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Post-war architecture in a Cold War climate: The building of domestic architecture in Moscow from 1945-64

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Introduction

Housing was the architectural focus of the major European cities in the years following the Second World War. Was this the same for Moscow? As DiMaio explains, 'the disruptions and destructions of the Second World War only heightened an already extreme [housing] crisis'[1] in the Soviet Union. Moscow had its share of the 25,000,000 people left homeless at the end of the War,[2] and the 6,000,000 buildings destroyed.[3] Voznesensky puts this figure into perspective when describing how 'more than fifty per cent of the total housing space' in the Soviet urban centres was left inhabitable.[4] When this is considered alongside the huge food shortages, a short supply of building materials and a post-war baby boom, one can understand the urgent need for stability across the Soviet Union at this time.

Many studies that have delved into this subject in the past, however, have revealed that a post-war reconstruction programme was not a priority of the late Stalinist regime. They demonstrate that under Stalin, domestic architecture in the post-war period was set aside in favour of an ostentatious 'architecture of victory'[5] that would help to promote post-war Moscow as an economically and politically successful Socialist state. The contrasting focus on Soviet welfare methods is most commonly associated with Khrushchev's rule, with his highly impressive mass housing programme that was established in 1957.

The aim of this dissertation is to map the changes in attitudes towards the building of domestic architecture in Moscow from the post-war period under Stalin, to Khrushchev's era of mass housing construction, until his removal from power in 1964. In line with more recent studies into Stalinist architecture, this study will argue that the post-war need for housing was dealt with, to some extent, by Stalin, and cannot, therefore, be solely attributed to

[1] DiMaio 1974: 1
[2] Bittner 2000: 4
[3] Piatakov 1949(1): 7
[4] Block 1951: 5
[5] Aman 1992: 80

Khrushchev. This argument arises from a clear separation between early and late Stalinism (pre and post-war), and thus it is centred on *late* Stalinism only. This notion challenges more traditional literature in the field, such as Tarkhanov and Kavtaradze's *Architecture of the Stalin Era,* in which post-war Soviet architecture is dismissed as 'not essentially different from its pre-war counterpart.'[6] By focusing on late Stalinism only, it can be suggested that the Soviet system 'increasingly sought to improve popular conditions'[7] from the end of the War. The inclusion of the Cold War within the title of this study is to prompt a discussion into how the events of the Cold War period transformed the importance of housing in Soviet politics from Stalin to Khrushchev. This argument will become especially relevant during Khrushchev's period of de-Stalinization from 1954.

Mark Smith's recent book, *Property of Communists,* is the only study to have comprehensively dealt with these arguments so far in the historical field. In the introduction of his accomplished book, he introduces three motifs that 'were encoded into the ideology of Soviet urban housing:' 'sacrifice,' 'beneficence' and 'paradise.'[8] This dissertation will be structured into three chapters according to these motifs. Under the first chapter, 'sacrifice,' late Stalinist architecture will be discussed in the immediate post-war period, exploring whether 'living conditions were ruthlessly subordinated to the fulfilment of industrial, military, or prestige properties.'[9] The second chapter, 'beneficence,' will investigate the change under Khrushchev (and to some extent, Stalin), to improve living conditions in Moscow. 'Paradise' will be the final chapter of this dissertation, which will study the height of Khrushchev's housing programme, in which he used 'housing to create a way of life appropriate to Communist ideals.'[10] While Smith inspired the structure of this dissertation,

[6] Tarkhanov 1992: 117
[7] Smith 2010: 4
[8] Smith 2010: 5
[9] Smith 2010: 6
[10] Smith 2010: 6

these themes discussed in his book are not used in the exclusive manner that is employed to structure this argument.

Following a trip to Moscow in January, case studies of architecture have been selected to support each chapter heading. Photographs from this trip and from archival sources will be used to analyse the buildings. A detailed visual analysis of domestic architecture from 1945-64 is completely missing from the art historical field currently. Khrushchev's Novye Cheryomushki (1954), for example, which will be discussed further in chapter two, is the 'flagship'[11] example of one of Khrushchev's microdistricts of housing, yet is only *briefly* mentioned by renowned architectural historians Mark Smith and Catherine Cooke. This has informed the visual approach that will be adopted within this study. T.J. Clark's sociological approach demonstrated in *On the Social History of Art*[12] will also be influential. Loosely following Clark's model, this argument will deal with the relationship between sociology and art history, by analysing architecture as a symptom of the politics and society of the era.

One may wonder what makes this topic so ripe for discussion. Perhaps it is the lack of a direct comparison between the architectural periods under late Stalinism and Khrushchev in literature that makes it so noteworthy. Others may argue that they have barely considered domestic architecture when there is such a plethora of impressive, Socialist Realist, Stalinist buildings. The issue of housing, however, relates to everyone, and is thus far more interesting than a study of architecture that is so far removed from 'normal' life. As a topic, post-war housing seems to have gathered special interest in this country over the past year, with the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) exhibition, *High Society*, in 2012. The exhibition's focus was upon five high-rise housing schemes developed in the post-war era; the concrete, modernist answers to the mass-housing schemes in the UK. Following the UK's

[11] Blakesley 2007: 185
[12] Frascina 1982: 249-58

recent architectural explorations in this area, therefore, this couldn’t be a more relevant time to be investigating the different housing schemes across the world in response to wartime destruction.

Chapter 1: Sacrifice

'It is no secret to anyone that in the years of Stalin's personality cult housing construction was much neglected and the housing problem quite acute.'[13]
-Brezhnev, 1964.

The post-war 'desire for a calm domestic life, bolstered by an enclosed home,'[14] was not addressed thoroughly enough in the post-war decade in Moscow. The spring 1946 issue of the *Anglo-Soviet Journal* optimistically declared that the post-war Five Year Plan (1946-50) 'will re-house all families rendered homeless by the War, with an improved standard.'[15] For Moscow in particular, 3,000,000 square metres of housing was the new Five Year Plan target.[16] These claims to the vast reconstruction of housing, however, cannot be fully supported by statistical governmental evidence from the era. As Block described in 1954, 'in the Soviet Union there is a law, partly written and partly unwritten, under which any information on housing, unless specifically released for publication, is deemed secret.'[17] He continues to describe how, since the last census that included housing information in 1926, the 'publication of statistics revealing housing conditions and needs [in the Soviet Union] has been discontinued.'[18] This suggests that perhaps Stalin's plan for the reconstruction of Moscow was not so wholly focused on housing as the Plan initially conveyed.

The post-war Five Year Plan is of huge importance in its indication of the priority of housing to the late Stalinist regime. It features heavily in journals at the time, namely *USSR in Construction*, an illustrated monthly edited in Moscow and initially published in English and French for the foreign reader. The first post-war issue was in 1949, which hailed Stalin's 'historic victory' of the War and called into action the 'speedy healing of the wounds

[13] DiMaio 1974: 16
[14] Smith 2008: 305
[15] Vevers 1946(1): 48
[16] Block 1952: 252
[17] Block 1954: 256
[18] Block 1954: 246

inflicted on the Soviet Union.'[19] Given the state of the post-war housing crisis, surely these were the 'wounds' for which the most 'speedy healing' was required. Yet the statements in this first issue indicate otherwise. The journal, the aim of which was supposedly to show the '*living* conditions and activities of the Soviet people'[20] was strongly focused on the re-building of *industry* in the Plan, particularly in Moscow. Housing is only briefly mentioned as part of the reconstruction plan of 'new coal mines, blast and open-hearth furnaces, rolling mills, machine-tool and engineering works, electric power plants, factories and mills producing consumer goods.'[21] Stalin was even quoted, describing his post-war aim to 'raise the material well-being of the people and *still more* strengthen the *military* and *economic* power of the Soviet state.'[22] Despite being a propagandistic source, therefore, it is clear in the first post-war issue of *USSR in Construction* that the state budget for housing was succumbed to Stalin's resumed General Plan for the Reconstruction of Moscow (1935) as a visually monumental and industrial capital.

The reality was that 'reconstruction [of housing] was highly uneven during the post-war decade.'[23] The resumption of Moscow town planning under Stalin's General Plan demonstrated that the housing that was to be built would be in the centre of the city. Maps from the late 1940's shown in Moscow's Shchusev State Museum of Architecture, sadly not reproduced anywhere; demonstrate Stalin's focus on the centre of Moscow: 'the greatest density of the population in the centre.'[24] The map shown in figure 1 gives some indication of his plans. The extended radial structure of the city can be seen, with the most densely populated area within the Garden Ring (*Sadovoye Kol'tso* - second out from the centre), as can a vast number of green areas that extend from the city centre, outwards. Despite the post-

[19] Piatakov 1949(1): 1
[20] Piatakov 1949(1): 1
[21] Piatakov 1949(1): 1
[22] Piatakov 1949(1): 4
[23] Smith 2008: 288
[24] Tarkhanov 1992: 84

war housing shortage, great efforts were made to continue to form Moscow into a new 'garden city.' This idea ironically came from an *English* author, Ebenezer Howard, who wrote *Garden Cities of To-morrow* (1898), which depicted an 'ideal city where people live in harmony with nature.'[25] To create this utopian vision, much of Moscow's resources that should have been spent on housing, including labourers, was used to plant '800,000 trees and 4,000,000 bushes'[26] between 1945-8. The journal, *The Soviet Union*, which *USSR in Construction* turned into post-1949, similarly reported on Moscow's 'multi-coloured carpet of millions of flowers… the symbol of pulsating life.'[27] These journals are laughable to the modern-day reader in their propagandistic optimism. Yet what they do reveal is the extent to which the building of housing for the masses was sacrificed to continue constructing Stalin's great vision for Moscow.

Furthermore, by concentrating on housing in the city centre, albeit with increasingly green spaces, apartment blocks were to grow upwards, 'of at least six to seven storeys.'[28] The housing that was built was created to be impressive and monumental, the idea of 'the mass over the individual,'[29] 'without due regard… to the needs of the population,' such as social and educational facilities, gas, and other amenities.[30]

The building of the Seven Sisters (1947-55) encompasses Stalin's vision for Moscow, to become a *gesamtkunstwerk* (a total work of art).[31] Originally conceived as eight buildings, the Seven Sisters were Stalin's version of the Western skyscraper, with their 'unprecedented size and visual power.'[32] In an era of increasing Cold War tension with the West, however, Stalin's skyscrapers were declared to be the 'direct opposite of bourgeois skyscrapers' in

[25] Self 2013
[26] Piatakov 1949(6): 14
[27] Gribachev 1950(6): 34
[28] Tarkhanov 1992: 84
[29] Tarkhanov 1992: 90
[30] Block 1952: 250
[31] Ades 1995: 247
[32] Thomas 1996: IX

newspapers at the time,[33] with *Izvestia* reporters describing the American skyscraper as 'the unnatural grimace of a Capitalist city… the naked symbol of private egoism.'[34] Whether the Stalinist skyscrapers were so different, however, is questionable. By observing figure 2, it is clear that each of the Seven Sisters were planned around the circumference of Moscow's Garden Ring, to geographically 'crown the architectural ensemble' that Moscow would become.[35] They were symbols of Soviet power, 'to embody the greatness and beauty of the Stalin age,'[36] presented through a Classically inspired architectural style; 'the climax of Socialist Realist city planning,'[37] as Cooke describes. Propagandistic material of the era emphasises the height of the new buildings, with the 'soaring upward flight'[38] of each building's spire. These tall buildings were clearly built out of Stalin's own self-interest ('egoism'), to transform the skyline of Moscow into one of 'majesty and greatness.'[39]

This emphasis upon *height* recalls Paperny's concept of 'Culture Two,'[40] referring to the typically 'vertical… spatially hierarchical, and individual' culture of Stalinism.[41] This concept is certainly conveyed through the Seven Sisters. Each building is designed by a different architect, but all encompass the Classical architectural qualities of 'harmony of form,' 'grandeur'[42] and 'strict symmetry,'[43] with ironically cathedral-like sizes and spire-topped verticality. High-rise buildings such as these were symbols of the individual over the masses in late Stalinism. As Paperny describes, high buildings were 'needed by the state before they were needed by the population.'[44] Indeed, out of the seven skyscrapers, only two

[33] Mordvinov 1950: 52
[34] Chechulin 1949: 59
[35] Vlasov 1951: 42
[36] Mordvinov 1950: 52
[37] Cooke 1993: 102
[38] Mordvinov 1950: 52
[39] Mordvinov 1950: 52
[40] Paperny 2002
[41] Smith 2010: 6
[42] Barsukov 1950: 53
[43] Mordvinov 1950: 52
[44] Paperny 2002: 250

were apartment houses, and these were only to 'accommodate the elite of Soviet society.'[45] Furthermore, their geographical position in the centre of the city, as mentioned earlier, is supported by Paperny's concept of Culture Two, which is 'characterised by the transfer of values to the centre.' The Seven Sisters were built towards the centre of Moscow in an attempt to 'curb [the population's ideological dispersal] through architecture,' 'to catch, settle and secure,' in other words *control*, them.[46] Brandon Taylor agrees, describing the 'vertically stratified' society under Stalin, in which there was 'an elaborate hierarchy of precedence and control,'[47] demonstrated through architecture.

The needs of the masses, therefore, which one would assume were vital in the successful running of Communism, were increasingly sacrificed. As Block wrote, 'participation of the masses in the life of the community necessitates a profound change of attitude on the part of governed and of government.'[48] The apartment building of Kudrinskaya Place (1948-54, initially Ploschad Vosstaniya), however, is demonstrative of the government's lack of post-war change. The basic map in figure 3 shows the location of the apartment block on the western axis of the Garden Ring. As one of the Seven Sisters, the building rises to twenty-four floors, and can easily be seen from the city centre. Figure 4 was taken to convey the scale of the building more clearly, with the vast difference in size between the figure at the front of the image and the door to the back entrance of the building. When observing the building in its entirety (figure 5 – the door comes to the height of the colonnade at the bottom-right of the building), it becomes clear how 'momentous' this building is and was in its 'ideological purport and scale.'[49]

Designed by the architects, Mikhail Posokhin (1909-89) and Asot Mndoyants (1909-66), both members of the Soviet Academy of Architecture, the exterior design of the

[45] Thomas 1996: IX
[46] Paperny 2002: xxiv
[47] Taylor 1992: 193
[48] Block 1952: 231
[49] Gribachev 1951(7): 7

Kudrinskaya apartments embraces the simplified Classical style that was approved under Socialist Realism. This style was 'the classical of *all* periods, beginning with Greece and Rome and ending with the Russian Empire,'[50] utilised so that the building would 'harmonise with the city's historically developed architecture.'[51] The architects' model for the building is displayed in figure 6, demonstrating the landscaped approach to the building (no longer present) and its overall dominance over the surrounding area. Classical Roman architectural influences can be observed with the colonnade that surrounds the ground floor of the building, from which three block-forms rise, two of which flank a central tower with multiple-tiered forms. The overall effect is one of Classical Greek symmetry. Meanwhile, the central tower of the apartment building is reminiscent of the Gothic architecture of Western Europe, with pinnacles that top the four corners. These are purely decorative elements, as is the spire, upon which the Communist star proudly stands.

Decorative features can be seen all over the building's façade, at great expense. This was far from unusual amongst Stalinist buildings, and even late Stalinist apartment buildings. Figure 7, for example, demonstrates the time spent by architects, during the post-war housing crisis, to carefully mould and construct the details (albeit made of plaster), of a 1949 apartment block exterior on Gorky Street, Moscow. The Kudrinskaya apartments' exterior decoration was on a much grander scale, however. Doorways to the building were each created with great attention to detail (figure 8), with metalwork decorating the glass panels in the doors, depicting a repeated geometric design that surrounds the Communist star emblem. Meanwhile the exterior of the entire ground floor level is clad in marble, granite and limestone slabs and decorative stone reliefs and sculptures. Architects N. Nikogosyan, M. Anikushin and M. Baburin, were commissioned specifically to design the decorative façade of the building. Their work can be seen with the sculptural reliefs that rest above the three

[50] Paperny 2002: 18
[51] Piatakov 1949(6): 17

doorways of the eastern entrance to the building (figure 9). These reliefs are repeated around the building; depicting elegant, natural forms that act to frame the Communist star (above the left and right archways) and the Communist motif of the hammer and sickle in the middle. It thus becomes clear that the aim of the building was not to aid the masses during the housing crisis, but to further the state's Communist ideology.

Sculptures were also designed to surround the entire building. In the only detailed analysis of the building to date (1996), Ronan Thomas describes how the sculptures depict 'soviet stars, mothers nursing Communist youth and determined soldiers.'[52] Indeed, figure 10 depicts a Soviet mother, holding her child on her knee, whilst the sculpture in figure 11 depicts a musician, holding a cello. The sculpture in figure 12 is of a soldier, complete with the illusion of body armour and holding a rifle decorated with classical scrolls, and the sculpture in figure 13 depicts a construction worker, resting his right arm upon a capital in the style of the late Roman Composite order. Conveying the heroes of Socialism, representative of the masses, these sculptures were built 'on the principles of Socialist humanism,' as the Soviet architect, Kornfeld, wrote in 1952.[53] This is particularly ironic, considering that the apartments were not built out of concern for the people at all, but for the 'senior Ministry of Aviation and Moscow Council bureaucrats, academicians and artists.'[54] It is clear that these sculptures are purely ideological decoration; the sculptors attempted to validate Stalinist principles by stylistically rooting the sculptural forms in the Classical era. Whether male or female, each sculpture abides by a strong, muscular bodily ideal, whilst each figure, representing the contemporary Soviet, is depicted wearing Classically inspired drapery.

It can be argued, however, that the needs of the masses were not sacrificed as fully as they could have been, due to the implementation of some more economical architectural methods and materials. As the July 1951 issue of *The Soviet Union* journal announced, the

[52] Thomas 1996: X
[53] Cooke 1993: 103
[54] Thomas 1996: X

Kudrinskaya apartment building was built using a reinforced concrete framework.[55] Looking at figure 14, which shows the apartment building during its construction, the dominant use of precast concrete can be seen. This meant that not only was the structure of the building relatively inexpensive to build, it was also very quick. New cranes were built to aid the fast construction, as seen in figure 14, and ceramic tiles (figure 15), rather than expensive stones, were used to clad most of the building's exterior. As one journalist describes, however, 'the builders had the very best and most varied materials at their disposal,'[56] whilst elsewhere in Moscow, 'building [had] become more difficult because of the inadequacy of supply of building materials.'[57]

The building's interior was a similar display of ostentation, reflecting the 'genuine grandeur'[58] of the exterior. The ground floor was home to four food halls, a cinema, a hairdresser's and a fashion house. The food halls alone, one of which is still open to the public, had polished marble and granite floors and walls, and intricate plasterwork on the ceilings, holding extravagant chandeliers, all of which exuded an air of opulence. Figure 16 reveals the elegant vestibule, with granite floor patterns, mahogany elevator doors and fluted columns of the ornate Composite order.

The apartments themselves were built to accommodate varying family sizes, the smallest being two rooms. Even this was lavish in Soviet terms, for as Sosnovy explained, 'the Soviet worker with a family generally has to live in one room with a communal kitchen.'[59] Each apartment had high ceilings, carpeted walls and chandeliers. Whilst little more information exists on the apartments' interiors, the documentation on the other Seven Sister apartment building, on the Kotelnicheskaya Embankment, provides some information on what living standards would have been like. The interior appliances were particularly

[55] Gribachev 1951(7): 6
[56] Gribachev 1952(11): 18
[57] Block 1952: 256
[58] Barsukov 1950: 53
[59] Sosnovy 1959: 180

luxurious for the post-war era, for 'the kitchens [had] refrigerators, dishwashing machines, built-in cupboards and larders,' alongside a television set 'in practically every flat.'[60] There were even heated towel-rails in the fully-equipped bathrooms (figure 17), at a time when 'less than 20 per cent of the urban population in the USSR lives in houses with central heating, and only 16.6 per cent of the apartments have bathroom fixtures.'[61] It is because of this that Ronan Thomas describes the apartments of the Kudrinskaya Place as 'combining opulence with something also rather sinister,'[62] for the ideological aim of the building, 'demonstrating the power, beauty and grandeur of the Soviet state'[63] came at a huge cost to the masses.

The increasingly tense Cold War situation only made matters worse for the housing problem in Moscow. The two nuclear weapons detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States at the end of the Second World War, and their consequent refusal to share the science behind the atomic bomb with the USSR, led to 'suspicions of the good faith and intentions of the Western allies.'[64] Pritt described the 'continual reports of disagreement, crises, deadlock, threats…' between the Superpowers in 1946.[65] The idea that war was possible led the Soviet Union to 'divert available resources to defence, and to pursue a policy of all-out industrialisation of which housing was one of the chief sufferers.'[66] Paperny describes how, even in the spires of Stalin's Seven Sisters, 'were air-defence radar systems,' comparing the buildings to a 'chain of fortified cities.'[67] It becomes clear, therefore, that not only were the housing needs of the masses sacrificed for Stalin's vision for Moscow and the elite members of society, as seen with the Kudrinskaya apartments, but also for the Cold War defence programme. As Sosnovy described in 1952, 'with the present trend in the USSR to

[60] Gribachev 1952(11): 18
[61] Sosnovy 1952: 296
[62] Thomas 1996: XI
[63] Thomas 1996: X
[64] Vevers 1946(1): 10
[65] Vevers 1946(1): 7
[66] Block 1952: 257
[67] Paperny 2002: 250

allocate resources to military purposes, it is unlikely that the [housing] crisis will be lessened in the foreseeable future. On the contrary, it will probably become more severe.'[68]

Stalin's determined lack of communication with the West, prompted by the Cold War, also prevented him from embracing the much more economical ideas of post-war housing reconstruction in Britain at this time. The aforementioned *High Society* exhibition at the RIBA revealed images of the Churchill Gardens Estate in Pimlico, London (1946-61, figure 18), which contained a variety of building styles, built predominantly out of cheap yet efficient construction materials and using new building techniques. Estates such as these housed over one thousand families, quickly. Block understood the difficulties of 'making the Western experience [of housing construction] know in Russia,' however, describing his struggle when trying to publish new Western building techniques in the USSR in the early Cold War period.[69] Stalin's hostility to the West at this time, therefore, exacerbated the housing situation by preventing an architectural dialogue between both sides of the Iron Curtain.

Looking back at Brezhnev's statement at the beginning of this chapter, therefore, one could easily agree that housing construction for the masses was 'much neglected' in the post-war decade. As Smith describes, 'tens of millions of Soviet citizens continued to subsist in dreadful conditions.'[70] The building of domestic architecture was mainly sacrificed for Stalin's 'great construction works of Communism,'[71] including the reconstruction of those destroyed during the War (Dnieper Power Plant, Zaporozhstal Iron and Steel works, Urals Heavy Machinery works…) and those newly constructed, such as the Moscow Metro Ring Line (*Koltsevaya*), 1950. It is telling that these 'great construction works' only refer to industrial and ideologically powerful projects at this time, rather than domestic architecture.

[68] Sosnovy 1952: 303
[69] Block 1952: 236
[70] Llic 2009: 27
[71] Gribachev 1952(1): 4

The burgeoning Cold War only heightened this prioritisation. As the *Anglo-Soviet Journal* aptly concluded at the end of the late Stalinist era, 'whatever the need for economy… it is not permitted to hamper the most exuberant architectural expression.'[72]

[72] Vevers 1952-3(4): 13

Chapter 2: Beneficence

a) Stalin

As Voznesensky discussed in his 1948 publication on the economy of the USSR, however, 'it may be [Russia's] pre-war mind that is easier for us to comprehend in some particulars, while her post-war mentality and social processes remain more difficult of access.'[73] Voznesensky's statement infers that it is easy to overlook Stalin's *positive* post-war changes when his pre-war rule of terror and ignorance of the basic livelihood of the masses dominates. Campbell Creighton explained how American propaganda during the early Cold War period might have been partly to blame for this; with sources insinuating that 'the standard of living of the Soviet worker [in 1952] is worse than that of Russia in 1913.'[74] Creighton argued that late Stalinist beneficence did exist, however, declaring that 'in 1950 the Soviet people had reached a standard of living comparing favourably with that in Western Europe.'[75] Whilst this is most certainly an exaggeration, there are many sources to suggest that a 'new type of Soviet architecture'[76] began under Stalin to aid the post-war housing situation, referring to the emergence of an increasingly industrialised building industry that promoted housing construction from prefabricated parts.

Stalin encouraged a strong relationship between architecture and science in the Soviet Union in the post-war period, which promoted these new forms of building. Journalists of the *Anglo-Soviet Journal* explained the importance of scientific developments for the reconstruction of Moscow at this time, enabling bricklaying to become 'obsolete,'[77] replaced by increasingly mechanised systems on building sites. Meanwhile 'many new factories were opened to prepare mechanised aids to building and to manufacture prefabricated [building]

[73] Miller 1949: 69
[74] Vevers 1952-3(4): 13
[75] Vevers 1952-3(4): 13
[76] Bittner 2000: 155
[77] Vevers 1952(3): 4

parts.'[78] As Block described in 1952, 'Soviet housing is beginning at long last to profit from industrialisation (of which it has hitherto been the victim).'[79] Indeed, Post-war architecture students were specifically 'trained in new methods of industrial construction', with new institutes and technical schools organised in Moscow.[80] Stephen Bittner argues that the first types of prefabricated apartment blocks (*tipovoe proektirovanie*) were built in the late Stalinist era as a result of these efforts.[81] These buildings, built as early as the late 1940's, were the first examples of large-panel construction, using prefabricated concrete slabs to form the walls of buildings, rather than traditional masonry work. As Bittner concluded, they 'marked the first substantial attempt to cut residential construction costs and labour requirements'[82] in an aim to rehouse the masses.

A 1949 issue of the *USSR Information Bulletin,* published in the United States, described Stalin's post-war plan for Moscow, to include the building of 'whole districts – with their parks, shops, apartment buildings, and industrial structures.'[83] This is a particularly interesting source, for it suggests that the idea of the microdistrict (*mikroraion),* as an idealised residential complex that is so often associated with Khrushchev's successful housing programme, was actually initiated under Stalin. Stalin's Peschanaya Street project (1949-55) is the best example of this, located on the outskirts of Moscow. *Pravda* reported the plan for the project in 1949, which was to include 'more than three hundred apartment houses, as well as schools, stores, motion picture theatres and children's houses.'[84] The location of this new housing district seems strange, however, given Stalin's aforementioned Plan that focused on the centre of Moscow. Figure 19 shows where the Peschanaya Street area is in relation to Moscow's Garden Ring, with the nearest metro station to the district

[78] Vevers 1952(1): 43
[79] Block 1952: 256
[80] Vevers 1952(1): 83
[81] Bittner 2000: 156
[82] Bittner 2000: 157
[83] Piatakov 1949: 568
[84] Unspecified 1949: 30

(*Polezhayevskaya*) having only been built in 1972. This suburban residential quarter thus seems to have an even stronger affinity with Khrushchev's much later microdistricts that were outside of the city centre, with an aim to give residents quiet, green spaces with plenty of communal amenities; a new way of promoting the Communist lifestyle.

The earliest mention of the Peschanaya Street project in journals at this time refers to the building 'being done to express streamlined methods, with plentiful use of machinery and the employment of prefabricated parts.'[85] Figure 20 depicts the new housing district during its assembly, with the buildings in the background portraying the large-panel construction method in use. The concrete exterior of the buildings and the vertical line down the centre of their exterior (in-between the two sets of windows at the end of each block), demonstrate that only two concrete panels were needed to build the width of one basic apartment block. The background of this image also supports the statement that 'practically all material is crane-handled'[86] on site for the project, to enable these apartments to be 'built in one-third to one-quarter of the usual time' with 'half the number of workers' on site.[87] Some economical measures did, therefore, exist during late Stalinism towards the building of domestic architecture.

Prominent architects were commissioned to design different apartment blocks within the Peschanaya district, yet they were reminded that 'prefabrication does not at all mean standardised architecture,'[88] suggesting that economical architecture was not yet fully prioritised over its appearance at this stage. The first apartment block built within the complex was by the architects, Mikhail Posokhin and Vitaly Lagutenko (1904-69), and set the precedence for the rest of the buildings in the area. Interestingly, Posokhin had previously designed the Kudrinskaya apartments, the difference of which demonstrates the constantly

[85] Piatakov 1949(4): 1
[86] Vevers 1952(3): 6
[87] Gribachev 1951(9): 26
[88] Gribachev 1951(9): 26

changing roles that architects had to play in the late Stalinist era. Stalin's beneficent builds did, however, combine elements from *both* his ostentatious buildings and more economical methods. Figure 21 shows the exterior of the Posokhin-Lagutenko block (1948-50), located towards the South side of the Peschanaya district. The photograph portrays the monumental presence that the building still has, with the central section raising ten storeys high, flanked by two smaller blocks. Despite being much smaller in size and clearly less ornate, the appearance of the Posokhin-Lagutenko block still resembles the symmetrical form of the Kudrinskaya apartments and emits a similar sense of majesty.

This apartment block was, however, described as a 'school in industrial methods,'[89] prompted by Lagutenko's involvement, for he led the low-cost architectural experiments in Moscow at this time. Prefabricated concrete thus formed the structure of the apartment block, built in a nearby factory and assembled quickly on site with the help of tower cranes. A similar method was used to form the exterior walls, leading one journalist to liken the process to 'a child's house of bricks,'[90] for the use of prefabricated parts meant that building work on the Posokhin-Lagutenko block was 'largely a matter of assembly.'[91] Figure 22 demonstrates this prefabricated construction process more clearly and the use of mechanised methods for assembly. It is easy to understand how the block was built in one year using this method, a time that could have been shortened had Stalin not required some elements of decoration. The apartment block was faced with ceramic tiles, as seen in Kudrinskaya Place; a method that prevented the construction from being fully industrialised, for bricklayers had to be employed. The ceramic detailing can be seen more clearly in figure 23, which shows that great attention was given to the decorative layout of the tiles, conveyed through the design above each window. This feature is reflected in the entablature of the building (see figure 24), with a similarly repetitive geometric design that alludes to a Classical frieze. Whilst this

[89] Gribachev 1951(9): 26
[90] Vevers 1952(3): 6
[91] Vevers 1952-3(4): 38

apartment block demonstrates that Stalin did make some attempts to curb the housing crisis with industrialised building methods, therefore, these attempts were 'still relatively ornate… consistent with late-Stalinist architecture.'[92]

The interior of the Posokhin-Lagutenko block reflected the industrialised building methods of the exterior. Wet plastering was replaced by the much quicker use of plasterboard for the interior walls[93] and precast 'underfloorings, staircases, door and window frames, balcony blocks and rafters' were fitted with speed.[94] Retaining elements of traditional Stalinist architecture, however, the apartment sizes within the block varied from two to four rooms. Prefabricated furniture was used to create features such as built-in cupboards, which supports the statement that 'attention [was given] to the comfort and convenience' of residents.[95] Propagandistic sources from the era depict Western visitors looking around the new Peschanaya Street apartments with admiration, as shown in figure 25. Used with caution, sources such as these do reveal the hardwood floors and light interiors of the apartments and the overall attention to interior decoration. Much like the exterior of the Posokhin-Lagutenko block, therefore, the interior was finished with great attention to the comfort of the residents. The repercussions that this had on the economy and speed of the build, however, compromised its usefulness in overcoming the housing crisis.

As Bittner describes, after all, only 1 per cent of apartments were built using these mechanised construction methods in 1951, increasing to only 3 per cent at the end of Stalin's regime.[96] This means that Stalin's attempts at beneficence were somewhat limited. The Peschanaya Street project was publicised almost solely through propagandistic sources at the time and hardly mentioned in the critical contemporary writings of Sosnovy and Block. This suggests that the project was, in actuality, only a very small step in overcoming the housing

[92] Bittner 2000: 157
[93] Yasnov 1953: 21
[94] Piatakov 1949(6): 1
[95] Vevers 1952(1): 45
[96] Bittner 2000: 167

crisis. Economy was still consistently considered only in relation to 'attractive architecture,' with *Pravda's* call to architects 'to plan apartments economically *without* waiving the high demands of architectural art.'[97] This was a difficult task indeed and certainly the greatest detriment to Stalinist beneficence.

b) Khrushchev

Stalin's death in 1953, however, prompted a swift turnaround in the architectural priorities of the state. Khrushchev became the dominant figure in charge of housing construction, stemming from his involvement with architecture under Stalin's regime as the Secretary of the Moscow Party Committee. As Cooke described, 'the area of construction… had always been a principal arena for [Khrushchev's] talents in practical problem solving.'[98] He felt very personally about the housing crisis, as Bittner described, having said, 'it was painful for me to remember that as a worker under Capitalism I'd had much better living conditions than my fellow workers now living under Soviet power.'[99] Khrushchev's empathy for the Soviet people is what led him to take a more determined beneficent outlook upon housing construction than that under Stalin.

By late 1953, Khrushchev's plans for the construction of housing already far exceeded Stalin's. Stalin's aforementioned post-war Five Year Plan target for 3,000,000 square metres of housing looked pitiful in comparison to Khrushchev's aims for 9,700,000 square metres of housing in Moscow.[100] A vast proportion of this was planned for the peripheral areas of the city, which demonstrates Khrushchev's prioritisation of housing over the architectural magnificence of Moscow's centre. An image of Khrushchev's plans for the new Moscow outline is shown in figure 26, where the black dots reveal the scale and location

[97] Unspecified 1950: 38
[98] Blakesley 2007: 173
[99] Bittner 2000: 157
[100] Bittner 2000: 164

of the newly planned housing districts outside of the Garden Ring, within the 'green belt' area of Moscow.[101] Khrushchev aimed to give Muscovites 'more space… more air'[102] through 'the development of well-planned satellite towns interspersed with large new parklands and gardens.'[103] By developing the outskirts of the city there would be far more space for the housing needs of the growing population.

The 1954 All-Union Conference of Builders and Architects is where Khrushchev's plans for domestic architecture were first formally announced. His speech at the conference marked the same significance to the architecture profession that his later 1956 Secret Speech did to the arts; it 'launched the de-Stalinisation process, [which] marked a new development in Soviet society and foreign relations.'[104] Stalinist architectural excesses were attacked; reported in *Pravda* as 'uncomfortable, uneconomical and overburdened with decorative details.'[105] Khrushchev specifically condemned the architecture of the Seven Sisters, as 'wasting the people's money.'[106] He announced instead his plan for 'durable, beautiful, comfortable and inexpensive housing,'[107] demanding that the new focus for architects must be on the 'economy and quantity' of domestic architecture.[108] In order to achieve his ambitious aims, Khrushchev promoted an 'all-out drive' for standardised mass production,'[109] insisting that all building 'was to proceed by type-plans, not one-off designs, and that only industrialised building methods could generate housing at the extraordinary pace and on the scale needed.'[110] It was towards the end of this conference that Khrushchev famously promised a single apartment to every Soviet family.[111] These plans were underlined

[101] Gribachev 1960(127): 55
[102] Gribachev 1960(127): 1
[103] Gribachev 1960(127): 55
[104] Llic 2009: 47
[105] Mordvinov 1955: 10
[106] Blakesley 2007: 175 P.175
[107] Lyudkovsky 1955: 12
[108] Blakesley 2007: 175
[109] Glendinning 2009: 200
[110] Blakesley 2007: 175
[111] Bittner 2000: 161

in July 1957 when Khrushchev's housing programme was published, describing his 'commitment to end the housing shortage within a maximum of twelve years.'[112] This was a huge turning point in the history of Soviet domestic architecture.

With de-Stalinisation came Khrushchev's aim to restore good relations with the West. *The Soviet Union* documented Khrushchev's efforts at improving foreign relations at this time, despite the Cold War tensions, recording the trip of seven Soviet journalists to the United States in 1955 and Khrushchev's 'mission of friendship' to England in May 1956.[113] The World Festival of Youth and Students in Moscow, 1957, is often seen as the watershed of renewed East-West cultural relations. Inviting students from all over the World, the Festival was represented by the image of a dove, (see figure 27), as a symbol for peace, taken from Picasso's *Dove of Peace* (1949), which was greatly admired at the Picasso exhibition in Moscow in 1956. Whilst the festival itself didn't have a resolute impact upon new architecture, it did encourage a dialogue between the East and West for architects, despite Cooke's argument that 'there were no channels for dialogue' as of yet.[114]

Smith described how this newly opened avenue of discourse impacted the domestic architecture under Khrushchev. Specialist architects from the USSR were encouraged to 'study Western best practice, interact with foreign experts and make use of their findings in a sustainable and open way.'[115] Drawing upon construction methods in England and France in particular, Western domestic architecture influenced the new, cost-cutting methods of the Soviet industry, with ideas of 'single-family occupancy, reductions in ceiling height, the choice of four or five storeys as optimal, and the general removal of architectural excess.'[116] Soviet architects also joined the International arena through International Architectural Congresses, which Glendinning discusses in great detail. It was through this involvement

[112] Llic 2009: 26
[113] Gribachev 1956(5): 3
[114] Blakesley 2007: 175
[115] Llic 2009: 31
[116] Llic 2009: 32

with the International Architects Association that the architectural relationships between the East and West were strengthened. Khrushchev's denunciation of the Stalinist 'mistakes of Moscow University and the old monumental Socialist Realist set pieces,' at the 1958 meeting, reinforced this new relationship.[117] Soviet architects learned from Western 'models of individual apartment types' as well as the 'large-panel prefabricated concrete systems' in France.[118] After all, as *The Soviet Union* stated in 1960, 'the features characteristic of Soviet construction do not exclude an international pooling of experience, international cooperation, gatherings of architects, or contests.'[119]

Nowhere are these influences more clearly presented than in the Novye Cheryomushki district in Southwest Moscow (1954-1965, figure 28), designed by the architect, Natan Osterman (dates unknown), and his team. The district was the first example of 'the Western-influenced concept of the open-planned neighbourhood microdistrict' under Khrushchev; a vast area of economical, standardised mass-housing surrounding shops, schools, kindergartens, cultural and sports facilities.[120] The standardised apartment blocks were grouped into sections of the district to create small communities within. The architects' model of the tenth section of the Novye Cheryomushki district is shown in figure 29. The model depicts a variety of building sizes and shapes as part of the district's 'variegated experimental programme,'[121] with Osterman's aim for the 'free grouping of buildings set back from the street and surrounded by vegetation.'[122] This aim for a free, irregular grouping of buildings within the housing district was shared by Western architects at this time, seen by leading Soviet architects at West Germany's *Interbau* exhibition in 1957. This concept expressed a new sense of freedom through architecture that was so lacking under Stalin.

[117] Glendinning 2009: 200
[118] Glendinning 2009: 201
[119] Gribachev 1960(123): 14
[120] Glendinning 2009: 200
[121] Belouson 1969: 69
[122] Gribachev 1960(123): 14

It is important to note, however, that Khrushchev's vision for domestic architecture in Moscow did not just come from the West, but also drew upon the USSR's own modernist traditions from the post-Revolutionary era. As Cooke described, architecture from the 1920's and 30's 'became valued again in the mid 1950's, it offered indigenous starting points for many of the explorations that began in that decade: into minimal housing units and their equipment, new building types, lighter structural systems, spatial compositions on open sites, and much else.'[123] Much like the architecture of the 1920's and 30's, the Novye Cheryomushki district was an arena for experimental housing types and new construction methods; 'a site of communal structures.'[124] In its affinity to post-Revolutionary architecture, the district strongly abides by Paperny's concept of Culture One, with society's 'horizontal' quality in the 1920's, where 'the values of the periphery became more important than those of the centre.'[125] This is true not only with regards to the suburban location of Khrushchev's Cheryomushki district, but also in relation to his focus on the *collective* rather than the *individual* through the notion of the microdistrict.[126]

It is within Novye Cheryomushki that one finds the *Khrushchyovki* apartment blocks that are so associated with this period of domestic architecture. Typically four or five storeys high, they were the dominant standardised apartment types used throughout the Novye Cheryomushki district and became strongly associated with Khrushchev's mass housing programme. In terms of construction, each *Khrushchyovka* was 'a standardised panel condominium produced at a plant and assembled on the spot in exactly twelve days.'[127] This meant that the structure of each apartment block was made from large panels of reinforced concrete, into which windows were fitted before being taken to the building site. This was the new technology of conveyer construction, where 'outer wall sections, the floors, and inner

[123] Blakesley 2007: 184
[124] Llic 2009: 33
[125] Paperny 2002: xxiv
[126] Paperny 2002: 105
[127] Okorokova 2010

walls are made on a special rolling mill' before being moved to site for 'rapid and efficient assembly.'[128] The finished result of a *Khrushchyovka* exterior is displayed in figure 30. The building's modest appearance reflects the standardised construction methods and Khrushchev's focus on economy. The *Khrushchyovki* were, after all, only ever built as a temporary solution to the housing crisis at this time. Those that survive today are proof of this, as shown in figure 31, where the worn plaster on the outside of the block now reveals the lines of each individual panel with which the building was constructed.

During the late 1950's, however, these blocks were an extremely resourceful solution to the housing crisis. The apartments within Novye Cheryomushki's *Khrushchyovki* were highly publicised, with an article in *The Soviet Union* dubbing them as representative of 'The 1958 Flat.'[129] The author of the article, B. Lvov, described the interior of a typical flat, taking the example of one within a block designed by Lagutenko. This block contained forty-eight flats, all of which varied in size from one to three rooms. Figure 32 depicts the interior of a standard two-room flat. The flat is clearly very small in size; an issue shared by all of the standardised apartments, and prompted the production of 'attractive, compact dining-room, bedroom and living room suites' in factories at the time.[130] There was a new focus on interior design in the Soviet Union as a result of these domestic dwellings, where Soviet architecture journals began to 'carry articles about designs for tables, sideboards, lighting fixtures and flower vases.'[131] The development of plastics in the Soviet Union meant that floors were brightly decorated with practical 'plastic tiles of different colours in rug patterns.'[132] Interiors of these small flats had to be carefully planned to ensure that there was 'no wasted space,'[133] which can be seen in figure 32, with the use of a curtain to separate the lounge-come-sleeping

[128] Gribachev 1958(99): 7
[129] Gribachev 1958(99): 7
[130] Gribachev 1958(99): 10
[131] Gribachev 1958(99): 10
[132] Gribachev 1958(99): 9
[133] Gribachev 1958(99): 9

area from the main communal zone. Thought was given to the storage spaces of the apartments, as seen with the closet to the left of the bedroom, and to the development of built-in furniture, such as kitchens, to use the maximum amount of space available, efficiently. These apartments may have been small, as Zhukov explains, but 'what is far more important is that a family now has a flat all to itself.'[134]

Standardised apartment blocks such as these have frequently received bad press since the Khrushchev era. Lidia Okorokova describes the film comedy, *An Irony of Fate*, by Ryazanov in 1975, which mocks the *Khrushchyovki* in the first scene. The main joke in the scene revolves around the idea that someone could mistake an apartment in Moscow for an identical apartment in Leningrad.[135] Shostakovich's similarly light-hearted operetta, *Moscow, Cheryomushki* (Op. 105, 1958), with a libretto by Mass and Chervinsky, wittily conveys the 'extreme sexual tension' of *Khrushchyovki* residents 'from not having anywhere to put a double bed.'[136] Shostakovich's scores do, however, reveal an atmosphere of optimism regarding the new standardised housing of the district. Works such as *A Spin through Moscow* portray the energy of Novye Cheryomushki with its fast tempo and seemingly spontaneous crescendos. Granted, the *Khrushchyovki* were not luxurious or individual, by any means, but they are excellent examples of beneficent architecture that helped to fulfil Khrushchev's aim to house the masses.

[134] Zhukov 1960: 20
[135] Okorokova 2010
[136] Croft 2001

Chapter 3: Paradise

'The soviet housing programme became ammunition in Cold War skirmishing.'[137]
-Mark Smith, 2009.

The Cold War situation worsened throughout 1958, which had a strong impact upon East-West architectural relations. Soviet journals at the time expressed increasingly threatening remarks towards the United States, describing how they were 'playing with fire,'[138] after apparently planning to 'double the size of the NATO forces… build rocket launching sites and send planes carrying nuclear weapons in the direction of the Soviet Union's Arctic frontiers.'[139] Soviet paranoia about American spies, spotting 'reconnaissance balloons over Soviet airspace' increased these feelings of distrust.[140] Both the Arms Race and the Space Race, which was well underway by late 1957, heightened a sense of competition between the Superpowers. This competition had a huge bearing upon the domestic architecture that followed in Moscow, through which Khrushchev expressed his 'struggle for international prestige.'[141]

The competition was amplified at the 1958 Brussels World Fair, in which the Soviet and American pavilions were situated next to one-another, each demonstrating their latest technological achievements. Cooke describes the Soviet Union's 'new confidence in its world role as a nuclear and space-age power,' demonstrated at the Fair.[142] Despite decisions that had been made in 1958 to try to relieve the Cold War situation, such as the cultural agreement between the USA and the USSR, Khrushchev purposefully turned towards creating a new form of Soviet domestic architecture that was highly distinctive from the Capitalist style.

[137] Llic 2009: 32
[138] Gribachev 1958(99): 3,
[139] Gribachev 1958(100): 3
[140] Gribachev 1958(100): 4
[141] Llic 2009: 32
[142] Blakesley 2007: 190

As Smith described, 'from 1958 onwards, the Communist future became the dominant force in shaping the urban housing programme.'[143] There was a definite shift in Khrushchev's ideological move from Socialism to Communism in the USSR, in response to Cold War competition, which was revealed through new architectural plans. Smith explained, 'the focus on the Communist future sought to foster communal structures, a community-minded and mobilised population, and, overall, a means of using housing to re-craft citizens' proto-communist consciousness.'[144] Khrushchev's vision was emphasised at the 1961 22nd Party Congress, in which 'competition with the USA was one of the main reference points in the Programme.'[145] Khrushchev revealed 'a new driving force, that of the impending Communist future,'[146] for which architecture was used to bring it closer to reality.

The Novye Cheryomushki district was a base for this architectural experimentation, to create an ideal Communist way of life through housing: a Communist paradise. The idea of the microdistrict in itself gained an enhanced significance in this context. Its purpose 'was characterised by physical spaces and organisational structures that were designed to cultivate and release communalistic and voluntaristic energies of a mobilised proto-communist population.'[147] This concept was emphasised by Osterman's House of the New Way of Life (1964-9), situated around the corner from the *Khrushchyovka* in figure 30, in Novye Cheryomushki. Figure 33 reveals a birds-eye view of the model of the building. Observing the model, the residential complex consists of two sixteen-storey apartment blocks in the shape of open book-like forms. These blocks contained 812 flats, varying in size from two to four rooms. The two blocks look down upon a rectangular service block in the middle, which is a two-storeyed building that connects them together. The complex was built using the frame-panel construction technique from prefabricated concrete; a method that was not

[143] Llic 2009: 32
[144] Llic 2009: 26
[145] Llic 2009: 12
[146] Llic 2009: 30
[147] Llic 2009: 30

particularly revolutionary at the time but did satisfy the economical needs of the build. Care was taken, however, to create an aesthetically interesting structure, as seen in figure 34, with the continuation of the frame-panel construction aesthetic to the grid-like end wall of each block, which also provided residents with sheltered balconies.

It is the interior layout of the apartment complex, however, where the New Way of Life is most strongly presented. Osterman worked on the project with a team of sociologists and physicians in order to shape an ideological Communist way of living. The complex became 'a home of the future,'[148] as Belouson explains, where residents shared communal amenities within the service block below. This block was vast. It included thirty service rooms for washing services and rental of cleaning equipment, a library, a gym hall/movie theatre, a doctor's surgery, a winter garden, a hairdresser's, a small hotel for guests and a kitchen with a dining hall that would provide fourteen thousand meals a day for residents and the community in the immediate vicinity.[149] The basement provided practical extra storage space for each apartment. Sports were also particularly well catered for in and around the service block for residents. There was a large swimming pool, as well as halls for gymnastics and playgrounds. The New Way of Life encompassed Khrushchev's vision for a strong, healthy nation.

The apartments themselves were similarly compact to those in the *Khrushchyovki.* A journalist who stayed in one of the apartments in 1968 explained how the interiors were decorated 'in the modern style, with nothing superfluous' yet with clever methods introduced, such as 'accordion partitions that could be pulled aside to make one room out of two.'[150] Space was saved through a lack of furniture and appliances that the household did not constantly use, such as vacuum cleaners. These could be rented from the service block below. The biggest change in the interiors of this new complex, however, was the removal of

[148] Belouson 1969: 70
[149] Belouson 1969: 70
[150] Polukhin 1969: 17

a kitchen from each apartment. Instead, the service centre kitchen would provide residents with their meals in the dining room located on each floor of the apartment blocks. This was communal living in the extreme, thought by Khrushchev to 'bring relief to the separate household economy of every family, and, more importantly, liberate the women of the house.'[151] Perhaps this was a result of the Khrushchev-Nixon kitchen debate at the American National Exhibition in Moscow in 1959. As Cold War tensions rose, Khrushchev and Nixon argued over the different ways of liberating women under Capitalism and Communism: through the Capitalist General Electric kitchen or the Communist way of life. It was thought that the House of the New Way of Life would reduce women's household chores by two hours, leaving them more time for recreation, work and exercise.

Osterman's design for the House of the New Way of Life was based upon the idea that 'life would be less hermetic and private, and consequently the collective, Communist principal would be strengthened.'[152] It was thought that the building would cultivate the transition from Socialism to Communism successfully. The complex was an entirely experimental build at the time, the long-term success of which is demonstrated by the rather dilapidated state that it is in today (see figure 35). At the time, however, this building represented the optimism of a Communist paradise under Khrushchev. Granted, it strongly denied the Western, 'privatist' concept of 'my home is my castle,' as Polukhin explained,[153] but as he also enthused, 'a different psychological atmosphere will be created here… the swimming pool, the reading room, the winter garden – all this will be my home.'[154] Referring back to Smith's quotation at the beginning of this chapter, therefore, it is clear that the competition between the Superpowers provoked by the Cold War climate did, in fact, prompt a sense of optimism regarding the housing situation. The paradise that Osterman's House

[151] Llic 2009: 33
[152] Blakesley 2007: 187
[153] Polukhin 1969: 18
[154] Polukhin 1969: 18

represented was revealed not only through the hundreds of families that it housed in Moscow, but also through its 'elimination of classes and all vestiges of social inequality' by embracing the notion of a Communist, 'all-people's state.'[155]

[155] Llic 2009: 28

Conclusion

It is very difficult to comparatively measure the success of the domestic architecture under Khrushchev and Stalin. The aforementioned lack of information published on housing, particularly under Stalin, makes it problematic for the contemporary student. Many accounts of housing from Western visitors to Moscow from 1945 onwards cannot be trusted, given that these are solely written in propagandistic materials of the era. Success could, however, be measured in the following alternative ways.

From a Western perspective, one would imagine that the apartments in Stalin's Kudrinskaya skyscraper would be the most successful from the point of view of its residents. Having described the interiors of the apartments, with large rooms, high ceilings and great attention to luxurious decorative details, it can be likened to the comfort of an opulent hotel. It is fair to say that a Western reader may find it harder to understand Khrushchev's House of the New Way of Life as a paradise, given their experience of housing that is catered to the liberation of the individual with private space.

The Cambridge-based author, Rachel Polonsky, who went to live in Moscow with her family in the 1990's, describes her experience of the private apartment of Vyacheslav Molotov, one of Stalin's closest comrades, in the Stalinist era. She describes the grand interior decoration of the apartment, with 'its spread of panelled rooms and high stuccoed ceilings'[156] and the lavish exterior, 'hinting at higher mysteries of domestic comfort contained within.'[157] She also asserts, however, that 'the luxury of this house makes a false promise'[158] asking, 'what intricate conspiracies of fate and human intention in the bloody political sphere of the twentieth century worked to keep [its] particular [residents] here?'[159] Given the information gathered for this study, in line with Polonsky's statement, the success

[156] Polonsky 2010: 2
[157] Polonsky 2010: 15
[158] Polonsky 2010: 15
[159] Polonsky 2010: 16

of Stalinist domestic architecture, despite the luxury imparted upon its residents, is thwarted by the consequent sacrifice to the Soviet masses. Khrushchev's far less aesthetically appealing Novye Cheryomushki represents a much more successful method for rehousing the masses. This is supported by Smith's declaration that 'the total urban housing stock in the Soviet Union increased by 85.7 per cent between 1950 and 1960.'[160] This is certainly a success for the post-war housing crisis.

The success of Khrushchev's housing programme over Stalin's, despite Stalin's beneficent attempts, is also supported by Paperny. Whilst he declares at the beginning of his thesis 'the victory of Culture Two over Culture One,'[161] and thus the victory of Stalinist architecture over Khrushchev's, Paperny is also working within the chronological guidelines of the 1920's to 1954.[162] Paperny's poles of Culture One and Two do, however, have a 'cyclic character,'[163] and thus Culture One, re-emerging under Khrushchev, can be said to triumph over Culture Two within the chronological boundaries of this study.

One could argue, however, that Stalinist architecture *was* more victorious in light of the state that the buildings studied are in today. The present crumbling façade of the House of the New Way of Life, shown earlier, and the worn plaster on the *Khrushchyovki* are suggestive of their lack of long-term success as comfortable apartments. Khrushchev's housing was built to be temporary, as aforementioned, whereas Stalin's housing, despite taking much longer to build, used strong materials that would stand the test of time. Indeed, the Kudrinskaya apartments are just as magnificent from the outside today as one could imagine they were in the 1950's. The ceramic tiles of the Peshchanaya district apartment blocks are also predominantly still intact. Perhaps one could argue, therefore, that Stalinist

[160] Llic 2009: 28
[161] Paperny 2002: xxiv
[162] Paperny 2002: xxiii
[163] Paperny 2002: xxiv

domestic architecture was a longer-term success than Khrushchev's at housing the population.

There are, however, surprising similarities between the domestic architecture under Khrushchev and Stalin. Looking at the case studies under the sacrifice and paradise chapters, it is clear that both leaders used domestic architecture as a way of promoting the Communist ideology. Through the decoration and grandeur of the Kudrinskaya apartment building, Stalin aimed to inspire the population towards Communist success. The building can be seen to perform a similar function to a religious altarpiece in this respect, as an aid to visually uplift the masses towards 'active participation' in the regime.[164] Khrushchev's House of the New Way of Life is a similar platform for his promotion of the Communist ideology in response to the Capitalist Cold War threat. Khrushchev promoted a whole new Communist lifestyle shaped by architecture, an experiment that optimistically aimed to lead the masses into the Communist future.

The people whom the domestic architecture under Khrushchev and Stalin addressed, however, with regards to the principles of Communism, are surely the only real markers of the leaders' success. As Block explained in 1952, 'Communism consists in a new consciousness of the people: an awareness of the masses that they are fully participating in the life of the community and sharing in its welfare.'[165] Late Stalinist allocation of housing by means of 'gratitude and gift'[166] prevented full participation of the masses, as did his hierarchical system of town planning. In this respect, with its focus on the community and the ability for the masses to 'fully participate,' Khrushchev's Novye Cheryomushki, particularly with the ideology represented by Osterman's House, is as close to paradise as Communism achieved under Stalin and Khrushchev through domestic architecture.

[164] Block 1952: 231
[165] Block 1952: 230
[166] Llic 2009: 38

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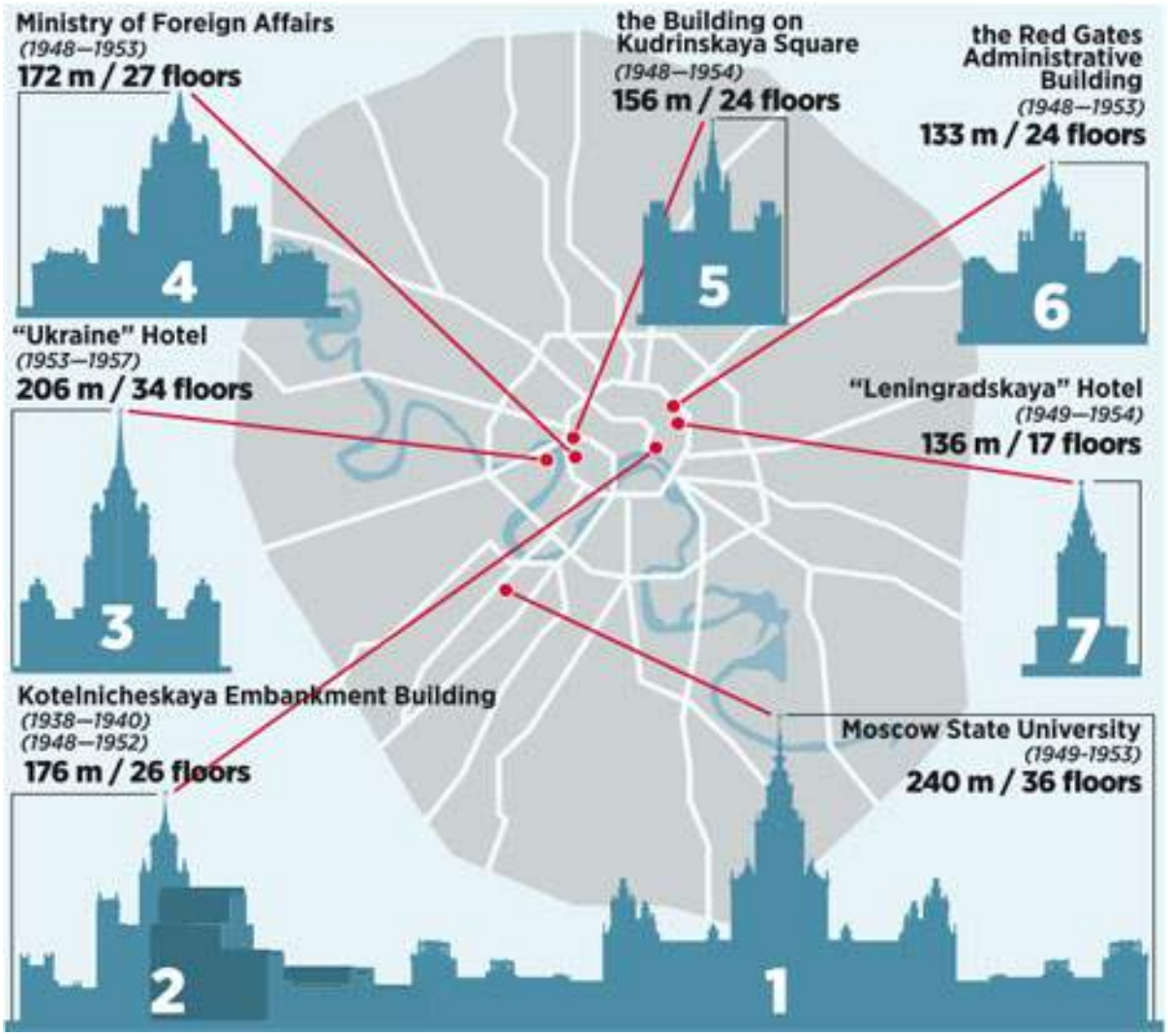

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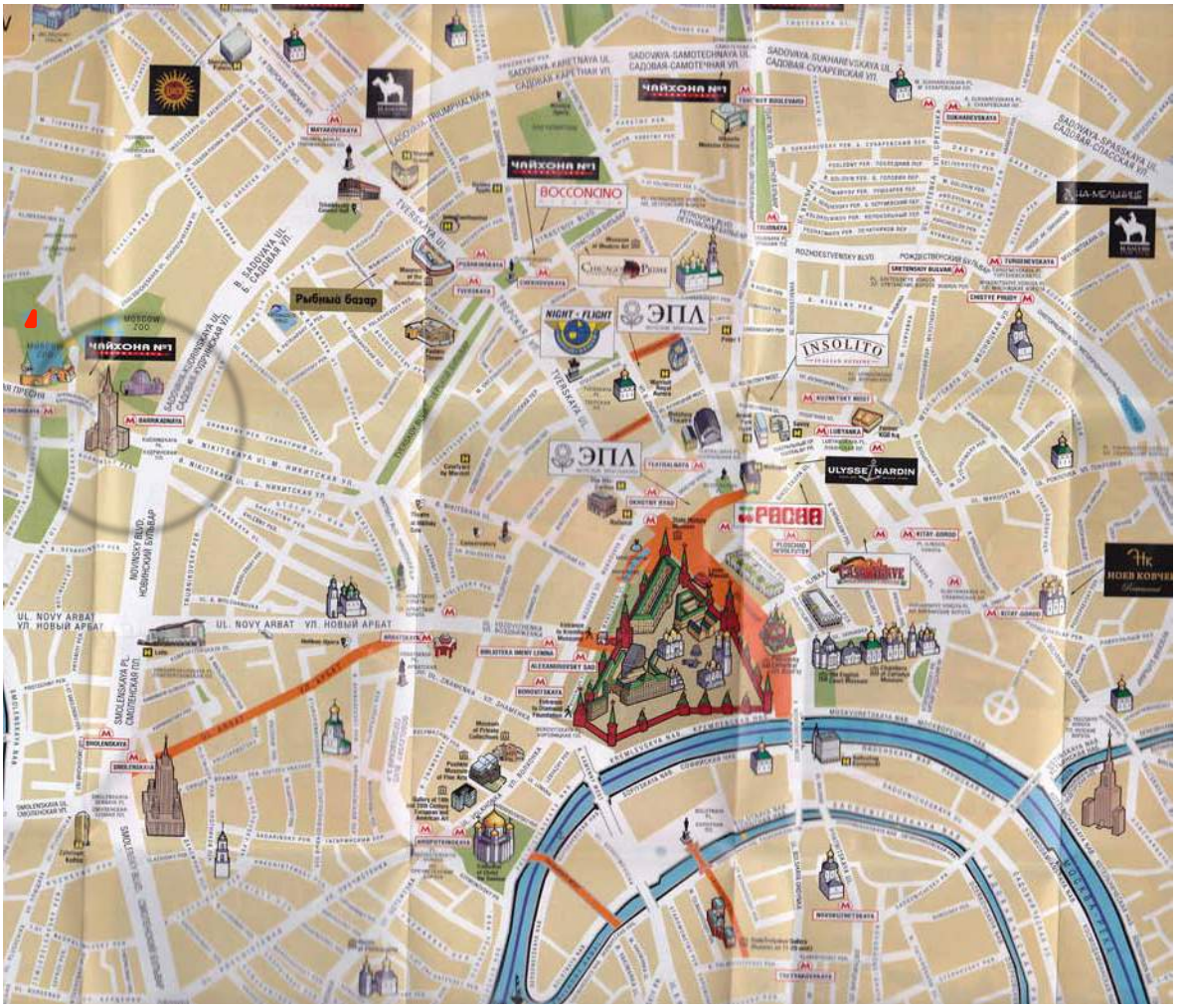

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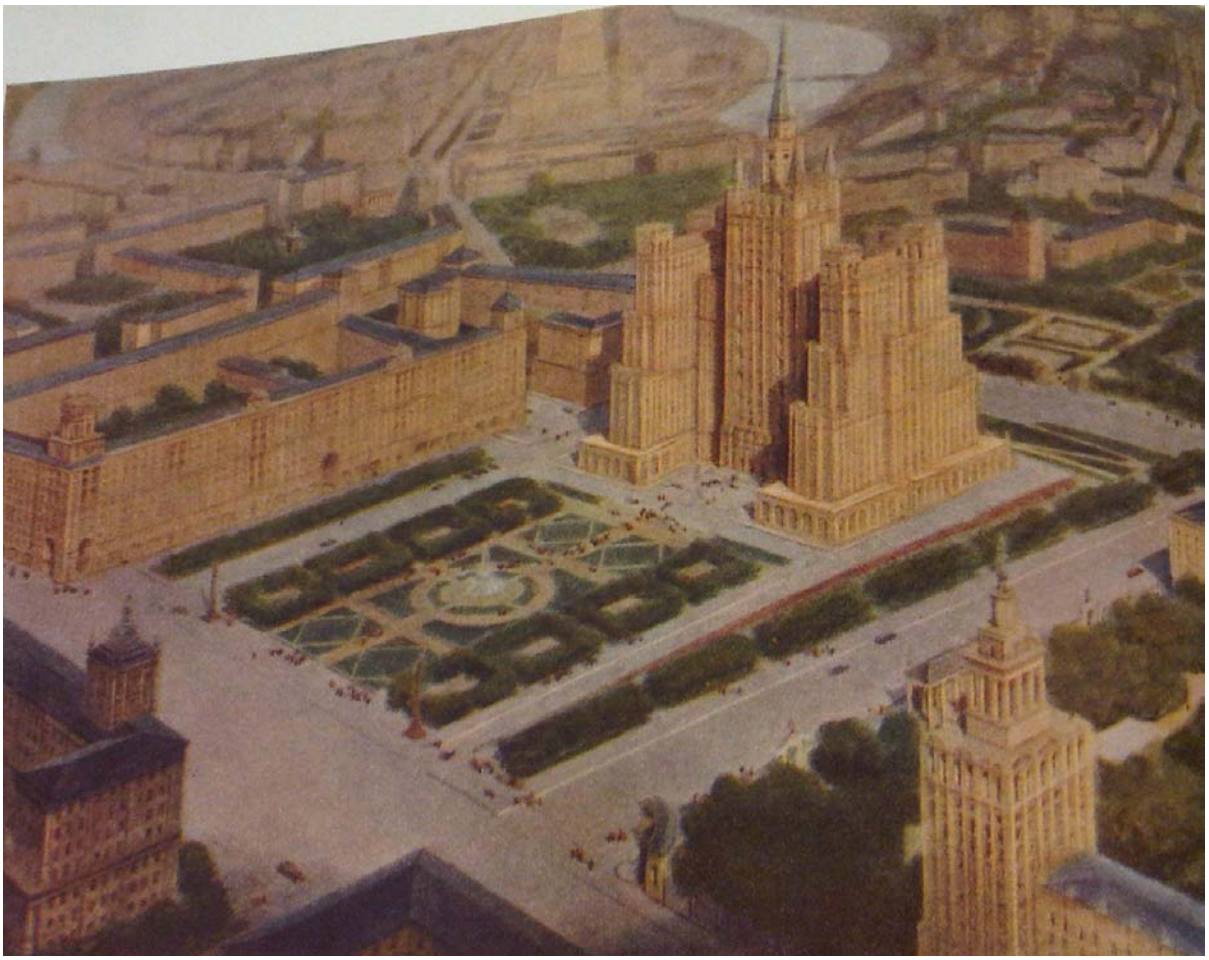

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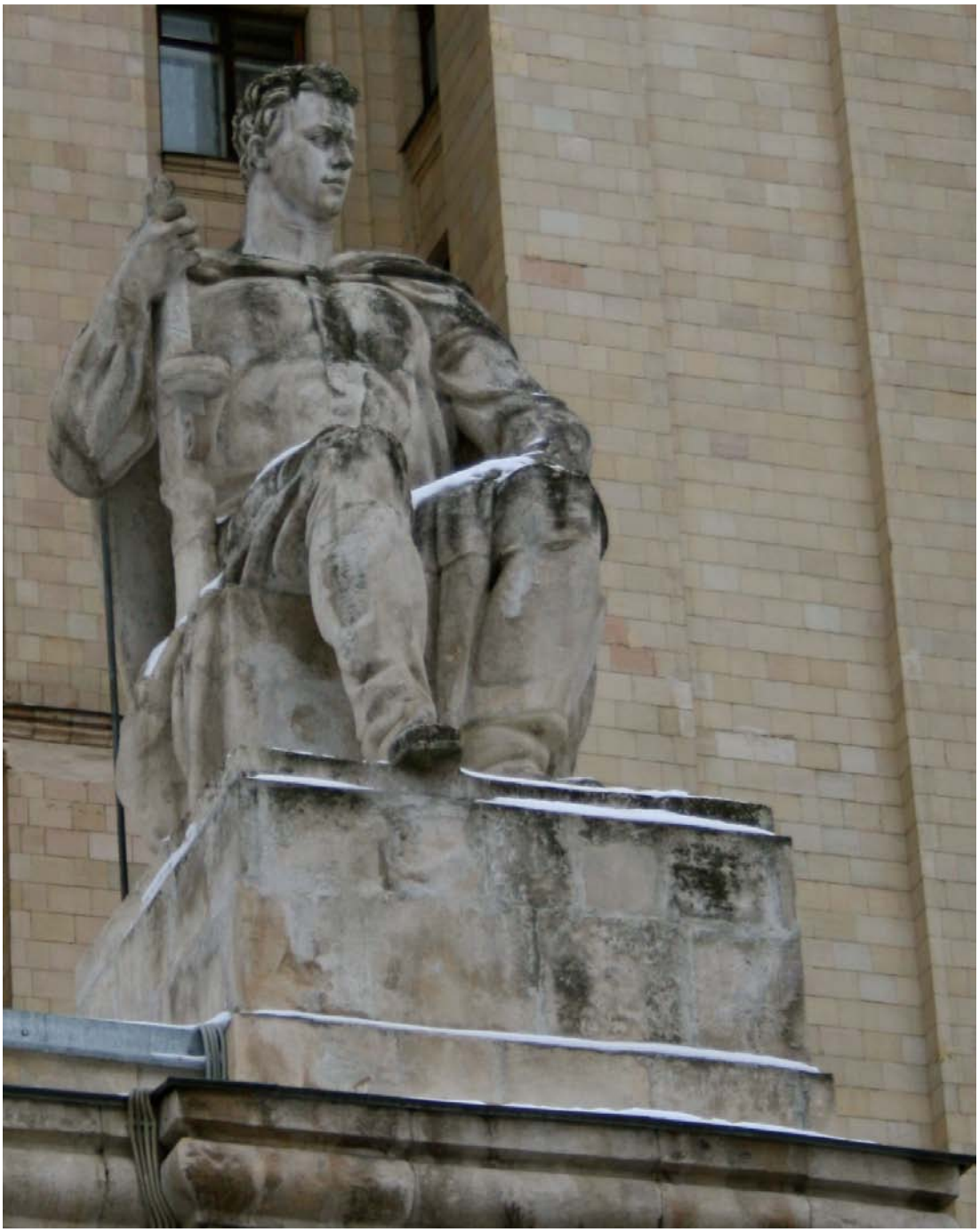

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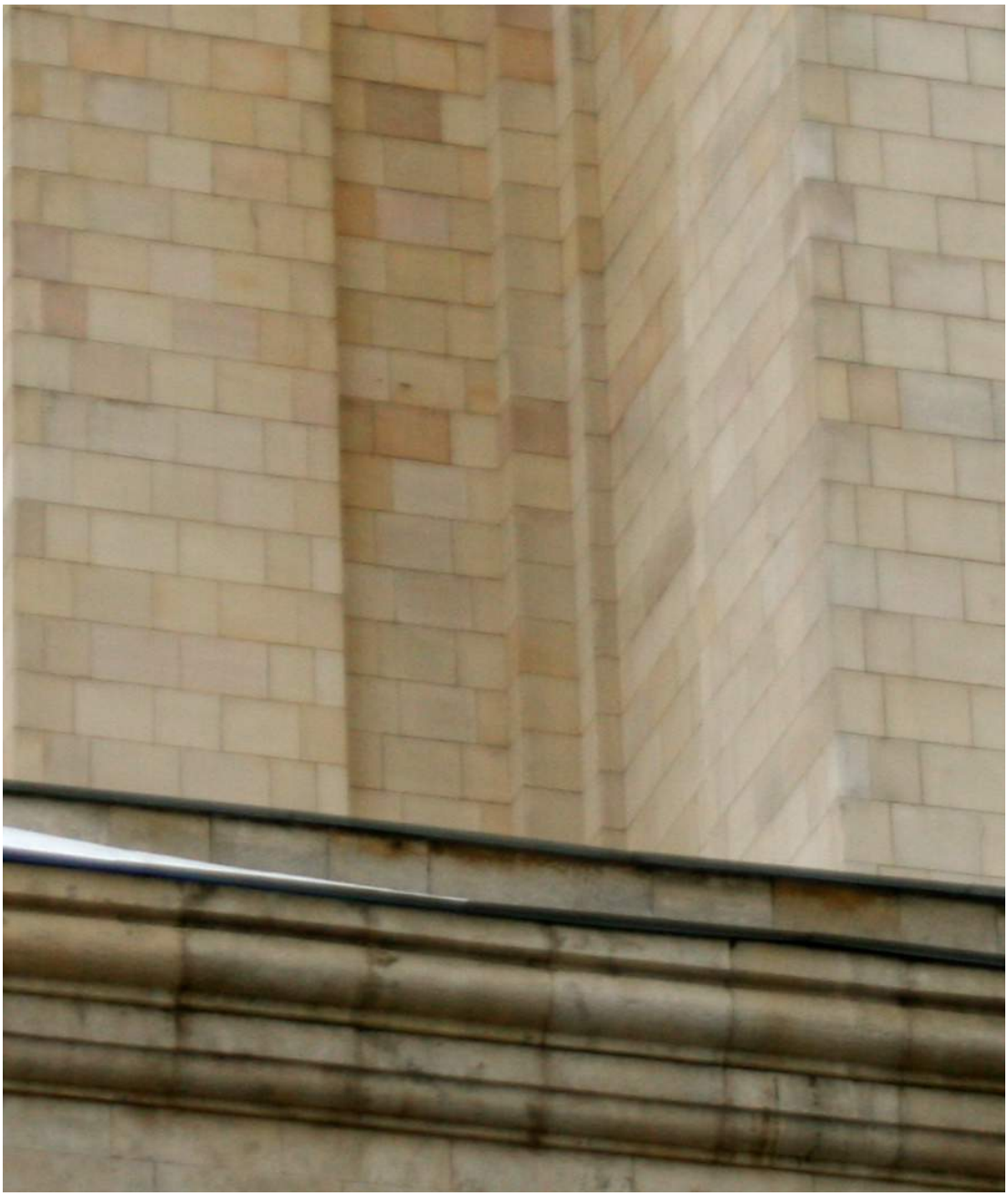

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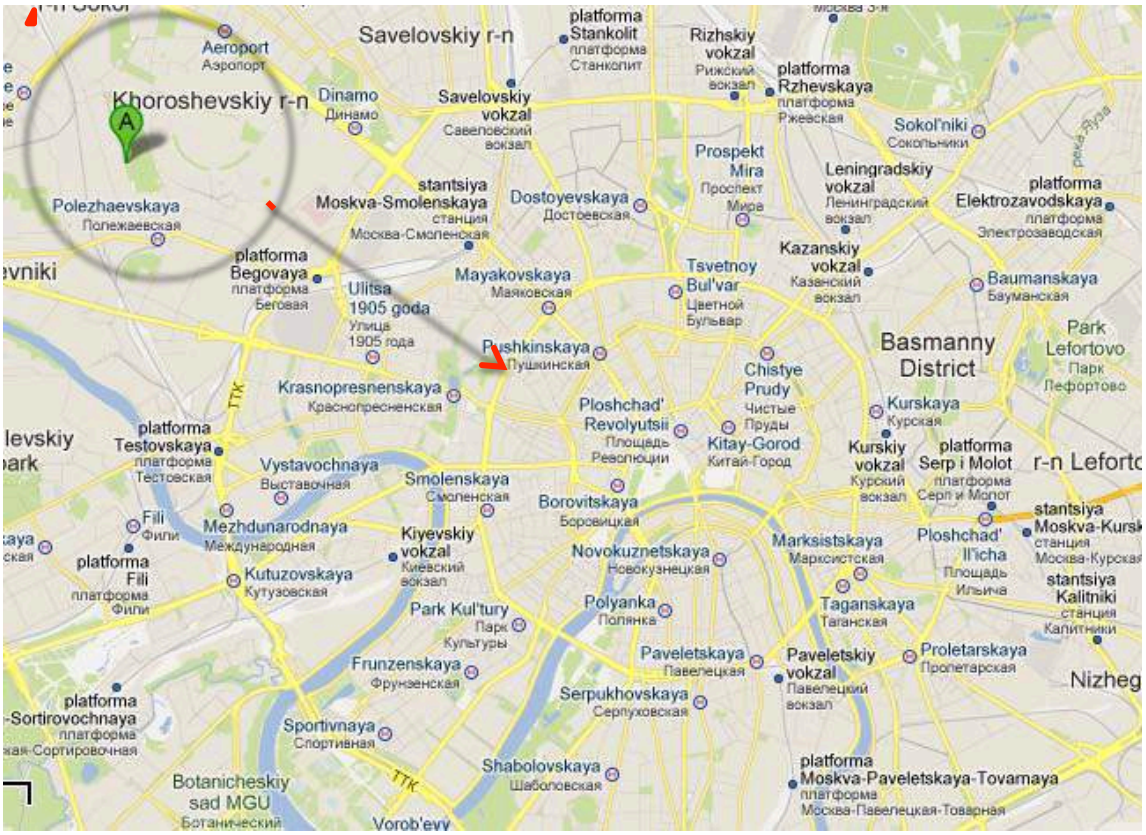

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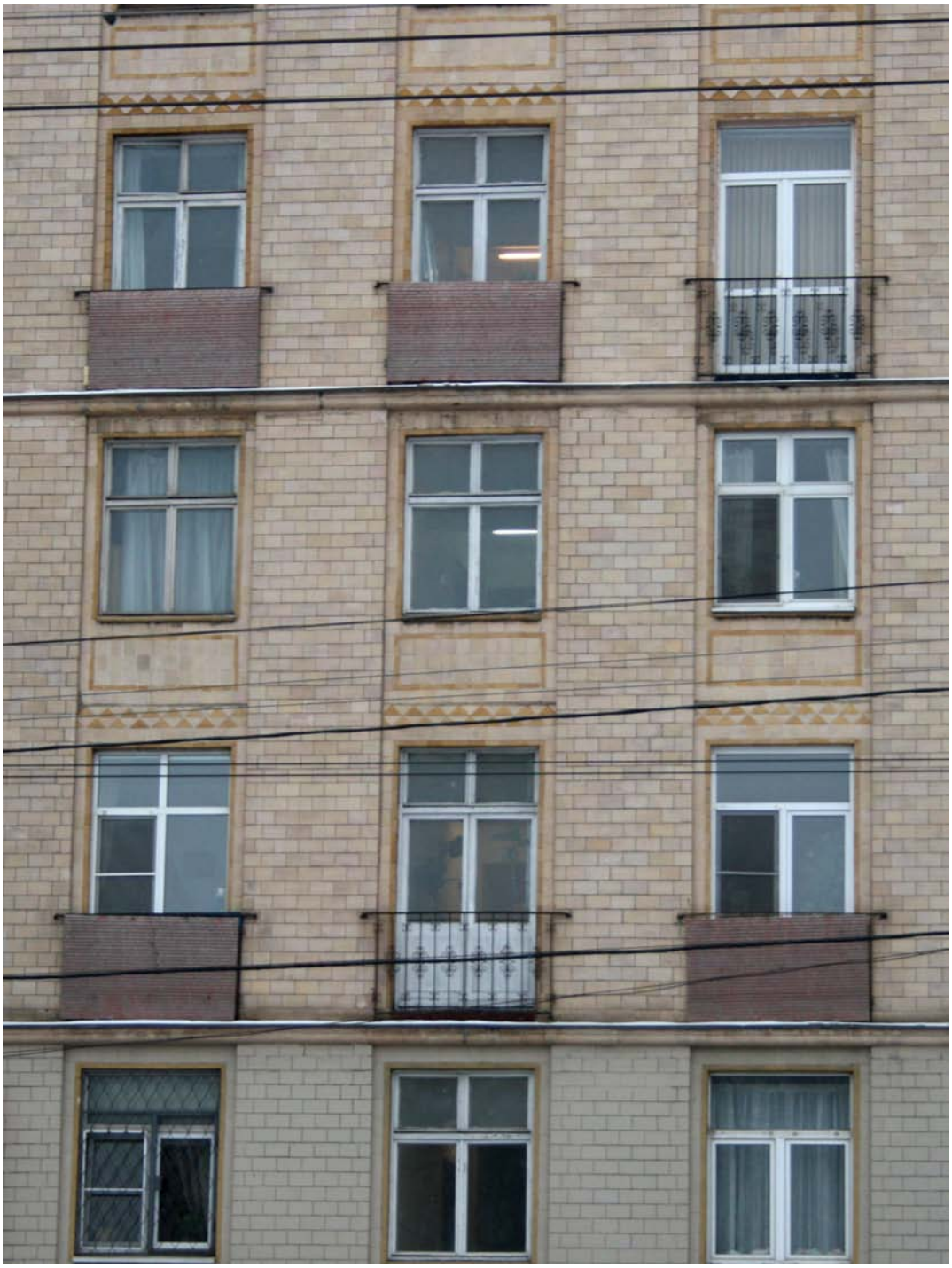

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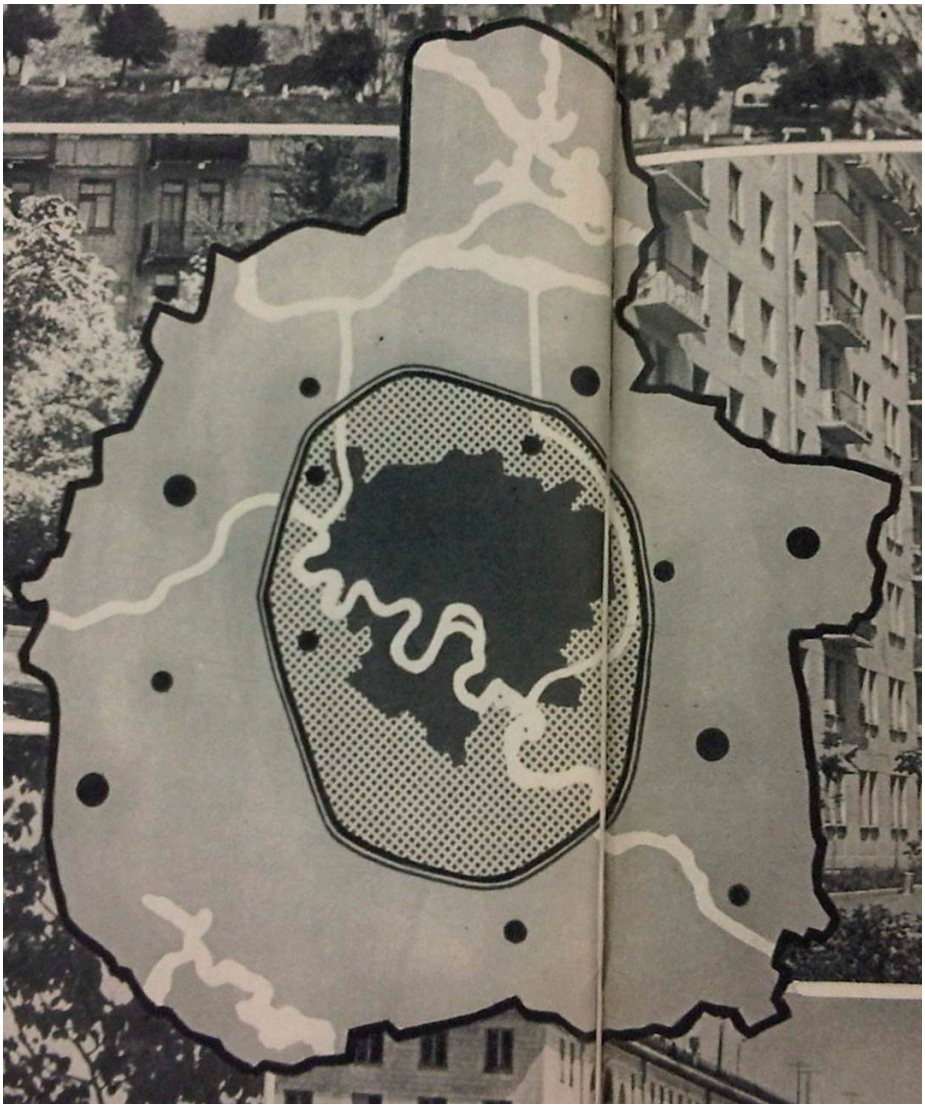

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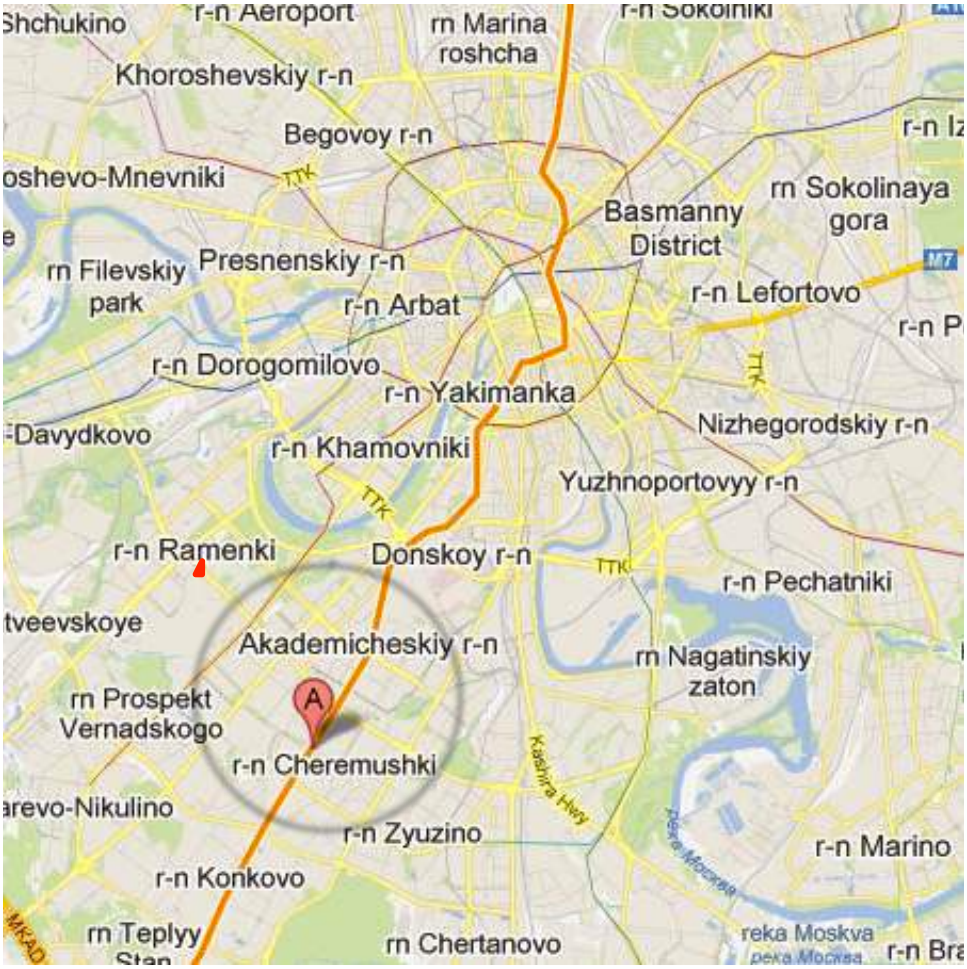

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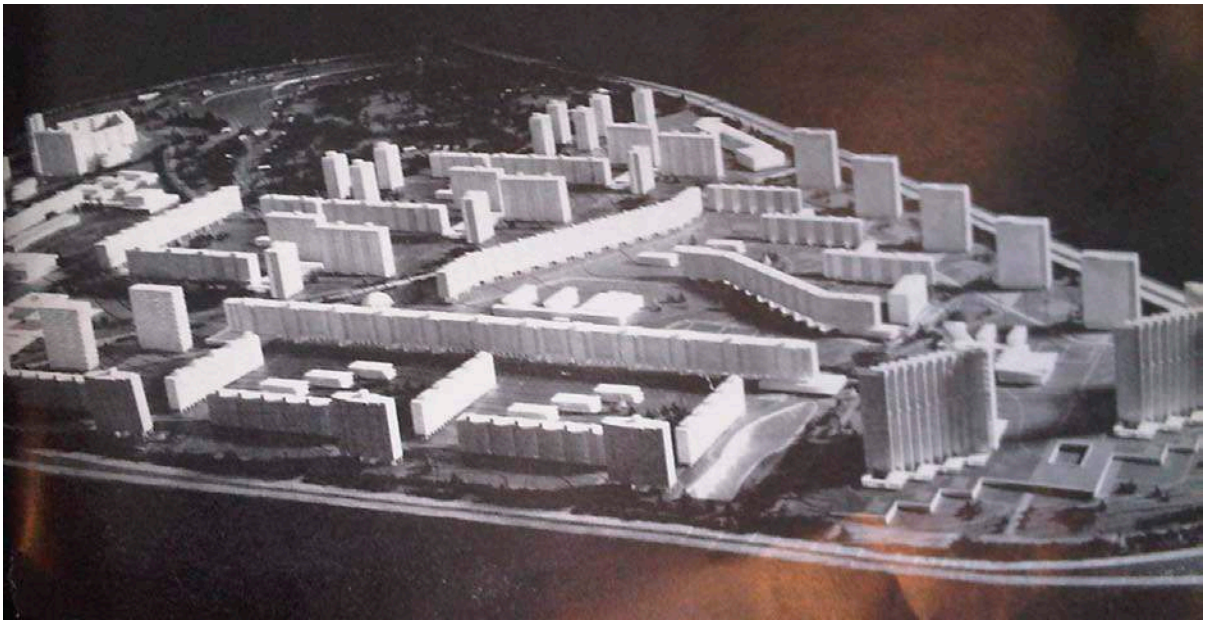

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Khrushchyovka exterior detail, Ulitsa Grimau, Novye Cheryomushki
Photograph, 2013

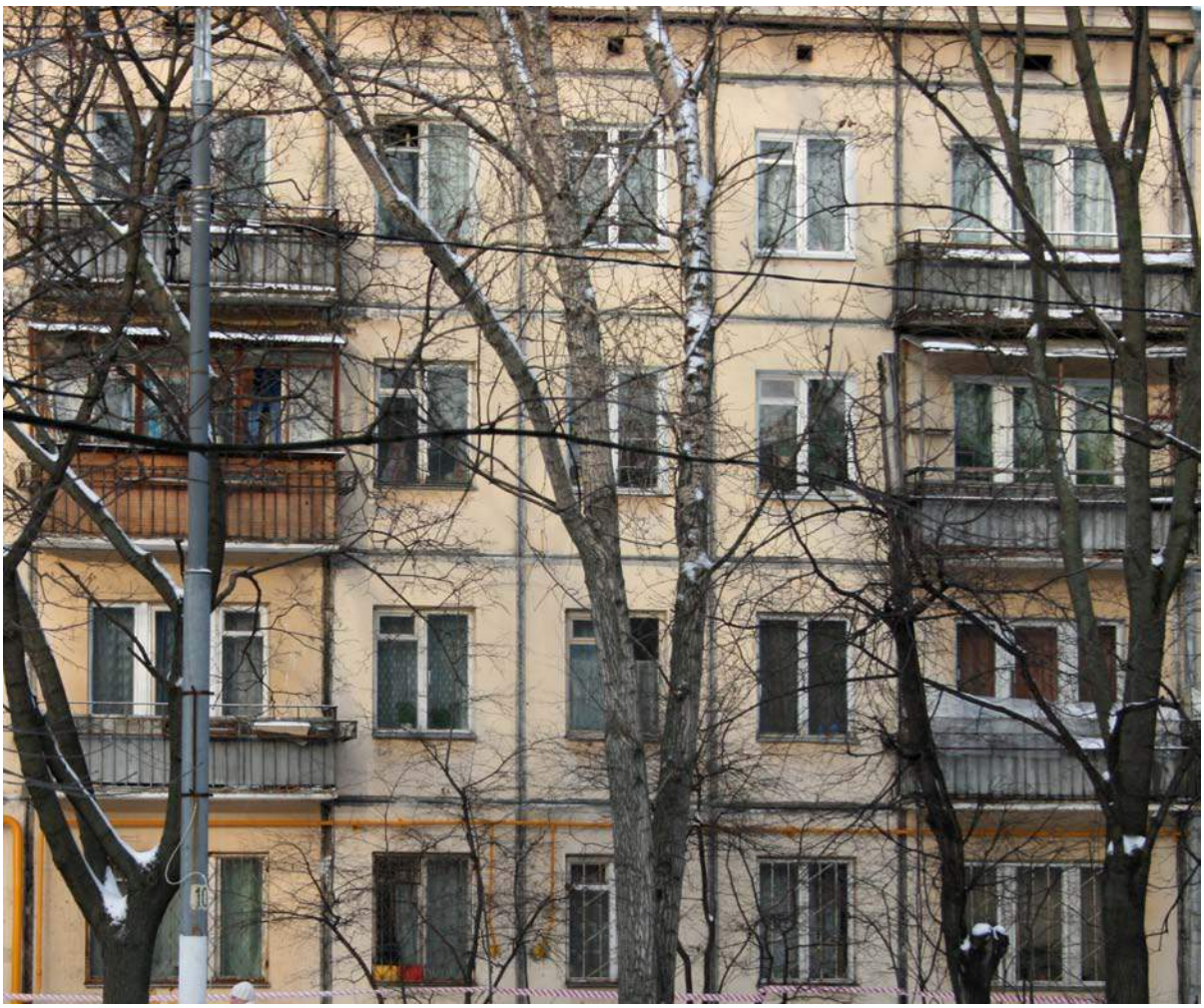

Fig. 32.
N. Khorunzhy and A. Alexandrov
A standard two-room flat
Detailed plan (from *The Soviet Union*, 99, 1958)

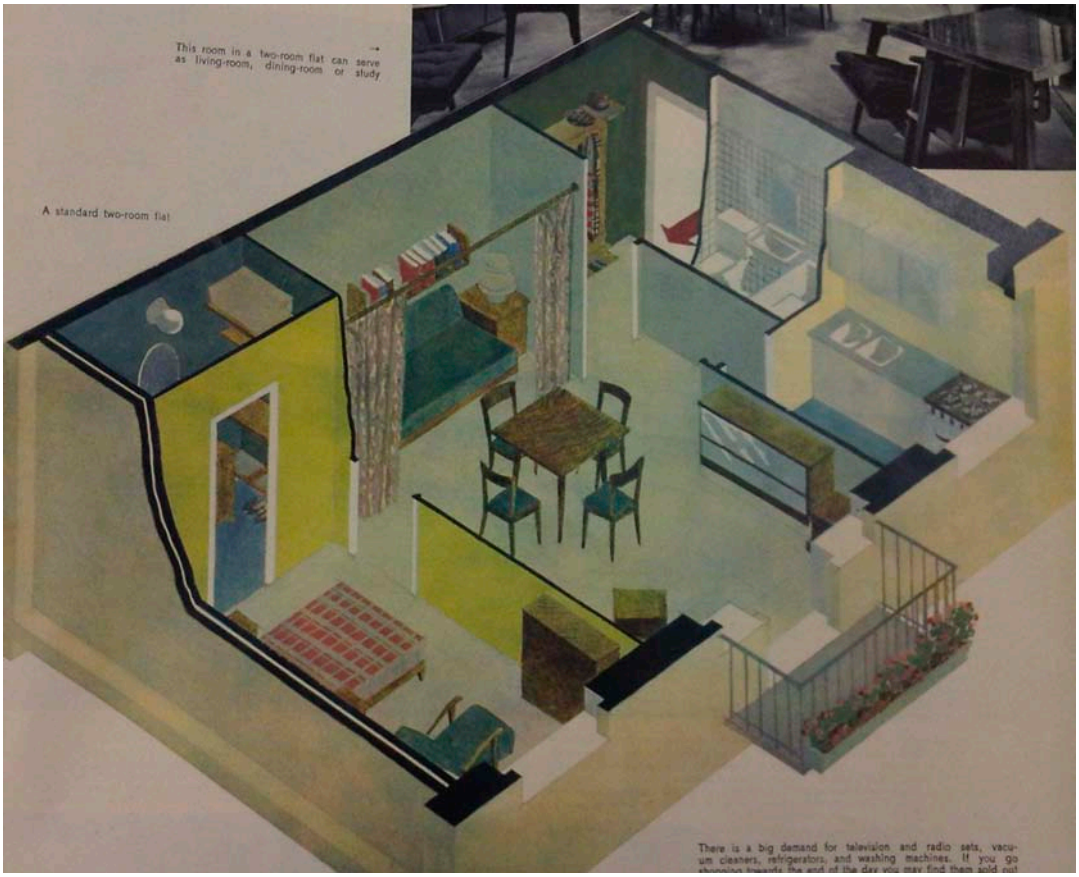

Fig. 33.
Natan Osterman
Birds-eye view of the House of the New Way of Life
Architect's model (from V. Belouson, *Design Revolution in Moscow*, 1969)

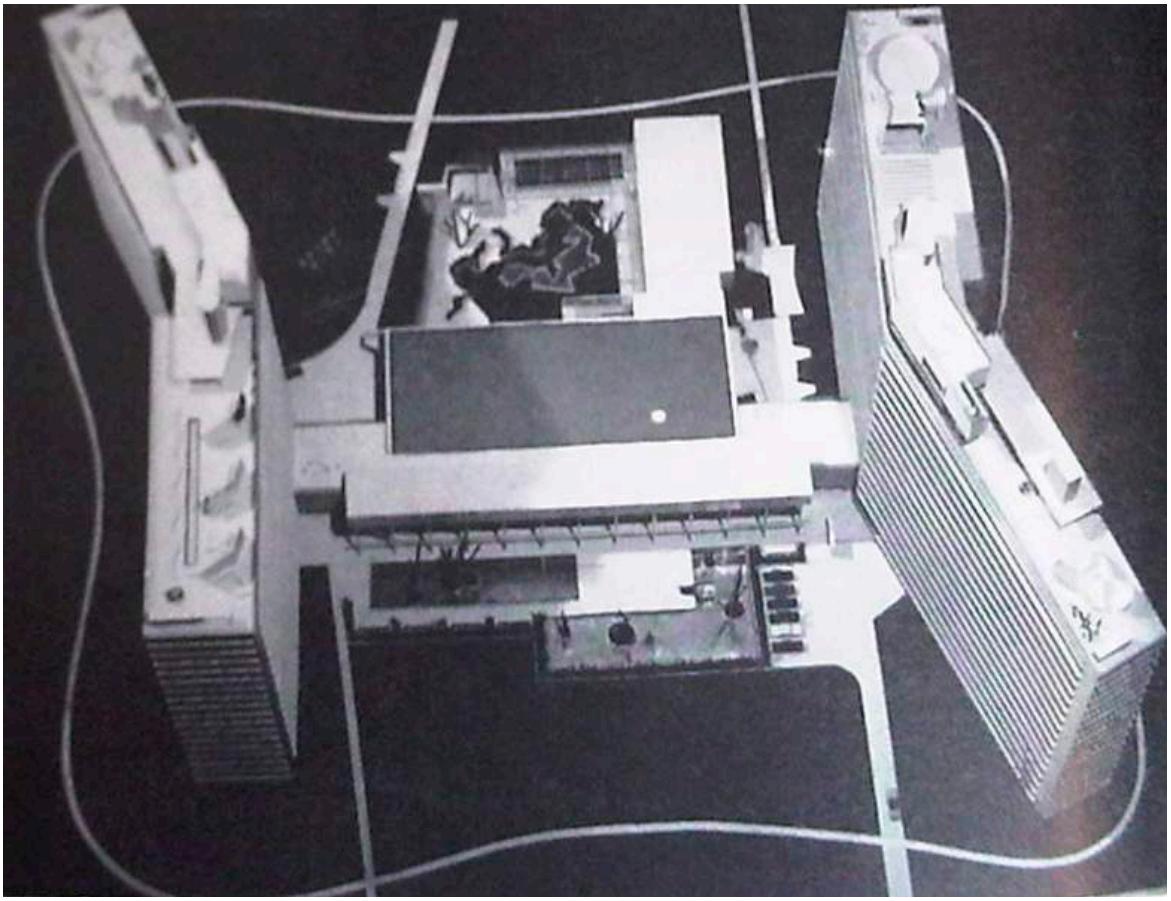

Fig. 34.
Emily Thomas
Structure of Osterman's House of the New Way of Life
Photograph, 2013

Fig. 35.
Emily Thomas
House of the New Way of Life, service block exterior, 2013
Photograph, 2013

Locations of the architecture studied

Whilst researching this project in Moscow, I studied the following buildings in relation to each chapter heading. Sadly the word count didn't permit me to use all of them, but the details of where to find each one in Moscow will hopefully enable me to build upon this study in the future.

Sacrifice:
Posokhin and Mndoyants, *Kudrinskaya Place (Seven Sister)*, Ulitsa Barrikadnaya, nearest Barrikadnaya metro (1948-54)

Rosenfeld and Suris, *apartment block,* Ulitsa Sadovaya-Triufal'naya 4, nearest Mayakovskaya metro (1949)

Zholtovsky, *House of Lions*, Ulitsa Emolaevskiy Pereulok, Patriarshy Ponds, nearest Tverskaya metro (1945)

Beneficence (Stalin):
Posokhin and Lagutenko, *Peschanaya Street Project,* Ulitsa Kuusinena, south of Rosenfeld apartment block, nearest Polezhaevskaya metro (1948)

Rosenfeld, *Peschanaya Street Project,* Ulitsa Kuusinena, south of 3-Ya Peschanaya Ulitsa, nearest Polezhaevskaya metro (1951-55)

Zholtovsky, *Bolshaya Kaluzhskaya 7,* now Leninsky Prospekt 11, nearest Shabolovskya or Oktyabr'skaya metro (1949)

Beneficence (Khrushchev):
Unknown architect, *K-7 type-design apartment blocks (5-storeys),* Ulitsa Grimau, Novye Cheryomushki, nearest Akadamicheskaya metro (1957)

Unknown architect, *Khrushchyovki* (4-storeys), Ulitsa Grimau, Novye Cheryomushki, nearest Akadamicheskaya metro (1957)

Paradise:
Osterman, *House of the New Way of Life,* Ulitsa Shvernika 19, Novye Cheryomushki, nearest Akadamicheskaya metro (1964-9)

Unknown architect, *four open-book style high-rises,* Ulitsa Novyy Arbat, nearest Arbatskaya metro (1960)