Soviet Food Culture, 1965-1985," PhD diss., University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2015, <https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:123695e5-654d-4112-8efb-38980ad8e51a>, p.240.

[55] Anna Kushkova, "V tsentre stola: zenit I zakat salata Olivye, *Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie* 76, (2005), pp: 278-313.

be consumed with guests at the unfolded large table in the designated room. The kitchen was reserved for everyday meals consisting of simple foods readily available in Soviet stores. Inside of the home, the everyday and the occasional foods were not only separated in their symbolic meaning, but also in terms of the place of their consumption. Although celebratory eating happened in the room, the social gathering may have later relocated to the kitchen, if there were smokers in the group: while special foods were too important of a ceremony to take place in the kitchen, post-meal socialization was more comfortable in the kitchen with its liberal and resourceful use of space instead of the overly formal large white-cloth table in one of the rooms.[56] The tradition of the celebratory feasts in apartment homes, particularly those held for the favorite Soviet holiday—New Year's Eve—largely outlived the Soviet Union itself. Jennifer Jordan states: "food becomes incorporated into our personal memories, identities, and daily practices and also into the collective identities of communities, diasporas, and nations.[57] Despite the emergence of many public places that offered New Year's Eve parties, post-Soviet urbanites continued gathering at home, and spending hours eating food, drinking, and talking by the "holiday "table."[58]

Metaphorically speaking, in the first half of the 20th century food may have been prepared in the kitchen but eating permeated the rooms of Soviet apartments on the everyday basis. In the second half of the 20th century the situation turned the other way around: now social functions took over the originally food-centered space to a degree that eating and food preparation became nearly auxiliary in the social space of a kitchen. At the same time, it is crucial to remember that

[56] Personal Interview with an apartment dweller Natalia S., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 2nd, 2017., as well as Boym, *Common Places*, pp. 150-157.
[57] Jennifer A. Jordan, *Edible Memory: The Lure of Heirloom Tomatoes and Other Forgotten Foods,* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), p. 36.
[58] Jennifer Patico, *Consumption and Social Change in a Post-Soviet Middle Class*, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2008), p. 177.

many of these kitchens were rather small if not tiny, with a typical Khrushchevka kitchen not exceeding seven square meters (seventy five square feet), and the so-called improved plan apartments[59] no less than eight square meters (eighty six square feet).[60] How did the small dimensions of Soviet kitchens affect cooking and eating practices of the post-Soviet urbanites, after the prescribed upper limit for the kitchen area was no longer effective? How did the Soviet spatial practices transform after the state that facilitated their creation ceased to exist? The answers are located in several realms of late-Soviet and post-Soviet reality.

Post-Soviet Kitchen

The late Perestroika and early post-Soviet spaces of eating exemplified a curious paradox. Chapter 1 "Remodeling" of this dissertation has demonstrated that despite the shortage economy of the last Soviet years, and the decline in overall social prosperity, Perestroika and post-Soviet reforms enabled access to private labor, private production, and imported goods. In addition, despite the fascination with the West and everything Western, post-Soviet urbanites did not produce domestic spaces that closely resembled their Western counterparts, but rather created their own spatial model of eating, cooking and storage. Inside of an urban home this predicated the period's leitmotif: remodeling and apartment re-planning, with kitchens being first in line to change.

Kitchens, perhaps more than any other part of the Soviet mass-constructed prefabricated apartments, are citied to be small and inconvenient.[61] *Rabotnitsa* magazine was among the

[59] 'Improved plan apartments' is an umbrella term used to define apartment series buildings, where apartments had bigger floor areas, always separate kitchens and more storage space than in the early prefabricated series. In terms of architectural series, improved plan apartments typically refer to the second generation of prefabricated apartment building construction starting in 1963. Philipp Meuser and Dmitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR 1955*-1991, (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015), p. 267.
[60] *Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila* 2.08.01-89* *Zhylie zdaniia.* (Moscow: TsITP Gosstroiia SSSR, 1989).
[61] Out of the 9 apartment dwellers interviewed for this project, 4 indicated kitchens as the primary spaces they remodeled and attempted to improve, either with efficient organization, or by physically enlarging or connecting them other spaces of their apartment.

earliest Soviet sources to suggest a radical revision of a kitchen: an article "10 Meters for 100 people" offered the following solution:

> […] in coordination with an architect you can move walls, expanding the kitchen and reducing the size of a room. Third option: the wall does not move, but niches are made in it for the shelves, drawers and the fridge and all this furniture is placed flush with the wall.[62]

At the same time, the issues with kitchens were not a secret to those responsible for the design of the Soviet apartment homes—Soviet architects, planners and engineers. And yet, the changes clearly anticipated by the public and the architects were impossible to implement within the context of a centralized Soviet economy. Until the last days of the Soviet Union, prefabricated panel remained a basic unit for residential construction; monolith concrete construction remained rare and had to be approved by the highest authorities on a case to case basis.[63] Unlike with monolith construction, in the

[62] V. Stepanishev, "10 Metrov na 100 chelovek," *Rabotnitsa*, Vol.3, (March 1989), p. 8. This passage has an additional implication other than pointing out a perception of kitchens as insufficiently small. In this quote, the fridge is no longer treated as a technical breakthrough or a sign of social and economic wellbeing of its owners. On the contrary, it is shown as a bulky, inconvenient object that needs to be partially hidden inside of the wall. This is in tune with Sandy Isenstadt's argument that by the 1950s in the US refrigerators became so commonplace they were no longer treated as a technological miracle, and their physical presence was downplayed in the interiors by their "spectacularization" as a vision of food abundance. While the quote above clearly shows an attempt to downplay the refrigerator in the kitchen interior, the social context of this quote from Rabotnitsa is quite different from the American case. It similarly suggests that refrigerators and accessible food also became a commonplace in the late Soviet Union. However, the quality of this food supply was quite different from the "vision of plenty" described in Isenstadt's article. Sandy Isenstadt, "Visions of Plenty: Refrigerators in America around 1950," *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1998): 311-32, p. 311.

[63] Although there was no written rule to not use monolith concrete for floor slab construction, it is clearly evident in the recommendations for residential construction. The reason to limit the use of monolith concrete was the omnipresence of Building Construction Combines [rus. *domostroitel'nyj kombinat* (DSK)]—factories that produced prefabricated panels. For instance, *Zhylie i obshestvennye zdaniia: kratkiy spravochnik inzhenera-knostruktora* suggests only using concrete panels in residential construction. Yuri Dykhovichii, *Zhylie I obshestvennye zdaniia: kratkiy spravochnik inzhenera-knostruktora,* (Moskva:Stroiizdat, 1991), p.9. Within the context of centralized economy, the institutions that developed housing designs had a responsibility to create demand for the Building Construction Combine production, hence use prefabricated panels in the

standardized prefabricated panel apartment buildings, the technology and the law did not allow for much variation.[64] The rooms and the spaces were typically constructed orthogonally and with the constraints of the spans and the spacing of the load-bearing panels. The innovation came in the form of a new series of prefabricated panel developments that were either better laid out architecturally or bigger due to larger element dimensions. Between the beginning of prefabricated construction in the 1950s and the end of mass housing construction in the first years after the collapse of the USSR in 1991, the dimensions of the prefabricated panels grew and so did the areas of the apartment kitchens.[65] The 1970s and the 1980s saw the rise of the so-called improved-plan apartments, when the span between the load-bearing panels went from around 2.60-2.70 meters in the late 1950s to 3.60 meters in the late 1980s.[66] The building code requirements for the kitchen areas went up accordingly: from 4.5 square meters in 1958 to 8 square meters in 1989.

The architecture profession since the beginning of the mass prefabricated construction in the USSR (late 1950s) separated into two branches: architects and engineers who worked on the development of the prefabricated apartment buildings meant for mass construction and those who worked on individual projects, including individually designed apartment buildings. Those architects working on individually constructed (in contrast to mass constructed) apartment buildings faced the same problem with small footages predicated by the building code but

[64] For the discussion of the limited possibilities of prefabricated panel construction and the necessity to shift to monolith construction in housing see N.K. Buts, "Puti i metody razvitiia monolitnogo domostroeniia," *Stroitel'stvo i arkhitektura*, 8 (1989), pp. 14-15.
[65] Some standardized housing construction did not completely stop immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, but rather continued for a couple more years, when money and materials were allocated for the construction. Typically, these projects took longer than predicted and a lot of times those were finished with a funding source different than the state.
[66] Personal interview with an engineer Arseniy R., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 18th, 2017.

approached them differently. As one of the respondents for this research put it, he "only ever looked at the building codes to find a way around their limitations."[67] Because of the building code minimums architects only had a chance to design the composition and form of apartment layouts, not their footage. However, by the late-Soviet period, architects commonly believed that formal footage requirements were problematic and could barely host all the functions that had to be located in a kitchen even with these strict limitations. Therefore, architects would invent tricks to enlarge these small spaces. For instance, one of the respondents for this study explained that he used to attach storage areas directly to kitchens during the planning stage, and would never actually construct those storage areas after the plans were approved by the State Committee of Construction.[68] As a result, the additional 10-15 square feet would be added to the kitchen area and that could be enough space to comfortably fit in a refrigerator, so that the residents of the apartment would not need to stand up and move their stools every time there was a need to get something from the fridge.

By the 1980s, the last decade of Soviet rule, kitchens frequently appeared to be not only small, but also desperately outdated, still resembling their utilitarian predecessors from the early 1950s. Despite the Soviet 1950s-1960s campaign for new kitchen cabinet sets for small prefabricated apartment buildings, not every single person was able to find or afford them. Well-made diverse furniture appeared to be among the major Soviet deficits to a degree comparable with that of the iconic blue jeans. And even those who were able to buy kitchen cabinets on the peak of their production in the 1960s, witnessed those cabinets gradually lose their glamour during the two decades of everyday use.

[67] Personal interview with an architect Jaroslav D., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 11th, 2017.
[68] Ibid.

Under Gorbachev's reforms that liberalized the labor code and paved the way for individual production of goods, cooperatives changed the rules of the furniture world by creating custom kitchen cabinets from available materials. Then in the early 1990s, locally produced materials were replaced with custom-ordered imported elements assembled by local specialists.[69] The only other market that grew as fast as the one for kitchen cabinets, was the market for domestic storage units. By the late 1990s kitchen furniture stores were abundant in the large post-Soviet cities and frequently offered remodeling or interior design services in addition to the furniture itself.[70] The Soviet kitchens that lacked individuality in the 1980s, became in the 1990s a battle field for individual solutions meant to impress, similar to how book and souvenir collections were used as a sign of social status during Soviet times.[71] The favorite[72] and the most universally used[73] part of the Soviet household became filled with the senses and symbols of the new post-socialist well-being.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, food-related spaces and kitchens in particular, have experienced a wide range of transformations, as if to spite the strict Soviet laws. While kitchens were the hearth of the Soviet urban home and a hub for counter-Soviet thinking, they were also—ironically—the most regulated part of a Soviet apartment.[74] A kitchen had to have a window and a door, particularly because the majority of the Soviet apartment homes had gas stoves.[75] For the same reason, between 1958 and 1971 almost no kitchen (other than rarely used

[69] Personal Interview with architect Andriy K., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 24th, 2017. During an interview Andriy K. recalled that in 1992-1993 imported cabinet elements replaced locally produced cabinet parts.
[70] Personal Interview with an architect Taras Sh., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, April 22nd, 2017.
[71] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), p.155.
[72] V. Stepanishev, "10 Metrov na 100 chelovek," *Rabotnitsa*, Vol.3, (March 1989), p. 8.
[73] "Out all spaces of an apartment the most universally used is the kitchen" from O.Ia. Smirnova, "Vliianie bytovykh processov na formirovanie zhyloi iacheiki," *Stroitel'stvo i arkhitektura*, 22 (1986), p.13.
[74] For more information on counter-Soviet (dissident) gatherings in the kitchen see Nancy Ries, *Russian Talk Culture and Conversation during Perestroika,* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University, 1997), p. 92.
[75] The damage from possible gas explosion was to be minimized with the window structures being the first to burst.

kitchenettes with electric stoves) could be combined with any other room in the house and had to have a door, rather than an opening.[76] A kitchen was supposed to be bigger in an apartment with more rooms, quietly addressing the fact that meals were to be consumed in the kitchen, even in a large family.[77] At the same time a kitchen was not to go over a building code's upper limitation for state-owned and distributed (and hence, social) housing; two kitchens in the same apartment were simply unthinkable, although many apartments were meant to be populated by multiple generations.[78]After the collapse of the Soviet Union, not only Soviet *Sanitary and Norms and Regulations,* but also the walls of the kitchen themselves, no longer made sense.

The early post-Soviet eating spaces followed two different avenues of transformation with virtually the same spatial outcome at the end. The first avenue, available to those with enough financial resources and courage to start a massive *remont* in their dwelling, was to remove a wall between the isolated Soviet kitchen and the adjacent room to create a version of an open plan zoned with the help of a dining table, other furniture pieces or semi-partition walls. The second option—the creation of additional partitions in the rooms instead of removing the kitchen wall—may have not affected the walls of the kitchens but may have dramatically shifted the spatial dynamics. [Fig.4.6]

[76] *Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila* II-B.10-58 *Zhylie zdaniia.*(Moscow: Gosudarsvennoe izdatel'stvo literatury po stroitel'stvu, arkhitekture I stroitel'nym materialam, 1958), p.20; *Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila* II-L.1-71* *Zhylie zdaniia*. (Moscow: Stroiizadat, 1978), pp.16, 23.
[77] Ob izmenenii i dopolnenii glavy *Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila* II-L.1-71 in *Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila* II-L.1-71* *Zhylie zdaniia.* (Moscow: Stroiizadat, 1978), p. 11 (dopolnenie).
[78] Personal interview with an engineer Arseniy R., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 18th, 2017. This interviewee worked on an apartment building reconstruction in the 1980s. Since this apartment building was located in the very center of a republican capital, the apartments were supposed to house Soviet elites after the reconstruction. Unlike typical situations, future dwellers had a word in how the reconstruction wad done and were able to put in personal requests. One of the future residents requested that engineers and architects develop his apartment with two kitchens, since the apartment was to be populated by both his and his child's family, and the two families wanted to cook at separate kitchens.

1) 2) 3)

Fig. 4.6. 1-434 apartment plan transformations from Soviet (left) to post-Soviet (two on the right). In the apartment 1 cooking and everyday eating take place in the kitchen, while formal occasional eating takes place in the room that assumes most living room functions. In the apartment 2 the spaces for eating and cooking merge, producing a dining zone that may be used for both every day and occasional eating. In the apartment 3 the room that used to assume living room functions gains more privacy through the construction of a new wall. In this case, formal dining may relocate to the kitchen, in its turn adjusted to host more guests under more formal circumstance.

Because of the notorious tightness of Soviet kitchens, partially objective and partially constructed through the multifunctional use of these spaces, kitchens received a lot of attention after the Soviet Union collapsed. The ghost of the Cold War and the "Kitchen Debate"— a dream of a convenient and spacious 'American-style' kitchen—kept haunting the Soviet, post-Soviet and post-socialist homes long after the confrontation was over and the Soviet Union itself was gone.[79] Krisztina Fehérváry gives an account of the post-socialist Hungarian tendency to construct 'American' open-plan kitchens in newly built homes and privatized apartments.[80] A similar tendency towards the open-plan and the language of the 'westernized' interiors can be

[79] A comprehensive account of the American National Exhibition that demonstrated American commodities to the Soviet public in Moscow, 1959 can be found in Susan Reid, "Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 61, no. 2 (2002), pp. 211-52.

[80] Krisztina Fehérváry, 2002. "American kitchens, Luxury Bathrooms, and the Search for a "Normal" Life in Postsocialist Hungary," *Ethnos*, (67 (3):2002, 369-400), p.369.

found in all post-Soviet and post-Warsaw block countries. Yet, Fehérváry's article contains an important moment that should not be disregarded when talking about Americanized kitchens and their overall Westernization. She writes: "the newly built suburban family house was fast becoming the most important indicator of middle-class status nationwide" even in cities, where central-city living had been considered prestigious for decades.[81] Unlike in many cities of the former socialist bloc, most post-Soviet megacities did not have a consistent tendency towards suburbanization and construction of new, individually designed housing from scratch.[82] With the exception of Baltic urban populations[83] and Moscow elites,[84] European post-Soviet urbanites improvised with the available housing stock instead of constructing 'Western kitchens' from scratch with no spatial restrictions. In these circumstances, the newly constructed kitchens barely resembled their supposedly Western prototypes. Neither did they reproduce the Western model of home dining. Similar to the rest of the post-Soviet spheres of life, rather than transitioning to the Western models, they molded into a model of their own, the post-Soviet cooking and dining areas becoming their own space and their own habitus.

Irene Cieraad writes that in the United States an open-plan kitchen is a reaction to the enclosed Fordist efficiency kitchens and the resulting alienation of women in these spaces.[85] In the post-Soviet apartments, demolition of a wall between the kitchen and the adjacent room, and

[81] Fehérváry, "American kitchens, Luxury Bathrooms, and the Search for a "Normal" Life in Postsocialist Hungary," p.380.
[82] For studies on socialist bloc suburbanization, or, in other words, urban decentralization, see Sonia Hirt, *Iron Curtains: Gates, Suburbs, and Privatization of Space in the Post-Socialist City*, (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley & Sons, 2012), pp. 106-110, 127-128; K. Leetmaa, T. Tammaru, and K. Anniste, "From Piority-Led to Market-Led Suburbanization in a Post-Communist Metropolis," *Tijdschrigt Voor Economische En Sociale Geografie*, 100(4):(2009), pp. 436-453, and many others.
[83] Matas Cirtautas, "Urban Sprawl of Major Cities in the Baltic States," *Arhitektura un Pilsetplanosana,* 10. Serija; Riga, Vol. 7 (2013), p. 72.
[84] Robert J.Mason and Nigmatullina, Liliya, "Suburbanization and Sustainability in Metropolitan Moscow," *Geographical Review*, July 2011, Vol.101(3), pp.316-333.
[85] Irene Cieraad, "'Out of my kitchen!' Architecture, gender and domestic efficiency," *The Journal of Architecture*, (7 (3): 2002), pp. 263-279.

hence opening a plan of the apartment, was not always a product of any clear ideologies. Rather than being driven mostly by the necessity to open the space of the kitchen to the rest of the house and simplify domestic logistics,[86] the opening of the post-Soviet kitchen was a desperate attempt by the residents to enlarge the space for cooking, food storage and eating; if necessary, by sacrificing the lived space of the other rooms. This attitude is best illustrated in the *Rabotnitsa* article on kitchen remodeling that suggests three ways to improve a small kitchen situation: to move utility lines to the adjacent room, enlarging the kitchen and making the room smaller; or simply move the wall of the kitchen further into the room; or to make niches for kitchen cabinets in the room wall, and then solve "the problems" in the room that may have resulted from such transformation.[87] Since this article was published in 1989, it did not suggest removing a wall completely, a move rather unimaginable in the Soviet overpopulated apartments, but the basic idea to fix the problem with the kitchen at the expense of another room was already well established.

This is not to say that kitchen wall demolition happened in all post-Soviet apartments. Not all apartment residents could demolish the wall between the kitchen and the adjacent room even if they wanted to, simply because the wall may have appeared to be load bearing in some apartments.[88] Not all residents of post-Soviet apartments chose to do so, even if they could; yet, in those cases when the Soviet urbanites had economic resources to reconstruct their space in any way, they established a dining zone that created spatial uses different from those of the Soviet period. The most subtle example is found in larger apartments, where the walls of the kitchen remained intact, yet there appeared a separate living room (that would not become a sleeping

[86] Ibid.
[87] V. Stepanishev, "10 Metrov na 100 chelovek," *Rabotnitsa*, Vol.3, (March 1989), p. 8.
[88] For instance, II-57 series and PP-44 series had a loadbearing wall between the kitchen and the adjacent room.

space at night) with a designated dining area and a permanently placed dining table and a separate living room 'den' [Fig. 4.7].[89]

Fig. 4.7. *Remont* of a one-room apartment suggested by *Idei Vashego Doma* introducing a dining and 'den' space, separate from the bedrooms.[90]

Another scenario for keeping the kitchen walls was even more subtle, yet more transformative to the everyday practices of the apartment occupants. In those apartments where several generations of families lived together, residents could erect a new wall isolating the former walk-through room for further privacy of one of the adults or families. Typically, residents would create a hallway separating the shrunk former walk-through room and creating separate entrances to both spaces.[91] Besides providing more privacy for sleep, this also meant the social functions of the walk-through room were now relocated to the kitchen more so than they have ever been before.

[89] "Fabrika comforta," Vannye komnaty/No., 2004, accessed April 25th, 2018, *Idei vashego doma*, <https://www.ivd.ru/custom_category/custom_subcategory/fabrika-komforta-5002>
[90] From a competition held by *Idei Vashego Doma* in 2010, *Idei Vashego Doma*, "Konkurs," January 29, 2010, accessed October 9, 2018, < https://www.ivd.ru/archive/do-2017/konkurs-7488>
[91] Personal conversations with the Recorder of Deeds [ukr. Buro Technichnoi Inventaryzatsii] engineers.

This case of remodeling can be illustrated with the kitchen furniture trend, widespread after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Instead of regular movable chairs and stools, apartment residents started acquiring kitchen benches and micro-sofas to create what the post-Soviet population called a *miagkiy ugolok*—a soft corner, virtually an analogy of a couch in the kitchen. These kitchen bench couches were not produced by the Soviet furniture industry. The technical standards [*rus*: GOST] employed by the Soviet furniture industry do not contain any regulations or mentions of a kitchen bench, although they contain regulations for the rest of domestic furniture meant for sitting, including kitchen stools.[92] The last 1967-1972 edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* never mentions the soft corners, although it does mention a long list of its close relatives: sofas, daybeds, ottomans and couches, chairs and stools.[93] The kitchen seating was to happen on chairs or stools, and no elements of living room furniture were to be introduced into this space still largely seen as utilitarian from the perspective of the state and planning institutions. However, by the end of the 1980s kitchen benches became an extremely popular trend: a 1989 *Rabotnitsa* article on kitchen interior indicated that they were a contemporary "mass craze," were now produced by cooperatives and appearing on sale.[94] This spatially fixed sitting area was to provide additional comfort for everyday eating,[95] but also to adjust the kitchen space to occasional formal gatherings establishing a micro-living room inside of the kitchen. [96]In fact, apartment residents were frequently willing to relocate food storage—refrigerators away from the kitchen and into the hallway, in order to free a bit of space for the kitchen *soft corner*—

[92] GOST 13025.2—85*, Mebel bytovaia: funktsional'nye razmery mebeli dlia sideniia i lezhaniia*, (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo standartov, 01/1987).
[93] "mebel' and mebel'naia promyshlennost," *Bolshaya Sovetskaia Encyclopediia*, (Moskva: Sovetskaia Encyclopediia, 1972). Since furniture production in the Soviet Union was centralized, if a piece did not appear in the catalogues of the Soviet furniture industry and did not make it to Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Encyclopediia [Great Soviet Encyclopedia], it means that it was not produced and virtually did not exist in Soviet homes.
[94] V. Stepanishev, "10 metrov na 100 chelovek," *Rabotnitsa,* Vol.3 (March 1989), p.8.
[95] The comfort of fixed kitchen sitting may appear to be quite questionable when it comes to everyday eating.
[96] Stepanishev, "10 metrov na 100 chelovek," p.8.

miagkiy ugolok. The trend went so far that the soft corners, similar to the living room couches, started being sometimes used for sleeping at night, illustrating that the post-Soviet sleep still occasionally encroached into any living room-like space in the house, even if it was in the kitchen. An interviewee for this study, praising the layout and the size of the kitchen in her improved-plan apartment concluded that the kitchens were so big that some people "put couches in their kitchen and…slept on them."[97]

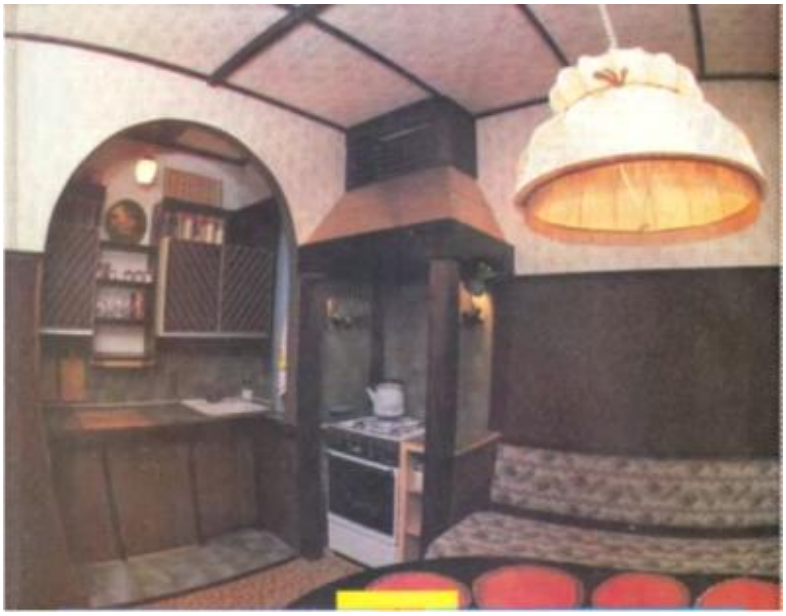

Fig. 4.8. Late Soviet kitchen bench illustration from *Rabotnitsa* magazine, Vol. 4, 1989.

Spatial Overlaps

In 2010 Elizabeth Cromley has observed that after a century of division between food storage, preparation and consumption within the home, in American homes these food practices have once again united in a "hearth of the home": a kitchen and a family room combined.[98] The wall between the family room and the kitchen came down: Cromley's review of homemaking

[97] Personal Interview with apartment dweller Marina D., interview by the author, Kyiv, May 6th, 2017.
[98] Elizabeth Cromley, *The Food Axis: Cooking, Eating and the Architecture of the American Houses,* (Charlotsville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), p. 207.

media indicates the preference for a cooking isle that allows the cook(s) to socialize with the rest of a home's population, instead of a blind wall of a Frankfurt kitchen, separating the labor of cooking from the rest of the domestic functions. Cromley's observation is fundamental: the wall is no longer there. There is, however, something else that goes beyond whether the wall exists or not—the functions of cooking, eating and food storage themselves.

The limited space of the late-Soviet and post-Soviet urban apartments with the many socio-spatial transformations during the collapse of the USSR show: the wall may, but does not have to come down, in order for the architecture and the space use of a home to change. With the blurring or a removal of the boundary between casual eating and formal celebratory dining in post-Soviet homes, the former cooking, eating, storage and celebratory dining spaces of an apartment came together in an overlap. Whether in a luxurious apartment with a separate dining room, or in a small apartment with a kitchen bench-couch, everyday and occasional eating no longer had to be strictly separated and orchestrated according to the type of a room. The post-Soviet urbanites demonstrated a tendency formally similar to the one described by Cromley: to combine a kitchen with a living room.[99] The difference is that they did not always demolish a wall. Instead, they have often simply moved the living room functions into the existing kitchen.

Because of the newly emerged freedom to spatially modify one's home, a post-Soviet apartment finalized an already existing apartment vector towards removing space-use bias: even sleeping on the couch placed in the kitchen no longer seemed to be an oxymoron, nor scandalous. After the collapse of the Soviet Union and the elimination of censorship, the kitchen largely lost its role as a political club. Nevertheless, it did not lose a status of a "favorite place" in

[99] Elizabeth Cromley, *The Food Axis,* p. 207.

the post-Soviet home.[100] Instead, it gained a new dimension: a favorite place to improve and transform according to individual desires and needs.

These days, Moscow authorities are tearing down early Khrushchev-era prefabricated buildings, the very same ones with the 4.5 square meter (48 square feet) kitchens. The official agenda of the city is that these buildings are morally and physically obsolete, meaning that they no longer fit the contemporary requirements to housing, and above all kitchens.[101] Ironically, the contemporary food-related practices of the post-Soviet apartment dwellers are flesh and blood of these compact Soviet apartments. These buildings left an imprint on the spatial imagination of generations of Soviet and post-Soviet urbanites, just like these apartment dwellers left their bite marks—hollowed out and demolished walls, and constructed partitions—on the body of the grand Soviet mass housing civilizing project.

[100] V. Stepanishev, "10 metrov na 100 chelovek," Rabotnitsa, Vol.3 (March 1989), 8.
[101] See for example "Sobianin: kvartaly v Moskve budut pereseliat' i snosit' tol'ko po zhelaniiu zhitelei," *TASS: Informatsionnoe agenstvo Rossii*, March 9th, 2017, accessed on March 11th, 2018, <http://tass.ru/obschestvo/4081517>

CHAPTER 4: CLEANING

> Communist Party of the Soviet Union sets a goal to resolve the sharpest problem in increasing the wellbeing of the Soviet people—the housing problem. During the first decade the housing shortage will be eliminated. Those families that currently live in overpopulated or bad housing, will receive new apartments. As the result of the second decade every family, including newlyweds, will have a comfortable apartment, conforming to the requirements of hygiene and cultural *byt.*[1]
>
> —Communist Party of the Soviet Union, XXII Congress, 1961

Invisible Spaces

Apartment sanitary blocks were secondary to late-Soviet imaginations. In communal apartments sanitary blocks were a common territory; as a result, dealing with their maintenance was perceived as a burden.[2] Yet, even in private apartments, the bathroom appeared to be second in line of maintenance priority after the kitchen.[3] Elements of that hierarchy lasted until nowadays: "I am now done with the kitchen, so I'll get to the bathroom as soon as I save enough money," explains a one-room apartment owner, proudly presenting her new kitchen *remont.*[4]

A similar observation in the broader post-socialist context is expressed by Fehérváry:

> In the postsocialist era, kitchens and bathrooms have been singled out for transformation by residents, a trend reflected in special issues of home improvement/interior decor publications.[5]

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[1] Programma KPSS, (Moscow: Gospolitizdat, 1961), p.94.
[2] Svetlana Boym speaks of the "communal duties" in the "Archeology of Banality: The Soviet Home," *Public Culture* (1994) 6 (2): 263-292., p. 266.
[3] Between 1987 and 1991 *Rabotnitsa* magazine published a number of articles on kitchen, "living room" and other rooms remolding, but not a single article on bathroom.
[4] Personal conversation with Valentina B., Kyiv, Summer 2017.
[5] Krisztina Fehérváry, 2002. "American kitchens, Luxury Bathrooms, and the Search for a "Normal" Life in Postsocialist Hungary," *Ethnos*, (67 (3):2002, 369-400), p.383.

Despite these remnants of Soviet inferiority, the interest and visibility of bathrooms increased dramatically after 1991. While a kitchen firmly secured its place in the Soviet imagery in the 1960s, a bathroom and a toilet room mostly stayed out of sight until the last years of the Soviet Union.

Therefore, this chapter not only explains the spatial transformations of bathrooms throughout the late-Soviet and post-Soviet years, but also tracks the introduction of bathrooms to the world or images and the accompanying commodification of these spaces of hygiene. At the end, it suggests the shift of the post-Soviet bathrooms from the realm or utilitarian auxiliary spaces of an apartment (such as a closet) into the status of representational spaces, not unlike the status that kitchens gained several decades earlier.

The rare images of Soviet bathrooms—exclusions that prove the rule to be true—are found in comedic episodes of the Soviet film, *The Irony of Fate* and *Afonia* in particular.[6] Another rare exclusion is the bathroom episode in the *Moscow Doesn't Believe in Tears* (1981). This movie is a rather unique cinematic artifact that has anticipated Perestroika and the post-Soviet reality through speaking of desires: material, social, and romantic.[7] Here the bathroom is shown as a clean, bright pleasant space in a comfortable modern apartment of the main protagonist, a member of the Soviet elite.[8]

While late-Soviet spaces of hygiene were missing from the world of images, in the 1950s and 1960s they were omnipresent in the formal discourse on apartment housing. Varga-Harris provides numerous examples of individual bathrooms being used as an example of Soviet

[6] In the *Irony of Fate* (*Ironiia Sud'by*, 1975) drunk and heartbroken Ippolit showers in the bathtub, while having a coat and a fur hat on. In *Afonia* (1975) plasterer Kolia gets drunk and falls asleep in the bathtub.
[7] Lilya Kaganovsky, "The cultural logic of late socialism," *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema.* 3 (2): (2009), p. 192.
[8] *Moscow Doesn't Believe in Tears*, directed by Vladimir Menshov, (Moskva: Mosfilm, 1979).

achievements in the home-building industry: an individual bathroom is presented as a sign of new happy times and a farewell to the constraints of life in kommunalka.[9] And yet, in all of these examples a bathroom is nothing but a rhetorical device: there are no concrete qualities to this bathroom, other than its belonging to an individual apartment. In other words, there is no concrete statement on the qualities of a convenient sanitary block: whether it should be small or big, what it should contain, how it should be finished and whether the pipes should be leak-proof. Instead, this rhetoric focuses on individual access; it is not that the bathroom is supposed to be qualitatively different, it is that the communal apartment neighbors would no longer be there to limit the access to hygiene facilities.

Similar to the enthusiastic rhetoric of the 1960s, institutionally published manuals on domestic interiors, even in the last decades of the USSR, only mention sanitary blocks very briefly and without illustrations of toilets, instead concentrating on the choice of finishing materials for the bathroom: tiles, oilcloth, and such. [10] Furthermore, *Rabotnitsa* published several articles on remodeling during Perestroika, yet none of them spoke of bathrooms. There were many articles on the interiors for sleep, kitchens, children's rooms and hallways, but there was not a single one on sanitary blocks, which suggests that until the 1990s bathrooms and lavatories were simply considered utilitarian spaces with no particular aesthetic requirements and choices other than cleanliness. If one were to make up an idea of Soviet and post-Soviet bathrooms based solely on mass media imagery it would have looked like bathrooms barely existed prior to the rise of remodeling magazines in the 1990s.

[9] Christine Varga-Harris, "Foundation: Revolution Realized," in *Stories of House and Home: Soviet Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years,* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 2015), pp. 53-80.
[10] See for example Boris Merzhanov, *Inter'er Zhylishcha*, (Moscow: Znanie, 1970), p.34.

There is a precise traceable moment when the toilet came out of the shadows and became a subject for public gaze and discussion: in 1992 Ilia and Emilia Kabakov presented their "Toilet" installation at the *Documenta* art exhibition in Germany.[11] A Soviet toilet suddenly transformed from an inconspicuous part of Soviet everyday life into a metaphor for Perestroika and the collapse of the USSR. At *Documenta* Kabakovs presented an installation of a public, not a private restroom. This public restroom familiar to every Soviet citizen consisted of a number of stalls with no doors and an unexpected twist: upon entering the toilet a viewer realized that the toilet was rendered habitable and became a commonplace Soviet household with a couch, a table with a recently finished meal and a reproduction of a classic painting on the wall.

The nightmare of the Soviet toilet and a fear of any hygienic space that grew out of Soviet communal apartments and scary public restrooms, has taught Soviet citizens to squint their eyes upon entry. A dim weak light, hanging from an unattainably tall ceiling of a toilet in a communal apartment[12] or the single lightbulb of the Kabakov "Toilet" were there to emphasize: a public restroom was not a place to look at. And yet, Kabakov's "Toilet" as an art installation subverted this basic principle: his toilet became a place and a subject for gaze. The disgusting Soviet public bathroom, that according to Boym has caused a desire to "close one's eyes," entered the visible sphere of the Soviet home.[13] Besides, just like the rare Soviet public restroom, it remained a place to look for: Kabakov's "Toilet" Documenta pavilion accumulated lines, just like its insufficiently placed prototypes did in the Soviet public places.

[11] Although not a part of imagery, another major introduction of toilet to the discourse happened with Victor Pelevin's "Vera Pavlovna's Ninth Dream," a short story first published in 1991.
[12] Many communal apartments were established in pre-1917 built apartment buildings. In these buildings story heights sometimes reached 4.5 meters or almost 15 feet.
[13] Svetalna Boym, "Ilya Kabakov: The Soviet toilet and the palace of utopias," *ARTMargins,* December 31st, 1999, accessed on July 14th, 2018, < http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/3-exhibitions/435-ilya-kabakov-the-soviet-toilet-and-the-palace-of-utopias>

While a typical reading of Kabakov's installation implies that it is the home that has been established in the toilet, the author of this chapter takes inspiration in a metaphorical reading: that of a toilet entering a home. Indeed, the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union seemed to have opened the lens of the former Soviet vision to the private spaces of hygiene. In the 1990s, images of bathrooms first appeared in mass media in relation to remodeling. The plentiful advertisements of tiles and fixtures, as well as luxurious stores that sold imported bathroom fixtures entered the post-Soviet reality.[14] The sanitary block, which for centuries has been "civilizing threshold" between Eastern Europe and the West, blurred *en route* from Soviet to post-Soviet hygiene.[15]

Just like the rest of a post-Soviet apartment the spaces of hygiene adapted to the new times, new understanding of hygiene, and new aesthetic ideas. Unlike the previous period, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, spaces of hygiene obtained a new social quality that has not been previously recognized by the Soviet media—they demonstrated status and economic standing, no less than the rest of the apartment. The introduction of sanitary blocks into the world of domestic interior aesthetics in the 1990s may have been similar in nature to the establishment of kitchens in the Soviet imagery of the 1960s, when kitchens stopped being perceived as being solely utilitarian and outside of aesthetic judgement.[16] The bathroom and the toilet room shifted from a domestic un-showable to the last frontier in the celebration of extreme wealth: post-Soviet nouveau riche were anecdotally claimed to admire golden toilets,[17] equally as a cash overflow

[14] "Respectable inter'er v panel'nom dome," *Salon interior*, No.1, 1994, accessed July 5th, 2018, <https://salon.ru/article/respectable-interer-v-panelnom-dome-1744>
[15] Svetalna Boym, "Ilya Kabakov: The Soviet toilet and the palace of utopias," *ARTMargins*, December 31st, 1999, accessed on July 14th, 2018, < http://www.artmargins.com/index.php/3-exhibitions/435-ilya-kabakov-the-soviet-toilet-and-the-palace-of-utopias>
[16] See Chapter 3 "Eat."
[17] For an example of a reference to 'golden toilets' see Mikhail Kolomenskiy, "K voprosu o formirovanii vneshnepoliticheskogo imidzha sovremennoi Rossii," Vlast', (03/2008), pp. 83; for further reading on Russian

extravaganza of the early 1990s and a subversive commentary on the previous absence of the toilet from the public imagery. If a toilet was not made of solid gold, it had to at least have a golden rim, like in an apartment for a "respectable" person, as shown in the 1994 inaugural Russian issue of *Salon interior* design magazine [Fig. 5.1].[18]

Fig.5.1. A combined sanitary block constructed in a prefabricated apartment house for a "respectable client," *Salon interior,* 1994.

Combined or Separate?

On a practical level the spatiality of late Soviet domestic hygiene boiled down to three categories: 1) not having a personal bathroom when living in a communal apartment; 2) having a bath and a toilet in one room; 3) or having them separate.[19] The hygienic spaces of an apartment

nouveau riche homes see Caroline Humphrey, *The Unmaking of Soviet Life: Everyday Economies After Socialism*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2002), pp.175-201.

[18] "Respectable inter'er v panel'nom dome," *Salon interior*, No.1, 1994, accessed July 5th, 2018, <https://salon.ru/article/respectable-interer-v-panelnom-dome-1744>

[19] See, for example, Boris Merzhanov, *Inter'er Zhylishcha*, (Moscow: Znanie, 1970), p.33, where the author claims 'combined' and 'separate' sanitary blocs to be the two main sanitary types available. Out of 9 (K-7, G (Gi), I-464, I-335, I-467, I-447/I-447C, I-507, II-18, II-38) prefabricated apartment building series of the first generation that Meueser and Zadorin list in their book on Soviet prefabricated construction only 1 (II-38) had separate bathroom and toilet room for one- and two- room apartments. At the same time, all of them had separate bathroom and toilet room in three+ room apartments. Philipp Meuser and Dmitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR 1955*-1991, (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015), pp. 167-256.

together were typically addressed as *sanitarnyi uzel* or *sanuzel*, which translates best as a sanitary block. When toilet and bathtub were placed in separate spaces, those rooms were called a toilet (room) and a bathroom respectively.

The first category of communal apartment dwellers was considered the least lucky out of the three as they never had easy access to the domestic hygiene facilities. Because multiple families lived in the same apartment that typically only had one bathroom and one toilet room, getting to use the bathroom was always the matter of lines, time limits, cleaning disputes and such. The troubles of the communal apartment residents with hygiene were many, and they are already vividly discussed in literature. Svetlana Boym, Christine Varga-Harris, Ekaterina Gerasimova, Steven Harris and many others indicate the lack of access to bathrooms in communal apartments due to overcrowding, the lack of maintenance because of their shared status, as well as the complex schemes of use, where every family or single resident had to have their own individual bathroom light switches and toilet seats to use.[20] The spaces of hygiene of an individual late-Soviet and post-Soviet apartment received much less attention, therefore those spaces are the ones that this chapter will discuss in detail.

In the apartments built after the 1957 decree "About the Development of Residential Construction in the USSR," and the 1958 update of the building code, bathrooms no longer had gas water heaters. The gas heaters had originally dictated a larger cubic volume of the bathrooms, and since they were no longer there, a sanitary block safely fell under the official

[20] Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home: Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2015), pp. 152-153; Ekaterina Gerasimova, "The Soviet Communal Apartment" in Jeremy Smith (ed.), *Beyond the Limits: the Concept of Space in Russian History and Culture*, (Helsinki:SHS, 1999), Steven Harris, "In Search of "Ordinary" Russia: Everyday Life in the NEP, the Thaw, and the Communal Apartment," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 6*, no. 3 (2005): 583-614; Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 121-167.

course towards minimization of apartment square footage. [21] Although the 1958 building code indicates that "apartments no bigger than 45 square meters can be developed with a combined sanitary blocks"[22] the same building code specifies that the apartments are to be designed "economically"—with a minimal area—and hence combined bathrooms, unless required otherwise.[23] Indeed, in the first decades of prefabricated housing construction, combined bathrooms were a typical solution for one and two-room apartments.[24] This did not change until the third generation of prefabricated housing (starting 1971), when some series introduced a separate bathroom and toilet room to 2-room apartments.[25] At the same time, sanitary blocks with a separate bathroom and toilet room were seen as more convenient and desirable.[26] Despite the loud mention of comfort in the 1961 Communist Party program, the early series apartment design was not about comfortable use. Instead it was about uninterrupted access to hygienic facilities, which communal apartments, particularly the ones in the pre-1917 buildings, could not provide.[27]

However, with the evolution of prefabricated housing types and the increase in floor area norms in the 1970s and 1980s, the discourse began shifting from simply having access to hygienic facilities, to the quality of the facilities provided by individual apartments.[28] In the late Soviet years there prevailed a belief that a separate bathroom and toilet block was a much better

[21] Christine Varga-Harris, "Homemaking and the Aesthetic and Moral Perimeters of the Soviet Home during the Khrushchev Era," *Journal of Social History,* Vol. 41, No. 3 (Spring, 2008), 561-589, p. 567.
[22] Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila, II-B.10-58 *Zhylie zdaniia.*(Moscow: Gosudarsvennoe izdatel'stvo literatury po stroitel'stvu, arkhitekture I stroitel'nym materialam, 1958), p.19
[23] Ibid.
[24] Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home,* p.2.
[25] Like, for example, KOPE series developed in 1981, Philipp Meuser and Dmitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR 1955-1991,* (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015), pp. 399-405.
[26] Personal Interview with an apartment dweller Natalia S., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 2nd, 2017.
[27] Soviet literature provides numerous examples of limited access to hygiene facilities in a communal apartment. One such example can be seen in A.N. Tolstoy novel *The Viper*. The female protagonist carries out daily hygienic procedures at the communal kitchen, and the spectrum of these procedures varies dependent on the presence of men.
[28] See, for example, KOPE series designed to only have separate sanitary blocs even in the small 2-room apartments.

planning solution than a combined one.[29] A public preference for separate bathroom and lavatories is evident not only in conversations with apartment dwellers, but in the prestige gradation of different types of housing throughout the late-Soviet years. Elements of individual initiative were introduced to housing construction in the 1970s, with cooperatives and institutions receiving a certain amount of freedom in apartment planning. While this freedom was limited by the upper limits of the building codes, unlike in social housing, architects no longer had to closely follow the lower limits. Although the later building codes suggested constructing combined bathrooms in smaller one or two-room apartments, cooperative and institutional apartment building residents were often lucky to have separate bathrooms and lavatories even in one or two-room apartments.[30]

A preference for a separate bathroom and toilet room continued dominating apartment dweller moods after the collapse of the Soviet Union, yet the value of the separate sanitary block rooms has been enhanced with a new meaning. This new meaning did not have to do with the increased comfort of using a toilet room and a bathroom separately in an apartment with more than one occupant. Instead, it was about a possibility to demolish a partition wall between the toilet room and the bathroom and gain more useful space, since a separate sanitary block had bigger floor area than a joint one.[31]

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[29] Henry W. Morton, "Who Gets What, When and How? Housing in the Soviet Union," *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Apr., 1980), 235-259, p. 245.

[30] Cooperatives and institutions had a little more freedom in deciding on the number of square meters per apartment, than state-owned housing. This often resulted in larger kitchens and separate bathrooms and lavatories. See Mervyn Matthews, *Poverty in the Soviet Union : the Life-styles of the Underprivileged in Recent Years*, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 67.

[31] For instance, see an interview with the head of Moscow State Housing Inspection Aleksandr Matveevich Strazhnikov. Svetlana Olifirova, "Vse o pereplanirovke kvartiry,"*Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, May 5th, 2005, accessed on July 15th, 2018, < https://www.kp.ru/daily/23519/40426/> . Another example can be found in an article on the resettlement of the first-generation prefabricated housing in Moscow, where the vice director of the Department of hosing policy and housing funds in Moscow states: "As for the new apartments. They are offered not on a square meter for a square meter basis, but on a room for a room. Take a two-room Khrushchevka. It has 42-44 square meters, a small kitchen, typically a combined sanitary block and walk-through rooms. Resettling from this housing people will receive a two-room apartment of no less than 50 square meters, with isolated rooms, a large kitchen,

Architectural Fantasies and Reality

Soviet literature on residential architecture often enthusiastically discussed innovations and improvements that were never implemented in reality as if they were already present on the ground.[32] The case of the late-Soviet and post-Soviet spaces of hygiene is a perfect illustration of this abyss that existed between the formal architectural and homemaking discourses and the practical reality of apartment dwellers. Just like any part of the Soviet apartment household, spaces of hygiene—bathrooms, toilets and less hygiene-dominated kitchens—went through some dramatic transformations after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The precursors of these transformations were reflected in the professional architectural discourse, yet the estimates of the existing situation and the solutions envisioned by architects in the late-1970s and 1980s were rather far from the reality of existing housing and apartment dwellers' needs.

One of the architectural dreams that never got realized in the late Soviet Union was a dream of multiple separate sanitary blocks.[33] An illustration of the "multiple-sanitary block" rhetoric can be found in 1974 Boris Merzhanov's home-making manual targeted towards "architects, designers and a broad circle of readers."[34] In his book, Merzhanov uses a number of examples to illustrate a domestic spatial organization of hygienic facilities that he considers desirable. First, he suggests an example of a 4-room apartment in 111-78 and 111-83 prefabricated panel apartment building series, as an example of homes with two completely

loggia, separate bathroom and toilet room. Is this person going to improve their housing situation? Of course, they will!" from "Zhyteliam moskovskikh khrushchevok predlozhat kvartity za MKAD," Komsomol'skaia Pravda, March 27th, 2012, accessed on July 15th, 2018, < https://www.msk.kp.ru/daily/25858/2825855/>

[32] The discrepancies between the Soviet texts and reality are a subject for Mikhail Epstein's "The Origins and Meaning or Russian Postmodernism" in the *After the Future: The Paradoxes of Postmodernism and Contemporary Russian Culture,* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1995), pp. 188-210. Epstein sees Soviet texts as inventing models of reality that "replace reality itself." (p.189).

[33] Except for the homes of extreme elites, that could request individually designed layouts or were offered an outstanding apartment composition in the so-called *vedomstvennye* buildings.

[34] Boris Mironovich Merzhanov, *Sovremennaia kvartira,* (Moscow: Stroizdat, 1974), title page.

separate sanitary blocks, resulting in two toilets being placed in one apartment [Fig. 5.2]. According to Merzhanov, the introduction of two separate toilets was to make the apartment "more comfortable for performing personal hygiene procedures for all family members."[35] A trustful reader may assume that 111-78 and 111-83 series 4-room apartments were indeed always built with two sanitary blocks, equaling two lavatories and two bathrooms. At the same time, a formal booklet on 111-83 series presents plans with only one bathroom in 4 and 5-room apartments [Fig.5.3].[36]

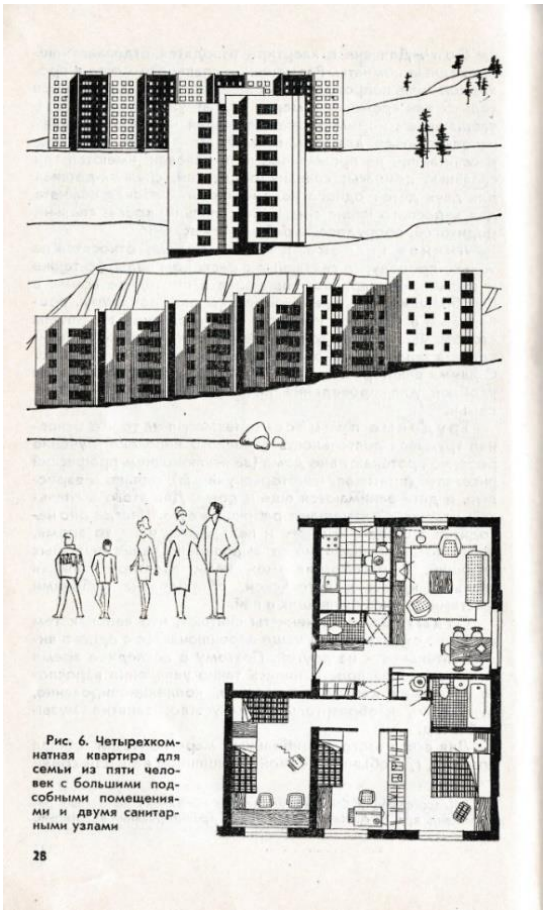

Fig. 5.2. 111-78 series according to Boris Merzhanov's book.

[35] Ibid., p. 27.
[36]Ol'khova A.P., *Novye serii tipovykh proektov zhilikh domov dlia massovogo stroitel'stva: Arkhitekturno-planirovochnye resheniia (obzor*), (Moskva: Tsentr nauchno-tekhnicheskoi informatsii po grazhdanskomu stroitel'stvu i arkhitekture, 1972), p.46.

Рис. 4 Основные типы квартир в составе серии (на примере серии 83)

Fig. 5.3. An illustration of 111-83 apartment plans from the series booklet Ol'khova A.P., *Novye serii tipovykh proektov zhilikh domov dlia massovogo stroitel'stva: Arkhitekturno-planirovochnye resheniia (obzor*).

Merzhanov again exemplifies progressive Soviet apartment planning with the apartments designed in the so-called New *Byt* apartment buildings: experimental projects of residential buildings with public services—laundry, cooking, and/or childcare— planned into the apartment block. In such buildings, separate apartments were not supposed to have full kitchens, but just kitchenettes meant for minimal use. The space freed with the absence of a full kitchen was to be taken by a second sanitary block in an apartment as small as three rooms.[37] At the time of the publication one of such buildings was already constructed in Moscow's Novye Cheremushki neighborhood. According to the original design concept, it was supposed to house regular families that were willing to change their lifestyle and reduce the amount of domestic labor.[38] However, Merzhanov as if on purpose forgets to mention that the building was never constructed or populated according to the original design. Even prior to its completion its public services and areas were significantly reduced. More importantly, right after completion, the building was assigned to the Moscow State University and became a dormitory, therefore eliminating the

[37] Boris Mironovich Merzhanov, *Sovremennaia kvartira*, (Moscow: Stroizdat, 1974), p.35-37.
[38] Ibid.

original concept of more than one sanitary block for an individual apartment.[39] Despite all Merzhanov's examples, in the Soviet Union, there only existed very few prefabricated standard apartments with more than one bathroom or one toilet room.[40] Individually designed buildings, a minority in the world of Soviet housing, also followed the rule of one sanitary block, even in large apartments meant to host 5 plus people [Fig.4].

There is an alternative reality that exists in these texts but is nowhere to be found on the ground.[41] The degrees to which the professional texts may be divorced from reality vary. The texts about bathrooms transcend reality to the highest: architects speak of new apartments with multiple bathroom blocks or at least two separate toilets as if they are omnipresent.

On the other hand, it would be incorrect to assume that Soviet architects and architectural writers were simply delusional. Rather, in a wide-spread Soviet manner, they projected what they thought was desirable onto the existing housing situation. A perfect case of such projection can be found in design competition catalogues suggesting reconstruction and improvements for early series, for instance the competition organized by State Committee of Construction in 1987. The first prize project suggests arranging a combined sanitary bloc and a separate toilet room in apartments for five occupants.[42] The second prize offers the exact same solution for five-person apartments.[43] The third prize suggests that two toilets should be placed in an apartment for four

[39] Anna Bronivitskaia and Nikolai Malinin, *Moskva: arkhitektura sovetskogo modernizma 1955-1991: spravochnik-putevoditel'*, (Moscow: Garazh, 2016), p.123.
[40] Meueser and Zadorin list two third generation series of apartment buildings equipped with two bathrooms: 112 and 148. 112 series originally developed for Vorkuta, soon became widespread in Norilsk, making it a general regional series for climatic zone 1. P. 407. 112 series built in Tashkent "over-compensated for the shortage of four- and five-room apartments with the additional conveniences such as large entrance halls and two sanitary blocks." P. 419. The problem of four- and five-room apartments was regionally specific to Central Asia.
[41] Mikhail Epstein, "The Origins and Meaning or Russian Postmodernism" in *After the Future: The Paradoxes of Postmodernism and Contemporary Russian Culture,* (Amherst: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 1995), p. 189.
[42] *Illustrirovannyi catalog proektov otkrytogo konkursa "Modernizatsiia I rekonstruktsiia zhylikh domov pervykh massovikh seriy," (*Moskvs: Gosstroy SSSR, 1987*),* p.11.
[43] Ibid, 16.

people, which has never been realized in the Soviet mass housing construction before.[44] The outcomes of the competition are a clear statement on the hygiene question: according to architects large apartments were to be equipped with two toilets in a country where this has not yet happened on a considerable scale.[45]

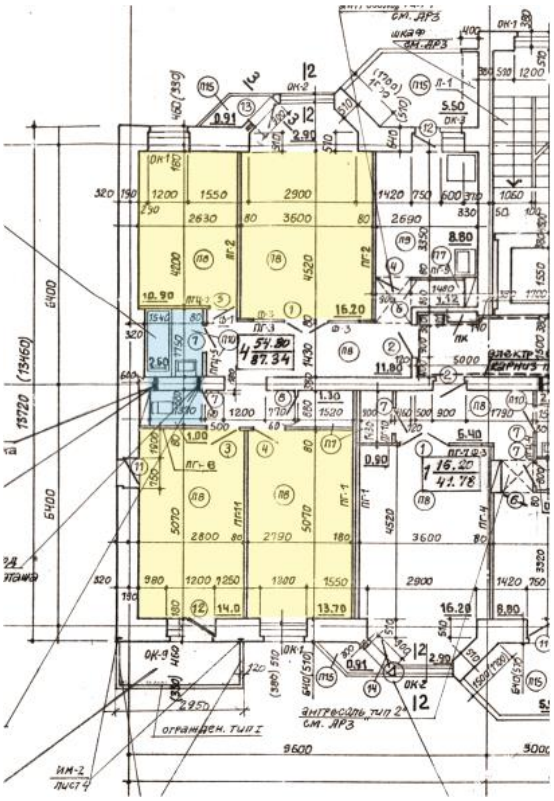

Fig. 5.4. An example of an individually designed apartment building with 4-room apartments containing one sanitary block (blueprints issued in 1989).[46]

[44] Ibid., 19.

[45] The unanimity of designers in 1987 is far more impressive, when considering that the opinions were not as univocal only 6 years prior, in 1981. In 1981, (1) some projects suggested having one separated sanitary bloc in apartments for 6+ people; (2) some offer a strange solution to move the bathroom away from the toilet room in large apartments, while not doubling their functions anywhere else; (3) and yet the third kind suggest introducing one full combined sanitary bloc (bathtub, toilet and sink) and another toilet room placed separately in a different part of an apartment for 3 and more occupants. *Ilustrirovannyi catalog proektov otkrytogo konkursa na razrabotku proektnykh predlozhenii po novym tipam maloetazhnykh zhilykh domov I prinzipov plotno-nizkoi gorodskoi zastrojki,* (Gosstroy SSSR, 1981), p.6, 67, 26-27.

[46] From Kyivproekt archives, folder #098833.AR-2, 2 Avgustyn Voloshyn street, Kyiv, Ukraine.

While overall square footages and kitchen dimensions of the Soviet apartments grew consistently starting from 1958 building code, the bathroom dimensions did not. The 1958 Sanitary Norms prescribed separate lavatories to have minimal dimensions of 0.8 by 1.2 meters (2.6 by 3.9 feet) with high-tank toilets and 0.8 by 1.5 meters (2.6 by 4.9 feet) for close-coupled toilets.[47] By 1962 the dimensions for the high-tank toilets disappeared from the building code, indicating the gradual end of use to this type of fixture that in the Soviet Union was popularly known as Niagara [Falls].[48]

By 1971 separate water closet dimensions remained exactly the same. Bathrooms had to have minimal dimensions of 1.73 by 1.50 meters (5.6 by 4.9 feet).[49] The last Soviet building code for apartment housing published in 1989 no longer mentions separate water closets, but simply indicates that the minimal dimensions for a bathroom were to be 0.8 by 1.2 meters, which is exactly the same as in 1958.[50] In other words, in the last three decades of the Soviet Union virtually no changes happened in the square footages of sanitary blocks.

Post-Soviet Bathroom

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, two processes took place simultaneously: while architects were finally able to realize their vision and design multiple hygiene blocks within the same apartment, residents of the existing apartments resourcefully transformed, partitioned and combined their existing sanitary blocs and hygienic practices to gain more usable space for new functional requirements.

[47] Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila II-B.10-58 *Zhylie zdaniia.*(Moscow: Gosudarsvennoe izdatel'stvo literatury po stroitel'stvu, arkhitekture I stroitel'nym materialam, 1958).
[48] Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila II-L.1-62 *Zhylie zdaniia,* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo literatury po stroitel'stvu,1964).
[49] Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila II-L.1-71* *Zhylie zdaniia.* (Moscow: Stroiizadat, 1978).
[50] Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila 2.08.01-89, *Zhylie zdaniia.* (Moscow: TsITP Gosstroiia SSSR, 1989).

Since most housing built after the collapse of the Soviet Union was no longer social [municipal],[51] the upper limits of floor area and amenities suggested by the Sanitary Norms or other documents[52] developed in the post-Soviet states no longer applied to the majority of the new apartments built. This meant that the plans, floor areas and space compositions predominantly depended on marketing, with only the minimal requirements being defined by the legislature. In a large apartment, an architect could finally introduce as many bathrooms as they desired, only dependent on the future marketability of such apartment home. Moreover, many Soviet prefabricated apartment building series' were modified to fit the new post-Soviet demands.[53] One such example is a set of post-Soviet modifications for one of the most successful and widespread Soviet series—P-44.[54] In the 1990s and early 2000s several derivative series, such as P-44T and P-44M, were developed to substitute the "morally obsolete" original.[55] Unlike its previous version, newly developed P-44M had two separate sanitary blocks in 4-room apartments.

P-44 was just one example of a characteristic phenomenon: despite the collapse of the ruling system, many elements of the Soviet infrastructure remained and continued functioning after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This was particularly true for the factories and organizations specialized in producing prefabricated panels for housing construction. Stroitel'noe

[51] See Jane Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), p.52.
[52] First construction regulations developed in the post-Soviet states in many ways resembled the late-Soviet ones, but some received a new nomenclature; for instance, construction regulations became known as Derzhavni Budivel'ni Normy in Ukraine and Noteikumi par Latvijas būvnormatīvu in Latvia.
[53] After the collapse of the Soviet Union, new housing construction became executed in two, rather than one major method: monolith concrete on site construction introduced after 1991, and continuing prefabrication as during the Soviet times. Monolith buildings were frequently commissioned without partitions and amenities (Personal interview with an architect Jaroslav D., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 11th, 2017) in an expectation that the new owners would like to implement their own vision. Prefabricated buildings, typically built as an economical option, on the contrary, had walls and often had amenities already in place.
[54] P-44 is in detail described in Philipp Meuser and Dmitri Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR, 1955-1991*, p. 375-385.
[55] I.N. Shkaruba, "Razvitie Panel'nogo Domostroeniia v Moskve," *Zhilishnoe Stroitel'stvo*, 8/2003, Moscow: Ladia, p.11

Upravleniie No.155, a former Soviet construction institution that became an independent organization after 1991, developed a new prefabricated series I-155, with two sanitary blocks in both 3 and 4-room apartments.[56] MNIITEP [Moskovskiy nauchno-issledovatel'skiy i proektniy institut tipologii, eksperemental'nogo proektirovaniia] developed yet another series where 3 and 4-room apartments had two separate sanitary blocks.

Individual apartment housing construction followed the same avenue. First, it is important to note that even in the Soviet Union individually designed apartment housing evaded some general regulations, if it was commissioned by major institutions and was meant to house high-status apartment dwellers.[57] In terms of the spaces of hygiene, this meant that second sanitary blocks attached to the master-bedrooms (that in elite housing could have actually functioned as bedrooms) started appearing while the Soviet Union was still standing.[58] However, such apartments remained an elite rarity until 1991. In an interview for this study, an architect who worked on individually designed apartment buildings in the last Soviet decades and after the Soviet Union collapsed explained the need for multiple sanitary blocks with multiple generations—multiple core families—living in the same apartment.[59] Even if an apartment like that was large, simply having a substantial amount of space for sleep or rest was not enough for comfortable living. In order to become truly comfortable these apartments required another sanitary block. Otherwise, even large and luxurious elite Soviet apartment approximated communal apartment living with the morning and evening lines to the bathroom and toilet room. The late Soviet architectural dream to introduce multiple sanitary blocks to large apartments,

[56] Shkaruba, "Razvitie Panel'nogo Domostroeniia v Moskve," p.11-12.
[57] See for example Gregory D. Andrusz, *Housing and Urban Development in the USSR*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), p. 102.
[58] Personal interview with an architect Jaroslav D., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 11th, 2017.
[59] Ibid.

therefore, turned out to be perfectly justified. Those post-Soviet apartment homes that were marketed as comfortable and prestigious were constructed with two sanitary blocks, like in an example below [Fig.5.5].

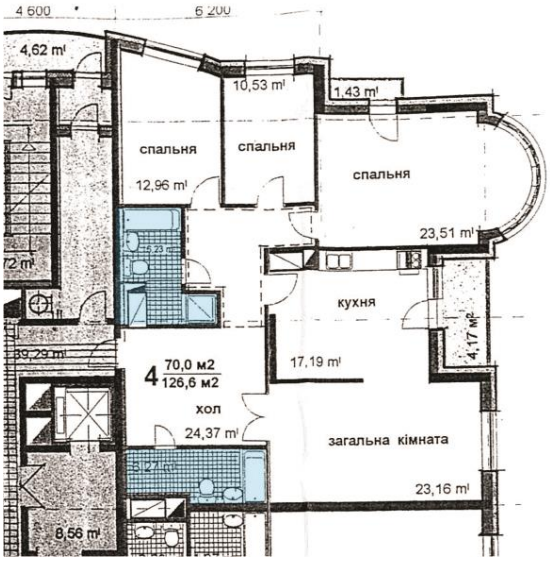

Fig. 5.5 Individually designed post-Soviet apartment building home with two bathrooms, blueprints developed in 2002. From Kyivproekt archives, 330201-AP.

While an introduction of multiple bathrooms in new construction should be viewed as a major trend after 1991, there also existed architectural micro-trends that are worth mentioning to reconstruct the full picture of the post-Soviet domestic hygiene. One such micro-trend came from requirements made by Western expats that became abundant in the large post-Soviet cities after 1991. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, foreigners willingly entered post-Soviet cities mostly in hopes of making business on the wreckage of socialism.[60] These foreigners needed temporary, semi-temporary or permanent accommodations. In the Soviet Union there existed

[60] The scale of influence projected by Western expatriates in the large post-Soviet cities can be seen in Yuri Medvedkov and Olga Medvedkov, "Upscale Housing in Post-Soviet Moscow and its Environs" in Kiril Stanilov (ed.), *The Post-Socialist City: Urban Form and Space Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe after Socialism*, (Dordrecht, the Netherlands : Springer Verlag, 2007), p. 252. For more information on expats in post-Soviet states see Natasza Camiah and Graham Hollinshead, "Assessing the Potential for Effective Cross-Cultural Working Between "New" Russian Managers and Western Expatriates," *Journal of World Business*, Volume 38, Issue 3, (August 2003), pp. 245-26;

hotels, meant particularly for foreign travelers and hence constructed and sustained at higher standards, yet these hotels were clearly a temporary solution.[61]

These foreigners that appeared on the post-Soviet real estate market were among the first clients to create a demand for organized professional-remodeling labor, able to change existing apartments according to Western standards of living. Construction professionals and architects who entered the rapidly invigorated post-Soviet apartment remodeling market as early as 1992 recall that one of the major problems cited by foreign clients were kitchens and bathrooms, the latter being even more important than the former.[62] Because of small footprints and remote locations, prefabricated apartments were of no interest to Western expats. Instead, they purchased apartments in historic or Stalin-era buildings. These apartments had larger footages, yet the state of bathroom interiors and appliances left much to be desired. In addition, Western European clientele simply had requests different from Soviet standards. For instance, nearly no Soviet housing was equipped with bidets. Although bidets can be found on some design stage blueprints for the third generation of prefabricated housing series (1971-1985), those same bidets never appear on the Recorder of Deeds plans, which could mean that they were never installed in reality.[63] Several interviewees for this study indicated bidets to be among the requests Western clients made to their apartment remodeling.[64]

At the same time this niche trend among expats has not changed the overall urban domestic reality. Although architects, designers and construction workers carried a lot of knowledge obtained at these early commissions into their further practice, bidets were not always one of

[61] For instance, hotels administered by the state join-stock company *Inturist.*
[62] Personal Interview with an architect Aleksey R., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 4th, 2017; Interview with a construction firm owner Mykola N., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, April 24th, 2017.
[63] Selection of typical plans granted by Buro Tekhnicheskoi Dokumentatsii in Kyiv, Ukraine.
[64] Personal Interview with an architect Aleksey R., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 4th, 2017; Personal Interview with a construction firm owner Mykola N., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, April 24th, 2017.

them. Until this day it is a type of bathroom fixture that is rather rare in post-Soviet apartments. During the Soviet era, bidets were predominantly not shown on the plans of standardized apartment series homes; water supply and drain elements for bidets were not projected either.[65] The reasons are many, but one particular reason that prevented bidets from being a popular bathroom solution in the Soviet Union was the size of Soviet bathrooms.

While the post-Soviet architects introduced the second set of sanitary blocks to new post-Soviet homes, the regular dwellers of these post-Soviet apartments combined their separate toilet room/bathroom blocks together to gain some more usable space for newly available appliances and to relieve the burden of domestic labor [Fig.6].[66] Just like in any other realm of human life, the collapse of the Soviet Union drove the extension of some hygienic practices and enabled the emergence of others. Perhaps the most notable practice that came to an end after the dissolution of the USSR was boiling laundry at the kitchen. Soviet women, the population predominantly responsible for laundry, used to boil durable white laundry in large pots at the kitchen stove as a way of removing stains and sanitizing fabric.[67] This practice fell victim to the spread of washing machines and the introduction of effective laundry detergents. In the early 2000s, post-Soviet television was populated with the anti-laundry boiling commercials of *Tide* laundry detergent: a popular television personality travelled from household to household comparing the brightness of laundry when boiled and washed with *Tide*. After the inescapable victory of *Tide* he notoriously threatened the audience: "Are you still boiling [laundry]? Then we are coming for

[65] See apartment plans in Philipp Meuser and Dmitri Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR, 1955-1991*, (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015).
[66] Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home,* p. 65.
[67] Olga Gurova, *Sovetskoe nizhnee bel'e: Mezhdu ideologiey I povesdnevnost'iu*, (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2008), p.46.

you!"[68] Despite the extinction of laundry boiling techniques, laundry processes did not completely abandon kitchens: this time it was about where to put a washing machine.

Even prior to the 1990s, the Western and Western-style washing machines already had affected Soviet homes to some degree. In the 1950s, when the first prefabricated series apartment buildings were constructed to house the wide range of the Soviet urban population, many Soviet people did not have washing machines.[69] The 1960s official rhetoric was saturated with the subject of domestic machinery that was to liberate women from their domestic workloads. The tone of this rhetoric, inseparable from the Cold War competition with the United States, assumed that not all women had been liberated yet, or in other words not every household had the necessary machines, washing machine in particular.[70] In the following decades, the Soviet industry produced a substantial number of washing machines, yet most of them were of a type quite different from currently common washers and required a completely different spatial set up.

Prior to the 1980s, Soviet industry only produced wringer washing or top loading activator washing machines.[71] These structures were portable, did not match the level of the kitchen countertop and could not serve as an extra usable table surface in the bathroom due to their intricate geometries or top loading construction. This meant that in an apartment, washing machines occupied leftover space; they were stored elsewhere in the bathroom[72] or in the

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[68] Oksana Fomina, "Grozu domokhoziaek toshnit ot slov: "Vy vse eshche kipiatite?" kak Bordovskikh ot gazirovki," *Komsomol'skaia Pravda*, November 20th, 2003, accessed on April 14th, <https://www.kp.ru/daily/23161/24803/https://www.kp.ru/daily/23161/24803/>

[69] Melanie Ilič, Susan Emily Reid, and Lynne Attwood, *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York : Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p.11; Natalya Chernyshova, *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev era*,,, (London : Routledge, 2015), pp. 82, 186.

[70] Susan Reid, "Cold War at the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev," *Slavic Review*, Vol. 61, No. 2 (Summer, 2002), 211-252, pp. 227-228.

[71] Ilič, Reid, Attwood, *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, p.193.

[72] For instance, one of Soviet washing machines *Maliutka* (first manufactured in 1973) had a height dimension of 57 cm and could be stored under a standard sink (59 cm at the lowest point). The instruction for the machine suggests

apartment until it was time to use them, rather than being built-in into the rest of the furniture and fixtures. At laundry time these washing machines were mounted on top of the bathtub [Fig. 5.6]. In the 1980s, the Soviet population first encountered automatic washing machines named *Vyatka*; the number of households that owned washing machines grew to 78%.[73] These machines were very similar to the front load automatic machines available today. Similarly, they were large, heavy and stationary. In other words, they required a space of their own in the late-Soviet and post-Soviet home. This space was lacking in the prefabricated Soviet domestic sanitary blocks.

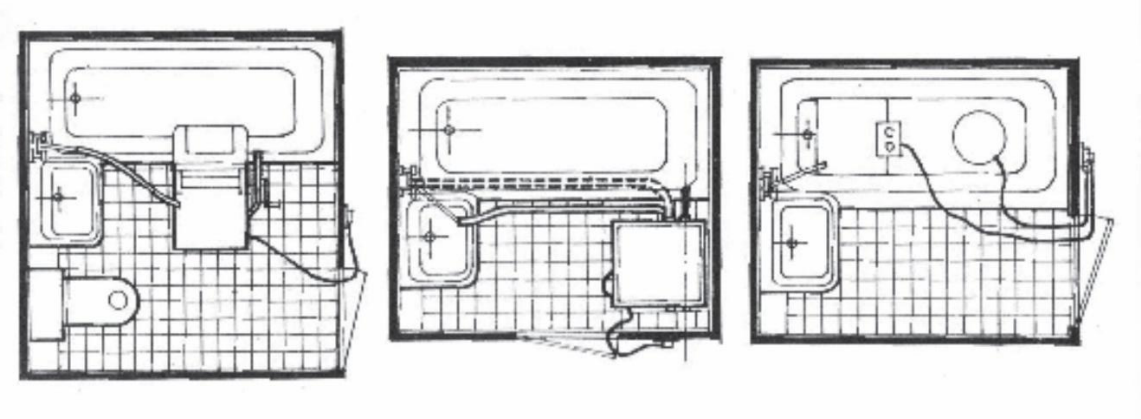

Fig. 5.6. "Mounting washing machines" in bathrooms of different configurations. An illustration from a 1988 Soviet book on a contemporary apartment interior.[74]

Just like a washing machine occupied its place in the Soviet consumer culture, a front load washing machine quickly became a necessary attribute of a post-Soviet household.[75] The space for a washing machine had to be found somewhere. This problem divided apartment dwellers into several categories. Those who were lucky to dwell in Stalin-era apartment buildings, could

using a special structure, if installing the machine on top of the bathtub for use. *Mashina stiral'naia bytovaia SM-1 Maliutka-2: Rukovodstvo po ekspluatatsii*, (Sverdlovsk: Proizvodstvennoe Ob'edinenie "Uralmash," 1988), p. 8.
[73] Natalya Chernyshova, *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev era,* (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 186.
[74] R.N. Blashkevich, *Interier sovremennoi kvartiry,* (Moskva: Stroizdat, 1988), p. 95.
[75] See Natalya Chershova, "Household Technology in the Brezhnev Era Home" in S*oviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era.*

simply fit their washing machine into the extra space that they had in their bathrooms due to the bigger bathroom footprint. The last Soviet building code prior to the Khrushchev-era shift to extra-frugal housing construction determined the minimum sanitary block size as 0.9 by 1.4 meters with a caveat of those being no less than twelve cubic meters if they had a gas water-heater. Since a residential story was not supposed to be less than three meters tall,[76] this meant that the floor area of such bathroom would end up being no less than four square meters. This would have provided enough space for placing a washing machine in the bathroom, and if not, it could have always been placed in the kitchen that was determined to be no less than seven square feet. Additionally, placing washing machines in kitchens became particularly popular with the new availability of modular furniture after the collapse of the Soviet Union, since the washer could be added into the row of kitchen cabinets and other appliances underneath the kitchen-counter surface. And yet this convenient solution was only possible in apartments with larger kitchens, and not the first generation of prefabricated housing.

The 1958 building code, the first document to fully reflect the changes in the official housing-planning policies, dropped the minimum volume for bathrooms with gas water heaters down to 7.5 cubical meters, placing the minimal bathroom area at a little bit higher than three square meters. [77] These three square meters were not enough to fit a washing machine. Those apartments, equipped with three square meters bathrooms were typically also the ones that had extremely small kitchens, therefore a washing machine could not fit there either. And yet, many residents of these first-generation Khrushchevkas found a solution: if the sanitary bloc consisted of a separate bathroom and a separate toilet room, the dwellers of these apartments demolished a

[76] Sanitarnye Normy I Pravila II-V.10-58 *Zhylie zdaniia,* (Moscow: Stroizdat, 1954)., p. 227.
[77] Sanitarnye Normy i Pravila II-B.10-58 *Zhylie zdaniia.*(Moscow: Gosudarsvennoe izdatel'stvo literatury po stroitel'stvu, arkhitekture I stroitel'nym materialam, 1958)., p.11

wall between the toilet and the bathroom to gain necessary 0.3 square meters for the washing machine. In other words, the washing machine was placed in the space gained by removing one of the doors to the sanitary block. To no surprise, this type of re-planning is quoted to be among the most popular transformations that took place in prefabricated apartment housing [Fig. 5.7]. [78]

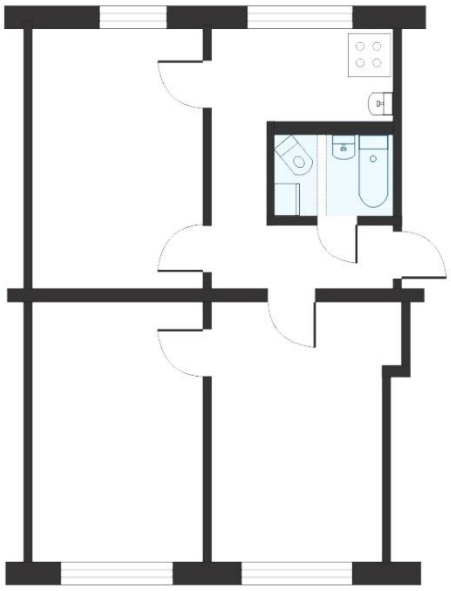

Fig. 5.7. A Recorder of Deeds plan of a Khrushchev-era apartment, after removing a wall between the toilet room and the bathroom to fit a washing machine.[79]

The newly popular hygienic options of the post-Soviet era, such as the readily available laundry washers, called for more space, and the space was found at the cost of a partition wall and independent use of the bathroom and toilet room.

Despite the seemingly diverging tendencies exemplified in architectural discourse and on the grassroots individual apartment remodeling level, the ultimate outcome of the post-Soviet

[78] Personal conversation with Buro Tekhnicheskoi Dokumentatsii engineers.
[79] Anonymous apartment plan obtained during personal conversations with Buro Tekhnicheskoi Dokumentatsii engineers in Kyiv, 2017.

transformation was the same: apartment dwellers and architects alike called for more space, and hence, better quality interiors for hygiene in an apartment home. The Soviet spaces of hygiene were no longer enough to fit all the requirements of the new time, be it the luxurious bidet and jacuzzies of the Western expats or indigenous nouveau riche, or the economically priced washing machines of the modest prefabricated apartment homes. Along with the desire for sanitary block remodeling, it became a visible part of a home, with the spaces of hygiene as much of a subject for aesthetic transformation as the rest of the post-Soviet apartment.

Just like kitchens massively transitioned from utilitarian to representational spaces beginning in Khrushchev and ending in Brezhnev-era, the spaces of hygiene transitioned after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Instead of bleak spaces meant to produce a healthy, yet selfless Soviet person (or *Homo Soveticus*), these new spaces of hygiene became a place of comfort and self-appreciation. The bathroom was now to become, using Jennifer Patico's terms, "respectable."[80] In other words, it became of a place of conspicuous consumption, where bathroom equipment, hygienic products, and sometimes even the number of bathrooms themselves were supposed to establish propriety and emphasize social standing. Fehérváry addressed luxurious post-socialist bathrooms as the elements of "idealized lives—and selves—long imagined to exist elsewhere," particularly in the West.[81] This work suggests that it is not just the long-lived dream of the imaginary West, but the necessity to conform to the standards of the new times that forced even less well-off post-Soviet urbanites to remodel their bathrooms. Since "hygiene is a strong signifier of respectability," spaces of hygiene have to satisfy societal

[80] Jennifer Patico, *Consumption and Social Change in a Post-Soviet Middle Class*, p. 209
[81] Krisztina Fehérváry, 2002. "American kitchens, Luxury Bathrooms, and the Search for a "Normal" Life in Postsocialist Hungary," *Ethnos*, (67 (3):2002, 369-400), p.372.

standards for where cleanliness is produced.[82] Therefore, terrifying bathrooms of the communal apartments and the utilitarian, yet aging bathrooms of the Soviet prefabricated blocks gave way to the consumption-centered bathrooms fit to sustain respectable post-Soviet identities.

[82] Beverly Skeggs, *Formations of Class & Gender: Becoming Respectable*, (London: SAGE Publications, 1997), p. 65.

CHAPTER 5: SOCIALIZING AND CONCLUSION

Housing is always more than just housing.

—David Madden and Peter Marcuse, *In Defense of Housing: The Politics of Crisis*

The assumption at the start of this dissertation was that urban apartment housing has an overlooked capacity to adapt to new times. Fueled by the current global urban housing affordability crisis,[1] the studies on the adaptability of urban apartment housing are gaining momentum: in the last decade studies of apartment housing trajectories have been published by established scholars, such as Florian Urban's *Tower and Slab* and Edward Goetz's *New Deal Ruins*, and emerging researchers, such as Roberto Castillo work that explores the change over time in Venezuelan superblocks.[2] My dissertation, in its turn, tracks one example of a capacity for transformation in existing post-Soviet metropolitan apartment homes. In response to the original hypothesis, I demonstrate that in the absence of working state initiatives in the first post-Soviet years, apartment housing was able to sustain and change according to new political, economic, and social realities.

The absence of the state from the housing transformation of the first post-Soviet years determined the scale of inquiry for this study: a microscale, calibrated for an individual apartment, rather than for large-scale building or renovation campaigns. This is, perhaps, the most necessary methodological difference between recent studies of the 1960s Soviet housing

[1] See, for example, David Madden and Peter Marcuse, *In Defense of Housing: The Politics of Crisis*, (London; New York: Verso, 2016), p. 85

[2] Roberto Castillo, "Appropriating Modern Architecture: Designers' Strategies and Dweller's Tactics in the evolution of the 1950s Venezuelan Superbloques," (PhD diss., University of Kansas, 2015).

campaign,[3] modernist building campaigns in different European states,[4] and this present study of housing after the collapse of the USSR. In the former cases, the scale of inquiry is responding to the grand statements and moves of the entire governmental machine, while the latter speaks to a grass-roots response to the changing state of the world. A study of governmental rhetoric and change in building codes would not suffice for this purpose; instead, this dissertation looks into the layout changes of individual apartments, as seen by residents, homemaking publications, and architects who practiced apartment remodeling and housing construction.

A key finding of this study, represented throughout all chapters, is that many tendencies of domestic spatial change happened throughout individual urban apartments— independent of type, prestige, or neighborhood qualities.[5] This is not a natural assumption when it comes to urban apartments: for instance, prominent studies of historic apartment housing in the United States, such as Cromley's *Alone Together*, concentrate on type and residents' class as their units of inquiry. Many studies of the Soviet prefabricated housing campaign of the 1950s and 60s, such as Varga-Harris' *Stories of House and Home*, similarly share this focus on type and class.

The post-Soviet transformation presents a different case. The collapse of the Soviet Union was not followed by an introduction of a new massively reproduced apartment type, other than, perhaps, the spread in monolithic concrete methods in apartment building construction. Instead, it was signified by the transformation of all existing apartment types, in the prefabricated panel and pre-1917 brick apartment buildings alike. This work, therefore, chose to study tendencies of architectural change and change in spatial and cultural practices across multiple types. Such

[3] Such as Christine Varga-Harris' *Stories of House and Home: Apartment Life During Khrushchev Years*, and Steven Harris' *Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life After Stalin*.
[4] For instance, the resent publications on French mass housing by Kenny Cupers and Nicole C. Rudolph. Kenny Cupers, *The Social Project: Housing Postwar France*, (Minneapolis, Minn. University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Nicole C. Rudolph, *At Home in Postwar France: Modern Mass Housing and the Right to Comfort*, (New York, N.Y. Berghahn, 2015)
[5] Reservations should be made for communal apartments and different types of hostel housing.

tendencies include the increased privacy of spaces for sleep, the gradual merging of spaces for daily and occasional eating, as well as the extension of hygiene space due to the spread of stationary laundry machines. At the same time, these changes may have come about through different formal solutions. For instance, a private place for sleep could have been constructed by both demolishing or constructing new partitions in the same apartment, depending on the number of residents. Regardless of the tactic employed—through establishing a formal living room or through constructing a hallway to isolate a former walk-through room—the sleep of one or more residents of this apartment would have become isolated from the other family members. The type, the income, and the demographic of the apartment made little difference, as long as the residents were able to afford the remodeling.

This observation inevitably evokes categories of publicness and privacy. These categories have been successfully discussed for Soviet era homes, with a particular emphasis on political and ideological conversations at the kitchen gatherings of intelligentsia and the "private-public realm" that has emerged in the post-Stalin Soviet Union.[6] But how were the private and public spheres in the home affected by late-Soviet and post-Soviet domestic transformations? This work argues that in those years, individual and family privacy in quotidian spaces became much more clearly outlined than it had been through most of Soviet history. Just like in the conclusion described above, a newly constructed wall outlined the individually owned private space within the apartment. A similar clarification of boundaries between public and private space took place in the realm of domestic socialization. This change is analyzed in detail in the sections below.

[6] See Oleg Kharkhordin, "Reveal and Dissimulate: A Genealogy of Private Life in Soviet Russia," in Jeff Alan Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (ed.), Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy, (Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 333-364; Ingrid Oswald and Viktor Voronkov, "The 'Public–Private' Sphere in Soviet and Post-Soviet Society: Perception and Dynamics of 'Public' and 'Private' in Contemporary Russia," *European Societies*, 6:1 (2004): 97-117, p. 106.

Another key observation of this work is that state-institutions, that preserved ownership of the apartment building structures, had very limited control over the changes that took place inside of these apartments. In 2011 Stephen Collier wrote about the surprising persistence of the Soviet heritage in urban housing management: since all infrastructure, such as plumbing, heating, and electricity systems were communal for the entire *microraion*, it was impossible to separate them into independent and insular individual systems.[7] Therefore, the housing condition in the 1990s presented a hybrid between the limitations of state-owned buildings and the extreme liberties of individual apartments. Inside of an individual apartment the grand Soviet project for the proper socialist household[8] turned inside out: in the first years after the collapse of the USSR nothing was illegal (or legal), nothing was proper, and everything was possible.

The Absentee State

During the Soviet era, housing and the home were an area of primary state concern and, hence, unprecedented state control. Of course, there was also the Arms Race and the Space Program, but those were matters of international prestige. Internally, housing was one of the most critical issues to the Soviet state, from its very beginning in 1917 with the placement of working-class families in former bourgeoise apartments, to Khrushchev's housing campaign starting in 1957, and all the way to the return of the housing crisis[9] and the modest attempts of housing privatization during the belated Perestroika reforms of the late 1980s. The collapse of the USSR in 1991 created a completely new reality—a reality where the newly independent

[7] Stephen Collier, *Post-Soviet Social: Neoliberalism, Social Modernity*, Biopolitics, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), pp. 8, 209-211.
[8] For the transformation of the idea of propriety of domestic interiors see Victor Buchli, "Khrushchev, Modernism, and the Fight against "Petit-bourgeois" Consciousness in the Soviet Home," *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 10, No. 2, Design, Stalin and the Thaw (1997), pp. 161-176; and Natalya Chernyshova, "Closing the Door on Socialism: Furniture and the Domestic Interior," *Soviet Consumer Culture in the Brezhnev Era*, (London: Routledge, 2015).
[9] William Moskoff, *Hard Times: Impoverishment and Protest in the Perestroika Years*: The Soviet Union, 1985-1991, Armonk (N.Y.) ; London : M.E. Sharpe, 1993), pp.64-44.

states were concerned with regional conflicts, hyperinflation, collapsed production, and belated salaries. Housing, a former priority and pride had to step back.

Control and concern over the housing conditions and the domestic life of post-Soviet citizens became virtually non-existent in the first years after the collapse of the USSR. Post-Soviet states did undertake property reforms; however, it is important not to overestimate their role in the reformation of ordinary residential spaces.[10] The participation of the state in matters of housing virtually stopped with the privatization campaign and unsuccessful attempts to introduce Western housing market models.[11] Many housing-construction regulations, other than the upper limits of floor area, simply did not change throughout the 1990s.[12] While the ones that did change were heavily based on the old Soviet *SNiPs*.[13] The housing reality, on the contrary, changed dramatically: the old building norms were established to suit state-owned social housing, where the most important parameter was the upper value of apartment dimensions and areas. After the Soviet Union, these upper limits became meaningless. This is not to say that compact apartments stopped being built, but their construction was now determined by a projected customer demand. Bigger apartments were being built for a different customer base respectively.

What mattered more than the property reforms was the disappearance of institutional supervision over the transformations undertaken in individual apartments. This unexpected (but

[10] An in-detail discussion of this issue can be found in Chapter 1 "Remodeling."
[11] Jane Zavisca writes that although there was a 1992 agreement between the United States and the new Russian Government to implement a housing reform and introduce a housing market, such initiatives did not take off until later in the 2000s. Jane Zavisca, Housing the New Russia, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), p. 1;
[12] For instance, in both the Russian Federation and Belarus the Soviet norms for apartment housing construction were only replaced in 2003 (SNiP 31-01-2003 instead of SNiP 2.08.01-89* in Russia, and SNB 3.02.04-03 instead of SNiP 2.08.01-89* in Belarus).
[13] For example, Ukrainian building codes—Desrzhavni Budivel'ni Normy (DBN)—have repeated the language and the standards of the Soviet norms. A 2005 DBN for residential buildings contains lower and upper limits of apartment area, just like its Ukrainian 1992 and Soviet 1989 counterpart.

quite quickly accepted) freedom led to a curious paradox. Prior to the late-1980s, individually moving partitions and altering walls in apartments was not a widespread practice; not that it was persecuted, it simply was not popular due to many reasons described in Chapter 1 "Remodeling". However, in the 1990s when it became extremely wide-spread, sometimes in grotesque forms, state institutions very rarely intervened. Also, in many post-Soviet states, a centralized system of documentation for such changes was not introduced right away. For instance, in Ukraine this system did not become formalized until 1997.[14] An architect interviewed for this study recalled that back in the early 1990s, no organization had monopoly over the registration of apartment-layout changes and several organizations could offer such services.[15] This lack of monopoly on re-planning registration meant that the registration may have been done rather cheaply and in the spirit of the Soviet and post-Soviet informal economy. Additionally, this meant that before 1997 amidst the institutional confusion an apartment owner could do anything they wanted inside of their home and sometimes even sell it without having to report the changes to anyone at all.

In the Soviet Union, control over the state and the preservation of housing funds was performed by the *Buro Tekhnicheskoi Inventarizatsii* (BTI) [rus. for Bureau of Technical Inventory], which is analogous to the Recorder of Deeds. Prior to 1985 BTI routinely took care of both urban and rural housing and non-residential structures; it also planned maintenance and registered property rights for these buildings. During Soviet times, the latter appeared to be a relatively simple task, since even after the introduction of housing privatization in the late 1980s,

[14] Derzhavnyi komitet budivnytstva, arkhitektury ta zhytlovoi polityky Ukrainy, "Pro zatverdzhennia instruktsii pro poriadok derzhavnoi reiestratsii prava vlasnosti na ob'iekty nerukhomogo maina, shcho perebuvaiut' u vlasnosti iurydychnykh ta fizychnykh osib," June 26, 1998 N 399/2839, < http://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0399-98/ed19980609>

[15] Personal Interview with architect Aleksey R., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 4, 2017.

70% of the urban housing stock was still owned by the state or state institutions.[16] The mass privatization a nd the form of real estate market that appeared after the collapse of the USSR expectedly overwhelmed and hindered work of the BTI, creating a breeding ground for long waiting times and corruption. With time, this complex procedure gave way to simplified documentation and databases, but not until 2000s-2010s.[17] At the same time, despite the privatization of individual apartment units, the shared structure of every apartment building remained the responsibility of State-governed Housing Maintenance Offices [rus. ZhEK or Zhylishcno-ekspluatatsionnaia kontora].[18]

This extreme freedom to execute individual apartment housing remodeling without supervision from any authority and no serious legal effects did not last long but produced a substantial number of urban legends and accidents. While this study did not particularly concentrate on urban folklore, such stories unavoidably came up in the interviews held with apartment dwellers, architects, and construction workers alike. To avoid mentioning those would not do justice to the spirit of the era, so it is worth citing a couple in this study.

A current day apartment homeowner, who worked as a construction worker in the 1990s, recalled a case of a client who accumulated several apartment properties and in 1997 decided to remodel them to attract higher class renters. The apartment owner requested that part of the loadbearing outside wall be demolished between the kitchen and the balcony. The builders refused, explaining that the wall was supporting the roof and that a metal beam would be

[16] Michael Gentile and Tiit Tammaru, "Housing and Ethnicity in the Post-Soviet City: Ust'-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan," *Urban Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 10, 1757– 1778 (September 2006), p. 1764.
[17] For instance, in Moscow a simplified procedure for legal apartment re-planning was introduced in 2011. See Moscow Government Decree No. 508-PP from 10.25.2011 "Ob organizatsii pereustroistva i (ili) pereplanirovki zhylikh i nezhylikh pomeshchenii v mnogokvartirnykh domakh," Ofitsial'nyi sait Mera Moskvy, accessed on November 14th, 2018, < https://www.mos.ru/authority/documents/doc/9600220/>
[18] Florian Urban noted that in the late 1990s, state authorities and other institutions sill owned 40% of the housing stock (all of it, not just apartments). Florian Urban, *Tower and Slab: Histories of Global Mass Housing*, (London; New York, N.Y. : Routledge, 2012), p. 141.

necessary to fortify the wall if its portion was to be demolished. The apartment owner then found discarded tram rails in the courtyard next door and insisted that construction workers install those instead of the beams, which she considered to be too expensive.[19]

This story was not in any way an isolated incident: make-shift solutions to major apartment remodeling were widespread. Presently it is impossible to know how many of the existing apartments were changed throughout the Soviet and post-Soviet years, since only a portion of the changes were formally registered with BTI. Apartment owners who did not foresee a need to sell their property or otherwise change its ownership in the near future often did not report the changes that they made, particularly if those changes went completely against the established rules. An interviewee for this study, together with her husband combined two apartments on the same floor of a prefabricated panel apartment building:

> We did it all by ourselves. We only have the engineer's conclusion from Gosstroi (Ministry of Regional and Ministry for Regional Development, Building and Housing of Ukraine) [that their plan to combine two apartments is structurally sound]. We were not officially married then [with her husband]. And there was some weird regulation that one family could only buy one apartment [in the building]. So as the owners of two separate apartments, we have not changed anything [in the paperwork] because in our county back then it would have been very difficult if not impossible. And then all of it became irrelevant, because we had no plans of selling it.[20]

[19] Personal Interview with former construction worker Oleh P., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 8th, 2017.
[20] Personal Interview with apartment dweller Marina D., interview by the author, Kyiv, May 6th, 2017.

Another interviewee simply explained partition removal in the 1990s as: "We did not need to get any permissions, back then everybody did everything themselves."[21]

In practice, if a re-planned apartment was not being sold or inherited, or if neighbors did not extensively complain about the noise and procedures of remodeling, authorities did not monitor what was going on in individual apartments. However, if remodeling resulted in damage to the overall apartment building structure, particularly when accompanied with human victims, a remodeling could result in an administrative or a criminal court case. Yet, many cases of extreme building damage did not come from individual apartment remodeling, but rather from commercial space remodeling on the first floors of apartment buildings.[22] This had to do with an inherent quality of apartment housing—because the load of the rest of the structure was largest on the first floor walls, massive layout transformations on the first floor could do the most damage to the entire building. Transformations inside of individual apartments on upper floors, on the contrary, produced minimal damage to the overall structure.

Socializing in the Home

Apartment layouts, of course, were not the only realm of life where the previous systems of control were eliminated or suspended due to the collapse of the Soviet state. The political and social lives of post-Soviet subjects experienced a similar removal of all former restrictions. Previously impossible public protests became a norm, private trade took over the city streets, the

[21] Personal Interview with apartment dweller/architect Anna F., interview by the author, Kyiv, May 5th, 2017.
[22] "Obrushenie zhylikh domov v RF v rezul'tate nezakonnykh pereplanirovok s 2006 goda. Dos'e," TASS-Dos'e, May 31, 2016, accessed on November 9, 2018, < https://tass.ru/info/3328058>

use of public space by youth subculture groups became less persecuted, and most importantly for this work, the forms of socialization in the home and semi-private spaces changed.

The space of socialization in the home has in many ways already been outlined in the previous chapters: through the boundaries and overlaps of the other practices—sleep, eating, and hygiene—the spaces of socialization become tangible, if not apparent. That is no accident. Sleep, cooking and dining, as well as hygiene frequently occupy the primary role in a domestic setting, while socialization may happen parallel to eating at the dinner table, or in the sleeping space in the interval between labor outside of the home and sleep at night. In fact, the term "living room" itself did not emerge as a name for a room with a specialized function; In the 18th century American working class homes, a "living room" defined the space, "in which cooking, eating, and socializing combined with income-producing work and even sleeping."[23] However, in the 20th century, particularly with the post-World War II reemergence of modernist design principles, a space dedicated solely to socialization and leisure started being seen as a matter of social well-being. In the United States, a definitive idea of a place for domestic socialization and leisure came with the establishment of the post-war family room in single homes.[24] A similar shift took place in post-war Great Britain, where the 1960s return of modernist design and the introduction of central heating resulted in an open plan "democratic' living room in the state-built public housing.[25] Although such a specialized living room was a product of modernist paradigms, it was not equally represented throughout all global modernisms, the Soviet one in particular. What may have been portrayed as a specialized living room in design blueprints

[23] Elizabeth Cromley, "Domestic Space Transformed, 1850-2000," in Andrew Ballantyne (ed.), *Architectures: Modernism and After*, (Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p. 173.
[24] James A. Jacobs, "Social and Spatial Change in the Postwar Family Room," *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2006), pp. 70-85.
[25] Judy Attfield, "Open Plan in British Domestic Interior," in Irene Cieraad (ed.), *At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*, Volume 1, (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse Univ. Press, 2006), p.73-74.

became a place of sleep or homework in the k=n-1 Soviet reality, and only periodically a space of leisure and socialization within the home. Furthermore, domestic social practices should not be limited to the walls of an apartment on its own. In terms of socialization, an apartment home includes more than just a few rooms. It also includes the semi-private shared spaces adjacent to the apartment: the stairwell, the hallways, the courtyard, and the residential street. This chapter chose to speak about these spaces of socialization as an individual subject that, despite its inherent dependence on other domestic practices, deserves an analysis of its own.

Perhaps the most famous domestic cultural practice that came to an end with the collapse of the Soviet Union was the so-called "kitchen culture": informal kitchen gatherings that first became widespread among the Soviet intelligentsia in the 1960s and continued until the end of the USSR. The kitchen in this case performed as a salon[26]—"a place for social interaction outside the private sphere."[27] Some of the topics discussed in these kitchen gatherings were too sensitive to discuss in a public space in the context of Soviet censorship. Soviet people talked politics in the kitchen, as in a quote provided by Melissa Caldwell: "We are used to swallowing politics with our meals."[28]

The end of Soviet censorship in the home was signified with the end of kitchen culture. The end of censorship meant that anything could now be discussed anywhere, and the introduction of new establishments outside the home offered different interest groups an alternative space for gathering. Yet, although the political component of the kitchen culture was gone, socialization in the kitchen persisted: twenty four years after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a domestic design

[26] Svetlana Boym, *Common Places: Mythologies of Everyday Life in Russia*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1994), p.148.
[27] Bonnie Calhoun, "Shaping the Public Sphere: English Coffeehouses and French Salons and the Age of the Enlightenment," *Colgate Academic Review*: Vol. 3 (Spring 2008), p.75.
[28] Melissa Caldwell, *Food & Everyday Life in the Postsocialist World*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), p. 11.

portal, *Houzz*, held a poll which asked: "How is the kitchen space being used?" 63% of the portal's audience responded that besides cooking (90%) and eating (84%) it was used for in home socialization.[29] Instead of dying out, the habit of socializing in the kitchen transformed its meaning from an intellectual, artistic, and political exchange in the 1960s to a normative domesticity and breadth of the soul, like in the post-Soviet television show *Poka Vse Doma*.

While kitchen culture is among the most celebrated unique forms of Soviet socialization in the home, the kitchen was of course not the only space where socialization happened. As discussed in the "Sleep" Chapter, in a Soviet apartment every room was someone's bedroom at night. Despite this circumstance, one of the spaces of the apartment was needed to host social functions such as family gatherings and celebrations with extended family. In terms of the functional organization of such a household, this meant that at least some functions had to merge inside the same rooms. From a contemporary perspective, the merging of some cultural practices, like socializing and eating, seems appropriate. While other overlaps, such as the combination of hygiene and socialization or sleep and socialization, at first glance appear problematic if not bizarre. However, there exist plenty of historical and contemporary examples of when such overlaps and merges were not only acceptable but sometimes desirable among urbanites.

For instance, a prominent example of an overlap between socializing and hygiene in the Soviet context can be found in the public bath houses—*bania*. In the frequent absence of adequate hygiene facilities in apartment homes, particularly prior to the housing construction boom in the second half of the 20th century, bath houses fulfilled the needs of urbanites for the spaces of hygiene. But besides hygiene, they also provided a space for socialization outside of

[29] Evgenii Ivanov, "Houzz issledovanie: Chto rossiane deistvitel'no delaiut pri remonte kukhni," *Houzz,* February 2, 2016, accessed on November 8, 2018, <https://www.houzz.ru/ideabooks/60830940/list/houzz-issledovanie-chto-rossiyane-deystvitelyno-delayut-pri-remonte-kuhni>

the home. Bania was of special importance to the construction of Soviet post-WWII masculinities,[30] and was also a magical and ritualistic place far beyond its formal understanding as a modern hygienic machine.[31]

Unlike in bania, where rituals and gender comradery met modernity, the overlap between socialization and sleep in the Soviet home resulted from a simple formula that has been previously mentioned in this work. The distribution of apartments according to the k=n-1 formula meant that the number of lived rooms was always one less than the number of apartment residents. If a similar formula was used to describe the typical plan of a post-World War II American single-family home, it would look like k=n+1, where 1 would represent the designated living room.

In late-Soviet apartments this had two possible effects on socialization: there was either no designated living room at all and every room could take its function, or there was a designated living room that had to host someone's sleep at night. This sort of difference depended on the number of people in the household and, most importantly, on the layout of the apartment.

In 1972 an architect and author of home making manuals, Boris Merzhanov, described a living room as follows:

> A living room [*obshchaia komnata*] is usually the biggest room in the apartment that serves for the rest of the entire family, reception of guests, studies and homework. That is why a living room in a contemporary apartment combines functions of a dining room, parlor and study. Often in an apartment there is not a possibility to have

[30] Ethan Pollock, "Real Men Go to the Bania": Postwar Soviet Masculinities and the Bathhouse," *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 11, No. 1, (Winter 2010), pp. 47-76.
[31] Tijana Vujosevic, "The Soviet Banya and the Mass Production of Hygiene," *Hygiene. Architectural Histories*, 1(1), Art. 26, (2013).

them as separate spaces, besides efficient use of domestic space matches the contemporary way of everyday life.[32]

Intentionally or unintentionally Merzhanov withheld information: the size of a room was not necessarily a definitive factor in designating space in certain apartment types, because it mattered more how a room was connected to the rest of the apartment. When it came to allocating living room functions, what mattered was whether an apartment had a walk-through room and or did not have a walk-through room. In an apartment without a walk-through room, rooms would have been connected with a corridor [Fig. 6.1]. In apartments with a walk-through room, this room became the connective tissue and a circulation space, and automatically lost in its sleep-related qualities—privacy and sound isolation. This meant that most social functions, such as family gatherings next to a television, celebratory dining with guests became allocated to this room, the least fitting for the privacy of a bedroom.

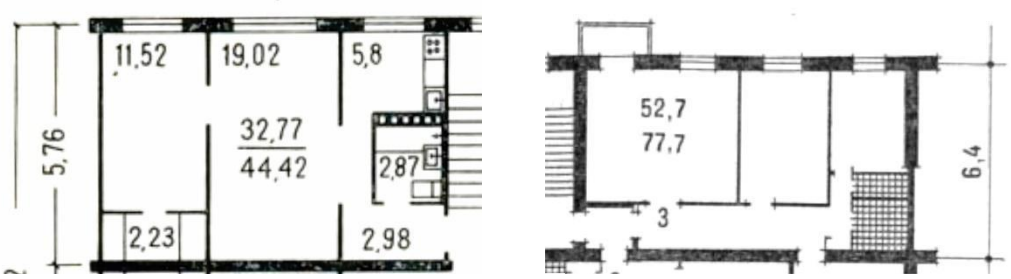

Fig. 6.1. (Left) Apartment with a walk-through room from I-464 series; (Right) So-called "stalinka" standardized apartment from II-4 series with a corridor that connects rooms.

In an apartment with a hallway [Fig. 6.1 right], where all the rooms were isolated from each other, the role of a living room could have been assigned to any of the spaces. Furthermore, living room functions could have transitioned from room to room rather

[32] Boris Merzhanov, *Inter'er zhylishcha*, (Moskva: Znanie, 1970), p. 21.

frequently, depending on the type of socialization happening at the apartment.[33] While small gathering were held in the kitchen, large gathering were allocated to the room of the family member(s) that initiated the gathering or based on whether substantial dining and unfolding a gateleg table was involved.

At the same time, there was no major bias against letting guests enter a space that at night served as someone's bedroom. A convertible couch bed would have been put into a couch position. A single bed would have been modified into a couch form. From this perspective the lived rooms of a Soviet apartment were flexible containers, where any function could adjoin the earlier present ones upon necessity.

Although there may have been no specific room that was always used for guest or family gatherings, family time spent at home was increasingly important throughout late-Soviet history. The improvement in housing conditions provided by the mass housing campaign, as well the overall shift from anti-family bias in the early Soviet history, led to the reintroduction of the home as a place to be.[34]

When it came to families spending time together, the two spaces that were used most frequently were the kitchen and the room with a television, whether it was also someone's bedroom or not. The family importance of the kitchen is described in detail in the "Eat" chapter of this study. While kitchens were important for the religious consumption of tea, the designated living room was a place to watch television. In the 1960s television broadly introduced a new form of entertainment to the Soviet home.[35] By 1970s, every second

[33] Personal Interview with an apartment dweller Mila D., interview by the author, Kyiv, May 7th, 2017.
[34] Vladimir Shlapentokh, "The Soviet Family in the Period of the Decay of Socialism," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* Vol. 22, No. 2 (Summer 1991), p. 269.
[35] Lynne Attwood, *Gender and Housing in Soviet Russia Private Life in a Public Space*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 195.

family had a television at home, with this number including rural areas where television ownership was less ubiquitous.[36] Unlike a gateleg table for celebrations, a television and its seating setup was required to be permanently positioned in some part of the apartment. Therefore, the rise of television stimulated the establishment of a permanent family gathering space, the closest apartment residents would come to having a 'living room' in the late-Soviet years.

Socializing in Semi-Private Spaces

Besides the socializing functions of the home itself, a tremendous change took place in the semi-public spaces contiguous to apartment homes: apartment building hallways, stairwells, and courtyards. Throughout Soviet history, these spaces were extensively used by several social groups, most importantly children, youth, and elderly. Children played in the courtyards,[37] and although the radioactive threat of Chernobyl may have negatively affected the perception of the outdoors for several years,[38] the presence of children outside continued regardless. The children's presence outside seemed to be a rule throughout building types, independent of the character of the courtyards. In the inner cities with historic, Stalin-era, or urban infill apartment homes, children played in courtyards even in the absence of modern children's infrastructure.[39] In new neighborhoods built according to the modernist principles of extensive outdoors territories with planned playgrounds, children used courtyards as well. Children's socialization in

[36] Christine Evans, *Between Truth and Time: A History of Soviet Central Television,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), p. 4.
[37] For an in-depth analysis of the culture of children's play in urban courtyards see Iulia Cherniavskaia, "Sovetskoe kak detskoe: opyt dvora," *Logos* Vol 27, No 5 (2017), p. 224-226.
[38]M. Rahu, "Health effects of the Chernobyl Accident: Fears, Rumors and the Truth," *European Journal of Cancer*, 2003 Feb. 39(3):295-9.
[39] Cherniavskaia, "Sovetskoe kak detskoe,", p. 224.

all kinds of courtyards did not change overnight after the collapse of the USSR.[40] On the contrary, it persisted for several years, until the metropolitan inner-city courtyards became a highly desirable parking asset with the extreme increase in car ownership in large post-Soviet cities in the late 1990s.[41] Although the *microraion*—modernist neighborhood—courtyards experienced an overflow of cars as well, the prescribed infrastructure has somewhat slowed down the car takeover. Until this day, many prefabricated building courtyards preserve elements of Soviet infrastructure, but problems with parking are nevertheless a pressing issue. Finally, the disappearance of children from courtyards can also be explained with the change of popular attitude to children's' safety in large cities. Children no longer spend as much time outdoors and this tendency is found in many big Western cities as well.[42]

For the elderly the situation was somewhat different. Elderly more so than children required an infrastructure to socialize in courtyards, benches and other forms of seating.[43] The absolute majority of prefabricated panel buildings had benches by hallway entrances and throughout the adjacent territory. Inner city courtyards often had this infrastructure as well, in the form of front gardens near pre-1917, Stalin-era and infill modernist buildings. During the 1990s, some of this infrastructure disappeared to make way for cars; however, when it was preserved, elderly socialization in the courtyards continued.

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[40] For a recent account of a persisting social meaning of a post-Soviet courtyard see Mateusz Laszczkowski, "Scraps, Neighbors, and Committees: Material Things, Place-Making, and the State in an Astana Apartment Block," *City & Society*, 27(2) August 2015: 136-159.

[41] For data on parking assets at the apartment building territory see Tamara Uskova, Sergei Kozhevnikov, "Monitoring usloviia prozhyvaniia naseleniia obalsnogo tsentra," *Preoblemi razvitiia teritorii* Issue 2 (62) (2012), pp. 35-36.

[42] See for example, Lia Karsten, "It all used to be better? Different generations on continuity and change in urban children's daily use of space," *Children's Geographies*, 3:3 (2005), 275-290.

[43] Cherniavskaia formulates this as following: "The anklave of benches by the hallways was assigned to the elderly ladies, the rest of the space [of the courtyard] belonged to the children]." Cherniavskaia, "Sovetskoe kak detskoe,", p. 226.

Youth is another group that has been affected by the new times. Spaces of youth socialization at the territories adjacent to apartment homes were not limited to just courtyards, but also included hallways and staircases of apartment buildings. There is a curious disparity in literature between the amount of research produced on courtyards in Soviet and post-Soviet settings, and the nearly completely missing mentions of staircases or *pod'ezd* (rus.). A Soviet courtyard has been romanticized by the Soviet authors, such as Bulat Okudzhava, and international academics, such as Stephen Bittner in his *The Many Lives of Khrushchev's Thaw*.[44] A stairwell, on the contrary, remained barely visible to scholarly literature, despite its clear practical importance for youth social practices. Perhaps, this imbalance could be attributed to the perceived semi-private or private understanding of an apartment building stairwell. Occupying such space may be understood as a marginal practice that carries less cultural value. Courtyard, on the other hand, may be seen as a semi-public or public space, making it a proper scene for gatherings. In any case, the practice of gathering in apartment building hallways existed during the late-Soviet times and persisted into the 1990s.[45] Courtyard youth gatherings, just like children's play were affected by parking take over.[46] But there also happened a transformation unique to youth spaces of socialization: the introduction of code or intercom doors to hallways and stairwells, typically initiated by the residents of the affected apartments. Although these doors were not always effective at keeping outsiders away, they clearly established hallways as a space communally belonging to the apartment residents, instead of the Soviet model where

[44] See chapter "History and Myth of Arbat," in Stephen Bittner, *The Many Lives of Khrushchev's Thaw: Experience and Memory in Moscow's Arbat*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), pp. 19-39.
[45] For analysis of the post-Soviet stairwell youth gatherings see Irina Kosterina, "Konstrukty i praktiki maskulinnotsi v provintsial'nom gorode: gabitus "normal'nykh patsanov," *Sotsiologiia molodezhi*, Vol. XI, 4 (45) (2008), pp. 122-140.
[46] Emil Nasritdinov and Philipp Schröder, "From Frunze to Bishkek: Soviet Territorial Youth Formations and Their Decline in the 1990s and 2000s," *Central Asian Affairs* 3 (2016), pp. 24-25.

apartment dwellers saw hallways as a territory of state and city responsibility.[47] The youth practice of gathering at apartment building hallways, therefore, gained even more traits of trespassing and lost its popularity.

Post-Soviet Social Space in the Home

Although the k=n-1 model of apartment distribution became irrelevant after the collapse of the Soviet Union and its apartment granting programs, the overlaps between spaces for socialization, sleep, and eating did not. At the same time, the spaces where these ways of daily life continued have often changed physically. An interviewee for this study Anna F. described a re-planning undertaken by her sister in the 1990s to modify a two-room apartment for two adults and one child. Perhaps the most interesting portion of the interview is how Anna F. describes the room functions before and prior to the remodeling:

> They took down the partition wall between the room and the kitchen, the one [room] on the left, that before used to be kind of a bedroom. It was [also] a living room, and had a balcony. They enclosed the balcony, and the living room became a leisure zone, parent zone, kind of more private [Fig. 6.2].
>
> They removed a partition between this, like, bedroom and the kitchen. And they ended up with an open plan, somewhat L-shaped room. The former entrance to this room, on the contrary, got blocked. So, the entrance to this kitchen-dining room turned out to be from the side of the bedroom and the entryway. […] At this entrance they put a couch. Closer to the kitchen was the dining zone. Where there used to be

[47] For example, see the descriptions of dilapidated common areas—hallways and staircases—in contrast to well-maintained apartments in George J. Neimanis, *The Collapse of the Soviet Empire: A View from Riga*, (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1997), p. 13. For another example of hallway and staircase door study, see Rosa Vihavainen, "Common and Dividing Things in Homeowners Associations," in Oleg Kharkhordin and Risto Alapuro, *Political Theory and Community Building in Post-Soviet Russia*, (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 155-158.

kitchen, they placed kitchen cabinets next to one wall and the other wall. And into a niche that used to be the entrance they put a big fridge. A dining table got placed where the partition used to be. And what used to be a bedroom became a family and leisure zone.

Their kid moved to this kitchen/living room. He did not have a bed, he slept on a convertible couch. Later they switched things around, [because he got older and the kid's bedroom and workspace moved to the isolated room. So, when he needed it, he got his own room. This was 1998-1999."[48]

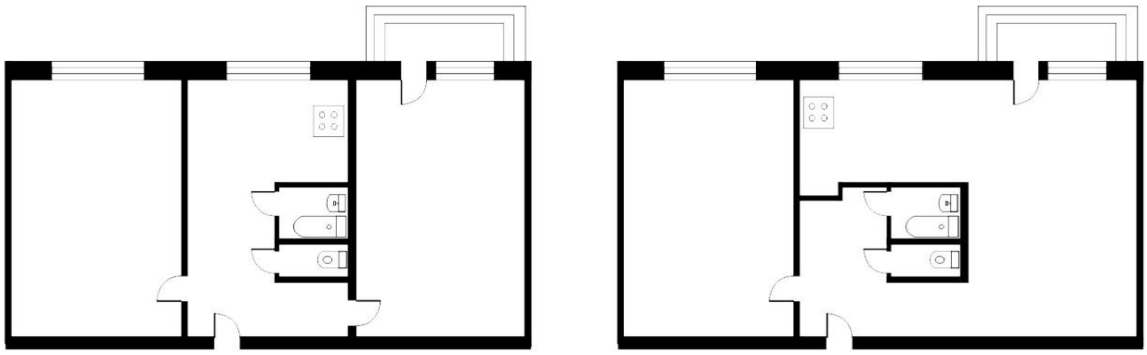

Fig. 6.2. A schematic illustration of a partition wall removed in the remodeling described by Anna F.

Anna's definitions speak for themselves: prior to the remodeling both rooms in her narrative were equally undetermined. After the removal of the partition, one of the rooms permanently became a bedroom, while the other one got assigned living room, kitchen, dining room and some bedroom functions.

The desire of post-Soviet apartment dwellers to establish functional zoning and provide everyone with a room of their own, outside of the shared living room area, had its own side

[48] Personal Interview with apartment dweller/architect Anna F., interview by the author, Kyiv, May 5th, 2017.

effects. In particular, one interviewee for this study mentioned that when she and her family lived in a small space with no separate rooms for every child, she used to see her children more often and knew what each of the family members was doing. After they moved to a larger apartment with a separate monofunctional living room and a separate bedroom for each family member, she felt partially alienated from her children inside the home.[49]

Social Findings in Physical Space

In her edited volume on vernacular architecture for the 21st century, Lindsay Asquith lists several common approaches to studying housing: the sociological, the anthropological, the behavioral, and only lastly the architectural approach.[50] In the spirit of vernacular architecture—"an object without a field"—she defines these four components as essential to the integrated study of architecture and architectural history.[51] Although not technically vernacular, mass housing apartments experience the same lack of integrated attention, originally attributed by Asquith to a common house.[52] In tune with Asquith recommendations, this work integrated elements of these four approaches to study changes in apartment homes, with a special emphasis on the architectural approach, or in Asquith words, "the physical spaces themselves."[53] Through looking at physical spaces, this work established a set of conclusions on the state of the society and individual spatial practices at the times of political rupture and transition to post-communism. First, the chapter on "Remodeling" demonstrated that the home improvement boom

[49] Personal interview with an apartment dweller Oksana G., interviewed by the author, Kyiv, May 14th, 2017. In addition to a different apartment composition, such decrease in family contacts could be explain with the shift of importance from television to personal computers that has coincided with the first decade after the collapse of the USSR.
[50] Lindsay Asquith and Marcel Vellinga, *Vernacular Architecture in the 21st Century: Theory, Education and Practice*, (London; New York: Taylor & Francis, 2006), p. 130.
[51] Ibid., p. 131.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.

was not an overnight surprise after the collapse of state-socialism. Rather it was a time-bomb set in the earlier Soviet and Perestroika conditions and ready to explode as soon as the necessary conditions of private labor and access to commodities were met. Second, this work outlined the changing spatial requirements for domestic publicness and privacy in the chapters on "Sleeping" and "Eating." Afterwards it demonstrated the commodification of spaces of hygiene in the "Cleaning" chapter. The final part of this work argued that the porous thresholds between a private apartment, semi-private and semi-public hallway and courtyard, and the public street have thinned out, becoming less permeable and better outlined in the post-Soviet years.

What do those shifts in the spatial senses of publicness and privacy, domestic consumption, and the freedom to modify one's dwelling add up to in relation to the post-Soviet society? This work argues that these shifts in domestic practices and interiors are an inseparable part of becoming post-Soviet. As shown in the first chapter "Remodeling" the late Soviet trend for home improvement was rooted in decades of Soviet housing policies and practices, but first became fashionable due to the political and economic shifts of Perestroika and reached its heyday in the first decades after the collapse of the USSR. The resulting domestic architecture became a hybrid between the Soviet and the new—an adaptation to the new reality establishing the post-Soviet "belonging" of interiors and their residents.[54] The hybrid of the Soviet mass housing infrastructure and the individually modified interiors of post-Soviet apartments determined the post-Soviet experience and way of life. In many post-Soviet cities, this hybrid became a structure so stable that it can hardly be addressed as a transitional mode of living, but rather as a way of urban living that is here to stay. Zavisca writes: "Transplanting American housing institutions

[54] For the analysis of hybrid building identities and spatial practices see Arijit Sen, "Staged Disappointment Interpreting the Architectural Facade of the Vedanta Temple, San Francisco," *Winterthur Portfolio,* Vol. 47, No. 4 (Winter 2013), pp. 207-244.

[mortgage and housing market under neoliberal reforms] to Russia failed, because the resulting housing order did not provide young families with a clear fair path to attain a 'separate apartment."[55] Indeed, a separate, owned apartment may not have become a reality of the current day post-Soviet nuclear families; what did happen instead was an apartment remodeling and associated spatial changes—the actual physical transformation of everyday life that took place along with the collapse of the USSR.

Not unlike how the nuclear-family homeownership became a definitive trait of the American middle class in the late 1940s, the desire for remodeling and the spatial transformations that followed became necessary prerequisites to becoming post-Soviet.[56] If "desiring a separate apartment for the nuclear family is neither natural nor inevitable" then it is remodeling and the resulting spatial transformations within existing homes that should be considered a definition of the post-Soviet condition in the fundamental human category of dwelling.[57]

[55] Jane Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 2012), p. 194.
[56] Jeffrey M Hornstein, *A Nation of Realtors: A Cultural History of the Twentieth-Century American Middle Class*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), p. 202.
[57] Jane Roi Zavisca, *Housing the New Russia*, ibid.

AFTERWORD

After the fall of state socialisms in Eastern Europe and the collapse of the USSR, very little funds have been allocated for housing modernization, with the only exception of East Germany.[1] While Germany has undertaken serious efforts in *die Plattenbau* renovation, those efforts "did not stop the outflow of better-off households and the policy of demolishing vacant buildings tended to be seen as the best solution to the 'housing estate problem.'"[2] The destiny of modernist housing in the United States was not much different, with Pruitt Igoe being the most famous of many examples of modernist housing being demolished due to disrepair, crime, and low quality of life. Soviet standardized housing was produced according to the same ideals and attitudes as modernist mass housing in the West. Yet, surprisingly, post-Soviet standardized housing followed a different avenue: not only did it not deteriorate completely in the economically difficult years after the collapse of the USSR, but it also managed to remain a socially acceptable living environment.[3] "One reason" for this better position "is their [prefabricated apartment blocks] ubiquity"[4] as Florian Urban concludes in his comprehensive global study of modernist housing. Another reason, illustrated by this dissertation, is their capacity for change, if this change is permitted by circumstance and state housing politics (or the absence of such).

Without doubt, Soviet-built apartment homes in their majority were dull and uniform. The problem was so grave that criticism of prefabricated blocks became an acceptable topic in heavily censored Soviet media, with the *Irony of Fate* movie being the most famous example. Paradoxically, it did not require a state effort to partially solve the problem of sameness in the

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[1] Jana Telemova et al., "Housing Estates in the Czech Republic after Socialism: Various Trajectories and Inner Differentiation," *Urban Studies*, Vol.48(9), (July 2011), p. 1816.
[2] Ibid.
[3] See, for example, Florian Urban, *Tower and Slab*, p. 141.
[4] Ibid.

1990s and 2000s. To understand the degree of change it is enough to observe the awe of a foreign visitor entering a post-Soviet remodeled apartment for the first time. The worn-out Soviet façade is deceptive compared to the new life found inside.

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APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

Apartment reconstruction – Professionals involved in construction use this term to identify a type of single apartment remodeling that involves refitting slabs and load bearing elements in old or worn out buildings.

Apartment building series – Attempts to create a universal housing unit were first undertaken in the early Soviet years, and many standardized residential buildings were built under Joseph Stalin. But the heyday of standardized mass housing in the USSR happened after the 1954 Central Committee and the Cabinet of Ministers of the USSR decree "On the development of prefabricated reinforced concrete structures and components production." Starting from 1954 the absolute majority of housing everywhere in the Soviet Union was built based on the centrally developed projects. Each project may have been reproduced an unlimited number of times with only minimal adjustments or variation dependent on the place of construction. At the same time, every residential project with an individually designed plan, section, or façade had to be approved at the Gosgrazhdanstroy [Госгражданстрой] – the State Committee on Civil Construction and Architecture of the USSR in Moscow. The package of architectural and engineering documents, as well as the buildings built according to the package, are known as apartment building series.

Buro Tekhnicheskoi Inventarizatsii or BTI—in Soviet Union and many post-Soviet states a municipal institution analogues to the Recorder of Deeds and responsible for recording layout changes in individual apartments.

Compaction [rus. *uplotnenie*]—confiscation of housing space above the established nine square meter norm from homeowners in the first years after the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

Compact housing [rus. *malogabaritnoie zhyl'ie*] is a term typically used to define Khrushchev and post-Khrushchev time Soviet apartments due to their small dimensions.

Cosmetic remodeling – [rus. *cosmeticheskiy remont*] Remodeling that does not affect the apartment layout or structural elements. Typically, it involves changing wallpaper, painting window sills, and other minor renovations.

Evroremont – A term that emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The term defines a remont done using imported materials or materials produced under foreign standards. Additionally, evroremont often meant a particular type of aesthetics and spatial organization, derived from the post-Soviet idea of what Western housing looked and functioned like. A typical example of this spatial organization and aesthetics is the deconstruction of the wall separating kitchen from the rest of the apartment spaces and, hence, transition to an open/semi-open plan.
Improved plan apartments is an umbrella term used to define apartment series buildings, where apartments had bigger floor areas, always separate kitchens and more storage space than in the early prefabricated series. In terms of architectural series, improved plan apartments typically refer to the second generation of prefabricated apartment building construction starting in 1963.

Philipp Meuser and Dmitrij Zadorin, *Towards a Typology of Soviet Mass Housing: Prefabrication in the USSR 1955*-1991, (Berlin: DOM publishers, 2015), p. 267.

Kommunalka—a communal apartment; typically, an apartment in a building built prior to 1917 Revolution that has been since subdivided into parts and populated by unrelated families as the result of compaction. In most post-Soviet cities, the number of communal apartments gradually decreased to a minimum since the collapse of the USSR; the only exclusion is Saint-Petersburg, where due to the dominance of pre-1917 apartment housing kommunalkas are still unexceptional.

Lived and auxiliary spaces—Soviet bureaucracy divided domestic space into the so-called "lived" and "auxiliary" space, with auxiliary spaces being kitchens, bathrooms, lavatories, hallways, and storage, and lived space being everything else.
Perestroika—the course of economic and political reforms announced by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1985.

Remont—remodeling, in this work particularly in relation to home improvement. In several post-Soviet languages, remont can stand both for the process of remodeling and the resulting interior design.

Re-planning [rus. *pereplanirovka*]—A given apartment plan is reconsidered, walls are demolished and/or new walls are constructed. The term is typically used for private, rather than governmental endeavors of changing an apartment plan. Re-planning became particularly popular in the 1990s.

Sanitary block [*rus. sanitarnyi uzel, sanuzel* for short]—in Soviet and post-Soviet terms, a space specialized for hygiene needs. In a Soviet apartment, a sanitary block was typically comprised of a bathtub, sink and a toilet. These three fixtures could be places in the same room, or separately. These two types of sanitary blocks are addressed as combined sanitary block and separate sanitary block, respectively. A separate sanitary block includes a bathroom—in this work *bathroom* is used to speak about a separate part of a sanitary block: a room with a bathtub and a sink; and a toilet room—a room separate from bathroom, with only a toilet in it.

Shabashniki A profound and detailed overview and the history of shabashniki can be found in *Broad is My Native Land* by Siegelbaum and Moch. In this book shabashniki are defined as "temporary workers earning money 'off the books' in the late Soviet Period."

ZhEK (rus. *Zhilishno-Ekspluatazionnaia Kontora)*— Residential Maintenance Office, a communal organization responsible for maintenance of several apartment buildings and their shared infrastructure, such as heating and gas supply.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions for apartment dwellers

What kind of home did you live in the late 1980s and early 1990s? Describe the place — urban neighborhood, commuter neighborhood/town— where you lived. What type of an apartment building? Was it private or communal? What kind of home did you/your parents have before this one? How did you acquire it? Has your home changed since the 1980s? Did you renovate, acquire new furniture, or change the use of rooms/spaces?

Which family members lived with you during Perestroika and the early 1990s? How many people permanently lived in your home? Did you know your neighbors? Were you friends? Did you spend time in the courtyard, hallways or other shared spaces of your apartment building? Did you invite guests? Would you visit your neighbors' homes?

Which rooms did they live in or, in other words, did each family member have a bedroom? Where did each age group spend most of their days? How was the space used for different daily needs (dining, studying, watching television, hosting guests, etc.)? How was the furniture laid out in different rooms? What kind of furniture was it (ex. folding couch or regular full-sized bed)? Which room did you like the most? Why? Where did you spend most of your time at home?

Did you have a desire or means to renovate your apartment? How did the above circumstances change after 1991? When did you first think about remodeling? Did you ever renovate your home during Soviet times? What did you think about remodeling at that time?

Was your kitchen/bedroom/other room convenient prior to remodeling?

How did you decide on how you were going to remodel? Did you do it yourself? Did you hire a firm? Did you hire construction workers separately? Did you know anybody, who already remodeled their home? What was your experience with the firm or the construction workers?

Where did you buy materials? Where did you get inspiration? Can you draw a map of how your home used to be before remodeling? How long did remodeling last? Where did you live during remodeling? Did remodeling differ from how you imagined the process? Did the end results differ from what you expected? What were your main intensions, and did they get realized?

Is the mentioned remodeling still intact? How did the use of spaces differ from what you originally planned? Is there still that same number of family members? How do people use apartment spaces since remodeling has been done? How have your guests and neighbors reacted to your remodeling?

Is there anything that you want to change about your home these days?

Questions for architects

When did you first hear about apartment remodeling? In what context? Who/what brought you into the industry?

When did you first start working in remodeling industry? Where construction materials available at that time? Was labor available?

Where did the ideas about how to remodel come from? Did clients dictate ideas? Were you able to introduce your vision? Did you use any media (magazines, TV shows, etc.) for your inspiration or to persuade the client?

Who were your typical clients? What did they typically commission? Just design, or design and construction, or just construction and legal advice for the legalization of remodeling with authorities? Did your clients mostly want a light touch up on their interiors or did they want to move walls and change the entire spatial layout?

Did you ever follow up on your remodeling efforts?

How did the idea of remodeling change over the years of your practice?

Questions for construction workers

When and how did you first start doing apartment remodeling? How and who did you learn from? What kind of work did you do? Did you do it alone or with a team/firm? Did you work with an architect? Was your income from this work satisfying? Did you ever work abroad? Do you know how remodeling was done abroad?

How did you learn about the new construction materials like drywall? Were those materials readily available? Did your knowledge and understanding of construction techniques and materials change from when you first started to the early 2000s?

Who were your typical clients? How did they typically want to remodel their apartments? Did they mostly want to do a light touch up on their interiors or did they want to move walls and change the entire spatial layout? Did your remodel your own place?

APPENDIX C: ONTOLOGY AND FIELDWORK METHODS

Fieldwork for this dissertation included a variety of sources and an examination of different historical periods.

The author conducted 22 anonymous interviews with apartment dwellers, architects, and construction workers. These interviews covered a period of time ranging from early 1980s to early 2010s. In the interviews with apartment residents the author asked how the living conditions of the families and individuals changed, how they physically modified their housing, and when those transformations took place. In the interviews with architects and construction workers, the author investigated the changes in professional practice between 1985 and 2000s.

The author also conducted archival research at PLC Kyivproekt (address) for buildings designed between late 1970s to the 2000s. Kyivproekt is an architectural organization that started in 1937 as a comprehensive institution, responsible for architectural design and engineering. Unlike specialized housing design institutions, such as KyivTSNIIEP, Kyivproekt studios and architects predominantly worked on individually designed projects, instead of infinitely reproducible housing or public building series. By looking at individually designed residential multi-unit buildings not meant for serial construction, this dissertation broadens its repertoire of building types. Most importantly, due to the nature of apartment building series and the work process in the design institutions, it is possible to say that individually designed multi-unit housing projects responded to changes in regulations, trends, and expectations during the Soviet era in a more expedient manner. Therefore, these projects are essential evidence that supports the conclusions derived from the apartment series buildings alone. After 1991, any difference between Kyivproekt archives with its individually designed buildings and other design institution archives ceased to exist, since the design method of non-address apartment building series was

no longer common. The total number of projects collected at Kyivproekt and used for this study is 23.

The author had personal conversations with the engineers at the Recorder of Deeds [rus. *Buro Tekhnicheskoi Dokumentatsii* or BTI address] office in Kyiv, Ukraine. The Recorder of Deeds offices do not offer access to their recent archives for scholarly purposes. However, BTI engineers were willing to discuss their observations on the most wide-spread forms of apartment re-planning since the 1990s when this institution started recording apartment layout changes.

The author studied Soviet building codes [rus. *Santarnye Normy i Pravila*] between 1971 and 1989. 1989 building codes were the last set of codes issued before the collapse of the USSR. Codes that came after that time, no longer prescribed the upper limits of square footage for apartments.

The author also examined a variety of popular sources. These popular sources included *Rabotnitsa* women's' magazine from (1983-1993), *Burda Moden* fashion magazine (1987-1991), and several interior design magazines, such as *Architectural Digest (2002)* and *Krasivye kvartiry* (2001-2002), online resources, television programs, and related publications in newspapers. Online resources included digital version of the *Idei vashego doma* magazine (1999, 2003, 2005, 2010), *and* Houzz.ru (2015, 2018). Television programs included *Poka vse doma* (1992-1996), *Kvartinrnyi vopros* (2001-2010), *Shkola remonta* (2003-2006). Newspapers and online news platforms included *Komsomol'skaia pravda*, *Mestnoe vremia. Vesti-Moskva. Nedelia v gorode. TASS: Informatsionnoe agenstvo Rossii*,

Finally, this dissertation analyzed professional architectural magazines, including *Stroitel'stvo i arkhitektura (1986-1991)* and *Arkhitektura SSSR* (1988-1991).

CURRICULUM VITAE

Kateryna Malaia

PLACE OF BIRTH
Kyiv, Ukraine

DISSERTATION TITLE
Domestic Space in the Times of Change: The Collapse of the USSR, 1985-2000s

EDUCATION

M.Arch	Department of Architecture, National Academy of Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, Ukraine, 2011
B.Arch	Department of Architecture, National Academy of Arts and Architecture, Kyiv, Ukraine, 2009

PROFESSIONAL APPOINTMENTS

2016–2019	Adjunct Professor, College of the Arts: School of Architecture, Portland State University
2017–2018	Part-time Assistant Professor, Liberal Arts Department, Pacific Northwest College of Art

PUBLICATIONS

Refereed Journal Articles

2018 "Monumental Landscapes and the Politics of Place: The First Lenin to Fall," *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies,* Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, Volume V, No. 1: 139-156.

Manuscripts in Submission

"Transforming Architecture of Food: Apartment Homes on the Eve and After the Collapse of the USSR," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* (in revision).

Web-based Publications

2015 "The Lost Mosque of Moscow," *Stambouline Blog*, May 11 <www.stambouline.com/2015/05/the-lost-mosque-of-moscow.html>

Other Publications

2016 "Not by Public Space Alone: Of Politics and Architects," *Lobby*, Bartlett School of Architecture: London, 5: 32-33.

AWARDS

2017 Graduate Student Paper Prize, Western Slavic & Eurasian Association

2015 Collaborative Research Project Grant in the Digital Humanities

2015 Urban Edge Prize Studio, participation & co-teaching

2011 Transdisciplinary Challenge Award participation, Center for 21st Century Studies

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

2019 Residence Grant at the Center for Urban History, Lviv

2019 Pamela H. Simpson Presenter's Fellowship, Vernacular Architecture Forum

2018-2019 R1 Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

2017 Graduate Student Travel Grant, ASEEES Kathryn W. Davis

2016 Travel Grant, Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies ASEEES-MAG Summer Convention, (unable to attend)

2015 Global Architectural History Teaching Collaborative Grant, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

2014, 2015 Graduate Student Travel Grants, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY/PARTICIPATION

Panels Organized

2018 Co-chair, Graduate Student Lightning Talks, Society of Architectural Historians (SAH), Saint Paul, April 18–22.

Papers

2019 "Post-Soviet Housing Insecurity and Resilience: Invisible Change in Every Apartment", Center for 21st Century Studies *Insecurity* conference, Milwaukee, May 2–4 (forthcoming).

2019 "A Unit of Homemaking: Prefabricated Panel and Domestic Architecture in the Late Soviet Union," Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF), Philadelphia, May 29–June 1 (forthcoming).

2017 "The Fall of the USSR, the Rise of a Bedroom and the New Privacy," Association for Slavic, Eastern European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES), Chicago, November 9–12.

2017 "Domestic Space in the Times of Change: The Collapse of the USSR," Society of Architectural Historians (SAH), Glasgow, Scotland, June 7–11.

2017 "Constructing a Space of One's Own: The History of Remont in the Late Soviet and Early Post-Soviet Years," Western Association for Social Studies, San Francisco, April 12–15.

2016 "Peripheries of Contact: Slavic World," Global Architectural History Teaching Collaborative, Seattle, October 7–8.

2016 “Monumental Landscapes and the Politics of Place: The First Lenin to Fall,” Association for Slavic, Eastern European and Eurasian Studies (ASEEES)-MAG Summer Convention, Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv, June 26–28 (unable to attend).

2015 "Animating Modernism: The Affective History of the Soviet Monumental 1960s," Visual Cultures of Socialism - A Comparative Approach, University of Hamburg, March 17–21.

2014 "Insurgent Ukraine: The Transformation of Public Space," UWM Urban Studies Programs 50th Anniversary Spring Forum, Milwaukee, April 26.

2014 "Moscow Mosque: Reconstruction for the Others," Society of Architectural Historians (SAH), Austin, April 9–13.

2014 "The Change of Main Facade: Brady Street, Milwaukee, WI," Center for Culture, History and Environment, Graduate Student Symposium, UW-Madison, February 8.

2013 "The Failure to Settle Past and Present: A Case Study of Moscow Urban Development," Midwest Interdisciplinary Graduate Conference, UW-Milwaukee, February 15–16.

CAMPUS TALKS

2018 “Domestic Architecture in the Times of Change,” College of the Arts: School of Architecture, Portland State University, February 23.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Portland State University
- Sophomore Studio (Winter 2019)
- Visual Communication I (Fall 2016, Winter/Fall 2017, Winter/Fall 2018)

Pacific Northwest College of Art
- History of Design Arts (Fall 2017, Spring 2018)

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Primary Instructor
- Introduction to Architecture (Leaving Learning Communities) (Spring 2016)
- Design Fundamentals I (Fall 2013/2015)
- Design Fundamentals II (Spring 2014)
- Master’s Pre-thesis (Spring 2015)
- Architecture History and Theory Survey (Fall 2014, co-taught)

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Teaching Assistant
- Design Fundamentals I (Fall 2011/2012)
- Design Fundamentals II (Spring 2013)
- Architecture Design II (Spring 2012)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2011-2019 Doctoral Research, School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

2011 Graduate Project Assistant, School of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, “Escaping Flatland: (Re-)Writing the Histories, Geographies, and Borderland Ecologies of Water,” C21's Transdisciplinary Challenge Award

LANGUAGES

English: fluent
Ukrainian: native
Russian: native

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2006–2010 Architectural Intern, Architecture Projecting LLC and Dixi LLC, Kyiv, Ukraine

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Society of Architectural Historians (SAH)
Association for Slavic, East European, & Eurasian Studies (ASEEES)
Global Architectural History Teaching Collaborative (GAHTC)
Western Slavic & Eurasian Association (WSEA)
Society of Historians of Eastern European, Eurasian, and Russian Art and Architecture (SHERA)
Global Urban History Project (GUHP)
Vernacular Architecture Forum (VAF)