



Università
Ca'Foscari
Venezia

Master's Degree Program in Management

Curriculum: Innovation and marketing

Final project

**Comparative analysis of the creation and promotion
of interior items in the Soviet Union and Western
Europe in the 50-90s of the XX century**

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Academic year

2021/2022

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INTRODUCTION

My home is my fortress: home is a place where a person wants and should feel good. That is why a person pays special attention to how his housing is designed, of course, if he has the opportunity to do so. Moreover, this is an investment, as usually the furnishings serve its owner for many years, or even several generations. Therefore, the choice of items becomes an important task for the buyer.

Although the set of the most necessary items is approximately the same from country to country: a bed, a table, a chair, a sofa, a lamp, and the like, their creation is largely influenced by national traditions, culture, climatic conditions, as well as the geopolitical situation.

Throughout its history, the Soviet Union has opposed itself to the Western capitalist world and vice versa. Unlike the Western European countries, the USSR lived on the principle of a planned economy, all enterprises were state-owned, and wages are a monetary expression of the worker's contribution to social welfare. In such a system, it is difficult to talk about advertising and promotion, since there are no market competitors, and the product produced is a public good. However, if there is money circulation, then there is also a product, the purchase of which must be promoted, so that citizens know that it can be purchased. So how did the process of communication between the manufacturer of a product and its consumer in a socialist state proceed? Moreover, are the methods of communication and promotion so different from Western - capitalist - countries?

On the other hand, in Western European countries there was a struggle for the attention of the consumer, as there were private enterprises that sought to obtain economic benefits. Thus, the sale of a product largely depended on its promotion.

Another point of interest is the relatively closed economy of the Soviet Union, when the production and marketing cycles were closed within one system. For a long period, Soviet citizens had practically no access to Western European goods and advertising, which means they had few factors for comparison.

The period after the Second World War was taken, when both the Soviet Union and the European countries were in a difficult economic, demographic and social situation. Many countries of this period had to go through a difficult path of economic

recovery. Italy and the countries of Scandinavia were taken as European countries, since it was their furniture that largely influenced the trends in the development of interior and object design in the second half of the twentieth century, and many products of Scandinavian and Italian designers have become classics and have a cult character. The end of the period under review is the 1990s, since it is the period that marks the collapse of the Soviet Union and the transition of the Russian state to a market economy system.

One of the objectives is to compare how countries with different economic and political systems got out of the crisis and helped people improve their lives and equip their homes, consider how different the approach was in these countries, as well as find similarities, if any. Further, the task is to find out whether there is a general trend in communication with the buyer, regardless of political and economic differences.

As sources, magazines and newspapers are used, in which there are references to interior items, for instance, the Soviet magazines «The Rabotnitsa», «New Goods», «Architecture of the USSR», «Decorative Art», also “Salon” and “Ideas of your home” which appeared in Russia, existed in Italy - «Domus», «Abitare», - IKEA archival catalogs and so forth, as well as advertisements and television advertisements of the period in question. All sources are publicly available on the World Wide Web: archives of magazines, articles, promotional items, some information was taken from blogs maintained by netizens.

Likewise, films are used as sources to consider the situation in the USSR, due to the fact that they were produced at state film studios and they have been a means of propaganda and communication with citizens since the time of the revolution.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF COUNTRIES AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR

USSR and the Housing Problem

Not having time to celebrate the victory in the Second World War in May, the government of the USSR began to actively restore the country's economy. The fighting caused enormous damage to the economy: they were carried out mainly in the European part of the country, where almost 50% of the population lived and most of the production capacities were concentrated.

- 1710 cities and almost 70 thousand villages were ruined
- 31850 factories were wiped out
- 1135 mines were destroyed
- 65 thousand km of railway lines were disabled

Nevertheless, work on the restoration of the economy in the territories liberated from the Germans began as early as 1943. The performance of work during the period of hostilities required incredible material and human resources. But these measures were extremely important for the Soviet government, which was afraid to remain after the war in too weakened economic conditions. This had a great importance at the level of international politics.

The Committee for the Reconstruction of the Economy in the Liberated Territories, established in 1943, developed annual plans and supervised their implementation. Due to the acute shortage of workers and qualified specialists, it was decided to send people from home front to these works. At the same time, the government distributed resources in such a way that the restoration of the western territories was followed by a systematic industrial development of the central and eastern parts of the Union.

At the end of May 1945, a decision was made to reorient some military enterprises to the production of national economy goods. In addition, the demobilization of part of the army was carried out.

People's committees were transformed into ministries, the 8-hour working day was returned, and people were given annual leave. The final transition to a peaceful way was carried out by the end of 1946, when the five-year plan for 1946-1950 was

adopted. Naturally, after the end of the war, the housing issue and the problem of restoring destroyed cities became acute. In addition to the fact that entire cities were destroyed, the shortage of residential space that existed before the war only worsened after it. Many city dwellers huddled in densely populated communal apartments and barracks. For example, in the Soviet TV series «The Meeting Place Cannot Be Changed», a young front-line soldier Sharapov returns to his room in a communal apartment on Ordynka (now one of the most expensive areas of Moscow), where he had one room and a small space of the kitchen.



PICTURE 1. Shot from the series «The meeting place cannot be changed»

Around industrial enterprises and in new settlements, wooden barracks were hastily erected, where workers settled. In the filmography, they are naively shown as clean and comfortable buildings, where the workers lived in the same room according to gender: everyone had a bed, and bathrooms and kitchens were not provided. In such barracks, workers lived in anticipation of their more permanent housing. Definitely, there could be no talk of any creation of interior decoration here. In the film «Girls», for example, an ordinary stool was the subject of a gift that could be given to your beloved partner. The film was based on the play of the same name by Boris Bedny. In the Stalinist period, the genre of the «industrial novel» was especially valuable, which would show how well the country lived and worked, thereby motivating citizens for labor exploits. It was also a story about ordinary guys in the late 1950s who worked in logging: the main characters were a young cook and a front-line worker. At the end of

the film, according to the plot, the heroes of the film were building a house for married couples, the rooms in which would then be distributed.



PICTURE 2. Shot from the film «The Girls»



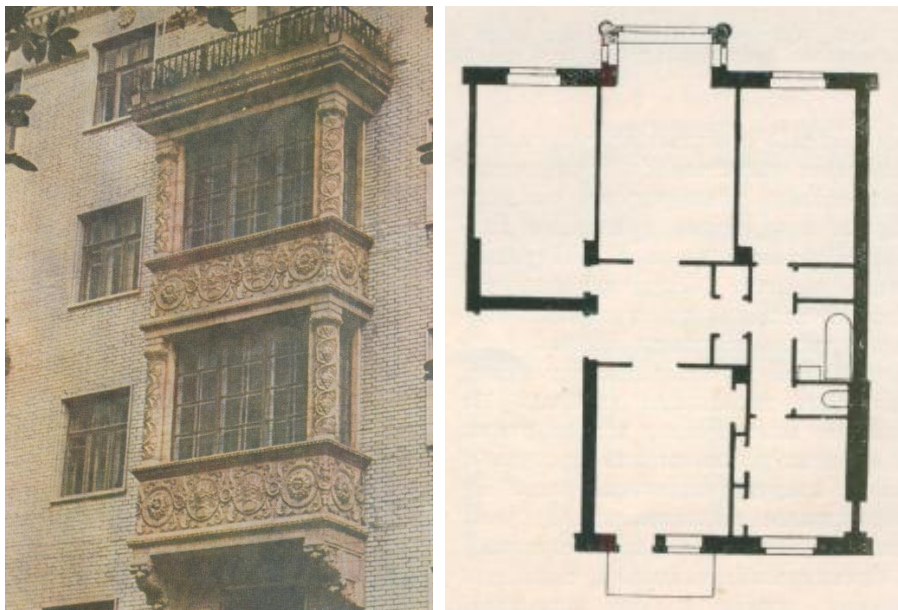
PICTURE 3 Housing in the post-war time

Thus, the problem of providing housing for the population had to be solved urgently. The leading architects of the country, K. Alabyan, V. Vesnin, M. Ginzburg, G. Golts, L. Rudnev, V. Semyonov and others, were invited to the created architectural workshops. They began not only to restore the destroyed buildings, but also to correct spontaneous pre-revolutionary buildings and layouts of inhabited localities. In addition, new cities were being built around industrial enterprises throughout the country (for example, the cities of Volzhsk, Angarsk and others). For this purpose, entire blocks of typical buildings were developed. They included not only housing, but also administrative buildings, houses of culture, commercial buildings and more.

Projects of two-, three-, four- and five-story houses were created - almost 200 standard projects of residential buildings. In the journal «Architecture of the USSR» for 1954, however, it was noted that standard designs still sinned with the use of decorative elements and imperfection of layouts. As a result, could not meet the challenges of

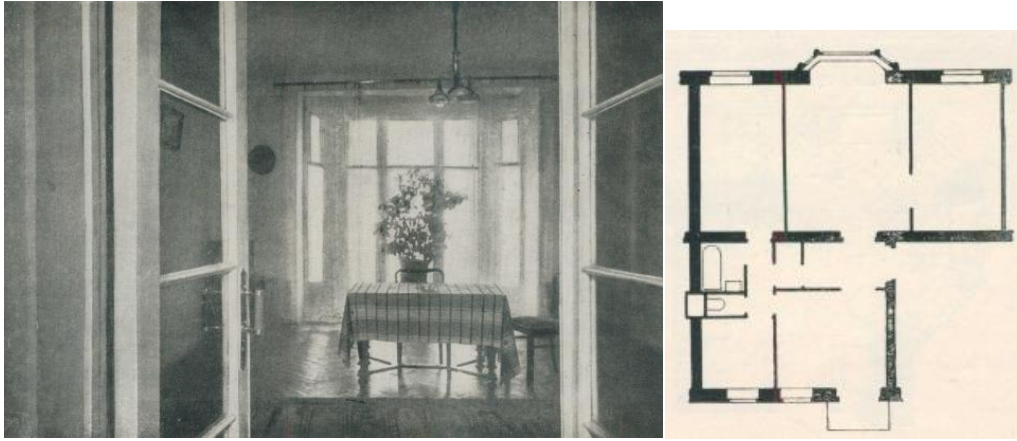
industrialization and standardization of construction, and therefore slowed down and increased the cost of it. The decoration was also influenced by the official policy of the Soviet State: it was necessary to emphasize the greatness of the victory of the Soviet people, and the monumentality of the buildings was supposed to affirm confidence in a brighter future.

For instance, a house built in Kyiv is carefully analyzed. The use of an architectural detail - a bay window - is criticized. Its use is justified by the external appearance of the building, however, when furnishing, residents find it difficult to use it: the usable area is naturally not used properly.



PICTURE 4. Magazine illustration «Architecture of the USSR», 1994

Another example analyzed in the magazine, also from Kyiv, also shows the interior of a similar serial house of the Stalinist post-war era. As you can see, the room is quite spacious, with double hinged classic doors with wooden frames, and herringbone parquet on the floor. But the room itself is rather empty: in its center there is only a dining table with a couple of chairs.



PICTURE 5 Magazine illustration, «Architecture of the USSR», 1994

Indeed, the furniture industry did not keep up with the pace of mass construction. During the war years, most enterprises worked for the needs of the front, and after the victory, production was not enough to meet demand. «The Rabotnitsa» magazine for 1952 contains a short story that can be considered a narrative advertisement for the Glavbumsbyt store of the Ministry of Paper and Wood Processing Industry. The magazine was founded on the initiative of Vladimir Lenin to involve women in the political life of the country. The magazine arose precisely as a party publication in 1914, and its authority was great. The themes of the first issues were economic and political discrimination against women, domestic violence, sexual harassment, women's solidarity, bitter reflections on the lot of women. The publication was interrupted several times: from 1914 to 1917 and from 1918 to 1923 due to police persecution and the First World War. The magazine at first overtook the newspapers in terms of the speed of submission of material. Gradually, especially in the post-war years, he reoriented himself to cover not only political, but also social and domestic issues.¹

This story is quite interesting and revealing for analysis. In the story, a young married couple gets an apartment in a new house. They want to buy beautiful and comfortable furniture for their new home. In total, three couples are mentioned in the story: they are all young workers, responsible citizens of their State. It was this image of a «new citizen» that was cultivated and promoted by the Soviet State in the Stalin era: in cinema, in literature, in the visual arts. A new citizen should have built a new socialist society, fulfill one's civic duty and work for the common good. Only new kind of citizen gets a new apartment in a new house, according to this little story, because

¹ <https://vestnik.journ.msu.ru/books/2013/5/borba-zhurnala-rabotnitsa-za-auditoriyu-i-tirazhi-v-1920-1930-e-gg/>

each of the heroes was working, achieved successes in her or his work and created a «social cell».

So it is said to that «new citizen» that he or she could buy new furniture in the state shop organized by one of ministry. The story describes furniture made of walnut and mahogany, leather and tapestry; it is noted that the store has a large selection of furniture. In addition, the process of creating of the furniture can be traced by the story. Firstly, they say about high number of house construction in the country so that high number of furniture was needed not only for individual apartments, but also for hostels and rural dwelling houses.

Afterwards they described the long process of designing the furniture. The state design studios, according to the story of the magazine, listened to the wishes of ordinary people: in addition to the usual requirements for strength and convenience, furniture had to be both beautiful and bring feelings of joy. «The situation should correspond to the new character of our life.»² The story says that the head of the design studio personally visits furniture stores and listens to customer feedback, receives first-hand information. In this way it is shown that the Soviet Government took care about an ordinary citizen listening carefully and directly to each request.

² Chalay Z. We want the furniture to be beautiful. «The Rabotnitsa». №. 2, 1952 - pp. 29-30



Жошнн, чообн шебел БЫЛА КРАСИВАЯ

— ...И удобная, конечно,— добавила молодая женщина, выбирая в магазине мебель для новой квартиры в новом доме, для новой жизни: она недавно вышла замуж.

Было воскресенье, и муж пошёл вместе с ней покупать обстановку. Оба они работают на производстве и имеют трудовые сбережения. Кроме того Любовь Алексеевна получила премию за важное усовершенствование агрегата. Андрей Петрович разузнал, где можно достать красивую и добротную мебель. Оказалось, что многие министерства выпускают мебель для населения, и супруги обошли ряд магазинов. Теперь Андрей Петрович показывал жене на красивый новый дом на площади у Никитских ворот:

— Это магазин Главбумсбыта Министерства бумажной и деревообрабатывающей промышленности. Мебель их считается высококачественной. Зайдём, посмотрим. Видишь, какой красивый дом! В нём должна быть и мебель красивая.

Молодожёны с удовольствием оглядывались кругом. Столы орехового и красного дерева гостеприимно поблескивали полировкой. Диваны и кресла, обитые плюшем, гобеленом мягких и тёплых тонов, овали к отдыху с книжкой в руках или к тихой дружеской беседе. Кожаное полумягкое кресло возле письменного стола вызвало у Андрея Петровича желание немедленно усестя и погрузиться в технические расчёты.

Образцы мебели для двухкомнатной квартиры, подготовленные для серийного производства Центральным мебельным проектно-конструкторским бюро Главмебельпрома.

Зинаида ЧАЛАЯ

Весь гарнитур спальни оказался небольшим по размерам и недорогим.

— Этот гарнитур подходит к небольшой спаленке, комбинированной с кабинетом,— сказал продавец.

— Мне это подходит,— весело объявила покупательница.— У нас две комнаты, и мы хотим, чтобы от мебели было не тесно, а хорошо и уютно, понимаете?

— Как не понимать! Ради этого всё и делается. Правительство заботится о том, чтобы гражданам было дома уютно и чтобы отдыхал человек.

В магазин вошла двое: скромно одетая женщина лет тридцати, и вслед за ней средних лет громадный, с размашистой походкой гражданин, заслонивший собою всю дверь. Это был приезжий с дальнего севера, известный стахановец-новатор Конон Кузьмич Русинов и его жена Анна Ивановна, мастер рыбных промыслов.

— Покажите нам красивую мебель: мы будем жить в красивом доме,— сказала Анна Ивановна.

Продавец понимающе кивнул головой:

— Тоже, как и они, в новом получаете?

— Да, но не в Москве. Ведь не только в столице идёт строительство,— засмеялся Русинов.— Больше ста миллионов квадратных метров жилой площади по Союзу — и это только после войны! И у нас на дальнем севере тоже строят.

Выбор мебели в магазине оказался довольно большой. Русиновы купили столовую, гостиную и кабинет красного дерева, кровати и шкаф для спальни.

Наша мебельная промышленность готовится к широкому удовлетворению потребностей советских людей в красивой

и удобной обстановки. Задачи у этой промышленности не малые. Жилищное строительство безостановочно растёт. Советское правительство неустанно заботится о предоставлении человеку всё лучших и лучших условий жизни.

В наши дни непрерывно растут требования рабочих на хорошую, удобную мебель и для общежитий. Общежития, которые строятся сейчас для молодых рабочих, — это благоустроенные дома, где предусмотрены и индивидуальные комнаты для рабочих или работниц.

В связи с укрупнением колхозов и новым жилищным строительством, на селе предъявляют спрос на новую, хорошую мебель и колхозники.

Мебельные предприятия стараются удовлетворить все эти потребности.

Получая новые квартиры, советские люди, естественно, хотят обставить их хорошо, чтобы стиль мебели соответствовал дому. Люди хотят в хороших домах жить хорошо.

Строятся новые мебельные предприятия в Хабаровске, Новосибирске, Кемерово, Челябинске, Свердловске. Ряд фабрик перестраивается, совершенствуются производственные процессы, и теперь уже большими сериями выпускается высококачественная мебель самых разнообразных фактур и отделки. Созданы и выпущены в продажу ряд гарнитуров респектных, столовых, кабинетов и спален.

Но этого мало. Нужно достичь того, чтобы советские люди — рабочие, колхозники, служащие, работники науки и искусства — могли приобретать стильную мебель хорошего качества и недорого.

В проектно-конструкторское бюро Министерства бумажной и деревообрабатывающей промышленности приходят посоветоваться, как лучше обставить свою квартиру.

Работники бюро с огромным вниманием прислушиваются к их пожеланиям. Вот появляется чета молодожёнов. Он молодой врач, она конструктор авиазавода.

— Надо, чтобы новая мебель была не только прочной, но и красивой. Её внешний вид должен вызывать у человека чувство радости, бодрости. Обстановка квартиры должна отвечать новому характеру нашей жизни.

Начальник проектно-конструкторского бюро Сергей Акимович Белудин обходит мебельные магазины Москвы, прислушиваясь к замечаниям покупателей, стремясь выяснить, почему не куплен тот или иной предмет, чем он не удовлетворяет покупателя.

— Мы учимся у народа, — говорит Сергей Акимович. — Вот началось высотное строительство, возник новый, социалистический стиль архитектуры, в котором монументальность сочетается с лёгкостью и красотой формы. Нужно, чтобы, войдя в этот дом, человек не испытывал чувства неприятного контраста, увидев разностильную или старомодную мебель.

Когда обстановка выдержана в одной художественной форме, это даёт ощущение единства, теплоты, уюта. Ни одна вещь не выделяется, не раздражает глаз.

— Мы разрабатываем, — продолжает Сергей Акимович, — доступную, гигиеничную и красивую мебель целыми комплектами, решая их в едином стиле. Такими же комплектами разрабатывается даже кухонная мебель.

В помещении бюро уже стоит эти замечательные по своему изяществу, стилю и удобству вещи.

Хорошо отделанная, облицованная дубом, буком и другими породами, с тёплым ольивом золотистой полировки, эта мебель создаёт светлый, жизнерадостный фон. Красивая

форма, тонкая резьба карнизов, продуманное сочетание тонов и форм — во всём чувствуется рука советского мастера, вкладывающего душу в свою работу.

Выпуск таких комплектов продиктован заботой о людях: человек получает возможность приобрести постепенно в разные сроки всю обстановку одного стиля.

Бюро разрабатывает и удобную для небольших квартир комбинированную мебель — диван-кровать, книжный шкаф, откидная передняя стенка которого служит письменным столом.

Платяные шкафы, диваны и другие вещи проектируются с таким расчётом, чтобы их вместительность была полностью использована; таким образом будут ликвидированы имеющиеся в квартирах «завалы» на шкафах.

Так от строительства гигантских зданий до мебели и других изделий домашнего обихода осуществляется сталинская забота об удобствах советских людей.

Созданием образцов мебели новой конструкции занимаются квалифицированные столяры экспериментальной мастерской, работающей при проектно-конструкторском бюро. Для консультаций приглашаются архитекторы, художники, учёные, врачи. Уже сделано до 50 образцов новой мебели для обстановки 1—2-х и 3-комнатной квартир. Для высотного здания Московского университета создаётся 400 видов различной мебели.

Вот, кажется, простая вещь — стул. Сделали первый стул. Профессор, приглашённый на консультацию, забрав стул работу:

— Не годится.

— Но почему?

— Стул неудобный.

Начальник проектно-конструкторского бюро опять принялся за расчёты, испытывая удобства и неудобства стула, находил верное решение. И когда профессор вновь пришёл и уселся на стул, то объявил с явным удовлетворением:

— Ну, батеньки мои, я не встаю.

Упорно и настойчиво работают наши мебельщики над созданием гигиеничной, удобной мебели для детей; эта работа ведётся при непосредственном участии врачей. Однако в порядке критики необходимо сказать, что до сих пор не решены вопросы о наиболее гигиенической школьной мебели. В этом вопросе первое слово принадлежит также работникам советского здравоохранения.

Советский человек — неутомимый творец счастья Родины — строит светлый дом, и в этот дом идут добротные, радующие глаз вещи.

И вот эти вещи располагаются по местам.

Молодой технолог заполняет книгами свой новый шкаф. Книги в темнокрасных переплётах — это томики Сталина и новое издание Ленина. Ближе от них светятся ирмовые супер-обложки с портретом Горького.

Отправлены на дальний север столовая, гостиная и спальня с кабинетом. От новых вещей в квартире москвичей — Андрея Петровича и Любви Алексеевны — повеяло каким-то особенным уютом; здесь начинается новая жизнь молодожёнов. Вместе с радостью у них возникает и чувство ответственности перед будущим, желание своим трудом ещё более усилить могущество Родины.

Андрей Петрович устроился поудобнее в рабочем кресле, придвинутом к столу. Проводя ладонью по гладкой поверхности стола, он весело говорит жене:

— Славно поработаем! Славно и отдохнём!



In the story, the newlyweds, who have labor savings for excellent work, want to purchase furniture for a new apartment in a new building. An interesting moment, in which it is noted that «the husband found out where you can DOSTAT beautiful and solid furniture.» The verb «DOSTAT» is used not in the meaning of «get», but

«find/catch». Thus, the furniture seems to be something like a «treasure» that is not easy to find. Another married couple enters the same store and purchases furniture for their apartment in the Far North. In both cases, it is indicated that young people will live in beautiful houses, and the furniture should be beautiful. The story is interrupted several times in order to indicate and emphasize the concern of the Soviet State for people throughout the country (not only in Moscow), about the big plans set for the furniture industry, which is obliged to improve the living conditions of the Soviet people. In addition, it is mentioned that it is a soviet person that has the requirements for furniture quality.

The illustration for the story shows a set of furniture. It is made in a rather classical style and has a complete set of furniture: wardrobes, a bed, a desk and a dressing table, bedside tables and more. All furniture is made of wood (the story mentions oak, beech, walnut and mahogany), it is decorated with carvings and cornices. Such furniture corresponds to the Stalin Empire style, which dominated in the post-war Stalin years. Thus, the style of the furniture corresponded to the general architectural style of the residential building. In addition, the fact that the furniture is designed as a set allowed buyers to purchase furniture elements gradually (not all at once) and not lose the overall style of the interior of the apartment.

Reading and analyzing this story, an almost ideal picture emerges: young people, excellent workers, have received a new apartment in a beautiful new house and are buying beautiful furniture for a new life with deferred savings. However, the story carries a clear message:

1. All buyers in the story are young married couples; they have created a cell of society that requires separate housing. Single people still had to live in a hostel, however they also had demands for their living conditions.

2. All the heroes of the story were responsible citizens and workers (Stakhanovite, doctor, designer, technologist, and others), so they receive remuneration according to their merits.

3. The Soviet State takes care of the private life of the Soviet citizen: after the appearance of new furniture, each hero has «responsibility for the future, a desire to further strengthen the power of the Motherland with his work.» That is, the ideological orientation of every detail is again emphasized.



PICTURE 6 Newspaper «Izvestia»

Obviously, not everything was so smooth. For instance, an article in the Izvestia newspaper (1953 y.) tells of a family of five who are celebrating a housewarming party because they have been given a «good» apartment. In the picture 7, it could be seen how family members are trying to place their belongings in a fairly cramped room. Their furniture is quite bulky and old-fashioned: according to the rich carving of the sideboard, one can say with accuracy that it belongs to the pre-revolutionary era - and takes up all the space so that they even have little room to move around.³

Moreover in 1955, a rather critical article was published in the newspaper about the backwardness of the furniture industry. It was accused of excessive bureaucratization of processes and approvals, slowness and backward technology. Many

³ On New Year's Eve. Housewarming. Izvestia, 31 Dec. 1953, No. 308

said in the article that «enterprises of the Ministry of the Paper and Woodworking Industry, Industrial Cooperation and Local Industry of the Union Republics lost hundreds of millions of rubles of furniture to trading organizations last year». those. it is precisely the failure to fulfill the production plan for a certain amount, and not financial losses, that is blamed on them.

Since the Soviet leaders were building a new system of the socialist state in contrast to the capitalist one, production had to work according to the new system. At no stage is the chain of state-owned enterprises producing a product or service interrupted: from design studios to shops. Each of the enterprises carried out the state plan. Thus, the entire part of B2B enterprises operates according to the principle of the socialist system. Signs of the capitalist market appear only at the B2C stage, since the Soviet person does not receive goods as a gift, but purchases them with the money he has earned. As a result, there is a disagreement between the B2B and B2C sectors, which are implemented according to different principles.

Possibly this is the reason why in the story from the magazine «The Rabotnitsa» the word «DOSTAT» (get) is used when the characters come to buy furniture. The words «buy» gives the right to claim and demand to receive goods for money, the word «get», on the contrary, puts the buyer in the framework of limited opportunities, which was in the fact the reality. The industry of the USSR was built around a vicious circle of state-owned enterprises and simply could not initially provide the buyer with an unlimited choice. That is why all the shops are owned by the ministries, and according to the magazine's story, the choice in them is «quite large», and some citizens from distant regions of the country have to come to Moscow to buy furniture. Thus, in communicating with citizens, the Soviet State has to carry out a difficult task: to create a buyer with a way of thinking that does not go beyond the framework of a planned economy, i.e. within socialist politics. The state, ideologically and physically, was not able to provide a free market with a large and varied selection of goods; the consumerism did not fit into the official policy of the Soviet Union.

However, the state carried out work on providing furniture to the population. In 1950 and 1953, Decrees of the Council of Ministers of the USSR were issued to increase the production of furniture.⁵ Modern living conditions demanded new

⁵ About measures to increase the production of furniture for sale to the public: Decree of November 5. 1950 №. 4561. M.: Council of Ministers of the USSR, 1950.; On increasing production and improving the quality of

progressive forms of furniture that meet the daily needs of people. In the mid-40s - early 50s, enterprises mastered the production of furniture sets and series. An example is a set of sectional furniture designed by N. A. Luppov in 1952-1953, with a single architectural and artistic solution, including items necessary for the complete furnishing of an apartment, one room or part of it.⁶ The advantage of a set of furniture in comparison with a set was that the consumer, at his request and living conditions, could complete its composition and place objects in the interior, as well as acquire it gradually, without violating the uniform style of the interior of the apartment.

Thus, a certain idea was promoted through magazines and newspapers:

1. Furniture can be purchased at a specialized state store with money earned by labor at a state enterprise; only a citizen who does his job and his civic duty well can get new separate housing and purchase furniture for it. So the slogan of the socialist state is respected - «from each according to his ability, to each according to his work» - and the promotion of furniture is also included in the general program of propaganda of the social system and lifestyle.

2. It is the State that takes care of the living conditions of its citizens, and if there is a shortage and poor quality, then this is the fault of certain people, and not of the system. The state plans the development of the national economy through the implementation of five-year plans. Such plans can be called sustainable, since they took into account and calculated the limited resources of the country - raw materials, energy and human resources. The Gosplanners translated environmental problems into figures, and in this way they managed to explain that if they continue to pollute the rivers, then gigantic funds will be required to clean them up; if you pollute the air, then you will need to invest in medicine so that people do not die from lung diseases. Soviet economists said that upfront expenditures on environmental measures, such as water purification and land reclamation, would bring benefits at the national economic level. Presented in this form, environmental problems became clear to the country's leadership.

Economists said that in order to take into account the ecology in the national economy, it is necessary to look more broadly than at one specific industry. To

furniture for sales to the public: Decree of December 16, 1953 No. 2643. M.: Council of Ministers of the USSR, 1953.

⁶ Cherepakhina A. N. The history of artistic processing of wood products. 1917–1945

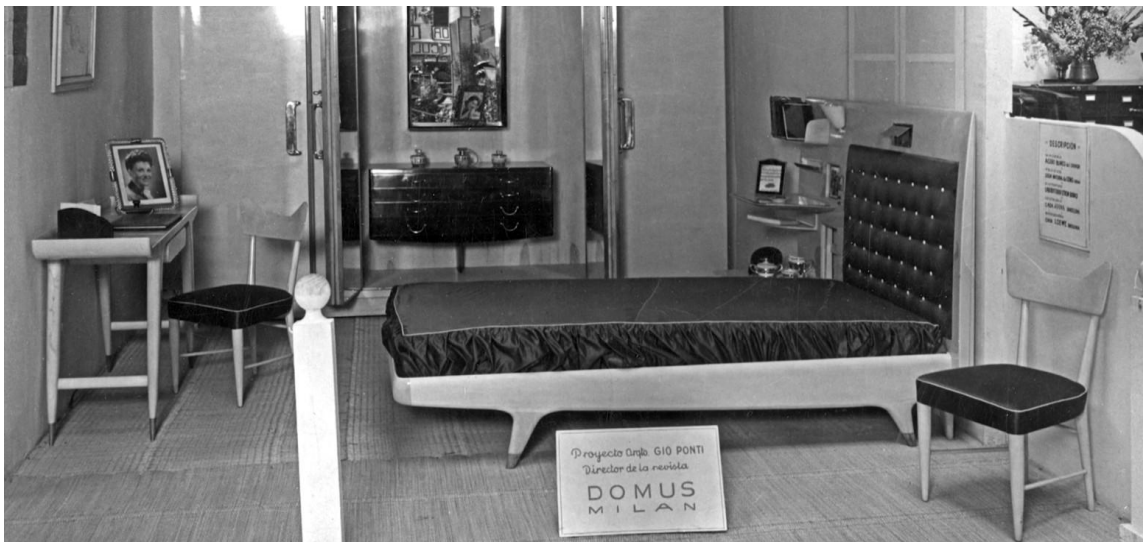
understand what they had in mind, you can look at the fictional design of the coal mine. Let's say you need 5,000 hectares of land to create a cut. All this land will be withdrawn from agricultural circulation. And if you look solely at the coal industry, then all the actors involved will benefit from the project. And if we take into account how much black soil can bring to the national economy, which will be withdrawn for coal mining, it turns out that not everything is so profitable. As a result, it will be necessary to calculate how much profit this cut will bring, and what will be the opportunity costs in the field of agriculture. In practice, it turned out that sometimes growing bread is more profitable than digging coal.

Since the late 1960s, party and state bodies have adopted a series of decrees that make the protection of nature part of the planned economy. An important role in this process was played by economists who worked in departmental institutions of the State Planning Commission, Goskomtsen and other planning bodies. Since 1975, each enterprise in the reports on the implementation of the plan has a section «Nature protection and rational use of natural resources». The report should have listed the costs of water purification, air purification, and land reclamation. The preparation of such reports has become part of the daily routine work of enterprises.⁷

⁷ Alekseeva A. Contradictions of the Soviet environmental management. January 12, 2021 <https://22century.ru/popular-science-publications/controversies-of-soviet-nature-usage>

The situation in Western Europe

The situation was quite different in Western Europe. There, after the Second World War, there was an industrial boom, thanks to US assistance and the Marshall Plan developed. The improving well-being of the population spurred the demand for goods and private enterprises invited eminent designers to develop collections and furniture elements, which ensured their competitiveness in a rapidly growing market. One such designer was Gio Ponti. In 1947, he designed the «bachelor's room», which was first presented at the Galleria del Sagrato, then at the Milan Triennale and finally at the XVI International Exhibition in Barcelona in 1948. Thus, the exhibitions revived after the war provided a platform for the performance novelties of furniture factories.



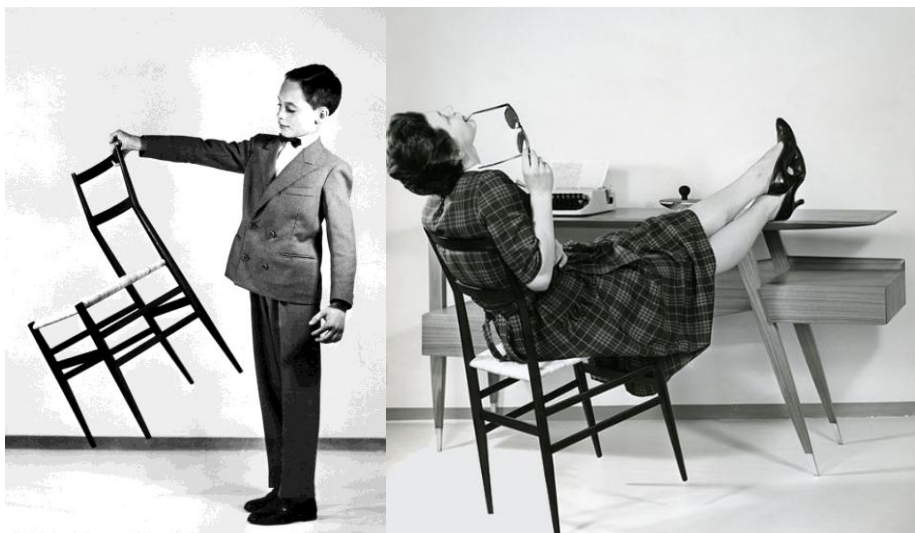
PICTURE 8 Molteni&C

In 1956, the Industrial Design Association (ADI), which set itself the following tasks: to promote and encourage the development of design in the country, to attract designers to work aimed at raising the technical and aesthetic level of industrial products. The La Rinascente department store created the Compasso d'Oro design prize, the Golden Compass, and today it is one of the most respected in the world. The first recipient of the new award was Cassina, a former workshop that began serial production of furniture in the 1950s. All this helped to draw attention to the industry and increase the designer's credibility.

Thus, designers and furniture factories existed in an environment of increased competition against the backdrop of a resurgent economy. Therefore, the search for new

forms and materials was an important moment in the victory over competitors. It has also become an important task to introduce and promote new products.

For instance, the history of the creation of the design icon «La Superleggera» by the already mentioned Gio Ponti is indicative of that time. The designer wanted to create a super light and strong chair made from natural materials, but at the same time affordable for the average American family. The owner of Cassina, for whom the item was made, was not sure what he had planned. Gio Ponti began work on the chair in 1949, and after three years of study and experimentation, the 699 chair, the forerunner of «La Superleggera», was produced. The chair combined all the signs of a transitional era: many industries were not yet sufficiently mechanized and still heavily dependent on manual labor. Thus, the frame of the 699 chair was produced in the Cassina factory, while the wicker seats were made by hand in the craft workshops of the city of Chiavari, famous for its wickerwork. So half-factory production allowed to significantly reduce the cost of the product and Cassina was able to start mass production of model 699. A few years later, having slightly changed the frame of the chair, «La Superleggera» was put into production, the weight of which was only 1700 grams. Moreover, thanks to the photos of Giorgio Casali, photographer of «Domus» magazine (Gio Ponti was its editor for many years), the chair has acquired a truly iconic status. In the photo, the boy is holding a chair with just one little finger, and on the other, the girl holds the weight on two super-thin legs of the chair. «La Superleggera» has become a classic and is still a bestseller of the Cassina factory thanks to the name of Gio Ponti, great design and high quality technology.



PICTURE 9 Giorgio Casali for the «Domus» magazine

Designers also played an important role in the Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland). The designers have continued the strong tradition of woodworking that has long existed in these countries. Moreover, with the development of technology and industrial production, it became possible to experiment with materials and mass-produce furniture, which was so necessary in the growing Scandinavian cities.

Manufacturers invited designers to search for new ideas to improve the competitiveness of enterprises. So the owner of Svenskt Tenn, Estrid Erikson, invited the Austrian Josef Frank to cooperate, Carl Hansen & Søn collaborated with Hans Wagner, the Fredericia factory with Børge Mogensen, and so on. Manufacturers, with the participation of designers, created bright objects for mass production, combining traditional materials (wood, metal, leather, textiles) and experimental technologies. In the first decade after World War II, Scandinavian designers won several awards at international exhibitions, and the Design in Scandinavia exhibition, held in the United States from 1954 to 1957, cemented the brand of «Scandinavian design» in people's minds.

A case in point is Finnish designer Ilmari Tapiovaara, who in 1946 designed a chair for the Domus Academy dormitory in Helsinki. The chair could be bought unassembled and flat packed. Because of the comfortable rounded seat, it has become incredibly popular. It became the first Finnish export product after the war. In 1951, the Domus chair won a prize at the Chicago Exposition and was sold in millions of copies in the United States by Knoll International under the name Finnchair.



PICTURE 10 Chair «Domus» by Ilmari Tapiovaara

Ilmari Tapiovaara himself was the art director of the Finnish company Asko for a long time and promoted the idea of designer furniture at an affordable price: «I want everyone to have a good design».⁸

Another case in point is designer Hans J. Wegner. Originally trained as a carpenter, he drew inspiration from historic furniture and was a master craftsman of chairs. His «Round chair», inspired by the Chinese chair, was featured on the cover of «Interior Magazine» in the US in 1950 and became a design icon and cult item.

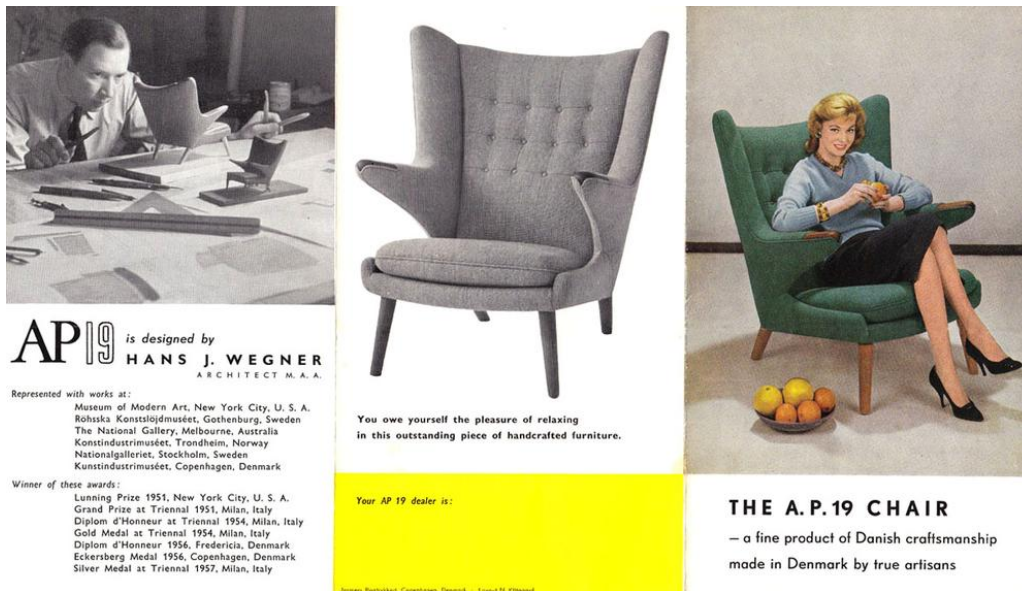
Another table «Peacock chair» was inspired by the English Windsor chair. Wegner drew inspiration from tradition and, using modern technology, created a «purified» modern version of it.



PICTURE 11 «Round chair» and «Peacock chair» by Hans J. Wegner

In 1951, Wegner creates another iconic Papa Bear model, easily recognizable and flamboyant. Initially, the chair was produced by AP Stolen, but two years later it began to be produced by PP Møbler.

⁸ Bozhko O. Ilmari Tapiovaara: design for millions. <https://www.interior.ru/design/6576-ilmari-tapiovaara-dizajn-dlya-millionov.html>



PICTURE 12 Brochure AP Stolen, telling about the prizes and regalia of the chair.

However, the idea of affordable design at an affordable price was truly realized by Ingvar Kamprad, the creator of IKEA. Starting with the sale of basic necessities, already in 1951 he released the first catalog of items for the home. The catalog was aimed at buyers with low incomes and was very popular among the population, and the entrepreneur managed to find low prices by finding manufacturers abroad. In 1953, the first IKEA showroom was opened: the company was able to demonstrate the quality of the products sold visually, and visitors to the furniture showroom could inspect the goods and touch them. Also this year we offer delivery of unassembled furniture in flat packaging, that allowed customers to immediately pick up the goods from the store and assemble the furniture themselves, saving on assembling.



PICTURE 13 First catalogue of IKEA.

Thus, after the Second World War in the Soviet Union and Western Europe, the issue of providing the people with furniture was equally acute. However, the development and attraction of buyers was built in different ways. In the Soviet Union, people were taught that it was necessary to go to the state store and purchase the necessary goods there. In Western countries, the economic and industrial boom provided increased competition among industries that actively invited designers to collaborate to increase the attractiveness of their products, also all sorts of exhibitions and competitions raised the status of the designer. However, even in Western countries, not everyone could afford to buy furniture, which explains the success of IKEA.

THE DECADE OF 1950S

USSR and N. Khrushchev's housing reform

A radical turn in the furniture industry of the USSR occurred in the mid-1950s, when two decrees were adopted «On the elimination of excesses in design and construction» and «On measures for further industrialization, improving quality and reducing the cost of construction.»⁹ This turning point was the reason for the formation of a new culture of life. Moreover the great importance was the change of power in the country, namely the arrival of Khrushchev and his policy against Stalin's personality cult.

In the Academy of Construction and Architecture of the USSR, they developed (and approved in 1958) new standards, where the allowable area of rooms, the height of ceilings and the width of openings in residential buildings were reduced compared to the norms that were in force before. In the projects of new standard houses, where millions of citizens were supposed to be resettled in the coming years, the dimensions corresponded to the «lower bar» of the new standards. This was a price to pay for the scale of the state housing construction program: the smaller the apartments, the more they can be built in a short time, the more people will move into them. Furniture inherited from the Stalinist style did not fit here. There was a need to adjust it to the new standard¹⁰ of furniture and interior and promote them to the people.

In total, there are three ways that were used for this:

1. Exhibitions - furniture and decorative arts
2. Periodicals and specialized literature
3. Propaganda and feature films

So from 1956 to 1968, eight furniture exhibitions were held, in which design bureaus from all over the country participated. At these exhibitions, furniture was presented that was not yet in production. Commissions worked at the exhibition, and were supposed to select models and recommend them for mass production.¹¹

⁹ Handel Y.S. Construction of an experimental residential area in Novye Cheryomushki: from the experience of Glavmosstroy. Moscow: Academy of Construction and Architecture of the USSR; Research Institute of Organization, Mechanization and Technical Assistance to Construction; Bureau of Technical Information, 1958. p. 52.

¹⁰ Kolosova I. I. The influence of architectural styles on furniture design in Russia in the XX - early. XXI centuries

¹¹ Piletsky A., Shortcomings of new furniture, «Decorative Art of the USSR», 1963, 7, p. 29.

At the All-Union Conference of Furniture Industry Workers in December 1956, the Council of Ministers issued two resolutions: on the creation of a new model range of Soviet furniture and on the establishment of competitions for the best images.

Thus, a series of competitions was launched, in which design bureaus from all regions of the Soviet Union took part. The first one was held in Moscow in 1958 and the associated exhibition in Novye Cheryomushki was widely covered in the Soviet press. Several articles are devoted to them in the May issue of the magazine «Decorative Art of the USSR» (Kamensky, 1959; Luppov, 1959b), in the May (Blashkevich, 1959; Kisin, 1959; Luppov, 1959a; Myatleva, 1959) and the August issue of the magazine «Architecture of the USSR» (Varaksin, 1959; Velbri and Brooks, 1959; Golverk and Mindlin, 1959b; Damsky, 1959; Klekovkin, 1959; Milyavskaya, 1959). Publications about the competition were also published in the magazines «Woodworking Industry» (Exhibition of furniture samples ..., 1959; Myasnikov, 1959; Varaksin, Baranov, Kissin, 1959a, 1959b) (the last article was published in two parts in the May and June issues of the magazine), «Architecture and construction of Moscow» (Krylov, 1959) and «Architecture and construction of Leningrad» (Golverk, Mindlin, 1959a).¹²

More than 30 design organizations from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan took part in the competition. Among the Russian participants are designers from Moscow, Leningrad, Saratov and Rostov-on-Don (Krylov, 1959). They put up 66 sets of furniture for apartments, 24 kitchens and 14 built-in complexes. The exhibition lasted until May 1959. It was visited by 10,000 people (Luppov, 1959a), not much for a city of five million. Among them were delegates to the 21st Congress of the CPSU, for whom excursions were organized to the exhibition (apparently, for this purpose it was specially held simultaneously with the congress). The head of state, N. S. Khrushchev, was also there.¹³

The unique Exhibition-competition was held in a new micro-district of Moscow in Novye Cheryomushki and presented new samples in the context of modern apartments in five-story block houses, with the arrangement and entourage of interiors

¹²Dezhurko A.K. All-Union competition for the best furniture samples in 1958: a turn from historical stylizations to modernism

¹³Maistrovskaya, M., Sluchevsky, Y. (2015). Furniture exhibitions: 1958–1959, Novye Cheryomushki «1st All-Union exhibition-competition for the best examples of home furniture.» Furniture world, (2), pp.36–39.

(wallpaper, fabrics, lamps, technical equipment, etc.), giving a bright an idea of how these products will look and function directly in a modern home.



PICTURE 14 Permanent building exhibition in Moscow, 1958. Elena Orlova furniture (TsMKB). B. Artmanis -A. Nikolaev, Modern furniture and apartment, Riga, 1959.

In addition to architects, authors of layouts, and designers, authors of furniture, an interior designer, Olga Bayar, from the Academy of Construction and Architecture of the USSR (she studied interior design at New York University), worked on this exposition. Obviously, it was her who picked up textiles, wallpapers, lamps and dishes, with which the models of apartments began to look almost like inhabited dwellings.¹⁴



PICTURE 15 Exhibition of the All-Union competition for the best furniture in Novye Cheryomushki, 1959.

¹⁴ Dezhurko A.K. All-Union competition for the best furniture samples in 1958: a turn from historical stylizations to modernism. Communications. Media. Design, Vol. 6, No. 1, 2021

It is interesting that in Leonid Gaidai's film «Operation Y...» the exhibition stand is almost completely recreated (Figure 17). This film was released in 1965 and was a real hit in the USSR: almost 70 million people watched it in the first year. The apartment of the character of the film was built in the MOSFILM pavilion. It could be also assumed that it was a new building, since the apartment has a home telephone: in the area of mass housing development, schools, kindergartens, shops and automatic telephone exchanges were immediately erected.



PICTURE 16 Shot from the film «Obsession» by Leonid Gaidai

Back to the 1958 exhibition, it is worth to mention that they began on the introduction of «modern style» into the interiors of Soviet citizens. The bulky furniture of the Stalinist period with an abundance of decorative elements could not be produced in sufficient quantities and did not fit the new building projects in size. Therefore, the «modern style» was the only possible option.

However, for many, he caused rejection, more than once there was an accusation of being «American»¹⁵. Zoya Finitskaya recalls similar reactions:

In the Manezh, at the exhibition «Art in everyday life», men and women, apparently unfamiliar, were standing by a glass case. They looked at a flint glass water utensil—a squat pot-bellied jug and two nearly globular goblets adorned with large dull whitish «peas.»

¹⁵ S. Harris, Communism on Tomorrow Street: Mass Housing and Everyday Life after Stalin, Washington – Baltimore 2013, c. 283.

- *Well, how do you like it? the man asked ironically.*

- *Of course I do, - the woman replied. - So homey, such nice things...*

- *But it's not ours!*¹⁶

In order to bring exhibitions closer to Soviet reality they were held on stands that repeated the dimensions of a typical apartment, and the exposition design created the illusion of residential interiors. The furniture was again shown surrounded by textiles, dishes, decorative flower arrangements, and there were books on the shelves. This technique - to use apartments in new buildings as an exhibition platform - was also resorted to at other furniture exhibitions, in particular, in Leningrad in 1959 and in Riga in 1962.¹⁷ Designers appreciated the presence effect that occurs when an exhibition space becomes a believable imitation of a habitable space. It was easy for the visitor to imagine that he was visiting, or even in his own house.



PICTURE 17 Shot Exhibition Art in everyday life in Moscow, 1961

In the spring of 1961, another large-scale exhibition «Art for everyday life» was held. This was a phenomenon of Soviet design: the exhibition featured 27 decor samples, fully furnished separate rooms and two apartments - one-room and three-room, where arts and crafts were demonstrated in an ensemble with furniture, decorative fabrics and lamps. «The Smena» magazine explains the purpose of the exhibition in this way: «after all, modern houses and apartments must be decorated in a modern way, that is, things that are simple in form, inexpensive, easy to use, solid and beautiful - things that could enter into every Soviet house, in every family ... The time has come

¹⁶ Z. Finitskaya, *People and Things (Aesthetics of Life)*, Moscow 1963, p. 117.

¹⁷ Artyom Dezhurko. *Exemplary interiors at Soviet exhibitions the turn of the 1950s - 1960s*. eSamizdat 2020 (XIII), pp. 161-172

for this motto to become a practical matter, so that the good things that we admire at exhibitions will supplant bad taste and philistinism.» Ergo the exhibition was supposed to show an example of «modern designed residential interiors and artistic products that are intended for industrial production».¹⁸

The exhibition was also covered in «The News of the Day» newsreel. The report notes that special attention was paid to furniture for small apartments: once again it emphasized «simplicity of forms and artistry», as well as that «the best products would be recommended for mass production».



PICTURE 18 Shot from the film magazine «News of the Day»

In just 40 days, the exhibition was visited by 245 thousand people, 365 excursions were held. The development of the exposition of the exhibition «Art in everyday life» was entrusted to Estonian specialists. A.I. Viilup, a well-known exhibition organizer, was invited as the main artist of the exhibition, who led a group consisting of an architect, a designer and four artists of the Estonian SSR (architect Plies, designer Koppel, artists Remets, Linnaks, Kasper and Pirans). In addition to them, representatives of enterprises and organizations that provided their products to Moscow from different cities worked at the exhibition, along with them, as authorized representatives, artists came to resolve issues of building an exposition.

Looking at the photographs from the 1958 exhibition, one can notice the general stylistic orientation of the furniture models of Soviet designers and their

¹⁸ MAKAROV K. The tradesman has not yet been finished off at all the crossroads of our life https://dzen.ru/a/Yr1u7nn8IG1_42kv

Western European counterparts. In fact, this similarity can be explained: in the USSR, the All-Union Design and Technological Institute of Furniture, VKTIM, was created, which was the leading design unit in the country's furniture design.

The most important subdivisions of the institute were the scientific library and archive, the pride of the institute, since back in the early 60s the VPKTIM library had the opportunity to subscribe to foreign magazines on architecture and design in France, Italy, the USA, Germany, Japan, Scandinavian and other countries. These were legislative magazines such as: «Domus», «Projekt», «Show Case», «Casarredo & Design», «Case de Abitare», «Habitat», «The world of interiors», «Form», «Design illustrated», «Interiors», «Schoner wohnen», «Arts decorasion», «La Maison Francaise» and many others. These magazines with excellent photographs and articles, which, if necessary, could be translated in the department of international relations and translations, provided great opportunities for orientation in the trends of modern architecture and design, new furniture forms, in modern interior culture. Another important informational opportunity of the institute was exhibitions, both open, accessible to all comers and very popular in those years, and, in particular, closed ones, i.e. exhibitions for specialists only. «These were the most interesting exhibitions, when foreign firms brought their products to conclude contracts. We could be there all day long, examining and studying new furniture samples. We were especially fond of Scandinavian furniture and interior design. We valued the forms of modest and business Finnish furniture more higher than even the bright and attractive projects of Italian designers. The exhibitions were extremely important, because seeing objects with your own eyes is incomparably more valuable and important than the most beautiful glossy photographs in magazines.»¹⁹

Thus, Soviet designers had the opportunity to draw ideas and learn from their foreign colleagues. However, in practice, it was necessary to instill «modern taste» in Soviet citizens. «It is necessary to educate the population in good taste, instill in them a sense of modernity. The ways of communication with the buyer are diverse, but above all, these are frequent and varied exhibitions, which should be an example of the correct solution of modern apartments».²⁰

¹⁹ Maistrovskaya M.T. RNIFDT / VPKTIM (The Russian National Institute of Furniture Design and Technology) - 1960–1980 - the center for the domestically produced furniture design (organization, exhibitions, competitions, methodologies)

²⁰ Luppov N., Interior - a complex of arts, «Decorative Art of the USSR», 1961, 9, p. 10.

lamps are united by simplicity, which brings freshness and novelty to interior design».²¹ The number of lamps to be produced and the cost - 3 rubles 40 kopecks were also given. However, it was surprising that as an illustration of the product, not photographs are given (for example, from the mentioned exhibition), but stylized drawings which do not convey an accurate image. Moreover, the magazine did not inform about where and how these lamps could be purchased. For instance, by IKEA catalogs even then it was possible to order by mail the item you liked, i.e. the buyer did not have to take extra steps to purchase. The creators of the catalog provided the shortest path from viewing the catalog to ordering goods.

On the whole, the «New Goods» magazine, designed to inform about the goods coming on the market, only talked about what could be produced. The magazine for 1958 tells about the folding table: its advantages are described in detail, the materials of manufacture are indicated, the simplicity and manufacturability of production are emphasized. However, this time as illustrations there are photographs. At the end it is only mentioned that «it is advisable to organize the mass production of folding tables on a large scale.»²² The buyer thus does not have information about when and at what price he will be able to purchase such a table.



PICTURE 20 Advertising article the magazine «New goods»

²¹ Ermolaieva N. Modern lamps. «New Goods», 11, 1961, p. 6

²² Kamenskii L. Modern lamps. «New Goods», 7, 1958, p. 13

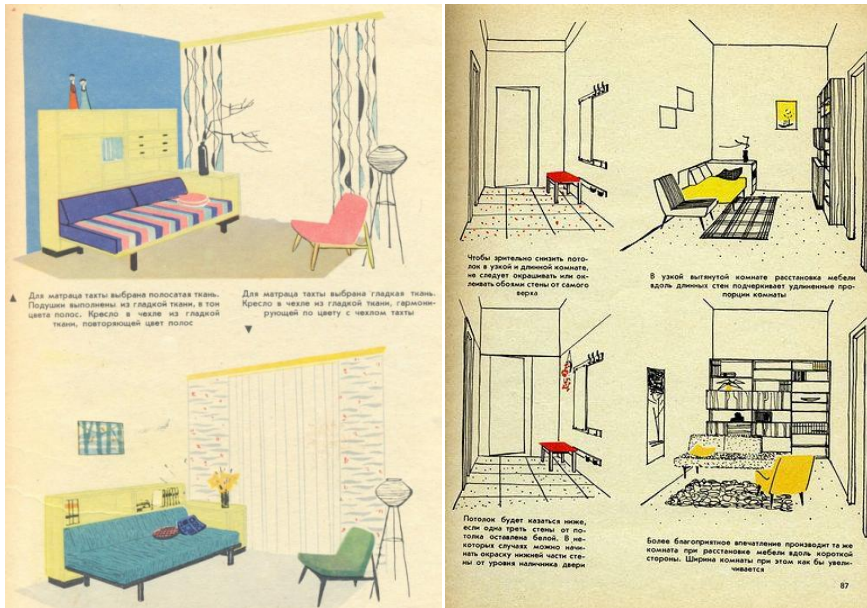
Another 1958 issue detailed sectional furniture. In the same detail as in the previous article, the materials from which it was made were described, the advantages of a sectional design with an indication of the dimensions. Photographs are given: they may have been taken at an exhibition where a sample of furniture was exhibited (indicated in the article). At the end, the author named the factory where it was to be produced. Nevertheless, once again the buyer could not get information about where and how it could be purchased.



СЕКЦИОННАЯ МЕБЕЛЬ

PICTURE 21 Advertising article the magazine «New goods»

In addition to advertising new furniture products, the task was to educate «modern taste», as it was said, for example, in an article in the magazine «Smena». Thus, educational literature was also produced. One can cite as an example the book «Apartment and Its Decoration» by Olga Bayar, who decorated the stands of Moscow furniture exhibitions. The book contained many photos, illustrations, layouts and furniture samples from the Soviet period. As illustrations, sketches of project proposals are given, taken in models of standard apartments at VDNKh and furniture exhibitions in 1959 and 1961. In addition, recommendations were given on the rational use of living space, reference information was given on the types and dimensions of furniture, as well as methods for their placement. The author illustrates in detail the artistic techniques that every citizen could use. Ergonomic schemes and various plannings are given. Still, the circulation of the book was only 50,000 copies, which is not an easily accessible source of information.



PICTURE 22 Illustrations from the book «Apartment and Its Decoration»

On the other hand, “The Rabotnitsa” magazine published 4,200,000 copies in 1964, and it also has educational material on the subject of home furnishing.



PICTURE 23 Article from the magazine «The Rabotnitsa»

The article once again reminds the reader that new furniture has appeared, that the designers have provided for a variety of multifunctional models. It describes in detail how to zone a room. However, most of the article is devoted specifically to decorating a room: choosing colors for walls, decor, choosing textiles for decoration

and live indoor plants. Emphasis is placed on the fact that the space should be «clean» and not overloaded with details.

To popularize the «modern style» and a new type of housing in 1959, a propaganda film «It's time for a big housewarming» was released. It was the first color documentary film in Soviet cinema.



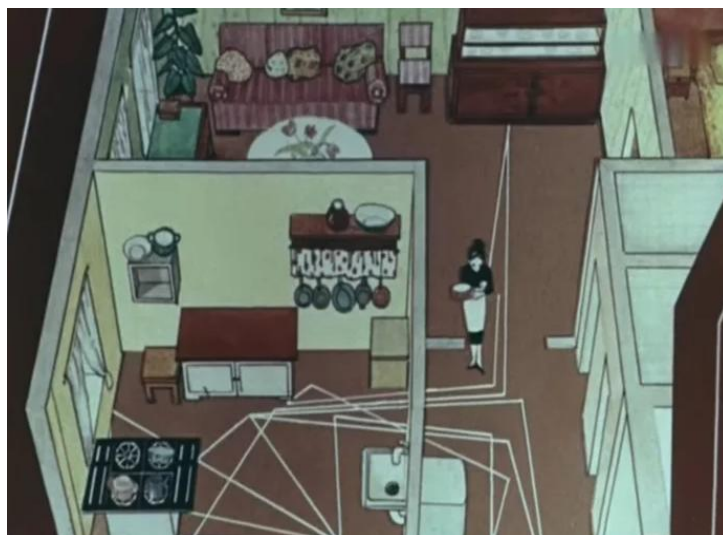
PICTURE 24 «It's time for a big housewarming» poster

The film shows a standard Khrushchev-era apartment. The furnishings of the rooms are filled with furniture in the style shown at the 1958 and 1961 exhibitions. Hence it was assumed that an ordinary Soviet person, settling in a «khrushchevka» would be able to furnish it with furniture produced at furniture enterprises, and the interior would be made in a modern style.



PICTURE 25 Shot from the film «It's time for a big housewarming»

Particular attention is paid to the scientific and manufacturability of houses. The footage shows a scientific meeting, where experts think about the bright future of the inhabitants of their projects. People worry about the extra movement around the house, measure the activity of people, the actions of the hostess in the kitchen and come to the conclusion that in new houses the size of the rooms will be ideal for any household chores.



PICTURE 26 Shot from the film «It's time for a big housewarming»

The theme of housewarming was also implemented in the works of Soviet artists: «Lyrical Housewarming», «First Fashionistas of the New Quarter», «Wedding on Tomorrow's Street» by Yuri Pimenov, «Moving to a New Apartment» by Alexander Laktionov, «Housewarming» by Tatyana Staroselskaya, «New Settlers. From a tent to a new home» by Dmitry Mochalsky, and many other works.²³



PICTURE 27 Zeitlin Naum Iosifovich (1909-1997) «To a new house» 1959

²³ Fine Arts of the USSR. Housewarming... 2. <https://sell-off.livejournal.com/30825515.html>



PICTURE 28 Goryunov Anatoly Fedorovich (1928) «At a housewarming party» from the series «At the construction sites of the seven-year plan» 1961



PICTURE 29 Kuzmichev Pavel Ivanovich (1906-1982) «New settlers» 1961

Another major event of the Khrushchev period was the exhibition «US Industrial Products» in Sokolniki in 1959. Perhaps the event was not of great importance for the furniture industry of the USSR. However, from an ideological and political point of view, this event entered the history of two countries.

On an area of 41 thousand square meters there were presented household appliances, equipment for urban and municipal services, vehicles and much more. Externally, the exhibition had its official goal - to improve Soviet-American relations.

But the real purpose of the exhibition was connected with the desire to demonstrate the advantage of the American way of life over the Soviet one.

That is why the exhibition featured not only books and art objects, but also certain consumer goods, which, in theory, were supposed to stun people deprived of many, even elementary, things. Of course, this exhibition is a political action, during which both states opened the curtain. N.S. Khrushchev and R.M. Nixon debated and discussed whose products were better. The American president praised the American way of life and said that every inhabitant of the country has a choice. Khrushchev, in turn, said that the Soviet people are focused on more important topics than this consumer goods, and some household goods in the USSR could do better, and even sarcastically asked: «Don't you have a machine that puts food into the mouth and pushes it down?»²⁴

It was not just an exhibition, but the most difficult dispute between two cultures, each of which has its own view of the economy, politics and society, a kind of attempt to demonstrate all the advantages of communism and capitalism.

American designers showed a house named Splitnik house which with its interior furnishings was intended to convince the typical Soviet worker that this was the kind of house that the “typical” American worker, earning \$100 a week, could afford.²⁵



PICTURE 30 «Miracle» Kitchen at the USA Pavilion

²⁴ Cold war kitchen : Americanization, technology, and European users / edited by Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann. The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England. 2009. p. 70

²⁵ Cold war kitchen : Americanization, technology, and European users / edited by Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann. The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England. 2009. p. 69

Moreover, the Americans noted the «miracle» kitchen: it was divided into the food sector and the dining room, while the Soviet kitchen huddled on five-six squares. An island was installed in the middle of the kitchen - it was here that American housewives kept dishes. But the cabinets were assembled not only for dishes, but for everything that was collected in the kitchen. A lot of machines were brought for export that could be transferred to the hostesses: a dishwasher, a microwave oven, two refrigerators and even a robot vacuum cleaner.

The exhibition was a huge success: it was visited by about 2.7 million people (compared to 40 thousand at the Furniture exhibition in 1958 in Novye Cheryomushki).²⁶ It was one of the most popular exhibits; everyone apparently wanted at least a look at it. In terms of approval, however, as indicated by the voting machines and comment books, it was by no means among the most popular, and comments were often heard echoing Pravda's line that it was unbelievable that the average American could live in such a house. This discrepancy makes sense, however, if a clear distinction is made between curiosity and approval. Everyone was curious about the model house and wanted to see for himself what the controversy was all about, but after he had seen it, his own feelings apparently were mixed, with enough of an element of skepticism and fear of being taken in to keep him from giving it unqualified approval. It should not be inferred from this, however, that the high American living standards depicted by the exhibit were disbelieved in general by the Soviet visitors. Most of their disbelief, such as it was, seemed to be concentrated on the model house.²⁷

The Soviet press was quite critical of the exhibition and the interest in it. «Apparently this house was shipped from the United States and assembled in Moscow only to astonish the Soviet man. However, no one was astonished, even though the house in itself is not bad. But for the Soviet planners and builders, it represents to a certain degree a past period of prefabricated house building.»²⁸

At the exhibition in Sokolniki, two worlds met as close as ever, and it was not an arms race or space programs, but a comparison of the living conditions of an average citizen of the Soviet Union and the United States. Against the backdrop of American novelties and the model of a «typical American house,» the comparison was clearly not

²⁶ https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/9-й_Квартал_Новых_Черёмушек

²⁷ Cold war kitchen : Americanization, technology, and European users / edited by Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann. The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England. 2009. p. 75

²⁸ Stroitel'naya Gazeta (Construction Gazette), 3 July 1959, RG 306 at NARA

in favor of the USSR. This may explain the appearance of a little article in the newspaper Izvestia. « 'Our kitchen,' says Zinaida Ershova, 'is just as good as the American one shown at the exhibition in Sokolniki.' » Zinaida's Soviet kitchen boasts such step-saving conveniences as wall-mounted units and a rack for drying plates over the sink, the latter fitted into a continuous worktop. A mixer tap indicates both hot and cold running water supplies. In short, it is a compact, modern, rationally planned, if rather modest kitchen.²⁹



PICTURE 31 The photograph by V. Biriukov in the Soviet state newspaper Izvestiia by 26 July 1959

In general, the newspaper quite straightforwardly compared the Soviet and American life of an ordinary housewife. In reality such kitchens were shown in USSR only in prototype format and did not yet exist in mass production.

Thus, during the Khrushchev period, communication with the population took place in an instructive manner. This is due to a large-scale housing program, the task of which was to solve the housing problem and provide the urban population with housing at the rate of one apartment per family. This means that many families who used to live

²⁹ Cold war kitchen : Americanization, technology, and European users / edited by Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann. The MIT Press Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England. 2009. p. 94

in barracks, dormitories, communal apartments and villages, for the first time received a separate apartment for their own use and for the first time had to equip the interior of their apartments. This explains the instructive nature of all communication activities.

The chapter discussed the main techniques used: furniture exhibitions, articles in magazines, educational literature, propaganda films and art paintings. All of them were educational in nature and did not carry a call for an immediate purchase of interior items. Rather, the ordinary citizens of the country were shown an ideal picture to strive for.

«...continuously moving forward life, changes in social relations, the success of science, the development of technology sweep away the old ideas about beauty and comfort and give people new tastes, new aesthetics.

Bulky Slavic cupboards, colossal sideboards and «three-bed» ottomans, which occupied more than half of the entire area of the apartment, are irretrievably a thing of the past. they are being replaced by light, simple and strict furniture, which gives maximum comfort and does not clutter up the rooms.»³⁰

However, the gap between what the official structures of the Soviet Union communicated and what was actually produced still continued to exist. One can cite as an example the history of the K58–103 furniture set, designed by Yuri Sluchevsky. It looked like a «designer» of modules of two types: low pedestals and a «second floor» of lesser depth, which, if desired, could be mounted on pedestals. This project was published in the May issue of «Decorative Art» of the USSR for 1958. A new modification was presented for the competition: instead of wooden legs, it was installed on aluminum, instead of veneer, the front surfaces were covered with white plastic. And most importantly: the system has become a team from a composite one. Neighboring sections had one common wall and were no longer, as before, separate objects. In this form, the furniture was recommended for industrial development. However, the factory abandoned aluminum, plastic, and prefabricated structures, again turning the sections into free-standing cabinets (moreover, unlike the original project, not two-story, but one-piece). The changes were so significant that Sluchevsky refused to consider this furniture as his own (Maistrovskaya, Sluchevsky, 2015). The TsMKB publicly expressed outrage at what the factory had turned its design into in The Decorative Art of

³⁰ Kantor V.I. Art and life. M.: Soviet artist, 1961. p. 7

the USSR (Travin, 1961) and New Goods, where Lev Kamensky presented a set of furniture, which received the new name Moscow at the factory, as a «group of products developed on the basis of the original project (Kamensky, 1961).³¹



PICTURE 32 Yuri Sluchevsky, Alexander Belorussky Set K58–103

New furniture involved working with new materials and advanced technologies. The Soviet industry was not ready for this, there was not even the necessary equipment, and its traditional production «on the shaft» put an end to the decisions of the party and government. «By the shaft» means without taking into account the number of manufactured items. The main thing is how much they were issued for. According to this parameter, factories were evaluated and answered to their superiors. Accordingly, it was more profitable to produce furniture not advanced, but expensive.

Therefore, the shortage of furniture was solved at the expense of imported goods. With the enormous scale of our housing construction, the domestic furniture industry could not satisfy the colossal demand for new furniture. Therefore, since the late 50s and especially in the 60s. On the basis of economic cooperation, we received large quantities of furniture from a number of countries, mainly from Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Romania, and Finland. Furniture sets and individual pieces of furniture from these countries were very popular among the population of the USSR, actively shaping the appearance of many dwellings.³²

³¹ Dezhurko A.K. All-Union competition for the best furniture samples in 1958: a turn from historical stylizations to modernism. *Communications. Media. Design*, Vol. 6, No. 1, 2021

³² *Soviet decorative art, 1945-1975: essays on history*, vol. 2, Moscow 1989, p. 28

1950s. European experience.

A completely different task faced the Italian furniture manufacturers. In 1958, the architect, designer and founder of the Domus magazine, Gio Ponti, wrote in the specialized furniture publication *Il Mobile italiano*: «Scandinavia has managed to become famous in design just like Switzerland in watchmaking, thanks to the fact that its manufacturers do not stand still and keep pace with time. As long as we reproduce the past or copy the present, Italy will not emerge from the crisis. To make a statement, our factories must turn to contemporary design and collaborate with architects. Together they can achieve something.»³³

Therefore, in 1961 it was decided to organize a furniture exhibition in Milan as a vehicle for promoting Italian exports of furnishing and accessories.³⁴ «In the Fifties», recalls Tito Armellini, «Italy continued to export little furniture and my father Manlio, from the Wood Industrial Association, with a group of entrepreneurs, tried to find solutions. In 1960 they tried to go to the Cologne fair but with little success. My father began to think that we should have had a fair too».³⁵ An exhibition committee was set up, headed by Tito Armellini (president of Federelegno-Arredo Trade Association), in addition, with Angelo De Baggisa (the vice-president of Federlegno) and others included the owners of progressive factories: Franco Cassina (Cassina), Angelo Molteni (Molteni), Silvano Montana (Montina), etc.



PICTURE 33 Press conference of the 1st Milan Furniture Fair

³³ I Saloni Milano. Exhibition history. <http://www.designstory.ru/theme/view/4764>

³⁴ <https://www.salonemilano.it/en/about-us>

³⁵ Magistà A. L'idea vincente: il giorno in cui nacque il made in Italy. <http://temi.repubblica.it/casa-salone-del-mobile-2011/2011/04/07/lidea-vincente-il-giorno-in-cui-nacque-il-made-in-italy/>

The main purpose of the exhibition has always been to promote Italian excellence in the design sector and Italian exports of the furniture and accessories industry. The first Salone went very well: 328 exhibitors, 12,000 visitors. The export of Italian furniture went from 5 billion 837 million lire in 1960 to 15 billion 906 million in 1964.³⁶

Another important task of the exhibition was to spur the collaboration of furniture factories and designers in the search for new forms of furniture. Thus, in 1965, two pavilions 30 and 29 were allocated for modern furniture, where such factories as Arflex, Bernini, Kartell, Boffi Acerbis and others moved.³⁷



PICTURE 34 The Furniture Fair of 1962

«The Salone was the amplifier of what we can call the design factories: a group of entrepreneurs, just as important as the designers, with such flexible production structures that they could afford to experiment and make mistakes on some products, as the large industry of serial production». Manufacturers with whom architects dialogued recognizing the value of their contribution. Up to developing the furniture together, finding the synthesis between functional, aesthetic, commercial and productive considerations.³⁸

³⁶ <http://temi.repubblica.it/casa-salone-del-mobile-2011/2011/04/07/lidea-vincente-il-giorno-in-cui-nacque-il-made-in-italy/>

³⁷ <https://www.officinedasa.it/salone-del-mobile/>

³⁸ <http://temi.repubblica.it/casa-salone-del-mobile-2011/2011/04/07/lidea-vincente-il-giorno-in-cui-nacque-il-made-in-italy/?h=1>

In addition, in the 60s of the 20th century, specialized magazines about the interior began to be published. By this time, DOMUS already existed, founded by Gio Ponti in 1928. It was through the magazine that the architect conveyed his view of architecture and Italian design: the Milanese architect wrote an impressive amount of texts on his works and those of others, introductions, aphorisms, comments and editorial notes, or simple and precise captions to the illustrations.³⁹



PICTURE 35 Domus magazine covers

In 1961, an authoritative magazine INTERNI was launched by Giovanni Gualtiero Görlich with the help of the architect Carlo De Carli (originally named «La rivista dell'arredamento») Since 1990 INTERNI curates the exhibition FUORISALONE during the furniture exhibition in Milan.

In addition, in 1961, the ABITARE magazine was founded by Piera Peroni. The goal: «to intercept and help educate an increasingly sensitive taste, a taste that with increased well-being evolved, perfected, refined, but above all spread beyond the more traditionally wealthy classes, while that 'economic miracle' was taking place which in a few years he would have brought Italy from the effort of reconstruction to a new, proper modernity... A way of educating, the one chosen by Abitare, which also wanted to transform dictionaries of good manners and furniture and decoration manuals into something more structured, more shared, with many articles written to explain how to

³⁹ Bucci F. Ponti scrittore . https://www.domusweb.it/it/Speciale_Gio_Ponti/PONTI_SCRITTORE.html

do what, how to improve that environment of the house, how to choose the furniture for the living room, how to arrange the vegetable garden... but also able to offer the right testimony of the most significant projects, the most courageous solutions, the most surprising situations seen and heard around the world, with an openness and a look that over the years will become increasingly recognizable, to the point of always and only being 'alla Abitare'.»⁴⁰

In addition, in other countries already existed: Echo du Meuble (Belgium), Meubles et decors (France), Möbel Kultur (Germany), Architectural digest (USA) and others.

At the same time, in Sweden in 1953, Ingvar Kamprad opened his first IKEA exhibition store in Älmhult, and in 1963 the first shop abroad - in Oslo, Norway. To gain a foothold in the market and increase the number of buyers, including from families with low incomes, Kamprad paid great attention to optimizing production and reducing product prices. To this end, in the early 1960s. IKEA moved part of its production to Poland. The company also worked to reduce transportation costs. The sale of furniture in a disassembled state was started, so that it would be more convenient and cheaper to transport it in a flat package. Another innovation of Kamprad was to provide customers with the opportunity to save on shipping and pick up the purchased goods from the store's warehouse on their own. The principle of prefabricated furniture, when the buyer himself could connect the elements with the help of instructions, became one of the know-how of the Swedish company and made it possible to reduce operating expenses.⁴¹

In 1960, the first restaurant opened in Älmhult in one of the brand's stores, operating as an additional way to attract customers. In addition, since the 60s, IKEA has changed its catalogs. It was during this period that they began to acquire a look familiar to modern man: in addition to furniture, furnished rooms with an abundance of decor were shown, which gave them a residential look. Moreover, the catalog also featured collaborations with architects: in this way, IKEA moved away from the faceless image of its catalogs and gave importance to its products.

⁴⁰ Finessi B. I 60 anni di Abitare. <https://www.abitare.it/it/news/2021/11/17/abitare-ha-compiuto-sessanta-anni/>

⁴¹ Mantle J. Companies That Changed the World. L.: Quercus Publishing. 2008



PICTURE 36 IKEA's catalog

Thus, against the backdrop of economic growth, Western countries, represented by furniture manufacturers, also aimed to educate the population in decorating the house. To do this, they offered furniture exhibitions, shops with an imitation of a living room, magazines with educational articles. The difference with the USSR was only in the fact that the buyer understood how to purchase the goods after the information received. IKEA catalogs directly invited their reader to either order furniture by mail or come to the store, see everything with their own eyes and feel, and finally, of course, buy products. Italian exhibitions did not show prototypes, but products which were already in production and on sale. Also magazines printed photographs of realized real apartments and new furniture that anyone could purchase.

THE DECADES OF 1970-1980S YEARS.

Time of «stagnation». USSR.

As a result of the housing reform of Nikita Khrushchev in the USSR during 1956-1964. the housing stock of the USSR increased by 80%, about 55 million people received new housing. In 8 years (1956-1964) more houses were built than in the previous 40 years. For a Soviet person, tired of the cramped barracks and dugouts, these meters became happiness and an opportunity to arrange personal life without prying eyes.⁴²

As time passed, the disadvantages of five-story buildings became more and more noticeable. Yesterday's joy of the inhabitants of Khrushchev gave way first to disappointment, and then to discontent. For decades, these houses have been rightly criticized for the lack of comfort, uniformity and facelessness, for the fact that with the beginning of their construction, architecture, as an art, practically ceased to exist. In addition, typical housing, not adapted for seismic zones, was built throughout the USSR without taking into account the climatic features of the regions, which was a gross violation.

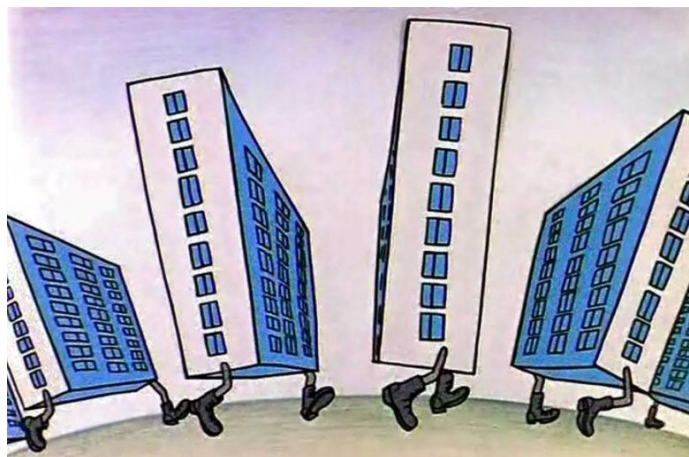
The small-sized Khrushchev five-story buildings were replaced by spacious Brezhnev nine-story buildings, which have a lot of advantages - without adjoining rooms, with a separate bathroom, an elevator and a garbage chute. Despite this, Khrushchev buildings continued to be built in the USSR until the beginning of perestroika, not as massively as before and far from everywhere.

The small-sized Khrushchev five-story buildings were replaced by other standard projects of residential buildings: several dozen projects of different heights were developed. Throughout the country, houses of the same design, layout and appearance were erected, Soviet residents moved into apartments and furnished them with standard furniture.

On this topic, the Soviet director Eldar Ryazanov shot the comedy «The Irony of Fate, or Enjoy Your Bath» in 1975 (the play on which the film was made was written in 1968). The film played up a situation in which two strangers living in different cities

⁴² Gorlov V.N. Stalinist architecture as a social phenomenon // Bulletin of the archivist. - 2005. № 5–6. pp. 122–135.

had exactly the same apartment; absolutely everything matches - from the street name and house number to the keys to the front door and furniture.



PICTURE 37 Shot from the film «The Irony of Fate, or Enjoy Your Bath»

The film has a lot of everyday details, one of which is a Polish sideboard set that cost 830 rubles and «20 rubles from above» was for Nadia (the main character). Muscovite Lukashin (the main character) gave 25. All these figures were quite interesting and spoke about the life of a Soviet person more than dry, straightforward statistics. And here - just two points - positive and negative.

By itself, the amount of 830 was huge and unbearable - for instance, the average worker had 120-180 rubles a month. Approximately the same amount was received by Dr. Lukashin and the teacher Nadya, each in their own state institution. It was possible to live quite decently on 120-180 rubles, especially if to take into account the low utility bills, five cents on the metro and cheap food, except for raw smoked sausage and similar pickles. Thus, Zhenya and Nadia could not immediately buy a headset.

There were two ways:

Officially, at the point of sale, sign up for the goods and wait for the postcard to arrive, which would indicate that the order had arrived and can be redeemed. Cunning people even made money by selling these postcards - they signed up for furniture (or for a car), and when their turn came up, they sold their «place» for a good sum.

Get a friend-seller, or better a merchandiser or immediately - the director of the «Furniture» store and purchase cabinets «by pull», but even here they would have to give gifts (preferably with money) or provide reciprocal services. It was impossible to

understand which of these methods Nadya and Zhenya used, but judging by the fact that «20 (25) rubles - from above» means that they thanked someone - maybe the person who sold them the «line», or maybe - familiar seller.

Another film «A Noisy Day» also describes the process of buying furniture, this time a Czech sideboard. «I'll go to the center on Dmitrovka. They said that today there will be Czech sideboards, I'll take a turn. Such sideboards happen once a year!» - one of the characters said. And then, after the purchase, she rejoiced at her luck: «You are my handsome! You are my beauty! Oh, what did I get out of him! The audience is just awful!.. They tear, push, shout! So I took him from the battle so from the battle! Can you imagine: sideboards are running out, and some in a hat - such a nasty mug! - bam, and gets in front of me! Eh?.. Well, I already showed her! I put her in her place!»

These episodes from the films are quite revealing. The shortage of goods that existed in the post-war period did not disappear against the backdrop of a growing economy. Moreover, Khrushchev's housing program and the industrial boom associated with it further increased it. Furniture production did not satisfy the increased demand of people who finally, for the first time in their lives, received separate apartments and wanted to buy furniture in it.

In this situation, the countries of the Warsaw Pact came to the rescue. In the second half of the 1940s. The USSR concluded a number of trade and economic agreements with the states of Central and Eastern Europe, but the difficult post-war situation in the economies of these countries predetermined the exchange between them mainly of raw materials. By the beginning of the 1950s. they generally completed the recovery period, and in the USSR, after the death of I. V. Stalin in 1953, there was a «rehabilitation» of material values, which led to wide deliveries within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) created in 1949 of consumer products.⁴³

The possibility of buying foreign things (albeit often «with a fight», but completely legally, in a state store) contributed to the formation of new cultural standards in Soviet society, which was very far from the ideas of revolutionary asceticism and take into account factors such as prestige, fashion, attractive appearance.

⁴³ Brabant J. 1) Socialist Economics: The Disequilibrium School and the Shortage Economy // Journal of Economic Perspectives. 1990. Spring 4 (2)

As a result, «some kind of comfort» began to replace the «cave life» of the townspeople.⁴⁴

For furniture, they went to specialized stores of furniture trades (Moscow, Leningrad, Minsk, etc.) or industrial trades. Furniture departments were also in department stores, large department stores and regional department stores. There people could come to look at the exhibited furniture, dream, imagine how it would look in their houses... But to buy - for this they had to sign up for a queue and then come once a week to «check in on the list». So it was possible to celebrate a year (or even two), and after a certain time, according to these lists, sign up to buy things in the store itself, and then wait a long time for the day when this thing will be delivered.⁴⁵ Moreover, in the magazine «Our House» for 1992, when censorship was already absent after the collapse of the USSR, the author of an article about the history of cabinets directly wrote that «it became even more difficult to purchase them: a preliminary record and the prospect of waiting sometimes almost half a century.»⁴⁶

In order to avoid long line a person could get a friend-seller, or better a merchandiser or immediately - the director of the «Furniture» store and purchase cabinets «by pull», but even here you would have to give gifts (preferably with money) or provide reciprocal services.

Not surprisingly, against this backdrop, an underground shadow market had developed. So in the 1980s there was a high-profile investigation «Russian Forest», which investigated the activities of furniture speculators. Managers, bribe-takers, thieving directors and merchandisers were arrested. The TV Center TV channel made a documentary film «King Philip. Soviet mafias» about this story.

⁴⁴ Herman M. Yu. Complicated past. pp. 384, 393

⁴⁵ How furniture was bought in the Soviet Union. 07.05.2021. <http://xn--90aagfb0bbcy11.xn--p1ai/kak-pokupali-mebel-v-sovetskom-sojuze>

⁴⁶ Lensu Ya. «Dear, respected closet!». Our house, 1992 - No. 1, p. 4



PICTURE 38 Shot from the film « King Philip. Soviet mafias»

At the same time, changes were still visible in the communication between official structures and the population. For instance, in the magazine «Architecture of the USSR» for 1968, decorator Olga Bayar talked about how the Swedish interior was arranged. The article was written based on the results of a trip to Sweden and communication with local architects. Their experience, attention to detail, use of natural materials were appreciated.. The famous EGG and Swan armchairs by Danish designer Arne Jacobsen (designed by the SAS Royal Hotel in Copenhagen in 1958) were used as illustrations. However the name of the famous designer and the year of creation of the models were not even indicated in the article. It was written only «upholstered metal stamped chairs» at the picture.⁴⁷



PICTURE 39 Illustration for the article «New in the interior architecture of a Swedish residential building»

The magazine for professionals «Woodworking Industry» described the experience of designers from the GDR, Finland and other countries in the process of

⁴⁷ Bayar O. Architecture of the USSR. 1968 No. 3, p. 18-20

creating furniture models. The importance of the artist at every stage of production was emphasized: from the creation of sketches to the launch of mass production.⁴⁸ However, as experience shows, the authority of the artist was little taken into account in practice. It is no coincidence that the article was written by Sluchevsky Yu.V., a participant in exhibitions in 1958 and 1961 and the author of many furniture models approved, but never put into production.

Among other things, furniture exhibitions were also held. So at the 1979 exhibition, furniture was shown not only from the Warsaw Pact countries, but also from Italy, France, Austria and others, as evidenced by the «New Goods» advertising magazine for the same year. In the article about the exhibition, the author talked about the trends in the furniture fashion of that period. There was no information about whether the furniture would go on sale.



PICTURE 40 the «New goods» 1979. N4

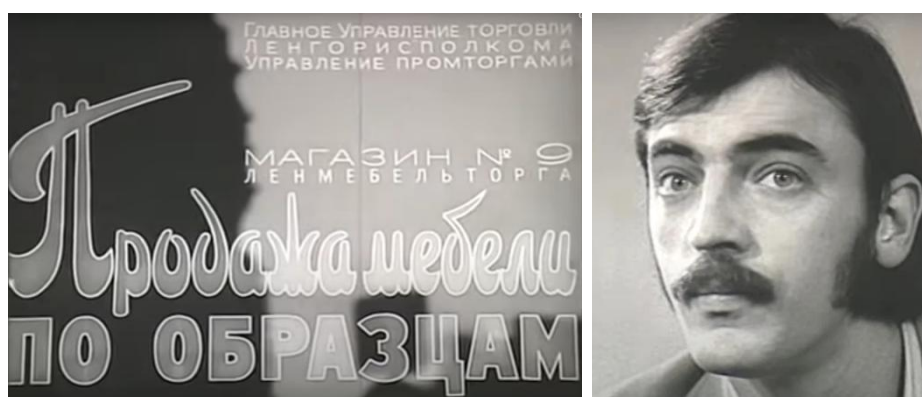
In general, the novelties of the furniture industry were regularly published in the «New Goods» magazine. Albeit it was categorically impossible to find out where to buy such a product, and often even the price of the product was not indicated. Therefore, this magazine could be called advertising with a big stretch.

Nonetheless, since the 1960s, specialized organizations have arisen: Vneshtorgreklama (1964), Soyuztorgreklama (1965), Glavkooptorgreklama (at Tsentrosoyuz), advertising organizations of Aeroflot, the Ministry of Culture, etc. To coordinate advertising activities nationwide, an Interdepartmental Council for

⁴⁸ SLUCHEVSKY Y. About the role of the artist in furniture design. Woodworking industry. 1971 No. 8. Page 1-4

Advertising was established under the USSR Ministry of Trade . In addition to New Goods, the publication of the Reklama magazine began in 1971 (at first it appeared as a printed organ of the Interdepartmental Council). Later, the magazines Kommerchesky Vestnik, Panorama, and others began to appear. In the 1970s and early 1980s, more than 70 specialized advertising publications were published in the USSR. Basically, these are supplements to regional and evening city newspapers.⁴⁹

An example of a commercial for store No. 9 of the Lenmebel'torg enterprise can be cited as a television advertisement. It was filmed in 1979. The plot was so simple that they even managed without a director, and the shooting itself lasted no more than half an hour. On the film, we see a young man and a girl: a young couple has just received the coveted housing and mentally fills it with furniture and other interior items. Attributes that provide comfort gradually appeared in the room: a massive wall, a sofa, a table with chairs, armchairs, a coffee table. And the voice-over explains where they could buy furnishings to suit your tastes. Nevertheless, the advertisement was not allowed to air: they did not like the actor's too long hair (which was considered a sign of the Western hippie movement).⁵⁰ Even in such a regional video, political censorship was powerful: only a person corresponding to the image of a Soviet citizen could purchase an apartment and furniture for it. Just like the characters from «the Rabotnitsa» magazine, described in the first chapter, fully corresponded to the image of a Soviet citizen of the post-war period.



PICTURE 41 Shot from the advertisement «Lenmebel'torg - Sale of furniture by samples»

⁴⁹ Uchenova V. V. «History of domestic advertising 1917-1990» M., 2007

⁵⁰ Mazur Yu. Mikhail Boyarsky advertised Soviet furniture, and Maxim Averin advertised cookies. January 26, 2016. <https://www.kp.ru/daily/26485/3354768/>

The decades of 1970-1980s years. Europe.

In the same period, a program called the «Carousel» was launched in Italy. This was an attempt by Italian television to sell advertising slots, while remaining within the limits of the advertising law: it was not allowed to advertise within any evening television show and not even before an interval of ninety seconds from the start of the same. The number of seconds dedicated to advertising, the number of mentions of the product name, the number of seconds to be dedicated to the «show» were predetermined, the plot of which had to be inherently unrelated to the product. The program ran from 1957 to 1977.⁵¹

Since the first episode of the «Carousel» aired, nothing was as before and the habits of Italians were changed forever. Italy was about to face the economic boom and with the «Carousel» Italy experienced consumerism: the ability to buy products that were not of strict and primary necessity, based on what was advertised and exalted every evening in terms of quality.⁵²

Furniture advertisements in short videos the «Carousel» were entertaining with comedy elements. Of course, with all the limitations, the video could not fully tell about the merits of the product. However, they conveyed the idea that the creators of the video wanted to convey to the viewer. One of the ads (SCIC kitchens) calls its kitchen «a woman's Friend», in the other (kitchens Salvarani) they showed an image of a perfect family with the slogan - «The new dimensions for living together.» Both kitchens are shown very spacious, with a huge number of accessories, with a variety of sections: behind all this, the original utilitarian purpose of kitchen furniture is almost lost.



PICTURE 42 Shot from « the Carousel» (kitchen brands SCIC and SALVARINI)

⁵¹ Wikipedia. Last modified January 14, 2016. <https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carosello>

⁵² La storia. <https://carosello.tv/storia/>

The economic boom and the era of consumerism that followed exposed the problem of interaction between design and buyers. The furniture exhibition Salone del Mobile in Milan already in 1968 (that is, only seven years after its birth) caught up with the oldest furniture exhibition in Cologne in terms of volume. In 1969, the Sasmil fair (parts for furniture production) was added to the exhibition. 1974 - Eurocucina, the first exhibition in the world dedicated exclusively to kitchens. In 1976 - Euroluce (light). In 1982 - Eimu (office furniture). In 1987 - Salone del Comlemento d'Arredo (accessories).⁵³ Yet well-behaved commercial event, at the beginning of the 70s the Salone joined the wave of Italian and European radical movements as they were reaching a larger audience.⁵⁴

Excessive consumerism, a painfully competitive market environment and established canons in design have been criticized by young designers. The «Anti-Design» movements led by Alessandro Mendini and the radical design - Ettore Sottsass designed new interior items, referring to the ironic classic models, using daring colors and extravagant forms; sometimes they created objects that were almost impossible to use in real life.



PICTURE 43 Mikiolone Bar Cabinet by Alessandro Mendini

Italian designers were able to demonstrate their view of the external world at the exhibition «Italy: The New Domestic Landscape», held in 1972 in the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), New York. This exhibition finally secured Italy's leading position in the field of product design.

⁵³ <http://www.designstory.ru/theme/view/4764>

⁵⁴ Comoglio G. Milano Design Week. From Salone to Supersalone, in 60 years of Domus. February 28, 2022 <https://www.domusweb.it/en/architecture/gallery/2021/09/04/from-salone-to-supersalone-in-60-years-of-domus.html>

The press release of the exhibition stated to «illustrate the counter-design approach of designers who believe that no objects can be added to our cluttered, consumer-dominated culture, and that social and political changes are needed before we can change the physical aspects of our society... environments were created by designers who believed that the quality of life can be improved by improving our physical environment. The pro-design environment emphasized new forms emerging from changing lifestyles: more informal social and family relationships and changing perceptions of privacy and territoriality, as well as the exploration of new materials and manufacturing techniques.»⁵⁵

In subsequent years, Italian new design reached its peak with the emergence of the Memphis movement, founded by the same Ettore Sottsass. The master of Italian design brought together an international team of young designers, and from 1981 to 1988 they exhibited their work in a salon provided by Artemide.

The Memphis style has become a real anarchy in design. It is difficult to single out «shaping features» in it, since it is focused solely on the expression of the designer's originality. But what is common and unifying is the sharpness of the gesture, the bold play with materials, textures and forms, the virtuoso mixture of styles. For all that, Memphis' style was attractive, witty and funny. He seemed to be shouting, «Don't take design too seriously!» Everything was garishly motley, feigned and playful.⁵⁶

Playfully, Sottsass and his associates were solving serious problems: they refused to create things for the assembly line and think only about profits and high sales. Modern design, they said, should be of high quality and multifunctional. They sought not just to supply the market, but with a focus on certain social groups. As a result, this led both in an aesthetic and conceptual sense to a new understanding of design.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ The Museum of Modern Art NQ ^ 26 FOR RELEASE: may 26, 1972

⁵⁶ Postmodernism. Memphis Group. <http://www.designstory.ru/style/memphis>

⁵⁷ Postmodernism. Memphis Group. <http://www.designstory.ru/style/memphis>



PICTURE 44 The Super lamp designed by Martine Bedin

However, very quickly, the products of the Memphis group became cult and collectibles, which went against their ideology. Now their items are sold at auctions and in galleries of contemporary art.⁵⁸ Few pieces in those years actually reached Italian homes and it was perhaps this disappointment that prompted Sottsass to abandon the project in 1985.⁵⁹

In addition to the fact that the products of the experimental Italian designers of that era rarely found their way into the homes of ordinary Italians, they would hardly have taken place at all if it were not for the support of commercial factories such as Poltronova, Zanotta, Kartell, Gufam, B&B Italia and others.

In addition, despite the advances in design, Italy remains a fairly conservative society, which can be seen even from advertising for kitchen furniture. Arclinea for instance puts up a slogan «And as always, they will all end up in the kitchen» in its advertising campaign.

⁵⁸ Pinskaya A. Unforgettable 80s and the Memphis group. They met in December...

<https://www.interior.ru/design/2484-nezabyvaemye-80-e-i-gruppa-memphis-oni-sobralis-v-dekabre.html>

⁵⁹ Trombetta L. 40 anni di Memphis in mostra al Vitra Design Museum. Febbraio 04, 2021.

<https://living.corriere.it/design/eventi/40-anni-di-memphis-in-mostra-al-vitra-design-museum/>



PICTURE 45 1980s: Arclinea advertising

The photo again (as in the old videos of the Carousel) showed a picture of the family: only this time they elegantly dressed were having guests on their beautiful kitchen.

Moreover, the Scavolini factory in its advertising campaigns had the slogan «the kitchen most loved by Italians» and invited a famous female singer Raffaella Carrà and TV female presenter Lorella Cuccarini to participate in their advertisement. Thus Scavolini used female images to promote its products.



PICTURE 46 Scavolini advertisement 1986/1987

Just like in Italy, in Northern Europe, designers were looking for new ideas and forms. Danish designer Verner Panton can be cited as an example. Unlike most Scandinavian designers, Verner Panton was interested in plastic and its possibilities in the manufacture of interior items. In 1967 Vitra introduced the Panton Chair, the first chair to be bent like an overhanging beam from a single sheet of plastic. Sleek, elegant,

sexy item has become a symbol of the era. The advertisement for the chair was accompanied by provocative photographs in NOVA magazine.⁶⁰



PICTURE 47 „How to undress in front of your husband» – fotoshoot by von Brian Duffy with Amanda Lear, 1970.

Another product design icon was created by Finnish designer Eero Aarnio - the Ball Chair, a hollow sphere on a stand that is open on one side for a person to sit inside. The model was made by the ASKO factory and presented at a furniture exhibition in Cologne in 1966. Thanks to its shape and bright colors, the Ball chair quickly becomes an easily recognizable thing, as well as the hero of films, music videos and magazine covers.⁶¹



PICTURE 48 Advertisement with the Ball chair by Eero Aarnio

⁶⁰ Furniture. <https://www.verner-panton.com/en/collection/panton-chair/>

⁶¹ The Story of the Ball Chair. <https://www.aarniooriginals.com/pages/ball-chair>

Also, Ingvar Kamprad from IKEA followed the trends in the design of interior items. This can be easily seen in the way items in branded catalogs have changed: items made of plastic, polyether and other materials have appeared, bright colors have become more used, shapes have become more experimental. Created by guest designers and in-house studio, the models are now as much collectibles as iconic items of the Memphis Group for instance.



PICTURE 49 Catalogue IKEA 1973

However, for the most part, the furniture presented in the catalogs remains traditional and familiar. Moreover, some new models have been modified if, for example, they could not be packaged in the traditional IKEA flat pack. This happened with the AMIRAL chair designed by Karin Moberg.⁶²

It is also necessary to mention that in 1979 the first store JYSK opened in Denmark, which now has 2903 stores in 52 countries around the world.⁶³ From the very first TV commercials, the store promises Danish quality at an affordable price: the products were presented by the founder Lars Larsen himself, and the price was shown at a «psychological» point in 999.

⁶² Product stories. 1970s. <https://ikeamuseum.com/en/digital/the-story-of-ikea/1970-product-stories/>

⁶³ Wikipedia. Last modified January 12, 2023. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jysk>



PICTURE 50 Jisk's television spot

In this case, it was not about any fashionable design or the latest technology. The emphasis of the company's marketing program was made precisely on a low price. Therefore, unlike JISK, IKEA had the advantage that consumers had access to the actual design at a relatively affordable price (although IKEA has been accused of plagiarism more than once).

As we can see already in the 1970s-1980s, the conflict between the advertised product and the real state of affairs became more obvious.

In the Soviet Union magazine advertisements and ongoing furniture shows promised items that would decorate the apartments. However, in reality, people faced severe shortages: people finally began to live in a separate apartment, and as soon as there was a relative opportunity to purchase interior items, they were ready to stand in line for years, either pay bribes, or buy them on the black market. Even films, which had a long production process and went through several rounds of censorship, spoke openly about the problems of acquisition apartment furnishings. In addition, due to the closed nature of the country, any item of foreign production was acquired with special desire and enthusiasm. In the realities of Soviet life, it was not about how beautiful an object was or how relevant its design was, people were content with what they could get.

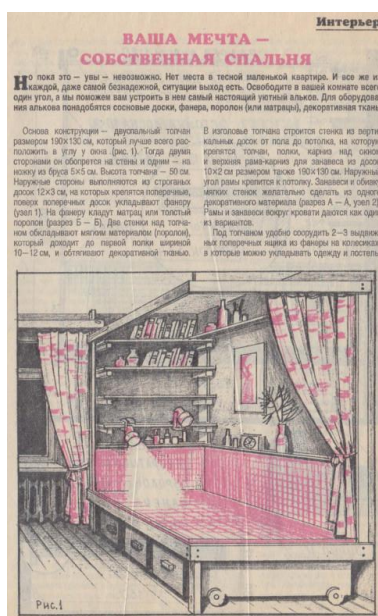
On the other hand, in Europe, the era of consumption was in full swing and the current design became a protest against consumption and elitist «sterile» design. However, the works of designers of that era became cult items, that were inaccessible to the ordinary buyer. On the one hand, they were extremely incomprehensible and complex, and, on the other hand, they were made in small batches at a fairly high price.

Most of the consumers, judging by the same IKEA catalogs and television advertising, still purchased things of a very traditional design. Meanwhile the products of modern avangard design could only be seen in films or fashion magazines. Thus, the design of interior items and real residential apartments had few points of intersection.

RUSSIA. POST-SOVIET PERIOD

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the transition to a market economy, the situation changed dramatically. The letter to readers written by the editor of «the Rabotnitsa» magazine is indicative, articles from «the Rabotnitsa» were mentioned in previous chapters. The letter literally sounded like a cry for help: the magazine was on the verge of extinction. In modern times, in order to cope with the budget, they had to ask for additional sponsorship money from their subscribers to purchase paper, pay for printing, transportation and other expenses. The editorial board of the magazine asked not only for money, but also for organizational assistance from women's organizations at the post office, paper mills and other enterprises.⁶⁴

In the same issue of the magazine, an article of the type «do by yourself» offered to construct a bed with detailed instructions, descriptions of materials and tools. At the very beginning of the article, it was noted that the existing apartments were cramped, and a separate room for the bedroom was a dream. In addition, they began to publish advertisements that did not exist in Soviet times.



PICTURE 50 The article from the issue of «the Rabotnitsa», 1992. №3-4.

The factories of the country found themselves in a similar situation. In 1992, the Moskva furniture factory went through a privatization stage and became a closed

⁶⁴ Krylova Z. Word to the reader. «The Rabotnitsa». 1992 No. 3-4, p. 2

joint stock company. In the same year, the factory opened its brand store with an exhibition center.⁶⁵

In the same year, «Grafsky Furniture Plant» became a joint-stock company «Grafskoye» (Voronezh region).⁶⁶

In 1993, in St. Petersburg the factory «Drevtekhdetal» also became a joint-stock company and change its name to «The First Furniture Factory».⁶⁷ Another factory of Saint Petersburg – «SevZapMebel» - became a joint-stock company one year before.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the change of the political and economic regime, many factories had to independently determine their status and development paths.

Enterprises entered the market: they changed the procedure for paying for raw materials, materials, components. In addition, the factory has already solved and thought out the problem of selling the goods on its own. That is why «Moscow» opened its own showroom, the same is done in the regions, for instance, «EMFA» (former Engels Furniture Factory) also opens its own store in the city of Engels (in 1996).⁶⁸

Moreover, in order to survive on the changed Russian market, furniture factories had to think about changes in production itself. The «First Furniture Factory» upgraded the equipment, and the furniture makers of the «EMFA» factory studied from the Italian and German manufacturers, introduced modern technologies.⁶⁹ The range of manufactured goods was also revised: for instance, the «VKMD» factory stopped manufacturing upholstered furniture and switched first partially, and then completely, to the production of cabinet furniture: kitchens, wardrobes, entrance furniture and do forth.⁷⁰ In the latter case, the factory opted for a simpler production. Since more components are needed in the manufacture of upholstered furniture: base, frame, filling, upholstery, in frame furniture made especially from chipboard, there are much fewer elements, production times are shorter, models can be of a simple rectangular shape,

⁶⁵ The history of the furniture-Moscow factory. <https://mebel-moskva.ru/about/history/>

⁶⁶ About the manufacturer. The count's furniture plant is a symbol of stability, prosperity and growth. <https://graftula.ru/about/makers/>

⁶⁷ Prudnikov O., Rechitsky A. First furniture factory. Responsibility and honor. Lesprominform №8 (98), 2013. <https://lesprominform.ru/jarticles.html?id=3370>

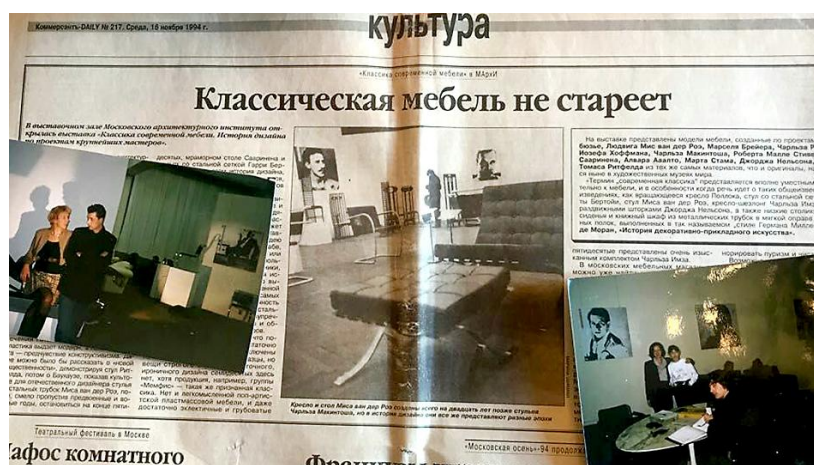
⁶⁸ About Emfa. <https://www.emfa.ru/aboutus>

⁶⁹ Engels furniture factory - from dawn to sunset. November 24, 2022. <http://volgafoto.ru/photo/24-november-2022-111023-engelsskaya-mebelnaya-fabr>

⁷⁰ History. <https://mche.ru/o-kompanii/istoriya/>

which is easier to store and transport. Thus, the factories themselves have already begun to decide what to produce, based on the market and their capabilities.

The Russian market has really changed. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there were no more restrictions on the sale of foreign furniture. According to Anton Dolotin, he traveled around several manufacturers of furniture factories before finding someone who would agree to open a salon in Russia. So in 1994 he opened «the Scic» salon of the furniture factory of the same name. The salon still exists today.⁷¹ Twenty years later, in 2014, Anton Dolotin founded his own furniture brand «Dantone Home», for which furniture is made exclusively by Russian manufacturers and which has 7 showrooms in the largest cities of the country.⁷²



PICTURE 51 Photo: from the archive of Elena Arkhipova

Also in 1994, Elena Arkhipova founded a representative office of Italian factories in Russia. First of all, she organized an exhibition at the Moscow Architectural Institute. Moscow architects saw works by Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, Nelson, Saarinen, Hoffmann, Marcel Breuer at the exposition entitled «Modern Furniture Classics», presented together with Alivar and Tre Di. The exhibition caused a resonance, even Kommersant wrote about it. In the future, Arkhipova brought design masterpieces to Russia, organized lectures and master classes by famous designers over and over again, wrote articles in various magazines, promoting things, people and ideas again and again: Cassina, Poltrona Frau, Kartell, Fiam, Agape, Missoni Home – now in

⁷¹ Medvetskaya A. «The butt itself chooses where it is more convenient to sit» - the pioneer of the Russian furniture industry Anton Dolotina October 13, 2022. <https://moskvichmag.ru/lyudi/popa-sama-vybiraet-gde-udobnee-sidet-pioner-russkoj-mebelnoj-industrii-anton-dolotin/>

⁷² Nekrasova S. 18 Russian furniture brands that will pleasantly surprise you. September 11, 2022. <https://www.sobaka.ru/lifestyle/design/151485>

the portfolio of the agency Archistudio founded by her (a total twenty-five leading design brands).⁷³

The agencies «Okaniya», WWTS, Elite Interiors, ATMA and others also open their offices. Some work as representative offices of Italian factories in Russia, promoting them through furniture stores, while others open their own, such as the Natuzzi mono-brand salon in St. Petersburg. Usually, the tasks of the agencies included: representing the interests of European manufacturers of the interior industry in Russia, information support on the assortment and technical capabilities of factories, technical assistance, conducting training seminars on the product for employees of salons, architectural and design bureaus, organizing working events at factories - familiarization with production, training, advertising campaign of factories in interior publications.

In addition to representative offices, shops focused on the sale of foreign furniture are also opening. Almost all of them have non-Russian names: «ROSSI», «Fabian Smith», «UNION», «BRAVO» and so forth. The expositions of these stores are designed as showrooms, which allow the buyer to easily understand how the furniture would look in the finished interior.

Foreign names of furniture stores are not accidental. As mentioned in a previous article – «any item of foreign production was acquired with special desire and enthusiasm». Moreover, the rejection of everything Soviet was so sharp that such a thing as «European-style renovation» appeared, as a sign of a different - beautiful and comfortable - life. In Russian cities, firms began to open with the names Eurowindows, Eurokitchen, Eurofurniture, Europaints, and the like.

«Euro-renovation» was a philistine concept, which meant the repair of an apartment with the help of imported materials and with a relatively high quality of work. It was not a standard redesign of the space, so only relatively wealthy people, for example, the so-called «new Russians», could afford it.

Moreover, in modern times, a person who had money could easily buy apartments in a house he liked, or buy several and combine them into big one. People began to invite graduates of architectural universities to decorate their newly acquired

⁷³ Mikulina E. Archivazhno: designer and educator Elena Arkhipova. October 31, 2019
<https://designchat.com/profi/arhivazhno-dizajner-i-prosvetitel-elena-arhipova.html>

apartments. After a long era of «sameness» and with the advent of a large selection of materials, furniture, accessories, a person could allow any idea to be realized: if only there was money. The apartment was proposed to be considered as a visiting card of the owner, a marker of his success.⁷⁴

An example of such cooperation between an architect and a customer can be an apartment project described in the interior magazine «Salon» for 1994. The article said that the architect Sergey Gevorkyan was invited by a wealthy client to reconstruct an apartment in a typical panel house. «The architect started working on this project, proceeding from the fact that the client wanted to get something non-standard and special as a result of the reconstruction and was ready to spend significant funds on this, but did not come to a definite, clearly formulated decision on the style of the interior being created. Indeed, the customer said that he wanted to have a «classic» interior, albeit in a panel house, without putting into this expression the meaning corresponding to the architectural term, but understanding it as simply a synonym for the word «solid». The architect 'only' had to try to guess the unspoken desire of his client and materialize it.»⁷⁵

It is curious that Sergei Gevorkyan had to start from the Italian dining group, chosen by the owner of the apartment. The architect himself, in turn, advised to turn to antique salons. That is, the concept of «solidity» for him and his client were different: the client chose imported goods, the architect - historical furniture. Another difficult moment is the discrepancy between the desire for «majesty», expressed by the client, and the architecture of the building itself: the apartment, although large, was located in a typical building with a standard ceiling height of 2.7 m. Therefore, the architect had to look for artistic solutions to give the space a harmonious look. As a result, none of the project participants were generally satisfied with the result, which the architect himself directly says: «The style of what happened in the end is impossible to determine. It was created under the customer's idea of a solid apartment, of a» solid «style. the author's style was initially absent, there was only a desire to guess what the client wanted, some

⁷⁴ Boyarova M. Interiors of Post-Soviet Moscow: The Second Half of the 1990s. January 15, 2017 <https://www.houzz.ru/statyi/interyery-postsovetskoy-moskvy-vtoraya-polovina-1990-h-godov-stsetivw-vs~77114885>

⁷⁵ Respectable interior in a panel house. May 1, 2001. <https://salon.ru/article/respectable-interer-v-panelnom-dome-1744>

turned out to be a direct hit, something not. The client's attitude towards this apartment is rather cold - he obviously expected more. wants.»⁷⁶



PICTURE 52 Illustration for the article. Sergey Gevorkyan's project

Another article of the same «Salon» magazine for 1995 also tells about the complex process of the relationship between the customer and the invited architect: «This tension, the spark between the two poles, is not born here by chance - it is provoked by the creative process itself. I like a difficult but fascinating dialogue with a customer who doubts, objects, expresses difficult wishes. It is boring to work with someone who already knows perfectly well what he needs. It is much more interesting to defend your vision of the interior, to convince your opponent. Curtains, accessories, painting - all this was suggested by the designers, who now constantly advise the owners and generally help them navigate the world of things.»⁷⁷ However, in this more modern apartment, it can be seen Michel Ducaroy's Togo sofa by Ligne Roset, a real design icon dating back to 1973.

⁷⁶ Respectable interior in a panel house. May 1, 2001. <https://salon.ru/article/respectable-interer-v-panelnom-dome-1744>

⁷⁷ In a room with a white ceiling. May 1, 2001. <https://salon.ru/article/v-komnate-s-belym-potolkom-1493>



PICTURE 53 Illustration for the article. Tatiana Boronina's project

Similar reviews of apartment projects began to appear in specialized magazines. One of the first was the magazine «Salon»: in 1994 a pilot issue was published, and since 1995 - already with a constant circulation. Then magazines appeared: «Ideas of your home» (1997), «Interior + Design» (1996), «Beautiful apartments», «Home and Interior» (1997) and others.

These magazines published not only reviews of apartment interiors implemented by architects and interior designers, but also reviews of exhibitions: ISaloni in Milan, Maison&Objet in Paris, IMM in Cologne, Cersaie in Bologna; interviewed famous foreign and domestic designers and architects; talked about novelties in the field of interior design and gave practical advice on decorating the space. For instance, the magazine «Ideas of Your House» examined the standard layouts of typical Soviet houses, offered a wide variety of options for reorganizing these layouts according to an individual project. In the very first issue in 1997, the reader was offered 11 options for redevelopment of a three-room apartment in a typical panel house. All layouts are analyzed in great detail, drawings and sketches by hand are given, and in some cases the cost of the work.⁷⁸

In the early 2000s, furniture shopping centers began to be built: «Grand» and «Three Whales» in Moscow, «Furniture City» in St. Petersburg. At the same time, in Moscow they were built on the initiative of a private businessman Sergei Zuev to sell their own furniture brought from Europe, and in St. Petersburg, the First Furniture

⁷⁸ KOPE-85: several design projects. December 1, 2001. <https://www.ivd.ru/dizajn-i-dekor/kvartira/kope-85-neskolko-dizajn-proektov-4395>

Factory, united with other furniture factories, implemented the Furniture City project. Other shopping malls were already private, such as Akvilon or Mebelny Continent.



PICTURE 54 «Furniture City» in St. Petersburg

Shopping centers were large buildings with several floors, where furniture manufacturers and suppliers rented sections. A shopping center magazine was published with advertisements for tenants, and shopping centers themselves were advertised in street advertising, television and radio, and others.

Gradually, many furniture manufacturers and suppliers preferred to rent a retail space in a shopping center, rather than having a separate showroom store. The reason is that the shopping center was a point of attraction for buyers, which means it provided greater traffic. In addition, the shopping center provided its tenants with advertising and technical support.⁷⁹

Finally, in 2000, IKEA opened its first store in Moscow. Although since the 1970s, IKEA placed orders with some Soviet factories, and also imported equipment and spare parts, becoming, in a sense, a co-owner of several woodworking enterprises. So, for example, the Standard factory in Tallinn then produced Ivar racks, Peer and Hyomgo chairs. The thaw in relations between the USSR and the West opened up additional opportunities for cooperation. In 1988, Kamprad came to the USSR and agreed with the Soviet authorities to open the network's hypermarkets in all million-plus cities.

⁷⁹ The hushed northern city is dozing. March 29, 2006.
https://www.promebel.com/tradearea/regionalnaya_roznica/a2002.html

But due to the collapse of the USSR, the difficult economic situation and high duties in Russia in the 1990s, IKEA postponed its entry into the Russian market, limiting itself to purchasing local finished products.

However, Kamprad did not abandon his intentions to work in Russia, and by 1997 contacts resumed again. Here is how Lennart Dahlgren, the first CEO of Ikea in Russia, recalls this time: «In Moscow, I immediately realized that IKEA in Russia was going to succeed. Moscow is life. Moscow is the pulse. Moscow literally breathed energy and thirst for change, and I was inspired this energy.»⁸⁰

Having waited out the default of 1998, on March 22, 2000, the first IKEA opened in Khimki near Moscow. Less than a year later, the Swedes opened a second store near the Tyoply Stan metro station.

«Thirty-seven thousand, five hundred and nine people visited the new store on opening day. Kilometers of traffic jams stretched along the road, people abandoned their cars where they could, and sales broke all records.»⁸¹

Russians received the first IKEA catalog in mailboxes a month before the opening of the store in Khimki. Ikea has created a completely new format, not known to Russians before: already in the store you feel at home, walk around the demonstration apartments, touch everything, feel complete freedom without intrusive salesmen. In addition, IKEA also built a shopping center, which housed clothing and food stores, restaurants, and entertainment centers. The strategy was following: a huge shopping and entertainment center, which is not easy and long to get to, «captured» a person for the whole day, leaving no chance to leave without shopping.

⁸⁰ The history of Ikea in Russia is from Soviet times to the opening of the first store in the 2000s. March 3, 2022. <https://www.pravilamag.ru/articles/325693-istoriya-ikea-v-rossii-s-sovetskih-vremen-do-otkrytiya-pervogo-magazina-v-nulevyh-fotografii/>

⁸¹ The history of Ikea in Russia is from Soviet times to the opening of the first store in the 2000s. March 3, 2022. <https://www.pravilamag.ru/articles/325693-istoriya-ikea-v-rossii-s-sovetskih-vremen-do-otkrytiya-pervogo-magazina-v-nulevyh-fotografii/>



PICTURE 55 First IKEA’s catalog in Russia

In July 2002, the company opened its first factory in Tikhvin (Leningrad region), and in December 2003 - the first IKEA store outside the Moscow region - in St. Petersburg. In total, 14 stores were opened across the country.⁸²

Thus, in a short period of 10 years, Russia has come a long way. Furniture manufacturers have learned to independently find a buyer and sell their goods, independently created the conditions for sale. Suppliers of imported furniture opened their own salons, introduced Russians to foreign brands. Several interior magazines appeared with completed projects, training materials and advertising. Architects and design bureaus also became intermediaries between the buyer and the furniture supplier.

The Russian buyer no longer felt a shortage. He or she can get the information about furniture and interior items from everywhere: outdoor advertising, a magazine, television, or from an architect who is carrying out an apartment renovation project. The only obstacle that remained in the way of acquiring furniture was the budget that he had.



PICTURE 56 Example of advertisement

⁸² Bobilev S. The history of IKEA in Russia. June 15, 2022. <https://tass.ru/info/14916143>

CONCLUSION

So, it was made an observation of how interior items were created and promoted in the Soviet Union and in Western Europe (on the example of Italy and the Scandinavian countries) throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

Obviously, at first glance it should seem that the approaches were completely opposite. Immediately after the war, the Soviet Union needed to show the victory and greatness of the Soviet state. Therefore, articles in magazines described an idealized picture of Soviet citizens who acquired furniture in a free manner. These articles were of an indirect advertising nature, and the main goal was to show the successes of the state and its concern for the "simple worker".

On the other hand, during the same period in Europe, private factories could afford to invite architects and designers to develop new models and experiment with technology and materials. In turn, new products were published in magazines and exhibited at specialized exhibitions.

In addition, while in the Soviet Union the item was practically impersonal, in Europe the names of the creators of the interior item became known to the general public.

The furniture market in Europe flourished and expanded, competition grew. It was thanks to the latter that the Milan Furniture Fair, one of the most important annual events of the furniture industry in the world, was launched in the 1960s. Moreover, they began to print more interior magazines aimed at a more ordinary buyer. In turn, IKEA, created a decade earlier, acquired the look that is recognizable today by every visitor: a large supermarket with a detailed exposition, illustrated catalogs, a restaurant, and the like.

However, in the Soviet Union they also began to hold exhibitions with furnished expositions, which, however, were caused by a change in the state housing program. Magazines and entire propaganda videos broadcast the standard housing of a standard Soviet family: still an idealized picture that had little to do with reality in view of the total shortage of goods. Nonetheless, these promotional materials showed quite modern interior items and layouts for that time.

Over time, the gap between reality and what the Soviet state communicated widened. Although advertisements for furniture products began to appear in the 1970s and 1980s, and also furniture from the socialist countries began to be sold in stores, it was still not so easy to buy the furnishings of an apartment.

However, in Europe there was a peculiar gap: while designers continued to experiment, look for form and express themselves through their products, traditional furniture design still prevailed in mass production.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia was able to go through a development path in a short period of 10 years, and by 2000, the country's furniture market, with the opening of the first IKEA, could be said to be little different from the European one. Projects created by architects were printed in magazines, expositions were created in furniture stores, and IKEA in Khimki was no different from IKEA in some European city.

In this regard, one general trend should be noted - this is the transmission of an idealized picture. In the Soviet Union, it was created by the state itself, and in Europe - by architects, designers, magazines, factories, and so on. Nonetheless, this ideal was poorly achievable in both cases. In the Soviet Union, the reason was the planned economy and the closed nature of the country, which caused a shortage of goods. In Western Europe - economic inaccessibility: designer products from top factories were not cheap, and it is rarely possible to purchase an entire IKEA stand and move it to your own home (at least based on the physical parameters of the booth and housing).

Thus, both a Soviet citizen, leafing through a magazine, and a Swede or German, looking through the next IKEA catalog, faced the same problem - the desire to purchase everything and the inability to do so. And if in the first case, a person was content with what he could "DOSTAT", then in the second case, a person took a loan that he probably could not master, which, for example, led to the financial crisis of 2008.

At the same time, if it is talked about ecology and sustainability, here in the capitalist world many enterprises are criticized: every year new and new models are presented at exhibitions, IKEA, JISK and other similar companies, that produce inexpensive products, redistribute production to countries with cheaper labor, there is often an overproduction and a shortage of materials, and so forth. From this point of

view, the planned economy of the USSR, for all its inflexibility and sluggishness, took into account the consumption of human, raw materials and energy resources.

Another common feature is the self-identification of yourself with what you acquire. Soviet propaganda pointed out what an ideal citizen and worker should be in all spheres of life, entering even inside the houses, into its most intimate parts and indicating exactly how he should equip it. Then later the Soviet people, as mentioned earlier, living in a closed system, were trying to buy a foreign piece of furniture in order to get an attempt to get closer to the world which is far from them.

Even so, this attempt to create another world around oneself is also relevant for a modern person who lives in a global world. A well-known scene from the movie "Fight Club" in which the protagonist looks at the IKEA catalog and seeks to get all the items to his home, calling himself an IKEA slave and thinking "what dining set identifies me as a person?". In an effort to acquire IKEA items, the hero strives to acquire the perfect picture that they broadcast. In any case, the house reflects the person, or who he wants to appear.



PICTURE 57

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