

MAKING A HOME ON THE NEVA: DOMESTIC SPACE, MEMORY, AND LOCAL IDENTITY IN LENINGRAD AND ST. PETERSBURG, 1957–PRESENT

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This discussion of the concepts and everyday practices associated with domestic life in 'the city on the Neva' draws on work that I am carrying out for a large-scale study of memory and local identity in St. Petersburg.¹ In this study, I address the impact of the city's official past, as constructed by cultural institutions such as museums, monuments, the city planning departments, and the heritage preservation organisation, VOOPiK (All-Russian Society for the Preservation of Monuments of History and Culture), founded by ministerial decree in 1965. However, alongside these *lieux de mémoire* in the formal sense, I also look at 'memory spaces' that are often ignored by tourists, but which may spell 'Leningrad' or 'Petersburg' to locals just as much as do the famous views of Vasilievskii Island, the Winter Palace, or the Summer Garden. These include districts (in the sense of a small familiar area rather

¹ Interviews collected as part of work for the project are cited below with the code Oxf/AHRC [=grant identifier] SPb. [place] 2007 etc. [date] PF1 etc. [recording number] AA [interviewer's initials]. I am grateful to Irina Nazarova, Aleksandra Kasatkina, Aleksandra Piir, and Marina Samsonova for help with interviewing. Interviews with the prefix Oxf/Lev were carried out with sponsorship from the Leverhulme Trust for an earlier project, 'Childhood in Russia, 1890–1991: A Social and Cultural History'. See <http://www.ehrc.ox.ac.uk/lifehistory> for information about the interviewing.

than of large official administrative districts, *raiony*, with their tens of thousands of inhabitants); forms of transport, in particular 'the Leningrad tram'; cafés and other leisure spaces; workplaces; and areas of the home.² I thus aim to combine two themes that, with reference to the post-socialist city, are usually treated separately: the history of how official commemorative practices (for example, street names and statues) altered to reflect ideological change, and the history of private life under political and economic transition.³ The work of anthropologists such as Michael Herzfeld (1991) and cultural geographers such as Edward Soja (1996) has been helpful to framing this approach, alongside such classic exercises in cultural theory as Michel de Certeau's *Arts de faire* (Certeau 1974) and Gaston Bachelard's *La poétique de l'espace* (Bachelard 1967). I have also been influenced by recent work in material anthropology, such as Daniel Miller's *The Comfort of Things* (Miller 2008), which emphasises the imaginative and emotional resonance of owned objects, their primary meaning as repositories of memory and self-perception. Rather than adopting what one might term a 'vulgar sociological' view of objects (their function as indices of status, for example), Miller asks what given objects mean to those who own them.

Obviously, in any society the domestic environment is likely to be associated with recollections of the past. Buildings and the organisation of space will draw on perceptions of what is 'traditional' (or conversely, seek to subvert these).⁴ Possessions may well include inherited objects and pictures or other visual representations of family members from earlier generations; at the very least, children will grow up with a sense that the time-span of their parents' lives is different from their own.⁵ However, in the late Soviet era, 'memory practices' were particularly vexed for a variety of political and cultural reasons.

² The work is to appear in Kelly forthcoming. Some of the research has appeared already in e.g. Kelli 2009; Kelly 2010a; Kelly 2010b. For the seminal use of the term *lieux de mémoire*, see Nora 1984–1992.

³ Among the many excellent studies of changes in official commemorative practices in socialist and post-socialist cities are Verdery 1999, and the essays collected in Czaplicka, Gelazis, and Ruble 2009 and Bassin, Ely, and Stockdale 2010. For work on the transformation of everyday life, see e.g. Humphrey 2002; Shevchenko 2009. An approach closer to my own is adopted in Bittner 2008, though this study is mainly archive-based and hence concentrates on official discussions and perceptions.

⁴ Two studies that address, on the one hand, the practices of Russian rural society in the late Imperial epoch, which were strongly governed by perceived traditions, and, on the other, the efforts of the post-revolutionary avant-garde to create radically new practices of domesticity, are Baiburin 1983 and Kiaer 2005.

⁵ In Soviet families, it was common for entire areas of past life to be shrouded in silence, not just because of anxiety that these might be politically unacceptable (cf. the extensive discussion of 'spoilt biographies' in Figs 2007), but because the general culture was so strongly focused on the present and future, thus making the experience of previous generations seem irrelevant. However, even then, a family was likely to have its 'past' in a safe sense, encompassing, say, celebrations, holidays, affectionate chatter about the antics of family members and pets, and so on. This kind of material comes up regularly in life history interviews, such as those collected for our project.

The relationship with what has been termed the 'usable past' in the Stalin era was relatively straightforward. There was a rigidly controlled canon of acceptable historical figures and phenomena, those which could be represented as *peredovye*, 'forward-looking', which is to say, in some respect prefiguring the ideological concerns of Soviet culture itself.⁶ The post-Stalin years, particularly in the misleadingly named 'era of stagnation' under Leonid Brezhnev, saw two contradictory processes at work. On the one hand, there was increasing interest in a broad range of historical material, much of it not of an obviously 'proto-socialist' kind, and a rising sense of regional distinctiveness, as exemplified, for instance, by the rehabilitation of *kraevedenie*, 'local studies', the interdisciplinary investigation of the natural and architectural environment and specific history of a given place.⁷ On the other, these decades saw a process of intensive 'Sovietisation' that made itself felt also in the home environment. The 'Decree on the Curtailment of Architectural Excesses' of 4 December 1955 made it incumbent on Soviet architects and planners to pare down the design of domestic building and eschew decorative elements. Now, apartment blocks were supposed to be *tipovye proekty*, or 'pattern book projects'—constructed to formats that were issued by planning institutes for nationwide use. *Tipovye proekty* imposed not just norms of space allocation, but also of apartment layout. For example, a standard two-room apartment design in developments of the 1970s and the 1980s across the Soviet Union consisted of one room about 17 metres square and one room about 11 metres square, plus a kitchen, bathroom, and separate lavatory.

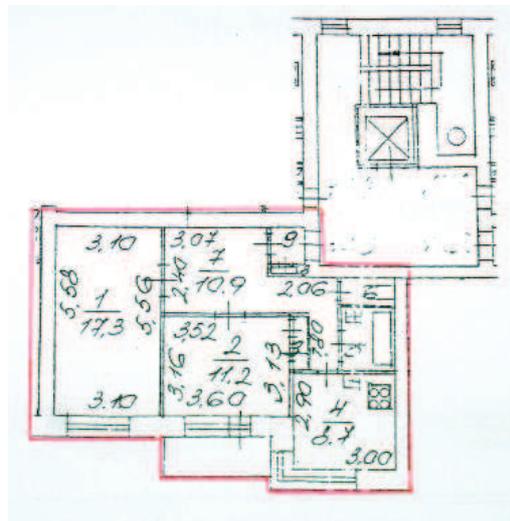


Figure 1. Official plan of a *tipovaya kvartira*, mid-1980s (author's collection)

⁶ This has been usefully discussed, for instance, by the contributors to Brandenberger and Platt 2006.

⁷ The general revivalism of the period has been studied in depth by, among others, Brudny 1998; Dunlop 1983, 1985, 1993; Hosking 1990; Mitrokhin 2003. However, these discussions focus on developments at the centre of Russian politics. On the regional revival and the redevelopment of *kraevedenie*, see, for example, Johnson 2006; Donovan 2011.

For the process of construction, systems building, in other words the use of prefabricated modules that were stacked together, was the preferred method.⁸ Domestic architecture accordingly started to be perceived as a dull, regimented activity fit only for those of little ambition and talent.⁹

Underlying the alterations in architectural ideals and building standards were considerations that were at once aesthetic and pragmatic. The premium developments of the Stalin era had been unashamedly elitist: solidly-built housing for the lucky few (including *znatnye rabochie*, or the ‘worker aristocracy’, as well as ‘responsible officials’).¹⁰ The Decree of the Central Committee and Council of Ministers of the USSR passed on 31 July 1957 set the objective of ‘ending the shortage of living accommodation in the course of the next 10–12 years’. It initiated a crash construction programme that aimed to create millions of new homes to an accelerated tempo.¹¹ The minimalist aesthetic endorsed in 1955 was in tune with the return to pre-Stalinist Soviet culture (what the architectural historian Vladimir Papernyi has called ‘Culture One’ [1985]). But it also, of course, cut costs. A further contradiction is that Soviet citizens were encouraged, indeed exhorted, to spend time and thought on creating *uiut* (a word that is usually translated as ‘cosiness’, but which is perhaps the closest Russian equivalent of the English concept of ‘home’), while not being given a great deal of practical help in doing this.¹² Soviet advice literature and journalism of the period drew readers’ attention to the (theoretical) availability of consumer goods for the home, yet in the deficit economy, as we shall see, acquiring these desiderata was often a challenging process.¹³

The cognitive dissonances of late Soviet culture were directly recognised in texts from the period. As the script of El’dar Riazanov’s hugely popular 1975 film comedy, *The Irony of Fate*, written by the director and Emil’ Braginskii, put it:

⁸ Edmonds gives a first-hand account of visiting a factory turning out such building units in Leningrad (1958:39–41).

⁹ Information from the former head of a studio at Lenproekt, who himself moved into designing functional buildings, e.g. garages, because they allowed him more room for manoeuvre.

¹⁰ For example, the area around the Lomonosov Porcelain Factory in Leningrad or along prospekt Marksa (Marx Prospect) on Vyborg Side included handsomely-appointed blocks that were used to house skilled workers as well as engineers and other ‘specialists’.

¹¹ For excellent general studies of the housing programme, see Harris 2003; Smith 2010. For a useful discussion of its effects in Leningrad, mainly based on material from the press and memoirs, see Leбина and Chistikov (2003:162–191).

¹² The concept of *uiut* was not invented at this period. It started to become important as part of the mid-1930s drive to emphasise to Soviet citizens that the Revolution had also brought them prosperity in a material sense. There is a large secondary literature dealing with this subject: see e.g. Fitzpatrick 2000; Glushchenko 2010; Gronow 2003; Kettering 1997. On *uiut* in the 1960s, see Reid 2009a. The precise evolution of the concept over time is an interesting question. The ‘National Corpus of the Russian Language’ (*Natsional’nyi korpus russkogo iazyka*, <http://ruscorpora.ru>) cites examples where *uiut* was used ironically in the 1920s and 1930s or at the very least juxtaposed with the ‘high struggle’ of life (see e.g. the quotation from A. R. Beliaev’s *Prodavets vozdukha*, 1929); such examples disappear in the selection of later materials. On the other hand, the bias of this source is towards literature rather than journalism, so its evidence is not conclusive.

¹³ On advice literature, see Kelly 2001, esp. chap. 6.

In the olden days, when someone fetched up in a town or city they didn't know, they felt lonely and lost. Everything was strange: alien houses, alien streets, alien life.

All that's changed now. Someone fetches up in a town they don't know, they feel right at home: all the houses, the streets, the life are exactly the same. They long ago stopped building to individual plans, now everything is pattern-book.

In the past, in one place you'd find St. Isaac's Cathedral, in another the Bolshoi Theatre, in another the Odessa Steps. Now every town has a cinema called Cosmos, built to a pattern-book design, in which you can watch a pattern-book film.

There's not too much variety in street names either. Which city doesn't have a Pervaia Zagorodnaia [First Backwoods Street], Vtoraia Proletarskaia [Second Proletarian Street], Tret'ia Fabrichnaia [Third Factory Street]... Pervaia Parkovaia ulitsa [First Park Street], Vtoraia Sadovaia [Second Garden Street], Tret'ia ulitsa Stroitelei [Third Street of the Builders]...? Lovely, isn't it...?¹⁴

Clearly, it was not just 'fate' that was ironic in the film. But at the same time, Riazanov and Braginskii's sarcasm was softened by the fact that in *The Irony of Fate*, standardisation was the engine of romance. Only because one Soviet street looked completely like another, independent of location, did the Moscow hero manage to meet up with the Leningrad heroine, when he let himself into her flat (which had the identical number and stood on an identically named street) thinking it was his own. The film conveyed the sense that individuality could be generated not *in spite of* standardisation, but *as a result of* this.

The purpose of the present article is to examine the tensions between historical and local particularity and Soviet universalism in a specific historical context. By looking at Leningrad apartments, I illustrate the effects of standardising reforms in a Soviet city with a highly developed sense of local identity, and one in which pre-Soviet history was becoming increasingly important. From the late 1960s onwards, newspapers, magazines, and guidebooks; museum exhibitions, literature, and art gave an increasing emphasis to pre-1917 St. Petersburg, and an ever-expanding number of pre-1917 buildings was placed under state protection (Kelly 2010a). Those who directed the changes at the level of what in Soviet culture was termed 'agitation and propaganda' mainly came from the Leningrad intelligentsia. However, as our interviewing project has shown, local pride and interest in the city's special character was and is not limited to those with higher education. It would be possible to argue for an overall 'Soviet urban domestic culture' at this period, certainly in Leningrad. So much is the tentative assumption on which this study is based, though the interview material and participant observation is biased towards intelligentsia informants.¹⁵

¹⁴ http://fictionbook.ru/author/yeldar_aleksandrovich_ryazanov/ironiya_sudbiy_ili_s_legkim_parom/read_online.html (last accessed 15 July 2011).

¹⁵ Some work on Leningrad culture (for example on leisure activities see Gerasimova and

The protagonist of Daniil Granin's 1967 story *The House on the Fontanka*, haunted by memories of Vadim, a friend from an old intelligentsia family who had died in the War, shared the trajectory of many: 'Something had happened to me. The past appealed to me more than the future'. Brought up in an era when 'the word intellectual sounded like a reproach', he found himself, by the 1960s, seeing Vadim's life and values as more 'real' than his own (Granin 1989, vol. 3:162–166). This reverential attitude to the past was typical of the times.¹⁶ Yet housing programmes saw increasing numbers of Leningraders moved out to apartment blocks in the new districts. These included so-called *korennyye leningradtsy*, born-and-bred Leningraders, those whose connections with the city went back at least one generation.¹⁷ Indeed, it is fair to assume that they made up a high proportion of those who received new apartments, given that being assigned such an apartment required a wait of a decade or more.¹⁸ It is my contention that the clash between the increasing imaginative interest in the past and the declining numbers of those who actually lived in what was coming to be called the 'historic centre' gave the creation of 'home' a highly specific cultural salience at this period.

'PETERSBURG STYLE' VERSUS LENINGRAD REALITY: A SHORT HISTORY

Usually in the West, 'Petersburg style' refers exclusively to the refined life of collectors, and studies of home decoration have concentrated on the palatial and

Chuikina 2000), has argued for divisions between social strata in terms of everyday practices. This discussion (focusing on the 1930s) is confirmed by my own work on the post-Stalin era also (Kelly forthcoming, chap. 11). However, the interviews cited below suggest that status divisions were of less importance in the home. For further details of the biographical backgrounds of the informants interviewed for our Leningrad and St. Petersburg project, see <http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/russian/nationalism> and <http://www.ehrc.ox.ac.uk/lifehistory>; for the social range of those interviewed for my history of Russian childhood, see <http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/russian/childhood>. For example, see Oxf/Lev SPb-03 PF14-16 (woman b. 1969, father a lorry driver, interviewed by Aleksandra Piir), which produced a general picture of how space was organised that did not differ greatly from that given by intelligentsia informants.

¹⁶ For general discussions of the rise of interest in heritage, see Elfimov 2003; Kozlov 2000. While mainly concerned with Moscow, Kozlov's essay includes material on Leningrad.

¹⁷ Records of the 'Leningrad connections' of those moved to new districts were not kept, but it is possible to identify an overall shift of resident population away from historic districts in the course of the twentieth century. In 1923, nearly a third of the city's population lived in the Tsentral'nyi (Central) district (491,054 of 1,590,770), plus a further 154,083 on Vasilevskii Island, and 225,744 on Petrograd Side. This places about 50 per cent in the areas that were to become the 'historic centre' (*Statisticheskii spravochnik* 1930:18–19). The population of the 'historic centre' was, as of 2007, of comparable size (about 0.5 million), but this represented only about 11 per cent of the city's overall population (c. 4.5 million). It should be noted also that the city's population overall reached a historical low in the immediate post-revolutionary years; by 1939, it stood at 3.2 million, and in 1959, 2.8 million.

¹⁸ For the length of the wait, see e.g. Rezvov 2000. Most incomers, if they obtained state accommodation at all (some had to rent on the private market), were housed in hostels or barracks (it is these with whom Rezvov's article is mostly concerned).

elegant traditions of the city.¹⁹ This celebration, indeed one could say fetishisation, of pre-revolutionary elite existence has some hold over Russian understandings of Petersburg also; for instance, a recent series of interviews by Aleksandr Zapesotskii, the director of the St. Petersburg Humanities University of the Trade Unions, adopted a reverential attitude to informants, such as Natalia Bekhtereva, with long-established roots and famous names.²⁰ A much more sober—but still admiring—account of Leningrad collecting (this time mainly by bibliophiles) was published by the well-known sociologist Boris Firsov (2009).²¹ In memoirs, one also comes across this perception: Igor' Smirnov, for example, writes, 'The interiors of city dwellings have as their purpose the preservation of valuables, they are predisposed to collection' (2006:219).²² There were indeed important collectors in the city, and efforts were made on the part of the city administration to provide support to them, among other things, by the provision of extra living space.²³

Collecting, however, has never been a mainstream activity, and in the early decades of Soviet power a different local style was current in Leningrad. Social ostracism of so-called 'former people' (those who belonged to pre-revolutionary elite groups, such as the gentry and merchant estates) meant that 'Petersburg style' was also stigmatised.²⁴ The ideal was dominated, from the 1920s, by rather severe modernism. The flagship projects of the day, the Lensovet Building and the House of Political Prisoners, were built on the principle of the *dom-kommuna*, 'housing commune', a type of co-operative housing development where residents not only pooled resources, but also shared collective facilities for catering, child-care, laundry, and so on.²⁵ Not all new housing was of the 'commune' type. An open tender organised in 1929 for a brick or concrete structure to be constructed on the corner of ulitsa Krasnykh Zor' and Pesochnaia specified ceilings of up to 2.85 metres (three metres on

¹⁹ See e.g. Thornycroft 2006, where the beautifully decorated apartment in a historic building formerly owned by the British expert on Russian art and picture dealer, John Stuart, is featured, or Cerwinske 1990.

²⁰ Publication ongoing in University Magazine [sic., but published in Russian], a glossy produced by the St. Petersburg Trade Unions' University for the Humanities [Sankt-Peterburgskii gumanitarnyi universitet profsoiuzov]. See e.g. no. 10 (Aug. 2004).

²¹ See also Dudakov 2006, which is on collecting generally but devotes much space to Leningrad collectors. The Sheremet'ev Palace on the Fontanka now also includes a permanent exhibition of paintings (largely portraits of the donors), furniture, and personal items donated by V. V. Strekalov-Obolenskii and A. M. Saraeva-Bondar' (Saraeva-Bondar' 1999).

²² My thanks to the author for making a copy of this text available to me.

²³ Collectors whose possessions were deemed to be of 'museum quality' could be allocated an extra room to house these; a certification process began in 1959. See TsGALI-SPb. f. 105, op. 1, d. 853, ll. 62–63. I discuss the status of collectors and collecting more fully in Kelly forthcoming, chap. 4.

²⁴ On the repression of 'former people', see e.g. Gerasimova and Chuikina 2000; Obertrais 2000.

²⁵ For a study of these communes based on Moscow material, see Buchli 2000. Julia Obertreis's excellent study of housing in Leningrad includes a short section on the communes in Leningrad, mainly based on memoirs (2004:343–360).

the first two floors). The three-room or four-room flats with a total area of 50 square metres (or 65 in the case of four-roomed ones) were to have a kitchen of seven square metres, a hall at least 1.5 metres wide, and separate kitchens and bathrooms (*Konkurs* 1929:3–5).²⁶ But the majority of new housing across the Soviet Union (84 per cent in 1935) was communal (Obertreis 2004:138).²⁷

In any case, proportionately, new housing was relatively insignificant. The bulk of housing in Leningrad up to the 1950s, and in the centre after that, continued to be made up of pre-1917 structures.²⁸ However, the character of this was not as palatial as the 'Petersburg style' stereotype would suggest. Even before the Revolution, high-ceilinged, sumptuously appointed *enfilades* made up, as Ekaterina Iukhneva has described, only a small proportion of the housing stock (2008). Most families lived in much more cramped conditions. The composer Sergei Prokof'ev's family was normally resident in Ekaterinoslav Province, where Sergei's father was an estate manager, and where they had a large and comfortably-appointed house. When Sergei joined the junior department of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1904, however, they rented a flat on Sadovaia, in the centre of the city, which offered them rather modest accommodation: three bedrooms, two of which looked into the building's internal courtyard, a sitting room, and a dining room, alongside a large kitchen and a tiny bathroom and lavatory.²⁹

After the Revolution, palaces and mansions were sometimes settled, at least in the interim, by non-aristocrats.³⁰ But by the end of the 1920s, such places had been made over into institutions.³¹ It was only the Soviet elite who lived in anything

²⁶ The brochure also invited tenders for the construction of a model hostel with rooms of 10–12 square metres for single people and 16 square metres for couples, a canteen with 70 places, a reading room, a 'red corner', and an office.

²⁷ It is not clear whether this figure relates to housing designed to be communal or settled communally or both—in later decades there was a distinction. One is inclined to suppose the latter.

²⁸ In 1994, blocks built between 1936 and 1960 comprised more than 50 per cent of the city's housing stock, those built between 1960 and 1970, 20 per cent, with pre-revolutionary buildings also making up 20 per cent (Tarbaev et al 1994:53–54). During the new housing drive of 1933–1934, the proportion of new building by district reached a maximum of 44.4 per cent (in Kirovskii district). In Vyborgskii district, it was 28 per cent, and in the Central district, 3 per cent. See Gerasimova and Chuikina (2000:42). These overall figures need a little nuancing. According to *Statisticheskii spravochnik* (1930:32–33), over 17,000 of the city's buildings had one or two storeys, as opposed to around 8,000 with three to eight storeys. By the 1970s, central Leningrad was overwhelmingly made up of buildings of four storeys and more. One- and two-storey structures had either completely disappeared (if they were wooden) or had been extended upwards by *nadstroika* (the addition of extra storeys) to create historically hybrid dwellings. At the same time, the existing 'footprint' was retained.

²⁹ Prokof'ev sketched it in a letter to his father (Prokof'ev 1982:152–153).

³⁰ The photo-archive of the Institute of the History of Material Culture, St. Petersburg, includes photographs of improvised living quarters in such places dating from the early to mid-1920s.

³¹ See 'Spisok No. 1 parkov, sadov i arkhitekturnykh sooruzhenii, nakhodiashchikhsia pod okhranoi Leningradskogo Otdeleniia Glavnauki' (a 1927 list of architectural monuments and the uses assigned to them), TsGALI-SPb., f. 72, op. 1, d. 190, ll. 37–39.

resembling the conditions enjoyed by high-status Petersburgers before 1917. For example, Kamennostrovskii prospekt (renamed ulitsa Krasnykh Zor') housed the large apartment of Sergei Kirov complete with heavy wooden furniture, hunting trophies, and a magnificent American fridge, and on Lieutenant Schmidt Embankment stood the neo-classical block owned by the Academy of Sciences, where academic bigwigs enjoyed a direct view of the Neva from their long windows.³² A fictional representation of this situation is the 'vale of science' (*iudol' nauki*) in Andrei Bitov's novel *Pushkin House* with its academic inhabitants, 'old people in the process of extinction with their decanal children and graduate-student grandchildren', and its soft voices and soft light falling on bookcases and piles of papers.³³

From 1935, planning for the new centre of the city, moved south to Mezhdunarodnyi prospekt, laid out an avenue of high-rise blocks whose style, as local historians have pointed out, owed much to the architecture of Petrograd Side, developed by speculative builders as a quarter for the newly rich in the first two decades of the twentieth century.³⁴ Many of the architects developing Leningrad architecture in the Stalin era had in fact trained and/or worked in the city before 1917, including L. A. Il'in (with many buildings to his credit from the 1900s and 1910s, and the leading architect for the first General Plan of the City of Leningrad in 1935), I. I. Fomin, and L. V. Kotov. Their ideas of appropriate living in terms of ceiling height and room divisions also went back to the early twentieth century.³⁵

These flagship projects had little impact on the living arrangements of Leningrad residents, which remained decidedly makeshift. The most notorious illustration of this is the Leningrad *kommunalka* (communal apartment).³⁶ The post-revolutionary

³² Both these buildings survive today, the former as the Museum Apartment of Sergei Kirov (<http://kirovmuseum.ru/>), the latter as apartments mostly inhabited by the descendants of the original residents. The Museum Apartment of I. S. Pavlov (the famous physiologist) gives a sense of how prominent academics lived in the early Soviet era: see <http://www.museum.ru/m125>. Ober-treis (2004: 287) also emphasises the exclusivity of separate apartments in pre-war Leningrad. At the same time, even the Kirov apartment, after *uplotnenie*, was in a socially "mixed" area (Zakharova 2000).

³³ Andrei Bitov, *Pushkinskii dom* (1971; first published Ann Arbor: Ardis, 1978). I cite here from Bitov (2007:18–21). The successful writer Iulii German also lived in a separate flat with his family: see the memoir by his son, Mikhail (German 2000:19–20).

³⁴ See e.g. Iakovchenko (1986:61, 80–87).

³⁵ The so-called *stalinki* have ceiling heights of three-four metres, which has made them very popular with the new rich in the post-Soviet era (Gubin, Lur'e, and Poroshin 1999).

³⁶ There is a considerable body of secondary literature on the communal apartment, some of it specific to Leningrad. The study with the broadest historical and informational range is Gerasimova (2000), which addresses the entire political, social, and legal framework of the communal apartment and changes to its status at different periods. Utekhin 2004 is an interesting study of the daily life of the *kommunalka* in the late Soviet and post-Soviet period. Boym 1994 includes a chapter on the communal apartment, largely based on personal experience and observation. See also the fascinating 'virtual museum' set up by Il'ia Utekhin and Nancy Ries, <http://www.kommunalka.spb.ru>. For studies of Moscow, see Messana [2005] 2011; Azarova 2007. There are some brief and general observations on communal life in Field 2007.

years saw a campaign for *uplotnenie* (literally 'compression'), in other words the compulsory settlement of new tenants in one-family apartments, particularly those inhabited by members of 'former classes' (the pre-revolutionary social elite).³⁷ As a result, large apartments were broken up into multiple units. Kitchens and bathrooms were shared, and family units would be assigned one room, with space allocated according to strictly defined official norms. Larger rooms were divided into cubicles by partitions made of plywood. One of my own informants, N.,³⁸ happened to live in a communal apartment shared by only two families, and her own family's territory included the former ballroom. But she was the daughter of a top-ranking 'Red commander', and even in these circumstances life had its stresses. She and her parents did not get on with the distant relations who lived in the other half of the flat, a situation that provoked all kinds of petty persecution (for example, on one occasion these relatives organised a relay so that the lavatory was occupied for the entire evening when N.'s parents had guests). Another woman with particularly unhappy memories of communal life was brought up in a flat inhabited by several generations of the same family.³⁹

Yet the classic situation of the *kommunalka* presented stresses of a different kind—the need to share accommodation with people of radically different social background. The pre-revolutionary apartment had been explicitly divided between the formal sections (drawing room, dining room, hall, accessed by the *paradnaia lestnitsa*, or front staircase) and the service sections, such as the kitchen and the servants' room (if provided, otherwise servants were expected to sleep in the kitchen). These gave way to the *chernaiia lestnitsa* ('black staircase', i.e. the servants' or 'tradesman's entrance') (Kelly 1997). Now, the entire apartment was, from an official point of view, living space of equal quality, assigned on the basis of its area, and the former 'service sections' were shared by all. In these conditions, the room itself became 'home', with a sharp distinction between the family or individual's own territory and the 'common parts' or *mesta obshchego pol'zovaniia*, literally 'spaces in common use'. The only place in the 'common parts' that might be to a limited extent 'personalised' by tenants was the kitchen, which was used not just for cooking and often also for hanging laundry, but as the 'social centre of the CA [communal apartment], the basic place for meeting neighbours and interacting with them, the main stage for public events in the life of the flat' (Utekhin 2004:27). Bathrooms and lavatories were strictly functional places, subject to an elaborate system of hygiene rules; for example, tenants usually had their own lavatory seats, and were careful to avoid contaminating/being contaminated by the common tub.⁴⁰ In kitchens, on the other hand, each family would have its own primus and, after gas was introduced, its own gas ring or rings. While food was not, as a rule, left in kitchens for fear of theft,

³⁷ There is a large literature on *uplotnenie*: see e.g. Leбина 1999; Obertreis 2004.

³⁸ Names have been anonymised.

³⁹ CKQ Oxf-03 PF2 (interview by Catriona Kelly, Oxford, 2003); author's field notes, St. Petersburg, 2004.

⁴⁰ On hygiene, see Utekhin 2004, chap. 4.

pans and other bits of kitchen equipment were usually stored there, and such items were not held in common. The kitchen was thus a kind of extension of 'home' into shared space.⁴¹

Otherwise, the main opportunity to place territorial markers on shared space (among children, the corridor usually served as a common playroom, so that toys might make their way out here) was the small amount of floor immediately outside the door of the individual room. Here, the light bulb was likely to be supplied by the individual family and only switched on by them as well, and there might well be a doormat, racks for shoes, and so on (Utekhin 2004:31).



Figure 2. The kitchen in a *kommunalka*, showing the different caches of kitchenware belonging to several residents. Note the blocked-up door, which may once have led to a dining room, or conversely, servant's room (photograph by the author, 2011)

Within the room, organisation was standardised to a high degree. Space was organised round a small number of larger possessions. Some of these were functional—the dining table, the divan for sitting and sleeping on, wardrobes for storing clothes, or cupboards for household items (both these pieces of furniture are known in Russian as *shkafy*). The *shkafy* might also be given a screening function, to allow minimal privacy to someone's sleeping arrangements:

So, the wardrobes divided off Mum and Dad's bed. But our [beds] simply stood there in the room, as divans. The big [bed], they partitioned that off in the corner. [...] And there was a TV there, and there was this kind of... not a secretaire exactly, but a desk for the eldest, since he was the first to go [to school]. So. And a big dining table, where I used to do my homework.⁴²

The TV that the informant mentions here was, of course, not purely a functional item: to own a TV was—up to the 1970s at least—also prestigious.⁴³ Another item in this status-linked category was

⁴¹ The extent to which tenants' possessions were 'present' in the kitchen might vary according to the specific relations among them. As Gerasimova points out, in later decades of Soviet power, people who had spent years living together as neighbours often established a high degree of trust and might keep pieces of furniture and so on in the kitchen (2000:18). There are photographs of such arrangements on <http://www.kommunalka.spb.ru>.

⁴² Oxf/Lev SPb-03 PF 26 (male informant, b. 1960). Cf. Oxf/Lev SPb-02 PF 14 (female informant, b. 1969) recalling the two divans (one for the parents, one for the children) in the 27-metre room that her family lived in until the mid-1980s. Oxf/Lev SPb-03 PF 28 (male informant, b. 1972) recalled that his own childhood bed was behind a *shkaf*.

⁴³ Later, this applied to special models: for instance, the informant in Oxf/Lev SPb-03 PF14 (b. 1969) recalled her family's ownership of a 'large colour' TV.

the *servant*. This was the mid- to late twentieth-century word for what in traditional usage was called a *bufet*. Both words referred to a piece of furniture with shelves and glass-fronted doors (as variously known in English by the words *dresser*, *sideboard*, *display cabinet*, *shelving unit*, etc.) This was the place for keeping particularly valued or delicate possessions—porcelain tea cups, crystal vases, photographs, and so on—and also treats such as chocolate or alcoholic drinks.⁴⁴ Bookcases also took up much wall space in many families.⁴⁵ Apart from chairs, this more or less exhausts the list of standard items (it is common for informants to describe their homes as ‘nothing special’).⁴⁶ The main variation took place at the level of individual possessions—which particular bits of glass and china, ornaments and trinkets, houseplants, books, pictures were on display.

The classic *kommunalka*, often discussed as though it were *the* standard type of Soviet domestic existence, represented only one type of communal habitation. In factory barracks and hostels, conditions were even more cramped, and a family’s essential private space would be a bed. In the recollection of one of our informants, born in 1944:

And she [my mother] tramped round from hostel to hostel, and I went along with her. And so she lived, well, how did people used to live in those hostels? [...] In the middle a table, a screen here, a screen here, a screen here, a screen here, that’s how people used to live.⁴⁷

Obviously, in a space of this kind, ‘home’ would be limited to the area inside the screens, which might contain a locker (*tumbochka*), shelves over the bed, hooks for hanging, and a suitcase placed under the bed for storage. Sometimes, wardrobes and cupboards might be used instead of screens to divide up the room into different ‘cubicles’,⁴⁸ but the end result in whatever case was a remarkably small amount of personal space for each family—perhaps four-five square metres at most.

⁴⁴ On alcoholic drinks, see Oxf/Lev SPb-02 PF6 (female informants, mother from working-class background, daughter a doctor, b. 1908 and 1931): ‘There was always a carafe of *vino* [literally, ‘wine’, but often used to mean ‘vodka’, as opposed to *sukhoe vino*, ‘dry wine’, for the kind made of grapes] on the sideboard’. The role of the *servant* is extensively discussed by Boym 1994 and Utekhin 2004.

⁴⁵ This is based on personal observation: bookcases are too obvious a possession to get mentioned by informants or Russian commentators. In Soviet days, they were usually of a standard sort: a wooden unit large enough to hold a single row of books, with glass sliding doors. These could be stacked to form a multi-tiered bookcase. The shelves might also be used for displays of other objects, as in the *servant*.

⁴⁶ See e.g. Oxf/Lev SPb-03 PF24 (male informant, working-class background, b. 1960).

⁴⁷ Oxf/AHRC SPb-08 PF51 IN (male informant, working-class background, b. 1944).

⁴⁸ This was done in the hostel where I lived in Voronezh for 10 months in 1980–1981, for example, though in the Leningrad State University hostel no. 10 and the Polytechnic hostel, where I spent short visits in 1981 and in 1979 respectively, partitioning of space was not attempted (possibly supervision by the hostel authorities was stricter: technically, moving the furniture around was a breach of rules).

The communal apartments of Leningrad, often seen retrospectively as unique to the city, had analogues in other cultures—in the tenements and rooming houses of Berlin, Paris, London, and Glasgow, to name only a few examples.⁴⁹ But there were important differences. One of these lay in the cultural capital of some of the *kommunalka*'s inhabitants, who were able to commemorate their existence in authoritative ways, writing about the stresses of enforced collectivism from the inside.⁵⁰ Another lay in the fact that many of Leningrad's communal apartments had originally been built as high-status accommodation. Poorly maintained after 1917, they rapidly declined into a state of Gothic decay. As the journalist Alexander Werth recalled, in 1944, the building where he had once lived on ulitsa Gogolia (now known by its pre-revolutionary name of Malaia Morskaia) was in an almost unrecognisable condition:

The white imitation marble walls were covered with dark, dirty-brown paint, and there was no sign of the well-scrubbed wooden steps with the red carpet and the carefully-preserved brass carpet rails [...] The hall was dark and empty. No mirror, no coat-hangers—nothing. (Werth 1944:36)

While the emptiness of this apartment may have been attributable to the effects of the Blockade, the general squalor was the result of longer-term processes.

However, Werth, an outsider in Soviet Leningrad, was seeing communal life with an alienated eye. Diaries of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s record many causes for irritation, but details such as damage to 'white imitation marble walls' were not among these.⁵¹ In that period, most Leningraders seem simply to have accepted the *kommunalka* as home—there was, after all, no choice—and not seen their existence as particularly bleak or degraded.⁵² But as the quantities of one-family accommodation expanded, the sense that the communal apartment represented a social anomaly, yet also somehow encapsulated 'Petersburg life', began to emerge, as will be discussed in the next section.

⁴⁹ Conditions were considerably better than in the rented rooms described in George Orwell's famous *Down and Out in Paris and London*. On Berlin, see Geist and Kürvers 1980–1989; on Glasgow, see Worsdall 1989.

⁵⁰ An example was the writer Mikhail Zoshchenko, whose short stories about Leningrad life, such as 'Cats and People' or 'The Bathhouse', immortalised communal life in the 1920s and 1930s.

⁵¹ For example, sources such as the diaries of Lidiia Chukovskaia (1976) or the diaries of Ol'ga Berggol'ts (2010) are primarily concerned with constraints on intellectual freedom. The unpublished memoir-chronicle of Aleksei Gonchukov (Central State Archive of Political and Historical Documentation, St Petersburg, f. 4000 op. 18 d. 333, d. 334, d. 335) takes a very positive view of life in the communal apartment, while complaining constantly about shortage of money, the dishonesty of the factory administration, and so on.

⁵² Retrospective accounts, e.g. Utekhin 2004, tend to represent informants' recollections of communitarianism as pure nostalgia, but evidence such as Gonchukov's testimony would suggest things are not quite so simple.

THE 'FAMILY APARTMENT': HOMES WITHOUT HISTORY

In Leningrad, as in other cities, the crash building programme begun in 1957 fundamentally altered the profile of accommodation available to citizens.



Figure 3. New blocks on prospekt Morisa Toreza, Leningrad, early 1970s (*Ocherki sovremennogo sovetskogo iskusstva: sbornik statei po arkhitekture, zhivopisi, grafike i prikladnomu iskusstvu*, Moscow: Nauka, 1975)

The percentage of those living in communal dwellings remained high. In 1970, an article in *Leningradskaiia pravda* newspaper gave it as 40 per cent; in 1990, it was between 19 and 65 per cent, depending on district, with an average of 23 per cent across the city (Bobchenok 1970:2).⁵³ Because of pressure on housing, flats built as 'separate family accommodation' were sometimes settled communally.⁵⁴ However, the view that this was undesirable eventually prompted a decision to reduce the number of larger apartments in new projects and concentrate on one-, two-, and three-roomed units,⁵⁵ and the main weight of the population gradually transferred into 'separate flats'.

⁵³ The 1990 figures were given in a highly critical series about the work of the different district soviets running in *VechL* in January, February, and March 1990, 'Vse ispolnilos' v srok?'. For a district profile, see also Tomchin 2003 and Raikova 1988.

⁵⁴ See e.g. the comments by D. S. Gol'dgor at a Lenproekt meeting in 1957 (TsGANTD-SPb. f. 36, op. 1-1, d. 216, l. 18): 'We want to settle the 27 square metre two-room apartments with just one family in each, but it won't work out that way.' Bobchenok (1970) also records the practice of settling multi-room flats which several families; see also Ruzhze and Eliseeva (1981:82), who report that up to 40 per cent of flats were settled communally 'in occasional years' (*v otdel'nye gody*), a veiled phrase that may translate as 'quite often'.

⁵⁵ Pozdnyakov (1961) refers to the need to match flat sizes to the population's requirements (here, three- and four-roomed flats are suggested).

What was just as important, Leningraders with 'cultural capital' were particularly likely to be rehoused in such separate flats. As noted above, even before the 1957 watershed, some such had inhabited separate apartments. However, isolated living became far more common during the 1960s and 1970s.

A significant role in this was played by the rise of the housing co-operative, reintroduced in the late 1950s as a way of tempting the cash-rich Soviet population to help fund new building, with the opportunity to shorten the wait in the housing queue as an incentive. Co-operative members made an advance payment of 40 per cent of the cost price of a new apartment, set according to a state tariff that priced 12 metres of living space at 2,800 roubles and allowed members to acquire the right to inhabit up to 60 metres of living space. The remaining 60 per cent of the fee was payable over 15 years at a rate of one per cent interest (Catrell 1968:135–136).⁵⁶ An unspoken factor in the process was that co-operative members were much more likely to end up living next to people like themselves, since co-operatives were—from 1 January 1964—generally formed by enterprises or organisations (including 'creative unions' for actors, writers, etc.).⁵⁷ What was more, as old buildings in the centre were cleared, they then underwent *kompleksnyi kapital'nyi remont* (a process by which wooden partitions were replaced by concrete ones, wooden staircases by metal ones, and pre-revolutionary apartment layouts were altered to accommodate single-family apartments that approximated to the ground-plan of new apartments).⁵⁸ The result was a shift in the symbolic, if not the real-life, role of the communal apartment. Such

⁵⁶ In practice, these prices were quite high for some people, as remarked by one of our informants (Oxf/AHRC SPb-07 PF10 SA, male member of the intelligentsia, b. 1960). But a more important disincentive was that those applying for a place in a co-operative had to satisfy the same deficiency of living space conditions as those applying for a state flat. If one shared a very large room in a *kommunalka*, one was ineligible. See e.g. Oxf/AHRC SPb-11 PF19 MS: 'We wanted to get on the co-operative queue, but they wouldn't let us.:'; cf. Oxf/AHRC SPb-08 PF51 IN.

⁵⁷ A Decree of Lengorispolkom on 26 October 1963 pointed to the disappointingly slow pace of co-operative building and decreed that from 1 January 1964 such co-operatives would be formed 'on the intercession [*po khodataistvu*] of enterprises, organisations, and institutions' (TsGALI-SPb. f. 105, op. 1, d. 1483, ll.163–165, l. 178). There is also the consideration that people's readiness to pay the deposit might vary depending on their attitudes to saving. Interview evidence suggests that working-class families often lived 'from paypacket to paypacket' (*ot poluchki do poluchki*) and might at most put by enough for the annual holiday, expecting to spend what they had accumulated by the time they got back: on this style of life see e.g. Oxf/Lev SPb-03 PF14 (daughter of a lorry-driver, b. 1969, interviewed by Aleksandra Piir). Accordingly, the characteristic inhabitants of co-operative apartments were the educationally advantaged, what might be termed the 'Soviet middle class' (including, but not limited to, the intelligentsia).

⁵⁸ This process of reconstruction began to be reported in the press in the early 1960s, at first because of anxiety that perfectly good building materials were being wasted (*LP* 28 May 1963, p. 2, 'Den'gi na svalku'). Later, as interest in heritage rose, there was also indignation that historic interiors were being lost. However, a Lensovet order of 7 April 1969 merely specified that items of architectural interest should be transferred to the Museum of the City of Leningrad (*BILGS* 1969, no. 8, pp. 2–3). The reconstructions also suffered from similar problems of hasty and sometimes shoddy building to the newbuild of the era (see the item in *LP*, 21 August 1964, p. 3, 'Iz remonta v remont. Reid L-skoi pravdy'). For a more upbeat view of the process, see Burak and Mishkovskii 1968.

apartments increasingly became linked, in the local imaginary, with social marginals—from alcoholics to bohemian artists.⁵⁹

Kommunalki were in fact often preferred by non-official artists, because there was more space for organising exhibitions, concerts, and so on, and the neighbours were less likely to make a fuss about noise than those in thin-walled modern apartments. As the poet Viktor Krivulin put it, the kitchen was ‘the *kommunalka*’s holy of holies, the sanctuary of any Leningrad apartment, an agora and forum, a place for meeting people and for talking about politics and the economy. People here wept aloud, shouted and gesticulated, like the characters in a Dostoevsky novel. In their own rooms, they whispered’ (1998:47; see also Skobkina n.d.; Valieva 2009). With the revival of interest in pre-revolutionary St. Petersburg, the very squalor of the *kommunalka* came to seem authentic, given the history of regarding the city, with a kind of melancholy pride, as the capital of crime and degradation.⁶⁰ While the communal apartment began to be associated primarily with an anti-homemaking drive, the ‘nesting instinct’ shifted to new family apartments.

The standardisation of the built environment that took place from the late 1950s had a significant impact on Leningrad. Pattern-book building was imposed on architects here as in other Soviet cities. The 1955 ‘Decree on the Curtailment of Architectural Excesses’ had singled out certain architect-designed housing projects in the city for criticism. Among them were Boris Zhuravlev’s apartment block on prospekt Stalina, ‘which includes a colonnade two stories high’, and Vasilii Kamenskii’s blocks on prospekt Stachek ‘with façades in an archaic style, pilasters with heavy rustication, and complex handling of the cornices’. The

⁵⁹ I should emphasise that this was an imaginative understanding, because clearly, with large sections of Leningrad’s population still living in communal apartments, the inhabitants of these were still socially diverse. This type of ‘social marginalism’ representation was typified by Igor’ Sheshukov’s film *Viktor Krokhin’s Second Attempt* (Lenfilm 1977), which showed scenes of drinking and wild behaviour in a 1940s *kommunalka*. The film’s release led to a major scandal, and a crack-down on film censorship was initiated by Party leader Grigorii Romanov (I discuss this episode in Kelly forthcoming, chap. 1). In the post-Soviet era, these attitudes have crystallised into an entire folklore: see, for example, the ballad by Sergei Petrov (b. 1948), ‘Kommunal’shchina’ (a dismissive word for communal life), posted in April 2010 online: <http://blogs.privet.ru/user/Sergei818/82525066>. Here the author’s neighbours are represented as alcoholics who spend their life distilling spirits and so on. Azarova (2007:213) argues for the development of ‘*une sorte de marginalité consciente*’ among Moscow communal apartment inhabitants in the late Soviet period, which also describes the attitude of say Viktor Krivulin (1998) quite well.

⁶⁰ Nineteenth-century texts chronicling the squalor of Petersburg included Vsevolod Krestovsky, *Petersburg Slums: Sketches of the Sated and the Starving* [*Peterburgskie trushchoby: Ocherki o sytykh i golodnykh*, 1867], A. A. Bakhtiarov, *The Belly of St. Petersburg* [*Briukho Peterburga: Ocherki peterburgskoi zhizni*, 1888], as well as, of course, Fedor Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* [*Prestuplenie i nakazanie*, 1866]. A famous twentieth-century text expounding this mythology was Nikolai Antsiferov, *The Soul of Petersburg* [*Dusha Peterburga*, 1922]. The last decades of the twentieth century saw an upsurge of literary interest in the *kommunalka*, beginning with texts such as Nina Katerli, *Sennaia ploshchad’* [The Haymarket, 1977; translated into English as *The Barsukov Triangle*] and extending to memoirs by writers and cultural critics (e.g. Boym 1994; Krivulin 1998).

Decree disapprovingly noted that remarkably high numbers of the city's buildings were architect-designed: 'of 353 buildings under construction, only 14 are *tipovye proekty*'.⁶¹

Leningrad's planners took the hint. Unlike the prime housing projects of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s—for instance, Traktornaia ulitsa or Mezhdunarodnyi prospekt (later, prospekt Stalina)—very little new housing built from the late 1950s onwards was constructed to site-specific plans.⁶² During the late 1950s and early 1960s, as in every other Soviet city, whole districts of low-rise blocks (five to eight storeys) were constructed at a relentless pace (between 1966 and 1969 alone, over 4.5 million square metres of accommodation was brought into use).⁶³ The grey concrete boxes surrounded by scrubland had little individuality. In the words of a British architect and planner who visited Leningrad in 1957, just as the first developments were beginning:

The first impression on this estate [Ivanovskaia ulitsa] is of rather poor workmanship, the blocks of flats being hastily thrown together. The flats, too, are on the whole dull and stereotyped. (Edmonds 1958:41)

The dullness of the developments, not just at this period, but in later decades as well, was acknowledged even in official sources. 'It's boring in Kupchino. And on the Right Bank of the Neva as well', remarked a contributor to a forum organised by Leningrad's main architecture journal in 1970 referring to two of the main areas for new building (*Problemy* 1970:21–22). The pervasiveness of poor workmanship was also frequently noted, not just in the 1960s, but at later stages too.⁶⁴ In 1982, the Executive Committee of Lensovet observed, 'Justified complaints from those moving into new homes are inspired by work that has not been properly completed, where there are problems with electricity and fire safety, and where lifts and plumbing do not work.' Provision of gas and water lagged behind construction and even sometimes behind the arrival of the tenants.⁶⁵ In systems-built blocks where no outer brick 'skin' was provided (the so-called *blochnye doma* or *panel'nye doma*), water, condensation, and draughts often seeped through the gaps, damaging the interior decoration and

⁶¹ The text is available online at <http://www.sovarch.ru/postanovlenie55/> (last accessed 2 November 2010).

⁶² *Tipovye proekty* were not necessarily designed by architects in a particular city: for instance, the Novye Cheremushki development in Moscow was put forward as a model for developments in other Soviet cities (on criticism of the Novye Cheremushki plans by Leningrad architects, see below).

⁶³ See the article by M. Luchutenkov, head of the department of the Leningrad City Soviet Executive Committee responsible for keeping statistical tallies of living space and the allocation of this (Upravlenie ucheta i raspredeleniia zhiloi ploshchadi Lengorispolkoma) (Luchutenkov 1969); and the many similar reports in the local press (*Kvartaly shagaiut* 1967; Andreev 1968; Zakhar'ko and Sovolinsky 1969).

⁶⁴ On the 1960s, see Fetisova and Shitov 1963; Kliushin 1966; Rosliakov 1967. See also Lebina and Chistikov (2006:177).

⁶⁵ *BILGS* 1982, no. 8, p. 5.

furnishings and making the dwellings unpleasantly cold (*Etot kovarnyi styk* 1986).⁶⁶ Living a reasonably comfortable life in these places was not straightforward.

At the same time, the British architect who recorded his negative first impressions did also add that ‘on examining finished work, however, the impression is rather better, a certain amount of modest craftsmanship being carefully concealed. The one-, two-, and three-bedroomed flats (priced at 33, 70, and 105 roubles a month) are really very pleasant’ (Edmonds 1958:41). If Leningrad new building is compared with Western social housing of the same period, it is not clear that aesthetics and standards were so very far adrift.⁶⁷ From the start of the crash building drive, the architects and engineers responsible for mass housing in Leningrad exercised their minds about how to construct buildings in which it would be possible to create *uiut*. Their concerns are revealed by the behind-closed-doors discussions in Lenproekt, the architectural institute responsible for the planning of individual buildings, blocks (*kvartaly*), and entire districts in the city.

In 1957, for example, A. S. Ginzberg, a participant in a session of the Technical Council of Lenproekt, complained that plans for pattern-book architecture often saw industrial production as the purpose of the process, not as the means. ‘Creating cheap, well-built, comfortable blocks’ was in fact the end that everyone should keep in mind. V. F. Railian was even more frank:

I’ve got a 2.6 metre wide room in my flat, and it’s not very comfortable. 2.27 metre wide would be really uncomfortable. You can’t even put the bed-head up against that wall, or you only have 15 cm left, so you have to jump across the bed, but if you put it along the long wall, then it looks like you were in a barracks, and if you have two beds, you can’t cross the room. There’s an access route on the sketch, but you can put anything on a sketch. You have to leave 5 cm between a bed and the wall, and here the width is shown as 75 cm, but if you add in the coverlets, it’s 90 cm, and then you won’t be able to get between the two beds at all. It’s just a cheat to put in that four-panel glass door, what use is there in that, you’ll still have to jump across the beds, and if some guest arrives and they’re sitting in the living room, then you’ll be stuck there. [...] Comrades, we’ve lost our way trying to carry out all these orders and directives from Gosstroï [the state building authority], they’ve just muzzled us, they’ve put blinkers on us and we can’t see anything and we’re completely off the right track. You have to work in a principled way, the whole design of these blocks should be completely different.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Co-operative blocks had some of the disadvantages of other newbuild—services, particularly telephone connections, might be slow to arrive—but the quality of finish was generally better in co-operative blocks than ordinary state ones.

⁶⁷ The minimalism of Western social architecture at this period has its defenders too; see e.g. Hathersley 2010, which contrasts this period approvingly with the would-be cheery post-modernism of more recent decades.

⁶⁸ ‘Stenograficheskiĭ otchet sektsii arkhitektury tekhnicheskogo soveta Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo proektnogo instituta “Lenproekt”, 5 marta 1957 g.’, Central State Archive of Scientific and Technical Documentation, St. Petersburg (TsGANTD-SPb.), f. 36, op. 1-1, d. 216. ll. 11–12.

A few months later, the Novye Cheremushki development, a prestige housing complex in southwest Moscow which the Leningrad architects were being instructed to see as exemplary,⁶⁹ also attracted adverse comment. There was simply not enough room for what one would expect in one's home, a member of Lenproekt complained.

A. Ia. Macheret: We've reached the full pitch of absurdity—if we put a toilet bowl in, we take the wash-hand basin out. OK, so why don't we take the main basin out, people can just use the toilet bowl?

This project is so cramped, you pretty well can't chuck anything out. When the discussion of small-scale apartments started, no one said they had to be less comfortable. But now we're removing the wash-hand basin, we're starting to get rid of the built-in cupboards. So if we do remove them, and people end up having to use ordinary furniture in small-scale apartments, what then? [...]

Voice from the floor: But we're supposed to be going for a cost reduction.

Macheret: You can't talk about cost reduction for its own sake. There are people involved here. After all, Viktor Viktorovich, imagine putting you and your furniture in one of these flats. Think of what that would look like. There'd be no room to hang a coat even. You just can't do things like that.⁷⁰

In 1961, the latest plans for high-rise blocks were criticised with equal vigour. Participants in the discussion described the plans as creating 'nothing more than a roof over people's heads' and 'living space, not real flats'. One speaker was especially doubtful about one aspect of the design: 'The main room [*obshchaia komnata*, lit. 'common room'] should be a good size, it should have plenty of space, it should have room for a bed. And here (pointing at the poster) it's a through room and there's nowhere here for a bed.'⁷¹ The comment made clear the expectation that living space would remain multi-functional, every room would serve as someone's bedroom, as well as being used for other purposes. A 'through room' (*prokhodnaia komnata*) therefore meant somewhere that another person would need to walk through to get to *their* bedroom.

Aside from the cramped conditions in the main room and the inconvenience of 'through rooms', a particular focus of disquiet was the size of the kitchens in these new apartments. In 1961, members of the Technical Council at Lenproekt pointed out that a kitchen sized only 2.15 by 2.17 metres would leave under half a square metre of workspace once the units and table were fitted in—and this only if the fridge were banished to the corridor.⁷²

⁶⁹ Novye Cheremushki, the most famous of the newbuild districts across the Soviet Union, was the subject of a 1958 comic opera by Dmitrii Shostakovich *Moskva-Cheremushki*.

⁷⁰ 'Stenograficheskii otchet zasedaniia seksii arkhitektury tekhnicheskogo soveta Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo proektnogo instituta "Lenproekt", 9 oktiabria 1957', TsGANTD-SPb., f. 36, op. 1-1, d. 234, l. 32.

⁷¹ 'Stenograficheskii otchet zasedaniia seksii arkhitektury tekhnicheskogo soveta Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo proektnogo instituta "Lenproekt", 4 apreliia 1961 g.', TsGANTD-SPb., f. 36, op. 1-2, d. 488, l. 25.

⁷² 'Stenograficheskii otchet plenarnogo zasedaniia tekhnicheskogo soveta Leningradskogo

Later generations of high-rise blocks were more generously sized (a nine-square-metre kitchen was standard by the late 1960s, and by the 1970s, ceiling heights had also risen).⁷³ But as basic designs improved, criticism shifted to the ‘icing on the cake’—or rather the *otdelka*, the fittings and interior decorations put into the apartment shells. It was general practice for Soviet builders to kit new flats out, from taps to wallpaper, but, as time wore on, this practice came in for increasing criticism from professionals. The Leningrad building journal *Leningradskii rabochii* (formerly *Stroitel'nyi rabochii*) complained in 1973 that Kolpino linoleum, the sole type locally available, was really horrible, that rubbish chutes were manufactured to a standard which would have made a village blacksmith blush, and that it was possible to buy just one type of parquet block. State building companies (*stroitresty*) were not allowed to raise spending on items such as these, yet tenants, once they moved in, immediately ripped out unsatisfactory lino, changed doors on fitted cupboards, tore out useless locks, so that installing poor-quality fittings was an obvious waste of money. The article pointed to cases where tenants had cheerfully paid 193 roubles for specially designed kitchens and suggested that everyone should be given the opportunity of choosing whether to stick with the default or pay for an alternative (see e.g. Poltorak and Konovalov 1973a). The newspaper regularly carried articles about new types of bathroom fitting, wallpaper, tiles, and other household objects (see e.g. Poltorak and Konovalov 1973b).

LIVING IN A ‘CUBBY HOLE’: THE EXIGENCIES OF HOME-MAKING

The discussions in Lenproekt and Leningrad journalism of the 1960s and 1970s leave one in no doubt about the importance of *uiut* as an objective of the planning and propaganda of the day. In the post-Stalin era, there was extensive coverage of the ‘house-warming’ (*novosel'e*), the arrival in the new family apartment as a key point in the Soviet city-dweller’s existence (see e.g. Reid 2009b). At the same time, the mechanics of home-making were not dwelt on in detail in official sources. Reconstructing these requires recourse to oral history and personal reminiscence, on which I have drawn here,—including my own memories of Leningrad homes in the 1980s (I first visited the city in 1979 and returned several times before the collapse of Soviet power in 1991). What follows does not attempt to give an exhaustive account of home-making, instead I focus on some key sites of spatial organisation, particularly those which were linked with the expression of family and local memories.

Over the last decade or so, ‘nostalgia’ for the Soviet past has become a widely-discussed phenomenon (see e.g. Baiburin and Piir 2009; Boym 2001; Oushakine 2007).

gosudarstvennogo proektnogo instituta “Lenproekt”, 2 marta 1961 g., TsGANTD-SPb., f. 36, op. 1-2, d. 482, l. 45.

⁷³ Zakhar'ko and Sovolinskii (1969) reported that the latest buildings had been improved by ironing out the mistakes of the past—for example, entrance halls (*prikhozhie*) and kitchens were larger.

But it is interesting to contrast the lyrical reminiscences that one often comes across in interviews or on the Internet about, say, food (see e.g. Kushkova 2005) and the considerably less encomiastic recollections of what home-making was like. One of our informants, for instance, recalled the shock effect of arriving at her new block in Kupchino, right next to a 'bog', after the solidly-built and rather gracious building next to Obvodnyi Canal where her communal apartment had been located:

So they gave us a separate apartment. Of course, it actually was bigger, metre for metre, than the one we'd had. Naturally. But as a separate apartment, it was really small. Or, at least, the kitchen was small, and the passageway was small, and the ceilings were really low. It was a complete shock.⁷⁴

Another informant's recollections were similar:

My parents had got the flat through an official order [*po raspredeleniiu*]. Before they got it, my parents lived with my father's parents and his younger sister. And where they lived, it was this micro-district on Leninskii...round Leninskii prospekt. In this really typical Khrushchev-era apartment, on the first floor. Officially it was called a 'four-room' flat, but the space was more like a modern... well, a big one-roomed flat or a small two-roomed one [i.e. about 25–30 metres]. There was one slightly bigger room, this hall thing in the middle, and three of these little cubby-holes [*zakutochki*], practically, see...And my parents were in this room...I think it was about five metres, five square metres. And so when they unfolded their double divan, they had about 20 cm of free space left to get in the room and lie down.⁷⁵

The second informant, though, is describing a type of layout popularly known as a *raspashonka* or 'baby's jacket', which became obsolete in the early 1960s (see Lebina and Chistikov 2003:180). Later, it was customary for the rooms to open off a hall, and the minimum size of rooms became significantly larger. At the same time, space was always limited: in 1970, the average allocation per person was given by the head of the Leningrad City Soviet board responsible for distributing accommodation as 8.6 metres per person (Luchutenkov 1969). With ceiling heights of 2.4 metres, those used to the generously-pitched ceilings of some pre-revolutionary Leningrad *kommunalki* could feel particularly cramped.⁷⁶

Space was the one constraint that home-makers could do nothing about. Changing the layout of one's apartment by demolishing walls was forbidden (indeed, 'replanning' was heavily regulated even in the post-Soviet period) (*Zhilishchnyi kodeks*:17–18). The

⁷⁴ Oxf/AHRC SPb-10 PF2 MS (woman, b. 1945).

⁷⁵ Oxf/Lev SPb-07 PF2 AK (woman, b. 1977, father official in factory and Party member, mother accountant).

⁷⁶ Cf. the recollection of one informant that her family lived in a room with a 'four metre' ceiling (Oxf/Lev SPb-02 PF14): while probably exaggerated, this is typical. Blocks built in the 1970s and 1980s had higher ceilings (2.8 metres was standard). Once again, one should bear in mind that 2.4 metres was and is a normal height for new apartment blocks and houses in Western cities of the period too.

amount of choice that the average householder could exercise about decoration was also limited. As mentioned before, the majority of Soviet flats had their *otdelka* provided from the start. One type of parquet flooring, one type of linoleum, one type of ceiling finish, identical bathroom fittings, kitchen cabinets, and even wallpaper and paint remained the norm. Not everything about this was bad: the quantity of built-in storage in a *tipovaia kvartira* would have put the average British dwelling of the period to shame.⁷⁷ But provision was inflexible: new inhabitants could not decide where they wanted their storage, or what other fittings they wanted.

Even if the will was there, making alterations was not easy. The operative word even professionals used for obtaining building materials was *dostat'*, 'to get hold of', meaning to wangle supplies through one's connections.⁷⁸ Without such connections, obtaining wallpaper and fittings was difficult. There was accordingly a limited range for the imagination of the person or people who moved in.

One place where people were able to, or had to, make choices of their own was in selecting curtains.⁷⁹ In a major textile-producing city such as Leningrad, upholstery and curtain material was readily available in shops with the generic name *Tkani* (Fabrics) as well as in the different department stores. What was on sale were serviceable, but usually rather drab, with a limited colour palette and patterns that tended to follow the principles of Soviet 'good taste': small scale, geometrically stylised rather than representational prints. Browns and beiges predominated. In the circumstances, and also given that curtain-rails and hooks were extremely basic, it did not occur to anyone to attempt elaborate 'window treatments'. At most, people might hang inner net curtains or ruched blinds alongside the plain oblong strips suspended at the edges of the windows. Furniture was also, for most people, predictable in character: small, boxy units, usually constructed in plain deal with mahogany veneering.⁸⁰

In circumstances of such unpretentious, indeed basic, decoration, the room for creating a 'home' in an individual sense was rather limited. Indeed, now many informants, asked what they remember about their family's home at this period, will produce the phrase '*vse kak u vsekh*' (everything like in everyone's home), just as those recalling life in communal apartments do.

⁷⁷ This storage, typically, included built-in cupboards, an *antresol'* (overhead storage next to the kitchen), a 'cold cupboard' (*kholodnyi shkaf*) in the kitchen, used as a kind of larder for storing food, and so on.

⁷⁸ See e.g. Duraeva (1980:5)—in the context here of district administrations 'acquiring' pipes by means best known to themselves. On this principle in the socialist economy generally, see Verdery 1996.

⁷⁹ Here and below, I base my comments on personal observation during visits to Leningrad in the late 1970s and 1980s.

⁸⁰ See e.g. Vakhramev and Chudovskii 1973, which featured the new mass-produced (*tipovaia*) furniture that had become available, e.g. open wall-units (*vetrennye stenki*).

'FAMILY RELICS': MEMORY AND THE HOME

Modern Leningrad apartments were very different from the collectors' treasure-houses that signal 'Petersburg style'. Inherited possessions were few if any. Few of our informants remember even one thing in this category. Here is an exception:

And on the other side they had a double wardrobe and this really old desk, it had been my great-grandmother's...[...] You couldn't get a pram in the room. They used to fold it up and put it in the big room—there just wasn't room in the corridor.⁸¹

The desk must have dated from, at earliest, the 1900s, but this counted in most people's minds as 'really old'. It was rare to have any heirlooms (*semeinye relikvii*) at all.⁸² This was a standard situation in Soviet cities, given the amount that people tended to move about, the difficulties of transporting furniture, especially large pieces, around, and the vulnerability of burnable objects to times of crisis. In Leningrad oral history, the Blockade, with this as everything else, marks a symbolic border: it is common to be told that few things survived this catastrophe.⁸³ Informants from later generations sometimes remember things going to the state 'commission stores' (*komissionnye magaziny*), where private citizens could sell items on payment of a small percentage of the price received to the store, when they were the wrong size or simply looked 'odd' in new flats'. By the late Soviet period, it was generally furniture of an obviously functional kind (as in the case of this 'old desk') that survived. Occasional tables, what-nots (*etazherki*), silk-upholstered sofas were found only in the houses of devotees.

It was by all accounts relatively easy to get antiques during the Soviet period. They could be 'acquired' if you took over a room in a communal flat and previous inhabitants' belongings happened to turn up there. They could be bought in the *komissionnyi magazin* and in impromptu flea markets (*barakholki*) as well as from the growing network of private dealers. Sometimes, they could simply be picked up on household dumps. These were all ways by which collectors were able to accumulate their treasures. But many people either did not like old furniture, or did not have the space to house it.⁸⁴ Inherited possessions were likely to be small-scale: watches,

⁸¹ Oxf/Lev SPb-07 PF2 AK (woman, b. 1977, father official in factory and Party member, mother accountant).

⁸² Few of the informants interviewed for our St. Petersburg project can easily identify any 'family heirlooms'.

⁸³ See e.g. Oxf/AHRC SPb.-10 PF10 NG (female informant, b. 1937): '... For a long time this hob stood in the kitchen, we called it the hob, which...we used to keep warm by burning coal. It saved our lives during the Blockade, because we burned chairs in it, and furniture, and even books'.

⁸⁴ When the father of a friend of mine took home old furniture that was being cleared out of his workplace in the 1970s, his colleagues were astonished that he might be interested in 'junk' (*barakhlo*) of that kind. Cf. Viktor Krivulin's comments: 'In the rooms, furniture of some kind had remained behind from the last tenants, which had got more and more rickety and was reaching the point of no return—wardrobes with cracked mirrors, high-backed armchairs with holes in them, real

maybe small bits of jewellery, perhaps a few silver spoons.⁸⁵ Families from a rural background might treasure—carefully concealed—an icon.⁸⁶ This is typical, as is an informant's recollection that inherited objects were treated without much piety:

I remember now, we do have one family heirloom—it's a bronze clock. I think that's all that's left from before the war. [...] It was a real clock once, it had a special movement, an old one. But I couldn't get it to work again, so I just stuck a new movement in there. But all the rest is left, that clock...it even looks like one I saw in the Hermitage.⁸⁷

What of 'heritage' in a collective sense, the link to Leningrad as locality? Separate apartments presented their inhabitants with an environment that was not specific to the city. A dilapidated *kommunalka* might include pre-revolutionary architectural features, such as tiled stoves, stained glass, or a plasterwork ceiling. As L. V. Vlasov (born in 1926 and brought up on Kuznechnyi pereulok, in the heart of the city) remembered:

Until it was reconstructed in 1956, Flat no. 4 was out of the ordinary. There was a big hall with two niches for wardrobes next to the doors into the rooms. The kitchen had a roomy stove with an oven, 'embellished' with many flaps and a highly efficient ventilation system. There were cool boxes in the windows. The bathroom, a full 12 metres square, had a 'family tub' and a water-heater with a metal airing cupboard. The flower-painted lavatory pan stood on a little platform behind a door with decorated glass.

[...] The room we lived in had a beautiful moulded ceiling. The imitation fabric wallpaper had a kind of airy look to it. The parquet floor, set to an unusual pattern, was where I loved playing war games with my little tin soldiers. In the

nests of bed-bugs, couches from the brave dawn of the twentieth century with shreds of silk twill still clinging to them' (1998:48).

⁸⁵ For instance, an informant b. 1944 remembers a military decoration belonging to her grandfather (Oxf/AHRC SPb-07 PF1 SA); another informant, b. 1984, remembers silver flatware (Oxf/AHRC SPb-08 PF43). However, contrast an informant's recollection that things such as jewellery were sold after the War in order to buy food during the severe shortages of 1946–1947 (Oxf/AHRC SPb-07 PF8 SA).

⁸⁶ Oxf/AHRC SPb.-08 PF51 (man from Sestroretsk, b. 1944). The informant jokingly refers to the question of family relics as 'a trade secret'.

⁸⁷ Oxf/AHRC SPb.-07 PF1 IN (man, b. 1938). While a collector would have made efforts to find out something about the history of the clock, for most people such an object is just 'old'. Interestingly, native Leningraders (like this man) do not differ from people who originally lived elsewhere; take the following case: 'There were these tablecloths, for instance, snow-white with flowers on, poppies, and rugs, there was this black rug with pink flowers. Then later, it was used as a covering for cabbage. [...] Yes, the rug as well. When we were pickling cabbage and all that, we used it as a covering, it was all old stuff, and so it wasn't specially valued...' (Oxf/AHRC SPb.-07 PF1 AK [woman, b. 1951]). Cf. Oxf/AHRC SPb.-10 PF2 MS (woman, b. 1945, Gorky province, now Nizhnii-Novgorod province): informant collects a beautiful embroidered cloth and then comments, 'it may be in the dacha somewhere now'.

room was a beautiful tiled stove decorated with silhouettes of lads and lasses, and with a whole picture on its front. I often remember the warmth and *uiut* with which it filled our room in the evenings. (Vlasov 2007:32–34)

Separate apartments lacked such features, even if they had been carved out of old buildings, given that reconstruction also meant standardisation.⁸⁸ This was one of the reasons why some members of the artistic bohemia preferred to remain in *kommunalki*. In such circles, the cultivation of *uiut* was also considered a rather dubious objective, an expression of *meshchanstvo* (petit-bourgeois values).⁸⁹

However, this was a minority standpoint. Most flat-dwellers do not seem much to have missed such relics of the Petersburg past or attempted to replace them by other 'historical' items. The one item of a 'local heritage' kind that might be on display was porcelain from the Lomonosov Factory (the former Imperial Porcelain Factory). Tea, coffee, and dinner sets were all regularly offered as wedding presents or gifts for other occasions. Novelty items in Lomonosov porcelain—presentation plates, statuettes, decorative inkwells, candlesticks—might also be on show.

This china, along with other precious things, tended to be placed in the *servant*, which formed the cynosure of living rooms in family flats as it had in families' rooms in the communal apartment. At the same time, it was normally not antique 'Imperial' porcelain but modern Soviet designs that were placed in this family sanctum.

Despite the growing prominence of pre-revolutionary St. Petersburg in representational terms, Leningrad home-owners often evoked associations with the past in their homes in ways that were typical for other Soviet cities too. For instance, craft-style souvenirs picked up on trips round the Soviet Union brought a pleasurable sense of temporal and spatial exoticism.⁹⁰ In terms of *objects*, Soviet-era Leningrad homes tended not to be specific to the locale. The situation is caught rather well by Georgii Daneliia's film comedy *Autumn Marathon* (1979), where only the most negative character, the fat translator who passes off the hero's work as her own, inhabits a palatial apartment steeped in Petersburg history. The protagonist himself is housed in a *tipovoi dom* somewhere on the city's outskirts, where only the piano and a couple of pictures speak of the pre-Soviet world.

The arrangement of space in separate apartments was also 'Soviet' in character. Vadim Shefner's story 'A Palace for Two, or The Confessions of a Bachelor' was a witty

⁸⁸ In practice, family apartments with old features were likely to be those that had been converted back in the 1920s or 1930s.

⁸⁹ Cf. Viktor Krivulin's dismissive comment, 'Ordinary petit-bourgeois cosiness [*meshchanskii uiut*] was achieved by the expenditure of monstrous efforts' (1998:48). On the history of the term *meshchanstvo*, see Boym 1994; Kelly 2001, chap. 3. In the early 1980s, Colin Thubron encountered the after-effects of this allergy to *uiut* without offering any explanation for it: 'The living room was monopolized by two huge beds raised on blocks of wood. The curtains were gossamer thin. Heavy furniture stood about, its drawers crammed with worn blankets, pillows, books. A budgerigar perched dumb in a cage. There were no carpets, no ornaments, no pretence at decoration at all. The Russian aesthetic sense seemed to have died with Lucia's ancestors' (1985:79).

⁹⁰ In my own flat, I inherited from the previous owners a collection of Carpathian pottery and also some items of Georgian ceramics dating from the 1980s.

displacement into fantasy of the problems that those not used to more than one room might have. Presented with the flat of his dreams by a magician, the narrator has difficulty in 'thinking big':

Stunned by the exact way in which my creative commission had been fulfilled, I went to look at the finished apartment. Apart from the hall, it consisted of a single enormous room, a kitchen, a bathroom and toilet, and one more small room. The little room was really to make up numbers. [...] I couldn't really think of anything to do with the second room, and I decided that it could probably serve as something like the sick-bay in an orphanage—you'd go there when you were ill. (Shefner 1987:260)⁹¹

In the real world also, multi-functionality continued to be taken for granted.⁹² A couple with a two-room flat was unlikely to create a 'children's corner' in the room they used as their own bedroom and use the other as a full-time living room. Instead, the standard pattern was for the largest room to be used both as a living room and as the parental bedroom, while the child's room also served as a spare room for guests and, perhaps, also sometimes occasional storage. If space allocation officially included a study (the perk for those with higher degrees),⁹³ then this room might serve as a spare room and possibly also as a secondary sitting room if more than one person in the family had guests. Arrangement of furniture tended also to be replicated, as with the continuing use of the *servant* as a marker of 'display' space.

The 1980s saw increasing public expression of interest in preserving the past, encouraged by publications such as Daniil Granin's *Leningrad Catalogue* (1986, later republished as *The Camping Gas Stove and So On*), which lovingly evoked the plain ordinary objects of the lost past, including not just paraffin lamps, but gasmasks, old furniture, portieres, and linens. In the book, Granin underlined the importance of family memory:

Family archives aren't the past; they are the future. Every family should have its archive—the roll of honour [*pochetnaia gramota*]⁹⁴ of grandfathers and fathers, the history of their achievements, their labours, the history of a lineage, a family name. (Granin 2003:80)

Yet it is unclear how many people actually compiled such 'archives'. As in earlier generations, it was the photograph album that generally acted as the repository of family history, along with the stories told about it on the occasions when it was produced.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Shefner's character could not think of anything better for his kitchen than 'golden primuses' and 'lots of tables made of Karelian birch'—once again, an ennoblement of the *kommunalka*.

⁹² Here and below, the generalisations come from first-hand observation.

⁹³ The practice of assigning extra space for professional purposes to artists, academics, and so on went back to the 1920s. See Obertreis (2004:198).

⁹⁴ The word *pochetnaia gramota* is used for a certificate of congratulation or illuminated address of the kind given to prize-winners and the like.

⁹⁵ See e.g. Oxf/AHRC SPb.-08 PF36 IN (man, b. 1980).

All in all, the items by which people fashioned a past in the home tended to be related to Soviet preferences generally, rather than to anything local. Paintings of the city were popular with the old intelligentsia (as a visit to the flat once shared by Anna Akhmatova and the family of Nikolai Punin⁹⁶ indicates),⁹⁷ but were more likely to make their way into late Soviet homes in the guise of sets of postcards for study rather than display. Such a postcard, or a calendar showing the Bronze Horseman, would hardly be pinned up by people who lived half an hour's walk or metro ride from the real thing. Among educated Leningraders, the most widely favoured explicit repository of local memory was the home library. Most educated readers had at least a small collection of books about St. Petersburg and Leningrad and, of course, also copies of books by the classic authors of the city, the collection of which became a major manifestation of permissible consumerism in the late Soviet era.⁹⁸ Thus, one could say, the *kommunalka's* material connection with the past was offset by an *imaginative* connection with the past in Leningrad newbuild.⁹⁹

COOKING AND CHAT: THE LATE SOVIET KITCHEN

In some respects, home life in separate apartments represented a continuation of life in the *kommunalka*, with the separate rooms, particularly the 'common room', organised much as the single family room in the *kommunalka* had been. What had undergone significant change were the functional areas of the apartment. Secluded social contact between members of the same family was possible in the hall, the bathroom, and the kitchen. This last had now slid from its previous role, as somewhere where families precariously established a small private foothold in a generally public realm, to a largely private place that occasionally acquired a public function. Meals, apart from those on major festivals (state holidays, such as New Year, Victory Day, or 7 November, and family birthdays and other special occasions), would be eaten in here, including when guests were present. Entertaining was centred round the provision of food, as Nancy Ries has described in *Russian Talk*:

Their two-room flat was spare but orderly, a typical Muscovite apartment. Whenever I visited, we invariably spent the whole time (3 to 4 hours) in the tiny kitchen, where they fed me meals of borshch, rye bread, cabbage or beet salad, fried potatoes and sour cream, followed by tea or instant coffee and homemade cookies and preserves. Everything in their kitchen had its place, and there was never a bit of grime, not a single unwashed dish. In the fall, a line of jars of home-preserved apples and currants ran along the back of the

⁹⁶ Punin, a famous art critic of the 1920s–1930s, was Akhmatova's long-time partner.

⁹⁷ This is now the Museum of Anna Akhmatova in the Fontannyi dom.

⁹⁸ On collecting the classics, particularly *podpisnye izdaniia* (subscription editions, which were scarce and therefore regarded as important status symbols), see Lovell 2000.

⁹⁹ As I point out elsewhere (Kelly 2010b), some of the leading specialists in local history, for example, Dmitrii Likhachev, leader of the Leningrad preservationist movement, and Aleksandr Panchenko lived in modern areas of the city.

counter, and on the top of the refrigerator sat huge jars full of salted cucumbers and home-stewed whole tomatoes. [...]

After spending some time with us, Anna Aleksandrovna always retired to her room to let Masha and me talk by ourselves. Masha regaled me with stories of her life or accounts of her friends' lives. (Ries 1997:10–11)

Ries's description evokes a Moscow kitchen but could equally well be applied to Leningrad at this period. Iakov Fridman's 'Conversations about Nothing in a Kitchen in Piter' lyrically evoked kitchen chat in the late Soviet era:

Have you never sat in a tiny kitchen in Piter, when black December foul weather is raging outside the window, but in the kitchen, it's warm and cosy? When there's a dish of hot fried potatoes on the table, and salt herring with chopped onion, and a bottle of decent vodka, with half of it already downed. When your friends are there at the table, and there's chat about nothing and about everything. About the theatre, about politics, about women, about history, about literature, about the state of the nation and the people. The Russian people and the peoples of Europe. Have you never sat there? Too bad for you, then. (Fridman n.d.)

While in standard Soviet and post-Soviet usage, 'kitchen conversation' (*kukhonnyi razgovor*) was associated with political criticism (the kind of 'private conversation' one could not have elsewhere), the topics of discussion of actual conversations were quite varied. Apart from the ones Ries and Fridman mention, others included the socialisation of children (*vospitanie*)—prompted by the presence of the subject under discussion—and likewise the ever-present issue of how to 'get hold of' scarce goods.¹⁰⁰ But the more festive the occasion, the more likely it was that food and drink would be at the centre of attention, with the hostess congratulated on a particular dish and asked how to make it and perhaps also on her particular *nastoika* (flavoured vodka). Not everyone was as keen a housekeeper as Ries's friends, but typically there would be at least some preserved vegetables and fruits around—presents or purchases, if not products of the family's own cottage industry. Dominating the landscape would also be a large refrigerator useful for storing food supplies that were more perishable than the preserved items.¹⁰¹

The term 'hostess' is precise: in nine homes out of ten, kitchen work was strongly gendered. Men might help with some outside tasks, such as bringing *in* food and/or bottles of liquor and carrying *out* rubbish, but the business of preparing and serving food was generally left to female members of the household.¹⁰² However, cooking was

¹⁰⁰ From an informal interview with a contact (b. c. 1940, St. Petersburg), 16 January 2010.

¹⁰¹ This would likely be a prized possession; see e.g. Oxf/AHRC SPb-07 PF10 SA: 'And we had a "Sarma" fridge, a very good one, it hung on the wall. And opened like this. Well, and it did us for round about a hundred years, till granny Lena tried to scrape a chicken out of the freezer cabinet with a knife'.

¹⁰² See e.g. Shtern (2005:50): Evgenii Rein's mother, having baked a *vatrushka* (curd cheese tart) specially so that he could entertain Shtern, whom he was desultorily courting, left it in the kitchen with a note: 'I've baked this masterpiece for your lovely lady. In return you're to take the filth bucket

not necessarily seen as a chore. Being able to use *one's own* stove and kitchen table—however small—was a significant difference from the communal kitchen, where facilities had to be shared. At the same time, cooking for special occasions was still often undertaken communally, with friends and relations pitching in to help with preparation (a practice that may be one factor behind the prevalence of dishes relying on simple techniques, such as chopping, on the party table).¹⁰³

Memory played a central role in the kitchen space. The process of cooking—certainly when it became a performance for guests or at strongly ritualised family occasions—was also a process of recreation. The 'family recipe', handed down through the generations, was as rare as other forms of *semeinye relikvii* (even assuming traditions had survived the attrition of the human population and the likely destruction of manuscript recipe books, many traditional ingredients were unavailable, and techniques such as baking in a Russian stove unreproducible). But many keen cooks had their personal speciality, *firmennoe bliudo*, as lovingly revived as a family recipe of ancient origin. The tradition of refusing to pass on recipes (as though these were a form of magic knowledge) was less common than a burning desire to impart exactly how to make a particular dish. While the *firmennoe bliudo* quintessentially just put a slightly offbeat spin on something standard (the phrase itself is derived from Soviet commercial cooking),¹⁰⁴ such dishes would become encrusted with experience at the different occasions when they had been served, and their arrival was fraught with anticipation, if also, sometimes, with anxiety (would they turn out as well as usual?).

But the kitchen was a 'memory space' not just in the sense that it was a place for recollection and recreation. As somewhere for displaying objects—ceramics, a samovar, old pans, vases, treasured pieces of cooking equipment—the kitchen was second only to the *servant* (and in families where the *servant* was considered a bit petit-bourgeois [*meshchanskiĭ*], not necessarily even second).¹⁰⁵

There was nothing particularly 'Leningrad-specific' in all this, and indeed the kitchen was the most 'Soviet' room in the Leningrad apartment. Even in homes where antiques were on show in the main rooms, mementos here were unlikely to have city links. At the same time, the kitchen was very much the centre of the home: the primary space for *uiut* and for social contact and the primary space of family memories.

Thus, while the Soviet apartment in retrospect is sometimes seen as simply a kind of drab box, a mass-produced unit (the sociologist Lev Gudkov [2004] has gone so far as to attribute standard thinking to the influence of the *tipovaia kvartira*), the leeway available for individuation, and for the creation of a specific self—one, above all, with family connections—was considerable.

out for the next two weeks without a squeak of complaint, and to go and buy potatoes.'

¹⁰³ Cf. the predominance of salads as a festival food, on which see particularly Kushkova (forthcoming). I have addressed the history of the salad in Kelli 2011.

¹⁰⁴ The term literally means something like *specialité de la maison*, a dish that you might find in a restaurant or delicatessen.

¹⁰⁵ This is based on personal observation in the 1980s.

'FOR ME *UIUT* MEANS A SENSE OF RELAXATION': PETERSBURG HOMES IN THE POST-SOVIET PERIOD

The post-Soviet period is often seen as a time when nostalgia and retro were transformed into consumer demand (see e.g. Shpakovskaia 2004). In Petersburg, interest in antiques became far more widespread. There was a boom in shops selling old objects (*predmety stariny*).¹⁰⁶ Dealers issued small ads trumpeting their readiness to buy 'old furniture in any condition; we even collect from dachas'; specific items (desks, cupboards) might be mentioned.¹⁰⁷ People who owned old furniture suddenly reassessed the status of their possessions and might pay large sums of money to have their old desks, wardrobes, and tables restored.¹⁰⁸

However, equally prominent was a determination to break with the past in terms of interior decoration. Now it was the turn of Soviet fixtures and fittings, as well as individual items of furniture, to make their way to the dump.¹⁰⁹ Once tenants were given the opportunity to 'privatise' their living space (the legislation was passed in 1989), an open market in rooms and apartments started to open up, reflected in the many small ads carried by newspapers in the early 1990s.¹¹⁰ For those who had access to dollars, prices were low. In 1995, a two-room Stalin-era flat in the Avtovo area could be had for 17,000 dollars, and for around 27,000 dollars the buyer could purchase a four-room flat with a bay window, balcony, and parquet floor on prospekt Stachek, one of the prestige developments of the 1930s.

¹⁰⁶ See e.g. Karchik 1994 on a shop selling 'old things' on Stremiannaia: for example, old typewriters and an *elkhorn hatstand*. The article approvingly comments, 'There can be no other such shop in the whole of Russia, because our city is also a one-off'.

¹⁰⁷ See ad in *NevV* 4 July 1995, p. 5: 'Starinnui mebel' v liubom sostoianii. Vozmozhno s dach'; 'Kupliu' section; *NevV* 17 November 1995, p. 5: 'starinnyi pis'mennyi stol, shkaf, predmety kukhonnogo byta za razumnuiu tsenu'.

¹⁰⁸ An informant of mine was extremely proud of having done this in the late 1990s, though the 'antiques' were fairly standard mass-produced items from the late nineteenth century (author's field notes, 2005).

¹⁰⁹ When I had my own apartment renovated in 2005, the builders kept most of the pre-revolutionary items, as requested, but dumped a Soviet toilet table from the 1950s and a Finnish cabinet with sliding doors, both of which I had also been intending to keep.

¹¹⁰ In the Soviet era, tenants could exchange rooms and apartments, and combinations of these (two one-room flats swapped for a two-roomer, a two-roomer and a one-roomer for a three-roomer, etc.) and levelling payments were also permitted (see 'Kak obmeniat' kvartiru', *Leningradskaiia panorama* 1986, no. 4, pp. 19–20). But state and co-operative apartments could not be sold. Exchange persisted into the 1990s, with a new permutation being the *mnogoetazhnyi* (multi-stage, literally 'multi-storey') exchange, intended to clear an entire communal apartment for family use. See e.g. Tachaev (1993:2). In this interview, Stanislav Stepanov, an investment banker, described how he and his wife had recently moved from a single room in a four-room Khrushchev-era flat (the absolute bottom of the housing ladder) to two rooms in another four-room flat, where they had bought the other two rooms from their owner, then sold the complete package and moved to separate accommodation at last. Stepanov's firm was offering to act as an agency for other St. Petersburgers planning similar moves. Apartment exchanges, usually offered as an alternative or partial alternative to cash purchase, have not completely disappeared from the housing market even now. See e.g. <http://pia-spb.ru/> (last accessed 17 March 2011).

(For comparison, in 1993, a large-screen Sony TV was selling at around 2,000 dollars.)¹¹¹

Privatisation also gave the former tenants a much greater sense of involvement with their surroundings and, hence, a desire to improve these. The fascination with Western consumer goods extended to the world of the home. Already by the late Soviet period, people were acquiring items such as cassette recorders, which they might purchase on the black market or receive as gifts from Western friends.¹¹² More substantial purchases included imported furniture. At the top end of possible aspirations was 'Finnish furniture' (*finnskaia mebel'*), particularly the *stenka*—the modernist equivalent of a *servant*, a system of wall units with glass doors. A rung or two below came furniture from Yugoslavia and also from the Baltic states considered the most civilised of the Soviet republics.¹¹³ In the post-Soviet era, there was an explosion of outlets selling furniture from different European countries—Spain, France, Italy, as well as all over Scandinavia—and Russian manufacturers started to imitate imported styles as well.¹¹⁴

People also hurried to arrange redecoration (*remont*) of their quarters. The ideal was a so-called *evroremont*, 're-decoration in the European style', which included not just new paint and wallpaper but wide-ranging structural alterations.¹¹⁵ Windows were likely to be replaced with UPV-framed sealed-unit double-glazing (*steklopakety*) imported from Germany; the rough boards exposed when lino was removed would be covered by wooden laminate. Soviet doors would be stripped out, and new veneered ones with bright brass handles installed. (All this, it should be said, refers to homeowners at the modest end of the scale. The plutocracy, if prepared to live in old buildings at all—many preferred newbuild, with or without a pastiche-old façade—expected complete reconstruction.)¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ See *Novoe vremia* 12 September 1995, p. 5. In 2011, the price of the two-room flat had risen to over 100,000 dollars, while the four-room flat would have been somewhere between 200,000 and 300,000 dollars depending on precise location. For the price of the TV, 'Tovar kupit'—ne pole pere-iti', *Novoe vremia* 10 July 1993, p. 2.

¹¹² In the early 1980s, a cassette recorder of the kind that cost about 30 dollars in the West was worth around 250 roubles, or more than double the average monthly salary (personal observation). I remember seeing a handsome example when I visited the oppositional Leningrad poet Viktor Krivulin in August 1985. Its presence was rather paradoxical, given that Krivulin spent most of the evening decrying the decadence and materialism of the West.

¹¹³ Derviz recalls how her mother was overwhelmed by the quality of some Latvian furniture that she saw when on holiday there and quickly arranged to have some sent back home (2011: 159).

¹¹⁴ This furniture can be observed in the various generic furniture shops of the city, for example 'Adamant', or ones marketing furniture from one company only, such as IKEA, Ligne Roset, etc.

¹¹⁵ The authoritative National Corpus of the Russian Language ('Natsional'nyi korpus russkogo iazyka', <http://ruscorpora.ru>) includes citations for this term going back to 1996. The earliest Leningrad example is from a text by the writer Evgenii Popov written in 1997.

¹¹⁶ Among the glitziest new blocks were ulitsa Shpalernaia, 60 (an enormous glass structure built by 'St. Petersburg Renaissance'), the 'Zelenyi ostrov' (Green Island) development on Konstantinovskii prospekt, 26, Krestovskii Island (where a four-room apartment was selling for 2 million dollars in March 2011, see <http://www.mirkvartir.ru/18677917/>), and the Mont Blanc tower on Vy-

As interior design norms rapidly stratified, it became a point of honour among some of the better-off *not* to use the kitchen as a place for general socialising. One strategy adopted in smaller flats was to convert what had formerly been a kitchen into a dining room and use corridor space to carve out a small galley kitchen.¹¹⁷ A 'kitchen for eating in' was not envisaged by glossy magazines or even humbler advice literature publications. One publication in the latter category, published in Moscow in 1998, included, alongside cosy living rooms with overstuffed sofas and armchairs, rocking chairs, and dining tables, slightly sterile kitchens with pull-down flaps for food preparation, rather than eating space. One picture showed an attempt to divide off a 'dining end' by using a unit with studiedly unfunctional curtains and decorations (*Domovodstvo* 1998:12–15, 22–23). This latter strategy was popular with some homeowners too: for example, an informant of mine told me she looked forward to papering one end of her quite large kitchen in an early nineteenth-century flat overlooking the Summer Garden with William Morris–style wallpaper to replace the plain peppermint green emulsion currently in place.¹¹⁸

Yet some sense of the kitchen as a family 'shrine' (*ochag*) remained. Even idealised images sometimes had 'nostalgia value'. For instance, a picture in the 1998 household manual showed some old-fashioned enamel cans for collecting milk (*bidony*), long made functionally invalid by the arrival of the TetraPak; on the shelves sat woven baskets, even if an alien bottle of olive oil had usurped the table (*Domovodstvo* 1998:13).

Similar kitchens were displayed on the home forum run by the local newspaper (with strong online presence) *Moi raion*. This included a page where people swapped information about the decoration of their kitchens. As in the past, *uiut* often required the accumulation of significant amounts of clutter, including patterned ceramic plates, earthenware mugs and bottles, Soviet-era aluminium or enamel bowls and tubs, folksy calendars and pictures, and so on.

borg Side. All these had individual provision of services such as water and gas, air conditioning, underfloor garages, and, of course, round-the-clock security. On reconstruction, see e.g. Uzdina 1993. On the preference for accommodation that is completely new, cf. a woman whom I encountered on a plane journey from St. Petersburg to London, who was extremely proud of the fact that her building in the prestigious area round the Tauride Gardens was a completely new imitation of St. Petersburg *style moderne*, which she had furnished with reproduction Jugendstil furniture from Vienna.

¹¹⁷ I have observed this in several completely unconnected families from the relatively well-off intelligentsia in St. Petersburg.

¹¹⁸ Visit/field diary, September 2009 (woman, b. early 1960s).



Figure 4. A display of folksy items in a post-Soviet kitchen (from the local newspaper *Moi raion's* forum for home design, kitchen section, <http://forum.mr-spb.ru/showthread.php?t=2184&page=1>, last accessed 29 November 2009)

By no means all the kitchens on this site were 'folksy'; some were done out in the kind of sleek chrome and tiling envisaged by magazines. But efforts at making the place 'cosy' usually bore relation to a Soviet vision of 'traditional culture':



Figure 5. A different style of kitchen from the *Moi raion* online forum. Note how the sponge-clean units and microwave are assorted with lace curtains and a samovar (from <http://forum.mr-spb.ru/showthread.php?t=2184&page=1>, last accessed 29 November 2009)

Occasionally, there would be signs of attachment to a kind of 'retro-Petersburg style': for instance, one of the kitchens on the *Moi raion* site (borrowed from another Internet site) had heavy, mahogany-style furniture and rather formal lace curtains and lamps, though also (a completely inauthentic touch in this context) exposed brickwork. But more widespread were types of individualisation, rather than 'localisation', as in the fashion (widespread in the West as well) for multi-coloured letters and other kinds of fridge magnet:



Figure 6. The rise of the fridge magnet (from <http://forum.mr-spb.ru/showthread.php?t=2184&page=1>, last accessed 29 November 2009)

Thus, the fridge had been transformed from its Soviet-era role as a vital repository of food stores to a visual amenity stuffed with brightly-coloured Westernised yoghurt pots on the inside and decorated on the outside.

There was no one canonical understanding of 'the Petersburg kitchen'. Indeed, a blogger on *Zhivoi Zhurnal* (the Russian version of LiveJournal) explicitly addressing the topic carried three totally disparate images: a *kirovka* (constructivist building dating from the early 1930s, named for the then Party leader Sergei Kirov) in the Finland Station area, a quite palatial nineteenth-century block, and a building from the 1930s:

Figures 7, 8, 9. Three 'Petersburg' kitchens from the 2000s (from <http://zoe-dorogaya.livejournal.com/246159.html>, last accessed 20 January 2010):



Figure 7.

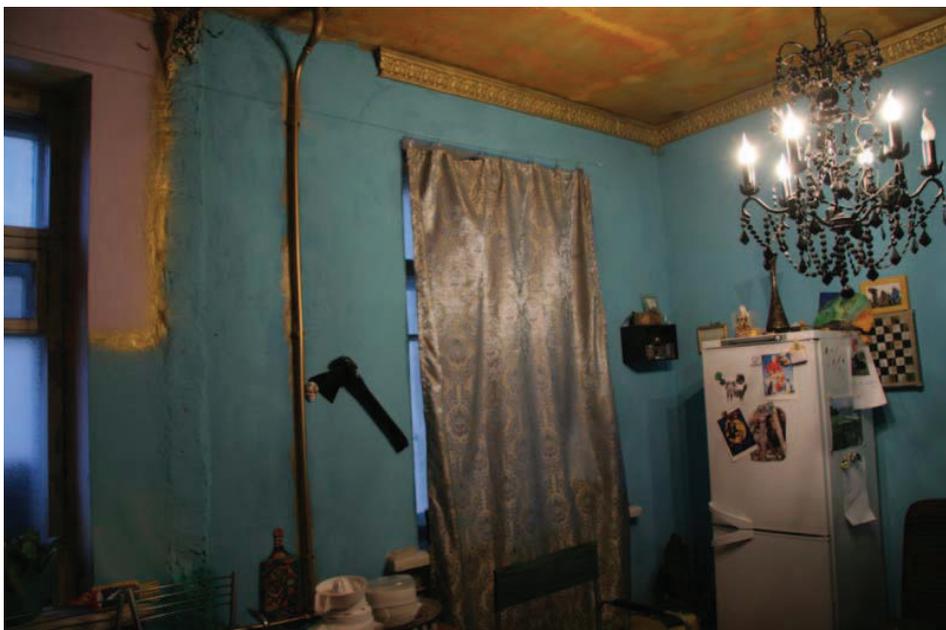


Figure 8.



Figure 9.

Only one of these kitchens self-consciously evoked the classic Petersburg past and then in an obviously ironic way (Raskol'nikov's axe suspended on the wall: Figure 8). If there was a unity between these images, it lay mainly in eclecticism itself: paper napkins, plastic toys, fridge ornaments, *and* folk ceramics; brocade curtains, novelty wine-bottles, *and* fridge ornaments; Soviet era cooking utensils *and* a mobile telephone next to Westernised wrapping-paper and gift presentation. All precision of a historical kind vanished. Chandeliers may be 'authentic' in St. Petersburg apartments, but hardly in the kitchen; folk ceramics and plastic work-tops have a tense and paradoxical relationship to each other.

Amid the confusion, though, the Soviet-era concept of *uiut* persisted.¹¹⁹ In the words of a participant in another *Moi raion* forum, 'Uiutnyi dom':

For me *uiut* means a sense of relaxation, calm, being secure. Warmth. Spiritual and physical. The things that surround you give you associations and invisible links with events and people who are dear to me.

And the people round you, of course.

Another participant said much the same, while being more specific about the types of objects:

¹¹⁹ Perhaps the most remarkable case is the observation in the advertisement for the two-million-dollar duplex apartment on Krestovskii Island (<http://www.mirkvartir.ru/18677917/>) that 'the functional and decorative elements contribute to the creation of *uiut* in the apartment'. This apartment, interestingly, had a kitchen-dining room rather than a separate space for eating.

For me, it's the little details that create *uiut*—something on the walls. And mats (on the floor). Lots of mats.

My home isn't *uiutnyi*, I don't want to spoil the walls.¹²⁰

This last remark points to an interesting and quite widespread dilemma. The post-Soviet era gave people vastly increased opportunities to buy new things and imposed new kinds of taste, but the basic sense of how to handle space—and, particularly, that space should be *filled*—persisted. On the whole, too, the relationship with the past continued to be expressed in generically 'retro' objects (folksy prints and knick-knacks) rather than in items with a specifically 'local' connection. The key idea was perhaps caught by the forum participant who spoke of '*The things that surround you give you associations and invisible links with events and people who are dear to me*'. A central place in home decoration was played by the *suvenir*, a word that in some European languages (e.g. English) is applied mainly to a memento brought back from a holiday, but which in Russian primarily signified a gift object, such as might be purchased for New Year or a birthday. Objects of this kind, often representing something animate (dinky animals or people in cartoon style), were favoured precisely because they did not conform to strict canons of taste: since the Soviet era, advice literature had been exhorting readers *not* to buy items of this kind (Kelly 2001, chap. 6). In their whimsical and even ugly nature, they spoke of informality, and hence of intimacy, 'peopling' (in a nearly literal sense) otherwise bleak expanses, turning a standard space into something inhabited by one individual or individuals. They were the expression of an emotional and communicative network stretching out beyond the apartment's walls. In this sense, commemorative objects in the apartment expressed not a vertical relationship with the city (stretching down into the past), but a horizontal relationship; they honoured ties to other people living at different points of the city topographically but within a unified temporal world.

This paper has examined the rise of the separate family apartment in Leningrad during the post-Stalin era. While the city is most famous in Western Europe for the 'Petersburg style' expressed by antiques collectors, the home style, and the relationship with memory, characterising most inhabitants during the late Soviet and post-Soviet period, was of a rather different kind. In the Soviet period, few families had large collections of inherited objects or indeed specifically 'Leningrad' items. Domestic space might acquire a kind of accidental historical significance—as happened in the *kommunalka* over the course of time. But on the whole, a generic Soviet setting was offset by a purely imaginative relationship with the past, as shown, for example, in the importance of local history in libraries. *Uiut* was characterised by memory practices—what was familiar and individual (as particularly in the kitchen) was very important—but these were not of a particularly self-conscious or 'academic' kind.

In the post-Soviet period, the opportunities to express a historical sense proliferated, and new memory objects appeared: for example, in kitchens, formerly

¹²⁰ <http://forum.mr-spb.ru/showthread.php?t=11011> (last accessed 29 November 2009).

functional objects now became, in their very redundancy, the signifiers of *uiut*. But even now, the historical 'Petersburg' had a marginal presence in most apartments: the sense of a wider urban world was more likely to be expressed in objects symbolising ties of affection, a network of horizontal relations stretching over external space. These traditions complement, and may even help to explain, the extreme interest in historical Petersburg that started to be evident among members of the local intelligentsia in the late 1960s. Those displaced from what was starting to be called 'the historic centre' into areas that by implication had no history normally did not transform their own homes into museums. Instead, they might bury themselves in official museum work or in local history. Thus, they laid imaginative claim to the city centre, and to the past, even while living daily lives that were in most respects explicitly Soviet, in newbuild areas on the periphery.¹²¹

ABBREVIATIONS

BILGS: *Biulleten' ispolnitel'nogo komiteta Leningradskogo gorodskogo soveta deputatov trudiashchikhsia*

LP: *Leningradskaiia pravda*

LPan: *Leningradskaiia panorama*

NevV: *Nevskoe vremia*

VechL: *Vechernii Leningrad*

VechP: *Vechernii Peterburg*

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¹²¹ The sense that the 'newbuild districts' (*raiony novostroek*), also known still more dismissively as *spal'nye raiony* (dormitory districts), might offer historical and even aesthetic interest of their own was constantly stressed in Soviet official culture. For example, areas such as Avtovo appeared, alongside monuments and buildings from the 'Golden Age' (1703–1840), on maps of 'The Sights of Leningrad' for tourists. But it was not till the post-Soviet period when they started to get their own literature (see Kelli forthcoming; Kelly 2010b).

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