



COOKING TOWARDS COMMUNISM

**Domestic Cooking and the Khrushchev Regime's Struggle
for the Communist Way of Life**

MA Thesis — Russian and Eurasian Studies

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Introduction

Cooking — specifically the everyday preparation of food for consumption at home — has been, and still is, perceived in the West as a private affair in which a government should not interfere. It is a part of everyday life that seems to have its place, as the French theorist Luce Giard writes, “in the private space of domestic life, far from worldly noises”.¹ With this study I hope to demonstrate that we cannot hold on to this Western perception of cooking, when studying it in the Soviet Union of the late 1950s and early 1960s, the period during which Nikita Khrushchev led the country. The Khrushchev regime, I argue, perceived domestic cooking as a public affair.

Over the last two decades, Western scholars studying Soviet daily life of the Khrushchev era have increasingly drawn attention to the regime's intrusions into spheres of life often understood as private in the West.² This is a revision of the established view that associates this period mainly with a liberalization of Soviet political and cultural life in the wake of Khrushchev's “secret speech.”³

In this speech, held on February 25, 1956, at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party, Khrushchev denounced Joseph Stalin's style of governance. According to Khrushchev it was based on state-led terror and a cult around his persona, and therefore deviated from the Leninist path towards communism. During

¹ Luce Giard, 'Part II. Doing-Cooking', in *The Practice of Everyday Life. Volume 2: Living and Cooking*, ed. Michel de Certeau, Luce Giard and Pierre Mayol, trans. Timothy J. Tomasik (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, original French edition in 1994), 171.

² Such conclusions are made by scholars who have studied apartment life, consumption, leisure and personal life (love, sex, marriage, and childrearing) during the Khrushchev era. For apartment life, see Victor Buchli, 'Khrushchev, Modernism, and the Fight against “Petit-Bourgeois” Consciousness in the Soviet Home', *Journal of Design History* 10, no. 2 (1997), later republished as a chapter in Buchli, *An Archaeology of Socialism* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 137-158; Reid, 'The Khrushchev Kitchen: Domesticating the Scientific-Technological Revolution', *Journal of Contemporary History* 40, no. 2 (2005): 289-316; Reid, 'Communist Comfort: Socialist Modernism and the Making of Cosy Homes in the Khrushchev Era', *Gender and History* 21, no.3 (2009): 465-498; Steven E. Harris, 'Soviet Mass Housing and the Communist Way of Life', in *Everyday Life in Russia Past and Present*, ed. Choi Chatterjee et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015), 181-200, and Christine Varga-Harris, *Stories of House and Home. Soviet Apartment Life During the Khrushchev Years* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015). For consumption and leisure, see Reid, 'Cold War in the Kitchen: Gender and the De-Stalinization of Consumer Taste in the Soviet Union under Khrushchev', *Slavic Review* 61, no.2 (2002), 211-252, and David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, eds. *Pleasures in Socialism. Leisure and Luxury in the Eastern Bloc* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2010). For personal life, see Deborah A. Field, *Private Life and Communist Morality in Khrushchev's Russia* (New York: Peter Lang, 2007).

³ The official title of the speech is 'On the Cult of Personality and its Consequences', but referred to as the “secret speech”, because it was delivered at a closed session that was not officially publicized until 1989. It did not remain secret for very long, as it was read out at meetings organized by Party and the Komsomol organizations around the country during the weeks thereafter. See Roy Medvedev, 'The Twentieth Party Congress: Before and After', in *The Unknown Stalin*, ed. Zhores A. Medvedev and Roy Medvedev, trans. Ellen Dahrendorf (London: I.B. Tauris, 2003), 96-97.

the years thereafter, the most coercive elements of the Stalinist system were indeed dismantled, hence the common characterization of the Khrushchev era as a period of liberalization and “thaw” (*ottepel'*).⁴

But Khrushchev did not only denounce Stalin, but also the society which the deceased leader had allowed to stray from the righteous Leninist path, and now had to be reformed. In the Secret Speech, Khrushchev called upon Party activists:

“[t]o return to and actually practice in all our ideological work the most important theses of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine... about the decisive role of the Marxist Party in the revolutionary struggle for the transformation of society and for the victory of communism.”⁵

As a consequence of this “return to Lenin” the Party and Soviet government started to problematize the way in which Soviet citizens, the regime’s cherished “builders of communism”, conducted their daily lives.⁶

The main aim of this study is to make a contribution to the discussion on the Khrushchev regime’s intrusions into Soviet daily life by focusing on its attempts to reform one aspect of it, namely cooking. Before I further address the topic of cooking, set forth the structure of this study and discuss the sources I use throughout it, I will elaborate on the Soviet understanding of daily life.

The Soviet Understanding of Daily Life

The Russian word for daily life is *byt*, which is a key concept in this study. It can be loosely translated to encompass the words “domesticity,” “lifestyle,” and “way of life” as well. During the prerevolutionary period, the concept was specifically used to denote the ways of life of the ethnic minorities and traditional European peasant societies subjected to the Russian Imperial Crown. After the Revolution of November 1917, the Bolshevik government used *byt* with a different political meaning. It was

⁴ The Khrushchev period is often referred to as the “Thaw.” Stephen Bittner discusses the variety of different ways in which the “Thaw” metaphor has been interpreted by memoirists as well as by Soviet and Western scholars. He points out that from the late 1960s onwards the adjective “liberal” was most commonly attached to the thaw. See Stephen V. Bittner, *The Many Lives of Khrushchev's Thaw. Experience and Memory in Moscow's Arbat* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008), 1-18.

⁵ Khrushchev, ‘O kul'te lichnosti i ego posledestviyakh’ [On the Cult of Personality and its Consequences], *Izvestiya TsK KPSS* no. 3 (1989), 165.

⁶ Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 138.

now used to refer to the “backwards” bourgeois way of life persisting among revolutionary Russia's population which had to make way for a new, socialist way of life. This socialist way of life would contribute to the creation of healthy citizens, emancipate women, and eradicate passivity, ignorance, and *meshchanstvo* — the amalgam of the selfish materialism and philistinism associated with the petty bourgeoisie. It was thus exactly in the realm of *byt* where the “New Soviet Person” was to be formed.⁷

Although the need to reform *byt* remained a prominent feature of the Party's rhetoric, financial support for the actual implementation of such reform failed to materialize until the end of the 1920s. The fast-paced industrialization of the Soviet economy, that had begun in 1928 under the auspices of Stalin's first Five-Year Plan, eventually uprooted daily life. This “reformation of daily life” (*perestroika byta*) was, however, motivated less by moral than by economic considerations. After the Plan had been completed, the regime even ceased its struggle for the socialist *byt*. Stalin had reared a new political elite from workers and peasants who, after the years of intense industrialization, expected a return to normalcy. In order to accommodate them, he allowed a “cultured” (*kul'turnyi*) lifestyle that in fact bore more similarities to that of the prerevolutionary bourgeoisie than to the socialist one envisioned by the Bolsheviks.⁸

In the wake of Khrushchev's secret speech, the Soviet leadership started to problematize *byt* anew. It strongly opposed the Stalinist way of life which it had started to associate it with *meshchanstvo*, and was now dedicated to the struggle for “the communist way of life” (*kommunisticheskii byt*). This meant that all everyday affairs outside the already regulated sphere of work, such as the arrangement of living space, relations with family, friends and neighbors, consumption, leisure, and even romance, had to conform to the principles of “communist morality” and serve the goal of communist construction. “One of the basic pillars of communist morality,” a candidate of philosophy wrote in the Party's newspaper *Pravda*, “is the

⁷ Ibid., 22; Deborah A. Field, 'Everyday Life and the Problem of Conceptualizing Public and Private During the Khrushchev Era', in *Everyday Life*, ed. Chatterjee et al., 163-164.

⁸ Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 77-79; Vadim Volkov, 'The Concept of *Kul'turnost*'. Notes on the Stalinist Civilizing Process,' in *Stalinism: New Directions*, ed. Sheila Fitzpatrick (London: Routledge, 2000), 213-216; Katerina Gerasimova, 'Privacy in the Soviet Communal Apartment', in *Socialist Spaces. Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*, ed. David Crowley and Susan E. Reid (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 209-210.

unity of the principles and norms of conduct in a person's societal and personal life [*v obshchestvennoi i v lichnoi zhizni*], in politics and daily life.”⁹

Not only did Khrushchev's regime preach such communist morality, it in fact initiated, as the historian Deborah Field puts it, “new attempts to monitor and regulate everyday life and personal behavior.” Professionals formulated principles for the appropriate communist conduct of daily life, which were disseminated among the Soviet population through print media, radio and television. Adherence to these principles in practice was to be enforced by local branches of the Party and the Communist Youth League (*Komsomol*), the trade unions, and voluntary organizations.¹⁰ With regards to its attitude to daily life, it could therefore be said that the Khrushchev regime showed stringent tendencies, rather than liberal ones.

The Russian theorist Oleg Kharkhordin associates the Khrushchev era with the rise of “the social” in the Soviet Union. Based on philosopher Hannah Arendt's work, he describes the social as a sphere of daily life that was distinct from the public and private spheres. The latter two were both superseded and undermined by the social, and the people that lived in it were treated as members of an “enormously overgrown family.” Kharkhordin argues that the Khrushchev regime ran Soviet society (*sovetskoe obshchestvo*) as a family.¹¹

Kharkhordin's metaphor of Soviet society as an overgrown family helps us to understand the philosophy that drove the Khrushchev regime's struggle for the communist way of life. It held that the life of an individual could only be meaningful when intimately integrated with Soviet society as if it were the individual's direct family. Under communism, personal life (*lichnaya zhizn'*) and societal life (*obshchestvennyi zhizn'*) would be indiscernible. Hence the regime's emphasis on the unity between the principles of conduct in personal and societal life. This philosophy

⁹ M. Zhurakov, ‘O Kommunisticheskoi morali’ [On the Communist Moral], *Pravda*, April 10, 1955, 2-3. I am indebted to Field for finding this article, though I have used my own translation. See Field, *Private Life*, 12. At the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party in October 1961, the ‘Moral Code of the Builder of Communism’ was issued as a part of the Party's new political program. It consisted out of twelve tenets, first and foremost “devotion to the communist cause, and love towards the socialist Motherland and to socialist countries.” See ‘Programma Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuz’ [The Program of the CPSU], in *Materialy XXII s’ezda KPSS* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1961), 410-411.

¹⁰ Field, *Private Life*, 5, 9-19. “Voluntary organizations” consisted of both Party members and citizens without Party membership who actively participated in the implementation of Party goals at a local level. Buchli, for example, notes that Housing Committees (*domkomy*) were set up to actively engage at the level of individual households. See Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 141.

¹¹ Oleg Kharkhordin, ‘Reveal and Dissimulate: A Genealogy of Private Life in Soviet Russia’, in *Public and Private in Thought and Practice. Perspective on a Grand Dichotomy*, ed. Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1997), 343-344, 358-359.

legitimized the regime's intrusions into the private spheres of daily life. But the policies that the regime implemented to change *byt*, Field points out, were not always in accordance with this philosophy. While some policies did in fact increase the regulation of everyday life, others simultaneously allowed people to take a higher degree of control over it.¹²

The prime example that demonstrates this, is the mass housing campaign initiated in 1957. The campaign's goal was to provide individual families with their own "separate apartment" (*otdel'nye kvartiry*) — which included its own kitchen — as an alternative for the crowded communal apartments (*kommunalki*) housing the majority of the population at that time. By 1965, millions of Soviet families had moved into such apartments, gained their own kitchens, and practically improved the degree of "privacy" they enjoyed.

At the same time, the regime did not give up its struggle for the communist way of life. "It is necessary to not only provide a person with a good home," Khrushchev said in 1959 with reference to the housing campaign, "but to teach him to make use of social facilities correctly, to live correctly, and to observe the rules of socialist societal life as well."¹³ One of Khrushchev's "social facilities" was the Soviet social foodservice (*obshchestvennoe pitanie*) — a system consisting of canteens, lunchrooms, et cetera — that was meant to make "private" kitchens obsolete. The reformation of daily life during the Khrushchev era was thus not straightforward, but riddled with inconsistencies.

Studying Cooking in the Khrushchev Age

The question that I seek to answer in this study is how the Khrushchev regime attempted to reform domestic cooking to make it fit into the communist way of life. Giard's "worldly noises" mentioned at the very beginning of this introduction were in fact never far away when Soviet women — it was considered to be women's work — cooked. We can listen to what these worldly noises — policy documents, cookbooks,

¹² Field, 'Conceptualizing Public and Private', 164-165.

¹³ Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev, 'O kontrolnikh tsifrakh razvitiya narodnogo khozyaistva SSSR na 1959—1965' [On the Control Numbers of the Development of the People's Economy in 1959-1965] *Vneocherednoi XXI s'ezd kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskogo soyuza. 27 yanvarya—5 fevral 1959 goda. Stenograficheskii otchet. Tom I* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1959), 55.

women's magazines and other official publications — had to say about the “preparation of food” (*prigotovlenie pishchi*).¹⁴

With this, the study will fulfill its aforementioned main aim: to contribute to our understanding of the Khrushchev regime's struggle for the communist way of life, by focusing on its attempts to reform cooking. The contribution consists in demonstrating that the regime's approach to this struggle was not immutable, but adapted to the unruly realities of daily life — shortcomings of the Soviet economy, persisting cultural practices, et cetera. In other words, the Khrushchev regime negotiated a synthesis between communist ideals and these realities in order to make the communist way of life work.

A secondary aim of this study is to contribute to the historiography on Soviet cooking by describing at least some of the ways in which cooking changed during this period.¹⁵ Soviet citizens generally ate three meals a day. They ate breakfast (*zavtrak*) in the morning, and the day's main meal (*obed*) was commonly eaten at midday. After they returned from work or school, they ate supper (*uzhina*). Though the number of people who could enjoy their midday meal in a canteen at their place of work increased during the Khrushchev years, as we will see later in this study, the majority of these daily meals was in fact prepared in domestic conditions. I must remind the reader that the massive production of many food products and domestic

¹⁴ Several words in Russian can designate “cooking”: *kulinariya*, *stryapnya*, and *prigotovlenie pishchi*. The first mostly used to signify “the art of cooking” or “cuisine”, and pertains more to the cooking by professional cook at a restaurant, than the housewife's at home. The second, *stryapnya*, can be translated as “cooking”, but with connotations of “clumsy work” and “concoction.” Bolshevik feminists used this word to speak about cookery in a negative tone. The third word, *prigotovlenie pishchi*, which translates literally to the neutral “preparation of food”, is most commonly used in Soviet sources from the Khrushchev era. It is also the word used in the case of the lemma on cooking in *The Short Household Encyclopedia*, which was published in 1959. See A. I. Revin et al., *Kratkaya entsiklopediya domashnego khozyaistva. Tom II. O-Ya* [The Short Household Encyclopedia. Volume II. O-Ya.] (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe nauchnoe izdatel'stvo “Bolshaya sovetskaya entsiklopediya”, 1959), 492.

¹⁵ A handful of studies on Soviet culinary history have been conducted, but not on the post-Stalin period. For the beginnings of Soviet cooking, see Halina Rothstein and Robert A. Rothstein, ‘The Beginning of Soviet Culinary Arts’, in *Food in Russian Culture and History*, ed. Musya Glants and Joyce Toomre (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 177-194; Maurice Borrero ‘Old and New Worlds of Dining’, in *Hungry Moscow. Scarcity and Urban Society in the Russian Civil War: 1917-1921* (New York: Peter Lang, 2003), 143-165. For the consolidation of a Soviet cuisine during the 1930s, see Jukka Gronow, *Caviar With Champagne. Common Luxury and the Ideals of the Good Life in Stalin's Russia* (Oxford: Berg, 2003); Gian Piero Piretto, ‘Tasty and Healthy: Soviet Happiness in One Book,’ in *Petrified Utopia*, ed. Marina Balina and Evgeny Dobrenko (London: Anthem Press, 2009), 79-96; Gronow and Sergey Zhuravlev, ‘The Book of Tasty and Healthy Food. The Establishment of Soviet Haute Cuisine’, in *Educated Tastes: Food, Drink, and Connoisseur Culture*, ed. Jeremy Strong (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 24-57; Edward Geist, ‘Cooking Bolshevik: Anastas Mikoian and the Making of the *Book about Delicious and Healthy Food*’ *The Russian Review* 71, no.2 (April, 2012): 295-313. For the Sovietization of ethnic cuisines, see Joyce Toomre, ‘Food and National Identity in Soviet Armenia’, in *Russian Culture and History*, 195-214; Erik R. Scott, ‘Edible Ethnicity. How Georgian Cuisine Conquered the Soviet Table’, *Kritika* 13, no. 4 (2012): 831-858.

appliances we now consider to be common, such as industrially canned foods, refrigerators or dishwashers, took off globally only after the Second World War and modernized, if not revolutionized, the preparation of food at home.¹⁶ During the Khrushchev years, this revolution began to take effect on Soviet cooking as well.

The Structure of this Study

The first chapter of this study shows why it was important to the regime to reform domestic cooking. In January 1959, Khrushchev presented his Seven-Year Plan for the Soviet economy and rebooted Lenin's project of communist construction with renewed vigor. Khrushchev declared that socialism had been established in the Soviet Union, and that the Soviet Union entered the period of full-scale communist construction. The goals of the new Plan were to simultaneously lay the economic foundation for communism, and to catch up with and overtake the most advanced capitalist countries in terms of economic production. Another important policy document of the Khrushchev era, the third Program of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union presented in October 1961, promised that the material foundation of a communist society would be completed after a period of two decades.

As the chapter shows, Khrushchev's reboot of the communist project impacted the regime's attitude towards domestic cooking. The Bolshevik aversion against cooking as a domestic burden for Soviet women that prevented their emancipation, was revived. In order to alleviate this burden, the Khrushchev regime promised that cooking would be outsourced to a massive network of social food service establishments. In fact, the regime held that if its struggle for the communist way of life was successfully completed, domestic cooking would have become obsolete, and Soviet women — in contrast to their counterparts in capitalist countries — would be liberated from their drudgery at the stove.

In the second chapter I explore how the Khrushchev regime attempted to fulfill this promise during the Seven-Year Plan. A policy on social foodservices was further elaborated in a resolution passed by the Party's Central Committee and Soviet

¹⁶ Peter Scholiers, 'Post-1945 Global Food Developments' in *Food In Time and Place: The American Historical Association Companion to Food History*, ed. Paul Freedman, Joyce Chaplin and Ken Albala (Oakland: University of California Press, 2014), 340-363.

government in February 1959, following the presentation of the economic plan. The goals of the policy were, in short, to expand the social food service's reach among the population and to improve its quality. Reporting in *The Female Worker* (*Rabotnitsa*), one of the Soviet Union's most popular women's magazines — discussed below — provides a perspective on the ways the social food service was expanded and improved in reality.

In the third chapter we move into Soviet households to see how the Khrushchev regime attempted to reform cooking at home. In its program the Party had acknowledged that the social foodservice would only take precedence over the domestic preparation of food after a period of ten to fifteen years. At the same time, as mentioned above, individual families were provided with their own kitchen on a massive scale. The regime thus seemed to have accepted that, rather than disappearing at once, domestic cooking would be phased out gradually. Until the social food service was adequately developed, the “reduction and alleviation” (*sokrashcheniya i oblegcheniya*) of Soviet women's burden *inside* households was a more urgent goal. On the one hand this was to be achieved by improving the production of modern household appliances and consumer products, and on the other by providing advice on the appropriate organization of cooking. Cookbooks, magazines such as *The Female Worker* and other household literature were instrumental to the regime's reform effort, and will be the source of information for this chapter.

The fourth and last chapter of this study shows that not all of the regime's policies with regards to cooking amounted to the alleviation of its burden on Soviet women. Since the 1920s, Soviet nutritionists had developed scientific principles of “rational nutrition” (*ratsionalnoe pitanie*) with the goal of optimizing the diet of the Soviet population, and so contribute to its health, longevity and capacity to work. Though rational nutrition did not feature explicitly in the Party's discourse, it was a constant element of Soviet culinary literature. The very popular *Short Household Encyclopedia*, first published in 1959, for example, defined “the preparation of food” specifically as “the culinary art based on the scientific principles of rational nutrition.”¹⁷ In this last chapter, I study culinary literature in cookbooks and *The Female Worker* to get an idea of what Soviet nutritional scientists expected from housewives in terms of their cooking. Their emphasis on a healthy, vitamin-rich diet

¹⁷ Revin et al., *Kratkaya entsiklopediya*, 492.

actually made the domestic burden on Soviet women heavier, and thus undermined the regime's attempts at the "reduction and alleviation" of it.

The Sources on Cooking

As mentioned above, I rely on policy documents, women's magazines, culinary literature, and other official publications as sources to study cooking in the Khrushchev era. Below, I discuss the sources that are used throughout this study.

Policy documents published by the Party and the Soviet government give an idea of the regime's aspirations and plans regarding domestic cooking. But they do provide scant information on how these were realized in practice. As far as quantifiable economic goals are concerned, government statistics can provide such information. The annual publication of *The People's Economy of the USSR*, the yearbook of the Central Statistical Board of the Soviet Council of Ministers, was resumed in 1956, and provides useful, reliable statistics.¹⁸

A source used frequently throughout this study is the women's magazine *The Female Worker*. It was published as a monthly supplement to *Pravda*, and was the Party's main mouthpiece to reach urban women. Publication started in 1914, but only became regular from January 1923 onwards. Its print runs increased enormously during the Khrushchev years. The number of subscribers grew from 1.2 million in 1956 to 4.2 million by the beginning of 1964. Because it circulated amongst friends, family, colleagues and neighbors, this magazine's reach among the population was wider than the number of its subscribers.¹⁹ The magazine frequently included recipe columns and advice on matters such as nutrition, the arrangement of the kitchen, and the organization of the cooking process. Moreover, it featured reports, interviews and readers' letters, that provide a window on Soviet society and daily life at the time.

¹⁸ Under Stalin, the Statistical Board had been tightly controlled by the state, and actually no statistics at all had been published from 1939 onwards. After Stalin's death the Board was given more independence from the state's planning and executive organs, which improved the reliability of its statistics. See, Nikolai M. Dronin and Edward G. Bellinger, *Climate Dependence and Food Problems in Russia 1900-1990. The Interaction of Climate and Agricultural Policy and Their Effect on Food Problems* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005), 23-26.

¹⁹ Lynne Attwood, 'Celebrating the Frail-Figured Welder': Gender Confusion in Women's Magazines of the Khrushchev Era', *Slavonica* 8, no. 2 (2002): 160.

Cookbooks too are an important source for this study. More than merely providing instruction on how to cook food, cookbooks are informative sources for practicalities, such as the inventory of the kitchen and the ingredients that were assumed to be available, and give an — idealized — image of the material culture of everyday life. Moreover, authors can use recipe books to teach their audiences about identity, norms of behavior, and reflect official attitudes towards domestic life. In other words, they are guides that draw their audiences into the creation of the culture of daily life.²⁰

The publication of cookbooks in the Soviet Union began in the 1920s. Initially, these were meant exclusively for professional cooks.²¹ In 1939, the publishing house of the People's Commissariat of Food Industry (*Pishchepromizdat*) eventually published the first major cookbook meant for domestic use: *The Book about Tasty and Healthy Food* (henceforth *The Book*). It was a collaborative work, written by the food industry's specialists, professional cooks and nutritional scientists. It featured hundreds of recipes and several chapters on matters such as the organization of the kitchen, nutrition, and the serving of the table. Until the publication of the fifth edition of *The Book* in 1952 its print runs remained very low. During the 1950s, however, it became truly ubiquitous. By 1965, a total of almost 8 million copies and abridged versions of *The Book* had been sold.²² It was the single most authoritative cookbook in the Soviet Union, and I argue that the editions published during the Khrushchev era were instrumental in the transfer of communist ideals into the domestic sphere.²³

²⁰ Barbara Ketcham Wheaton, 'Cookbooks as Resources for Social History', in *Food in Time and Place*, ed. Freedman, Chaplin, and Albala, 276-295; Arjun Apparai, 'How to Make a National Cuisine: Cookbooks in Contemporary India', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30, no. 1 (January, 1988): 3-24; Wendy Bracewell, 'Eating Up Yugoslavia: Cookbooks and Consumption in Socialist Yugoslavia', *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, ed. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 169-197.

²¹ Rothstein and Rothstein, 'Soviet Culinary Arts', 184-192.

²² The historian Edward Geist pointed out that of the 100,000 copies planned for the publication of its first edition only 71,000 had been actually printed by 1941. See, Geist, 'Cooking Bolshevik', 307. In the foreword to the sixth edition of *The Book*, itself published in a print-run of 700,000 copies, stated that about seven million copies of *The Book* and abridged versions had been sold in the previous years. See A.I. Oparin et al., *Kniga o vkusnoi i zdorovoi pishche* [The Book about Tasty and Healthy Food] (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo "pishchevaya promyshlennost"), 5. The latter edition is henceforth referred to as *Kniga* (1965).

²³ Geist, 'Cooking Bolshevik', 313; Piretto, 'Tasty and Healthy', 84; Gronow and Zhuravlev, 'Soviet Haute Cuisine', 40. Modern Russian scholars who grew up in Saint-Petersburg and Moscow during the 1960s and 1970s mention that they remember that every family had a copy of *The Book* in its possession. See Irinana Glushchenko, *Obshchepit. Mikoyan i sovetskaya kukhnya* (Moscow: Vysshaya shkola ekonomiki, 2015), 156, and Kharkhordin, 'Private Life in Soviet Russia', 353.

During the Khrushchev era, a greater variety of cookbooks meant for domestic use was printed, increasing the choice that Soviet housewives had.²⁴ This study mainly relies on *The Book*, but occasionally compares its content to that of other cookbooks.

All Soviet sources used throughout this study are official publications, which means they were printed under the supervision of the Soviet state. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the limits of the perspective on Soviet daily life that these sources provide. Scholars have pointed to the existence of a single, overarching “authoritative discourse” — in this case Leninist-Marxist ideological dogma revived by Khrushchev — in Soviet texts, that was experienced as immutable and was accepted as the truth, ideally speaking, by all authors and audiences of these texts. This discourse limited the ways in which daily life could be discussed in official publications, and, as the historian Christine Varga-Harris pointed out, even in letters that Soviet citizens wrote to authorities.²⁵ This means that the sources used in this study can only provide a perspective on daily life that reproduces an official or semi-official truth. For example, none of these sources raise the question if women actually enjoy cooking. Rather, it is readily assumed that cooking is dreadful, and only burdens them.

This does not mean, however, that the image of Soviet daily life gained through the sources is a blatant lie. Historian Jeffrey Brooks argues with regards to reporting in *Pravda* that it “was also the work of people who verbalized their own experiences, lexicons, and observations in an effort to make the world around them intelligible within the official given limits.”²⁶ I ascribe to this position, and hold that even though the sources used in this study are limited by an “authoritative discourse,” they do provide an insight into Soviet daily life. Some of them even recognized, be it implicitly, that reality did not conform to the regime’s ideals. As we shall see in the third chapter, for example, *The Female Worker* gave instructions on how to improvise refrigerators amongst the regime’s claim that these would soon become abundant.

²⁴ Gronow and Zhuravlev, ‘Soviet Haute Cuisine’, 37.

²⁵ The term “authoritative discourse” (*avtoritetnoe slovo*) was coined by the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin in the 1930s. See Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until it Was No More. The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton: Oxford University Press, 2005), 14-15; Varga-Harris, ‘Forging Citizenship on the Home Front. Reviving the Socialist Contract and Constructing Soviet Identity During the Thaw’, in *The Dilemmas of De-Stalinisation. Negotiating Cultural and Social Change in the Khrushchev Era*, ed. Polly Jones (London: Routledge, 2006), 111; Jeffrey Brooks, ‘Socialist Realism in Pravda: Read All About it!’ *Slavic Review* 53, no. 4 (Winter, 1994): 975.

²⁶ Brooks, ‘Read All About it!’, 975.

Remarks on Transliteration

For the transliteration of Russian concepts, titles and names I use the system that is used by Terence Wade in *A Comprehensive Russian Grammar*, with the exception that I do use an apostrophe (') for the soft sign (ь) in all cases.²⁷ When I refer to a Soviet source in the running text, its title is always translated to English. The exception here is *Pravda*, as I assume that English-speaking readers are familiar with this title. In the footnotes and bibliography I use transliterated Russian titles, followed by their English translations in square brackets ([...]) when referring to them for the first time. The original Russian texts of quotes I consider important, are included in an appendix. These are indicated by an asterisk in square brackets ([*]).

²⁷ Terence Wade, *A Comprehensive Russian Grammar* (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 1-2.

Chapter 1. Communism and Domestic Cooking

In the introduction to this study I elaborated on the academic discussion on the Khrushchev regime's attempts to reform daily life, or *byt*. The regime started a struggle for the communist way of life that would intimately link citizens' personal lives to the ultimate goal of Soviet society, namely the establishment of communism. I argue that the reform of domestic cooking was an aspect of this struggle. But why would Khrushchev's regime be interested to reform domestic cooking at all, and what policies did the regime propose to reform it?

To find an answer to these questions in this chapter, we first make our own return to Lenin. The Bolsheviks had despised domestic cooking as a bourgeois institute that suppressed women, and it had to be outsourced to a system of eateries outside the home. After Khrushchev's secret speech in 1956, such ideas again found expression in the regime's policies. In January 1959, Khrushchev presented his Seven-Year Plan, with which he reinvigorated Lenin's project, and started the full-scale construction of communism in the Soviet Union. This economic plan addressed domestic cooking and made provisions for the further improvement of the social foodservice. The Party's new political Program presented in October 1961— the third since the first one in 1903, further elaborated these ideas and promised that they would have been realized in practice by the end of the 1970s. Both of these documents are discussed in this chapter.

Lastly, I discuss how the reform of domestic cooking became an important aspect in the Soviet Union's peaceful competition with the capitalist West. The Seven-Year Plan also set the goal that the Soviet economy would "catch up with and overtake" the most advanced capitalist economies. The now famous "Kitchen Debate" between Khrushchev and American Vice-President at the American national exhibition on July 24, 1959, made this apparent.

The Bolsheviks versus the Domestic Kitchen

One of the key issues featuring in Bolshevik discussions on *byt* in the early period after the Revolution of November 1917 was the oppression of women within the domestic realm. In the Bolshevik's Marxist perspective, the petit bourgeois 'hearth' —

as the unreformed home was known — was intimately linked with the regulation of prerevolutionary daily life. The unpaid domestic labor carried out by women, including cooking, was seen as a patriarchal institute, preventing the emancipation of women in society foreseen in the legislation passed by the Bolshevik government in 1918.¹ Domestic labor did therefore not have a place in Bolshevik visions of the future.

During the Russian Civil War the issue was raised by the feminist activists who had joined the Bolshevik movement, and it eventually became concern for the new government. At the first National Congress of Female Workers and Peasants in November 1918, Alexandra Kollontai, a prominent Bolshevik feminist and later leader of the women's section of the Communist Party (*Zhenotdel*) spoke about the future of domestic labor in communist society.² According to Kollontai, cooking, as well as the preparation of all kinds of pickles, jams, smoked and cured meats, and *kvas* (a drink made from fermented bread) for winter, were doomed to oblivion. “Instead of being tormented with cooking [*stryapnei*], spending her last free hours in the kitchen preparing dinners and suppers,” she spoke, “there will be widely developed social canteens [*obshchestvennye stolovye*] and central kitchens [*tsentral'nye kukhni*].... Communism will abolish the woman's domestic slavery [*domashnee rabstvo zhenshchiny*], and will make her life richer, fuller, merrier and happier.”³

Merely a year later, Lenin supported Kollontai's views in his pamphlet titled 'A Great Beginning', writing that “notwithstanding all emancipatory laws, the woman remains a domestic slave, because the petty household burdens, strangles, dulls, and belittles her, binds her to the kitchen....” To really achieve the emancipation of women, Lenin called for an “all-out struggle against this petty household.” The bourgeois hearth was to be broken down, and all domestic chores outsourced to the socialist society. Lenin considered social canteens — he did not mention central kitchens — to be among the “shoots of communism” (*rostki kommunizma*) which,

¹ Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 25-27.

² On the First National Congress of Female Workers and Peasants of 1918, and the development of the feminist wing of the Communist Party, see Elizabeth A. Wood, *The Baba and the Comrade. Gender and Politics in Revolutionary Russia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 72-75.

³ Alexandra Kollontai, *Sem'ya i kommunisticheskoe gosudarstvo* [The Family and Communist Government] (Moscow: Knigoizdatel'stvo “Kommunist”, November 1918), 10, 14-15. Assessed online at 12-9-2016 at 13:39. <http://e-heritage.ru/ras/view/publication/general.html?id=46962267>.[*] In 1920 the text of this speech was published as a pamphlet in *Kommunistka*, and appeared in English translation in *The Worker*. See Kollontai, ‘Communism and the Family’, in *Selected Writings of Alexandra Kollontai*, trans. Alix Holt (Westport, Conn.:Lawrence Hill and Company, 1977), 250-275.

through careful nurturing, might bloom into full communism.⁴

The Beginnings of the Social Foodservice

During the Russian Civil War, the People's Commissariat for Food Supplies (*Narkomprod*) had organized such canteens in a system that also included tearooms (*chainye*), lunchrooms (*bufety*) and large automated kitchen-factories (*fabrikokukhni*). This system was referred to as *obshchestvennoe pitanie*. This term is often translated into English as "public dining," "public food service" or "public catering." I prefer, however, to translate it as "the social foodservice." I do so, because this translation more accurately captures the revolutionary government's intention to make the nourishment of individual citizens into a responsibility for society. In other words, the social foodservice would be the single cook for the Soviet socialist family.⁵

More than serving as an instrument to achieve the liberalization of women from the drudgery of cooking alone, the social foodservice was the most practical solution to the wide-spread malnutrition during the Russian Civil War. It allowed for the most efficient, hygienic, and scientifically sound distribution of food, ensuring the good health of the revolutionary population.

That Bolshevik authorities were genuinely committed to healthy nutrition was reflected by the establishment of the Institute of the Physiology of Nutrition in 1920, organized under the People's Commissariat of Public Health (*Narkomzdrav*). Proponents of social food services held that the preparation of food by housewives, based on tradition rather than science, was wasteful and potentially unhealthy. In a brochure titled *Down with the Private Kitchen!*, a certain P. Kozhanyi argued that "[w]hen each family eats by itself, scientifically sound nutrition is out of the question. What does the woman cooking for the family...know about such things when she

⁴ Vladimir Ilich Lenin, 'Velikii pochin. O geroizme rabochiki v tylu. Po povody "kommunisticheskikh Subbotnikov"' [A Great Beginning. On the Heroism of the Workers in the Rear. Concerning the "Communist Subbotniks"], in *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii. Tom 39. Iyun'-dekabr'1919* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1970), 23-24. [*]

⁵ The term literally means "social nutrition." Mauricio Borrero chooses to translate the term as "public dining." Rothstein and Rothstein translate it as "(system of) public food service," and modern Russian-English dictionaries translate it to "public catering." Kharkhordin argues that term *obshchestvennyi* must be translated as "social/societal" in a Soviet context. "[U]sing the word "public" at all in the Soviet context is profoundly misleading, if not outrageously erroneous," Kharkhordin writes. See, Borrero, *Hungry Moscow*, 144; Rothstein and Rothstein, 'Soviet Culinary Art', 192n1, and Kharkhordin, 'Private Life in Soviet Russia', 358-359.

learned to cook from a similar cook without any diploma?”⁶ Though it might have not featured as prominently in Lenin and Kollontai’s speeches and pamphlets, the commitment to healthy nutrition based on scientific research was an important driver for the establishment of the social foodservice — in chapter 4 the Soviet science of nutrition will be more elaborately discussed.

The foodservice had expanded rapidly in Russian cities during the last years of the Civil War. Historian Mauricio Borrero finds that the number of socialized canteens in Moscow had almost tripled from 881 to 2350 between October 1918 and June 1919, and quadrupled from 200 to 740 in Petrograd over the span of 1919, serving about 900 thousand people every day in both cities.⁷

In March 1921, the government introduced the New Economic Policy (NEP). This policy amounted to an intentional retreat of the Bolshevik government from its revolutionary struggle to nationalize the economy. Subsequently, *Narkomprod* transferred its responsibility for the social food service to citizen-run cooperatives.⁸

The service did not become an alternative to domestic cooking during NEP. First of all, its scale was too limited. Secondly, as archaeologist Victor Buchli points out, the prices for the use of the service were too high for the average Soviet household.⁹ Lastly, Rothstein and Rothstein argue that the food that was served in existing establishments allegedly was of such low quality, often unpalatable, and prepared under such miserable hygienic circumstances that women and their families did not want to use the foodservice.¹⁰ The preparation of food at home remained uncontested by the social food service. The fact that *The Female Worker* started publishing recipe-columns regularly since 1923, reflected that the Party acknowledged this.¹¹

In the context of the fast industrialization of the Soviet economy required by the first Five-Year Plan starting in 1928, the government revitalized its interest in the social foodservice. Government statistics published during the Khrushchev era show a tremendous expansion of the service from 1928 to 1932. The number of

⁶ P. Kozhanyi, *Doloi chastnuyu kukhnyu!* [Down with the private kitchen!] (Moscow: Izd. paevogo t-va “Narpit”, 1923), 8, cited in Rothstein and Rothstein, ‘Soviet Culinary Arts’, 181.

⁷ Many of these canteens were nationalized private restaurants. Borrero, *Hungry Moscow*, 150.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 160.

⁹ Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 31. The historian Julie Hessler notes that during the first Five-year plan, Soviet planners argued that the social food service lacked customers precisely because of its high prices. See Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade: Trade Policy, Retail Practices, and Consumption, 1917-1953* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 177

¹⁰ Rothstein and Rothstein, ‘Soviet Culinary Arts’, 183.

¹¹ Gronow and Zhuravlev, ‘Soviet Haute Cuisine’, 28.

establishments in the Soviet Union almost quadrupled from 14.6 thousand to 55.8 thousand.¹² But this growth was arguably motivated less by Marxist emancipative goals than by the economic concerns of industrialization. Historian Julie Hessler, studying Soviet trade during this period, finds that Soviet planners reasoned that the provision of affordable meals at factories “would reduce the likelihood of tardiness and absenteeism after the lunch break, raise morale, and keep workers from changing jobs.”¹³ Moreover, in 1930 the Party officially abolished its *zhenotdel* in 1930, claiming that women’s emancipation had been fully achieved.¹⁴

Soviet Women’s Unequal Position during the Khrushchev Era

During the Khrushchev era, the Stalinist claim that women had been fully emancipated was contested. It increasingly became clear that women, though integrated in the Soviet workforce as female workers (*rabotnitsy*), had retained their responsibilities for the household as housewives (*domashnie khozhyaiki*). In other words, women were expected to do the housekeeping after having worked a full day. This phenomenon which is commonly referred to as the women’s “double burden”.

Historian Donald Filtzer argues that Soviet women were consigned a subordinate social position, which was mutually reinforced both at work and at home. Managers, who were often men, generally perceived female workers as housewives incapable of performing skilled labor. Therefore they were less likely to grant them higher, better paid positions than men. Because many women were unable to make a contribution to the household budgets equal to their husband’s, their position as housewives was in turn reinforced.¹⁵

This inequality was reflected in the results of time-budget surveys conducted by Soviet sociologists from 1957 onwards. Based on these results, historian Andrei

¹² The number of canteens and tearooms — of which there are no separate data until 1937 — grew from 10.3 thousand to 39.2 thousand; the number of lunchrooms grew from 4.3 thousand to 16.5 thousand, and the number of kitchen-factories increased from only 5 to 105, a multiplication of 21 times. See *Narodnoe Khozyaistvo SSSR v 1964 godu. Statisticheskii ezhegodnik* [The National Economy of the USSR in 1964. Statistical Yearbook] (Moscow: “Statistika”, 1965), 648.

¹³ Hessler found that during this period the number of meals sold per day rose from 750 thousand to 14.8 million. See, Julie Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade: Trade Policy, Retail Practices, and Consumption, 1917-1953* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 177.

¹⁴ Wood, *The Baba*, 221.

¹⁵ Donald Filtzer, ‘Women Worker’s in the Khrushchev Era’, in *Women in the Khrushchev Era*, ed. Melanie Ilic, Susan E. Reid, and Lynne Attwood (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 29-51.

Markevich points to the existence of an inequality in the way women spent their time off work in comparison with men during the Khrushchev era. Women spent about 70 percent of this on household duties and childcare and 30 percent on leisure and rest, while the picture for men was the opposite.¹⁶

The time both sexes averagely spent on cooking again reflects this inequality. Results of a survey conducted in the Latvian SSR's capital Riga during the winter of 1959-1960, show that the average time women daily spent on cooking made up the majority of the total average amount of time spent on domestic duties, while men barely even cooked.¹⁷ The Latvian situation cannot be taken to represent a situation that generally existed in the Soviet Union. But it can at least give indication for the situation in Soviet republics with similar levels of female participation in the labor force, such as the RSFSR.¹⁸

During the Khrushchev era, it thus became apparent to the regime that, notwithstanding all Bolshevik emancipatory rhetoric, a more or less traditional gender division had persisted in Soviet households. Women were still burdened by a responsibility to cook.

Khrushchev's Reboot of the Struggle Against the Kitchen

In the wake of Khrushchev's secret speech, the Party started to address Soviet women's unequal position in daily life similarly to Lenin and Kollontai. Moreover, most of the solutions the Khrushchev regime proposed to tackle this problem in the Seven-Year Plan and later in the Party's third political program were in fact very similar, if not the same.

¹⁶ The collection and publication of any sociologic data had ceased under Stalin, and was resumed in 1957. See, Markevich Markevich, 'Soviet Urban Households and the Road to Universal Employment, from the End of the 1930s to the end of the 1960', *Continuity and Change* 20, no. 3 (2005): 444,464- 466.

¹⁷ The results of Riga Survey of November 1959—February 1960 made a distinction between solitaries and couples (without children; with children under 1 year old; with children between 1-6, and with or without children and with one or more non-employed adult relatives). The women among the couples without non-employed relatives averagely spent 5.15 (without children) to 8.98 (with children under 1) hours a day on household duties and childcare, of which they respectively spent 1.73 to 2.63 hours on cooking. Men in the same category averagely spent 0.87 to 2.20 hours on household duties and childcare, of which they spent 0.05 to 0.25 hours on cooking. Interestingly enough, these results also showed that solitary women averagely spent 1.67 hours on cooking a day, while this number is 0.47 hours for men. See *ibid.*, 468.

¹⁸ In 1959, women made up 47 percent of the labour force of the Latvian SSR. In the RSFSR this was 49 percent, and in the Estonian SSR, where women's participation was the highest, it was 50 percent *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR v 1959 godu. Statisticheskii ezhegodnik* [The People's Economy of the USSR. Statistic Yearbook](Moscow: Goststatizdat, 1960), 594.

The Seven-Year Plan was presented by Khrushchev on January 27 1959, the first day of the extraordinary Twenty-First Congress of the CPSU. Khrushchev elaborated on the previous plans' economic successes and progress and claimed that these "grant our country the possibility to now start the a new, paramount period of its development — the period of the full-scale construction of communism." Khrushchev thus declared that the construction of socialism in the Soviet Union had been completed. The first steps towards Soviet society's ultimate goal, the establishment of communism, were to be set in the next seven years.

Next to the increase of the country's economic and defensive power, the Plan's main objectives included a major increase of the people's living standard, and the goal to "catch up with and overtake" (*dognat' i peregnat'*) the most developed capitalist countries in production per capita. Rather than competing with capitalist countries in terms of heavy industry and defense exclusively, as had been the case under Stalin, the Soviet regime would show that socialism also excelled over capitalism with regards to its capacity to improve the quality of people's lives. The Seven-Year Plan did not require any "sacrifices" from the population (*"zhertv" ot naseleniya*), it would only have beneficiaries.¹⁹

In this context, Khrushchev emphasized the need to alleviate Soviet women's domestic burden. Elaborating on the improvement of the population's living standard, Khrushchev told his audience that "Soviet power has released the woman from that humiliating semi-slavish position [*polurabskogo polozheniyai*] in which she had found herself under Tsarism and still finds herself in many capitalist countries." Soviet women had indeed become an active force in all fields of Soviet life, and enjoyed equal rights to men, "but many women are occupied with the household and with childcare, hampering their active participation in societal life [*obshchestvennoi zhizni*]." In order to create the conditions that would allow women a broad use of their rights, knowledge and talent in society, Khrushchev considered the expanse of social services to be of utmost importance. He reminded his audience that Lenin had considered these services "shoots of communism." These shoots had developed into "an entire system of various organizations of the communist type, and our duty is to increase these organizations, and to improve and perfect their work."²⁰

We see here that Khrushchev proposed to finish business previously left

¹⁹ Khrushchev, 'O kontrolnikh tsifrakh', 20, 54.[*]

²⁰ Ibid., 60, 51. [*]

unfinished, and complete the liberation of women by making social services available on a massive scale. He especially emphasized the important role of the social foodservice:

Comrades! It is essential to stress the outstanding significance of the social food service. It is necessary to still broader develop the network of kitchen-factories, canteens at factories, institutes of higher education, and in schools, and to have social canteens in housing blocks, so the members of working families could use them and better organize their nutrition. The objective is to reduce the prices of the products of the social foodservice.²¹

Khrushchev reopened Lenin and Kollontai's struggle against the kitchen. If the social food service could embrace schools, work and even the home, the necessity for women to cook at home would simply disappear. These aspirations were translated into policy in a resolution titled 'On the Further Development and Improvement of the Social Food Service' passed by the Party and Soviet government on February 20, 1959. I will elaborately discuss this policy and its implementation in practice in the next chapter.

The Party's new Program, that was presented and approved on October 17, 1961, the first day of the Twenty-Second Party Congress, affirmed these ideas more clearly. This program reiterated the content of the Seven-Year Plan, but added that “the current generation of Soviet people will live under communism.”²² This became an important slogan in the Party's propaganda during the Khrushchev years. In effect, it meant that a communist society would have been established within a period of twenty years.

A section of the Program is specifically dedicated to the improvement of family living conditions and the position of women. The Party called for the liquidation of “the remnants of the unequal position of women in daily life.” This goal would be attained by the creating conditions for the “reduction and alleviation” (*sokrashcheniya i oblegcheniya*) of women's domestic work, and eventually “replacing this work with social forms of satisfying the everyday needs of the family.”²³ With regards to the system of social food service this section adds some crucial provisions to the Seven-Year Plan's:

²¹ Ibid. 54. [*]

²² 'Programma Kommunisticheskoi Partii', 428.

²³ Ibid., 393.[*]

The service at and the quality of production at canteens must be radically improved, so that dinners [*obedy*] at canteens are delicious and nourishing and cost the family less than food cooked at home.... *Because of all of this the social food service will be able to take precedence over nutrition in domestic conditions within 10-15 years* [emphasis mine]... The transition to free social food services (dinners) at enterprises and institutions... will begin in the second decade.²⁴

The Communist Party promised that domestic cooking would start becoming obsolete by the middle of the 1970s. This was an ambitious plan, but the regime was committed to make it work. In a student manual on the social food service published in 1963, a Soviet economist established, without any doubt, that “in the course of the next twenty years, the number of users daily profiting from the social food services will grow from 40 to 200-210 million people.”²⁵ Notwithstanding the scale of this project, Soviet planners seem to have been optimistic about its fulfillment. It reflects the Khrushchev regime's radical commitment to the construction of communism based on the Marxist-Leninist principles developed by the Bolsheviks during the Soviet state's early days.

Domestic Cooking as a Necessary Evil

In the reading of the Seven-Year Plan and the Party's new political program above, it seems as if the Khrushchev regime was genuinely committed to make domestic cooking obsolete. At the same time, however, the planned growth of the Soviet population's living standard could lead to the further entrenchment of domestic cooking. For example, the Seven-Year Plan foresaw the excessive growth of agricultural production in the Soviet Union. Driven by the successes of his Virgin Lands Campaign which had started in 1954, Khrushchev declared that “a level of production which completely covers the population's needs in foodstuffs” was to be reached by 1965.²⁶ Simultaneously, he promised that salaries would increase, and

²⁴ Ibid.[*]

²⁵ Stepan S. Vasil'ev, *Ekonomika obshchestvennogo pitaniya* [Economics of the Social Foodservice] (Moscow: Gostorgizdat, 1963), 91.

²⁶ The Virgin Land Campaign was started to cultivate 40 million hectares of previously unused steppes in Kazakhstan and Western Siberia. In the 1954-1957 period grain yields had increased with a rate high enough for Khrushchev to declare the Soviet Union's grain problems to be solved. See Dronin and Bellinger, *Food Problems in Russia*, 180-181. By 1965, agricultural production had to have increased by 170 percent. Khrushchev, 'O kontrolnikh tsifrakh', 34.

working days and weeks would get shorter.²⁷ Since its establishment, the Soviet Union was plagued by shortages of the most basic foodstuffs. But now, the supply of foodstuffs would become more reliable, and households would have more time and money to spend on the preparation of food.

Moreover, as I stated in the introduction to this study, each family would have their own private kitchen to do the cooking in. On July 31, 1957, the Soviet leadership had approved a decree that promised to end the housing shortage that had plagued the Soviet Union from its inception within a maximum of twelve years.²⁸ In 1959, Khrushchev pledged that around 15 million apartments, all including a kitchen, would have been constructed by 1965.²⁹ And in 1961, the Party's program stated that by the end of the 1970s every family would have “a comfortable apartment conforming to the requirements of hygiene and cultured living.”³⁰

Historian Susan Reid rightly points out that providing kitchens to families for individual use seemingly contradicted the regime's aim to outsource domestic cooking to the social food service. The same could be said about other policies that improved the living standards of individual families. According to Reid, this phenomenon points to diverging ideals among the institutions involved in planning how modern, urban daily life should take shape in the Soviet Union.³¹

This explanation is plausible, but Reid does not continue to prove it. And moreover, it does not account for the fact that, as we have seen above, the Party's Program explicitly stated that the social foodservice would take precedence over domestic cooking only after a period of ten to fifteen years.

Until that time, the “reduction and alleviation” of the burden of cooking was a more urgent goal. On the one hand, the Party's Program stated that “up-to-date inexpensive domestic machinery, appliances, and electrical devices will be made extensively available for this purpose.”³² A growth of the light and food industries' production had already been provisioned in the Seven-Year Plan.³³ On the other hand, as was also mentioned in this study' instruction, Khrushchev held that people

²⁷ Real incomes would have generally increased 40 percent by 1965. A transition to a five-day working week with six-hour workdays would have been made by 1965. Khrushchev, 'O kontrolnikh tsifrakh', 48, 53.

²⁸ Mark B. Smith, 'Khrushchev's Promise to Eliminate the Urban Housing Shortage', in *Soviet State and Society Under Nikita Khrushchev*, ed. Melanie Ilic and Jeremy Smith, (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 26.

²⁹ Khrushchev, 'O kontrolnikh tsifrakh', 51.

³⁰ 'Programma Kommunisticheskoi Partii', 390.

³¹ Reid, 'The Khrushchev Kitchen', 293-295.

³² 'Programma Kommunisticheskoi Partii', 393.[*]

³³ Khrushchev, 'O kontrolnikh tsifrakh', 30.

should be taught to “make use of social facilities correctly, to live correctly and to observe the rules of socialist societal life.”³⁴ Subsequently, advice on the appropriate organization of cooking was provided in cookbooks and journals.

These seemingly conflicting policies with regards to domestic cooking, could also be explained by the leadership’s perception of domestic cooking as a necessary evil that would persist until communism was achieved. In the meantime, as historians Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger argue with regards to consumption, the regime negotiated a synthesis between a rising living standard and communist morality in Soviet daily life.³⁵ Cooking at home was to be “rationalized” as well in order to fit with the regime’s emancipative goals. In the third chapter of this study, we will see how this rationalized form of domestic cooking was to take shape.

The Kitchen Debate

We have seen above that the Khrushchev regime's reforms of domestic cooking were driven by a commitment to establish a communist society in which women would be liberated from their duties at the stove. Shortly after the presentation of the Seven-Year Plan, the kitchen also became a space for the peaceful competition between the communist and capitalist ways of life. This was apparent in the widely publicized discussion between Khrushchev and Richard Nixon, then vice-president of the United States, on the 24th of July 1959 at the American National Exhibition in Moscow's Sokol'niki Park, which is famously known as “the Kitchen Debate”.

The American Exhibition took place in the framework of a Soviet-American agreement to encourage cultural exchange between the two nations, signed in January 1958. A Soviet exhibit had taken place in New York earlier that summer. It had strongly emphasized advanced technology — *Sputniks*, space capsules, heavy machinery, and a model nuclear ice breaker — over consumer goods. The American one contrasted the Soviet hi-tech exposé by highlighting consumer goods. It featured four fully equipped kitchens, including RCA Whirlpool's futuristic, fully automated

³⁴ Ibid., 55. [*]

³⁵ Bren and Neuburger, 'Introduction', in *Communism Unwrapped*, 9.

“miracle kitchen”.³⁶

Reid writes that the planners of the American exhibition intentionally used such products as offensive weapons in the Cold War. They hoped to demonstrate capitalist superiority at a third front in addition to the arms and space races, namely the living standards race. The planners, Reid argues, drew on the “Nylon War”-theory developed by sociologist David Riesman in 1951. This theory held that consumer items targeting women— vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, et cetera — were “the most powerful missiles” America could aim at the Soviet Union, as these would frustrate innate feminine consumerist desires. Eventually women would pressure the Soviet regime and entice it to shift its focus from heavy to light, and harmless, industry.³⁷

The meeting between Khrushchev and Nixon at the exhibit was therefore also carefully staged in front of a General Electric's kitchen placed in a full-scale, ranch-style American house.³⁸ Nixon, in line with the American publicity campaign, presented the model house to the Soviet leader as the “average” American home, and then the following exchange took place:

Nixon: I want to show you this kitchen. It is like those of our houses in California.

[Nixon points to dishwasher]

Khrushchev: We have such things.

Nixon: This is our newest model. This is the kind which is built in thousands of units for direct installations in the houses. In America, we like to make life easier for women...

Khrushchev: Your capitalistic attitude toward women does not occur under Communism.

Nixon: I think that this attitude towards women is universal. What we want to do, is make life more easy for our housewives.....³⁹

³⁶ Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachman, ‘Kitchens as Technology and Politics’, in *Cold War Kitchen. Americanization, Technology, and European Users*. ed. Oldenzieland Zachman (Camebridge and London: The MIT Press, 2009), 4.

³⁷ Susan E. Reid, “‘Our Kitchen is Just as Good’: Soviet Responses to the American Kitchen’ in *Cold War Kitchen*, 86-87.

³⁸ Cristina Carbone writes that Khrushchev had “catapulted it [the model house] to fame two months prior to the exhibition's opening by baldly calling it a capitalist lie that was perpetrated on the Soviet people.” See Carbone, ‘Staging the Kitchen Debate: How Splitnik Got Normalized in the United States’, in *Cold War Kitchen*, 59.

³⁹ A transcript of Khrushchev and Nixon's Kitchen Debate can be found online. See ‘The Kitchen Debate’, *Teaching American History*. Assessed online at 15-09-2016 at 14:55. <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/the-kitchen-debate/>.

Before Khrushchev could retort to Nixon's remark about the “universality” of the American attitude towards women, the vice-president changed the subject of discussion to house prices.

The outcome of the Kitchen Debate was different than the Americans could have expected on the basis of the Nylon War theory. Reviewing the statements left by Soviet visitors to the exhibition, Reid concludes that the Soviet responses to the American kitchen were ambiguous; not unanimously rejecting or capitulating before its marvels. Soviet visitors were generally not very impressed. One engineer even likened the American kitchen to a “gilded cage” that stultified women, instead of setting them free.⁴⁰ Nixon's remarks on the universality of the desire to make life more easy for housewives, backfired in the Soviet press. Misgiving about the merits of American kitchens resounded even years later. For example, in 1961 a candidate of philosophy, M. Lifanov, contributed an article to *The Female Worker* in which she commented:

... some “miracle kitchen” on its own does not liberate the woman from domestic work, does not help in the development of her abilities and talents. Without socialist transformations, without the liberation of women from the shackles of the household it is impossible to achieve the full equality of woman and man.”⁴¹

Rather than winning the living standards race with their kitchens, the Americans gave the Khrushchev regime an opportunity to contrast a communist vision of the future of domestic cooking with a capitalist one. The communist way of life would not merely make the life of housewives easier. Unlike their capitalist counterparts, Soviet women would be liberated from their kitchens to lead a more well-rounded life in Soviet society – which was by no definition equal to an easier life.

Conclusion

The Seven-Year Plan and the Party's third Program show that the Khrushchev regime rebooted a struggle against domestic cooking in the context of the full-scale

⁴⁰ Reid, 'American Kitchen', 96.

⁴¹ M. Lifanov, 'Kommunizm i nash byt' [Communism and our Daily Life], *Rabotnitsa*, November, 1961, 14.[*]

construction of communism. Just like the Bolsheviks had decennia earlier, the Khrushchev regime held that cooking was a domestic burden that prevented the full emancipation of Soviet women. It proposed that cooking should be fully outsourced to the social food service. Such a reform got an extra dimension in the peaceful competition between the Soviet Union and the capitalist West.

The establishment of a massive system of social foodservice that could embrace all of the population's needs, would take another two decades. Domestic cooking would persist, and the Seven-Year Plan made provisions for a rising living standard that could lead to its further entrenchment. The regime therefore had to negotiate forms of domestic cooking that were morally acceptable within the parameters of communist construction. The implementation of this two-fold policy — outsourcing domestic cooking to social food services, while negotiating acceptable forms within Soviet households — will be analyzed in the following chapters.

Chapter 2. Improving the Social Foodservice

In the previous chapter we have learned that the Khrushchev leadership claimed that the remnants of the Soviet women's unequal position in *byt* were to be liquidated by outsourcing domestic work, including cooking, to socialist society. “In order for women to become active members of society,” the aforementioned Lifanov wrote, “it is necessary to organize our *byt* in a new fashion.”¹ In the case of domestic cooking such a reorganization would be achieved by making the network of canteens, tearooms, lunchrooms, restaurants and factory-kitchens, referred to as the social foodservice (*obshchestvennoe pitanie*) pervasive in all spheres of daily life. A specifically Soviet, communist meaning, that did not exist as such in the West at that time, was imparted to the phenomenon of eating outside the home.² Lifanov explained that:

... this form of social *byt* [the social foodservice] will noticeably liberate the woman from the kitchen ... It accelerates and makes the housewife's work at the stove easier. And little by little cooking in domestic conditions will become obsolete, like domestic weaving, for example, already has.... Communist *byt* will once and for all liberate women from burdensome domestic labor.³

Khrushchev called for the social foodservice's expansion and improvement in order to achieve this ideological goal. In this chapter I will look at the practical implementation of Khrushchev's plans. What kind of improvements were actually proposed and how were they implemented in practice? Was the project a success and did it really contribute to the Soviet woman's liberation from the stove at home? In order to find answers to these questions, I will first treat the resolution ‘On the Further Development and Improvement of the Social Foodservice’ passed by the Party’s Central Committee and the Soviet Council of Ministers on February 20, 1959. This policy document was, in the first place, meant as a roadmap including concrete improvements that were to be made to the foodservice during the Seven-Year plan.

¹ Lifanov, 'Kommunizm i nash byt', 14.[*]

² Historian Peter Scholiers made a study of the increasing prominence of dining out systems between the 1950 and 1990 in Western Europe and the United States. See Scholiers, 'Food Developments', 352-360.

³ Lifanov, 'Kommunizm i nash byt', 15.[*]

In the second place, it could be argued that certain rights for Soviet citizens, as *consumers*, were consolidated in this document. Secondly, I will discuss how this resolution's provisions were implemented. I base this discussion on reports in *The Female Worker* and Soviet brochures. Lastly, I take stock of the improvements carried out during the Seven-Year Plan on the basis of Soviet statistics to find out whether The social foodservice did become what Khrushchev and Soviet ideologues, such as Lifanov, had in mind.

A Resolution on the Social Foodservice

The social foodservice, like most other branches of the Soviet economy, was state-led, and centrally organized. Its network consisted out of state-owned and cooperative establishments where food was prepared and sold to Soviet citizens. Until 1958, the Soviet Ministry of Trade had full responsibility for the social foodservice's management and organization. During that year, however, the ministry was disbanded and reorganized as the less powerful State Committee of Trade. This state organ formulated plans for service's further development. These had to be approved by the Council of Ministers, and were implemented in practice by a special department at each Union Republic's Ministry of Trade. Locally based trusts managed establishments on a day-to-day basis.⁴

Khrushchev's emphasis on the need for the social foodservice's development in February 1959 was not entirely new. Official Soviet statistics show that the number of establishments had consistently increased during the 1950s. Whereas there had been 95,400 in 1950, there were 130,900 by the end of 1958.⁵ The government's dedication to foodservice's further professionalization was reflected by the publication of *The Collection of Prescriptions of Dishes and Culinary Goods for the Social Foodservice's Establishments* in 1955. This document prescribed legal norms with regards to the expenditure of raw material for each dish or *polufabrikat* (semi-finished product) produced by professional cooks.⁶ Moreover, in the presentation of

⁴ Vasil'ev, *Ekonomika obshchestvennogo pitaniya*, 107-116.

⁵ *Narodnoe Khozyaistvo SSSR v 1964 gody*, 648.

⁶ The collection included an order (*prikaz*) signed by the then Minister of Trade Anastas Mikoyan. G.F. Shorin et al., *Sbornik retseptur blyud i kulinarykh izdelii dlya predpriyatii obshchestvennogo pitaniya* [The Collection of Prescriptions of Dishes and Culinary Goods for Establishments of The social foodservice] (Moscow: Gostorgizdat, 1955).

the sixth Five-Year Plan at the Twentieth Party Congress in February 1956, Nikolai Bulganin, then prime minister, had already emphasized the need for “the rapid growth of the social foodservice,” because, “[d]oing so will provide its services not only to those who are working, but also to the members of their families, which should ease women's work.”⁷ Khrushchev's plans thus were a continuation of a policy that had developed over the 1950s.

What was new, however, was the urgency which Khrushchev imparted to the social foodservice's further development by emphasizing its important ideological role in the full-scale construction of communism. This urgency is reflected in the text of the resolution ‘On the Further Development and Improvement of the Social Foodservice’ passed on February 20, 1959. In its preambles, the Party's Central Committee and Council of Ministers jointly stated that the service was not only the most economically efficient way to feed the population, but also as a means to “change the *byt* of the family at the root, and liberate women from the burden of the household.”⁸

Although the foodservice's improvements since 1956 were acknowledged, the existing situation was judged to be inadequate. The text identified a number of reasons due to which the objective to make “[t]he social foodservice more massive comfortable and favorable for the population” had not been fulfilled in the past. First of all, the foodservice's reach among the Soviet population was not wide enough. The number of establishments and the total output of dishes — 12.416 billion over 1958, amounting to an average of 34 million a day — was obviously insufficient to serve a population of 204,9 million.⁹ Secondly, the use of the service was too expensive, due to high overhead costs caused by inefficient organization at individual establishments. Thirdly, the quality of food and service at establishments was acknowledged to be bad, and signs pointing to consumer fraud (*obman potrebitelei*) persisted. Lastly, managers of factories and other economic enterprises were blamed

⁷ Nikolai Aleksandrovich Bulganin, 'Direktivy XX s"ezda KPSS po shestomu pyatiletnemu planu razvitiya narodnogo khozyaistva SSSR na 1956—1960 gody' [The Directives of the Twentieth Congress of the CPSU for the Sixth Five-Year Plan for the Development of the People's Economy of the USSR] in *XX s"ezd Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskogo Soyuza. 14—25 fevralya 1956 goda. Stenograficheskii otchet. Tom II* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1956), 54.

⁸ 'Postanovlenie TsK KPSS i Soveta ministrov SSSR. O dal'neishem razviti i uluchshenii obshchestvennogo pitaniya' [A Decision of the CC of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR. On the Further Development and Improvement of the Social Food Service], in *Kommunisticheskaya partiya sovetskogo soyuza v rezolyutsiyakh i resheniyakh s"ezdov, konferentsii i plenumov TsK. Tom devyatyi, 1956—1960* (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo politicheskoi literatury, 1960), 413-414.[*]

⁹ *Narodnoe Khozyaistvo v 1964 g.*, 633, 7.

for not taking serious responsibility for the foodservice's further development, exclusively perceiving it as a matter for the Party and Soviet state.¹⁰

In order to remedy these shortcomings and to fulfill the objective to make the social foodservice accessible for the majority of workers at factories and offices, and students, the resolution made important provisions. At least 64,300 new establishments had to be built, providing at least 3.1 million extra dining seats. The output of dishes had to be more than doubled in comparison to 1958. Establishments should averagely save 1 to 1,5 percent on their expenses, which had to be used to bring down the prices for meals permanently from 1961 onwards. Savings could for example be made through the efficient sourcing of raw materials on a local level, or by letting larger establishments produce *polufabrikaty* for further use in smaller ones. The quality of the food and service at establishments was to be improved by ensuring that staff members received professional training at universities and special schools. Furthermore, the resolution ordained the widespread implementation of “progressive forms” of foodservice, such as the introduction of meal subscriptions, self-servicing (*samoobluzhenie*) and the organization of take-away meals (*otpusk obedov na dom*) at canteens.¹¹

The responsibility for the construction of new establishments was delegated to government and party organs at republic and regional levels. The quality of food and service at existing establishments, however, was as responsibility for managers at factories, the staff working at establishments, and the users of the foodservice. The resolution ordered local trade unions to organize “socialist competition” (*sotsialisticheskoe sorevnovanie*) among the establishments among the Soviet Union. Furthermore, the trade unions were to strengthen “social control” (*obshchestvennyi kontrol*). Inspectors drawn from the workers, employees, students and housewives, and the Committee for Workers’ Control should “play an important role in the struggle for a high culture of service... in the improvement of the quality of food and the reduction of the costs of nutrition, in the severe observance of the allocation of raw materials and the established prices during the social foodservice’s production.”¹²

The resolution of 1959 was an impetus for the significant improvement of the

¹⁰ ‘O dal’neishem razvitii i uluchshenii’, 413-414.[*]

¹¹ The decree also made provisions for the expansion of the social foodservice on the country-side, but these are left outside of the scope of this study. See *ibid.*, 415- 419.

¹² *Ibid.*, 419.[*]

social foodservice. It reflected a genuine concern for the social foodservice's development into an institute that would benefit Soviet families in general, and women in specific; it acknowledged the service's shortfalls, and provided a way forward. As such, it protected the rights of Soviet citizens as *consumers*. It was a guarantee that the foodservice would be accessible to all, and that its quality would be upheld. But it also made Soviet citizens themselves responsible for the protection of these rights, and expected they contributed to the service's improvement as social inspectors.

Socialist Competition and the Perfect Canteen

The resolution called upon the trade unions, the political organizations that represented workers' interests, to organize socialist competition and strengthen social control in order to improve the quality of the food and service at the social foodservice's establishments. Around the time the resolution was passed in February 1959, *The Female Worker* reported more frequently on the situation in canteens, the foodservice's main unit. Such reports arguably were part of a concerted campaign to stimulate competition amongst canteens, and to entice the magazine's readers to be more critical of the services provided by them.

Socialist competition, however, is a term that requires at least some elaboration. The term, *sotsialisticheskoe sorevnovanie* in Russian, was coined by Lenin in 1917 when the new leadership needed a control mechanism for the Soviet socialist economy that could substitute capitalist market incentives. Historians Katalin Miklóssy and Melanie Ilic point out that Soviet regimes deliberately contrasted "socialist competition" with "capitalist competition." While the capitalist competition (*kapitalisticheskaya konkurenciya*) was portrayed as being driven by the selfish desire to establish oneself as an ultimate winner among many losers, its socialist counterpart was to be a means to stimulate the unselfish desire to contribute to a communist society in which everybody would win.¹³

During the Khrushchev era, as historian Junbae Jo points out, socialist competition was to be organized locally by the trade unions, and broadly developed

¹³ Katalin Miklóssy and Melanie Ilic, eds. *Competition in Socialist Society* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014), 1-2.

as “a national movement for the achievement of economic targets.”¹⁴ Socialist competition should be seen as the key mechanism that drove both the development of the Soviet economy, and the increase of population's living standards. In the previous chapter we have seen that Khrushchev linked the all-out construction of communism to the peaceful competition with the capitalist West. Competition on the work floor of canteens was part of the larger struggle for the victory of communism.

We can gain an insight in socialist competition among Soviet canteens from reports in *The Female Worker*. In October 1959, for example, the journal reported on canteen no.3 that served the workers — mainly women — at the shoe and knitting factories of Gomel, a city in the Belorussian SSR. This canteen was reported to rank 3rd in the competition among all canteens in the Soviet Union.¹⁵

The Female Worker's journalist explained why this canteen deserved such ranking. First of all, its staff had lowered expenses by mechanizing the production process, sourcing raw materials more efficiently — they used the waste and leftovers from the kitchen to rear their own pigs, for example — and it had declared “a war against losses.” They had implemented self-service at the canteen which more than doubled the canteen's capacity per hour. The subsequent increase of the canteen's revenue and decrease of its expenses allowed for a permanent 15-20 percent reduction of the meal prices. Secondly, the food was not only cheaper, it was apparently that good that “outsiders” (*postoronye*), workers from other factories, preferred this canteen over those at their own workplaces. Thirdly, the canteen offered comfortable services to workers. Dinners for the whole family could be taken out to the home with a 10 percent reduction on the price on workdays, including Saturday — a short workday until the mid-sixties. Workers could pre-order food by telephone, and discuss the menu for the next day. Furthermore, it served warm breakfast to the nearby school to help out working mothers. “Will you really gather such rich and varied fare inside the home for this money?” an interviewed engineer asked rhetorically, “Yes, and you will not be able to cook this skillfully yourself.”¹⁶

Lastly, the canteen also had a Commission of Social Control (*komissiya*

¹⁴ Junbae Jo, 'Dismantling Stalin's fortress', in *Soviet State and Society Under Nikita Khrushchev*, ed. Melanie Ilic and Jeremy Smith (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 131-132.

¹⁵ It is not exactly clear from the report how such a ranking was established, though the report tells that social inspectors— consisting of a worker from the factory's laboratory and the factory doctor—check the quality of the meals in the canteen's kitchen. It could be that the information they gathered was processed by the factory's trade union commission (*Zavkom*) and sent to Moscow. Mikh. Shchelokov, 'Pryatnogo appetital' [Bon appetit!], *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1959, 23-4.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.[*]

obshchestvennogo kontrolya), consisting of 30 the trade union activists. “The social foodservice interests all of us,” said a member of this commission, “[a]fter all cooking at home takes a lot of time, and we want to go to the theater and cinema, many of us study at the evening school and college, and moreover, the children require some attention.”¹⁷ What we thus actually read in this report, is that canteen no. 3 of Gomel was managed in full accordance with the resolution of February 1959, received official recognition and was presented in *The Female Worker* as an example that had to be followed, an ideal that had to be fought for.

Socialist Competition and Surprise Inspections at Canteens

The journal did not merely report on exemplary canteens, but also on canteens where the situation was very bad. Reports of so-called *reidy*, surprise inspections carried out by female workers, the staff of social foodservice trusts, or members of the trade unions and Commissions of Workers’ Control at canteens, indicated there were many canteens that did not operate in accordance with the provisions of the resolution. One such report, published in November 1958 — three months before the resolution was passed — covered a *reid* carried out in Penza, and another published in November 1961 covered one in Kursk.

Both reports state that the goal of the *reidy* was to find out what was being done in both cities to liberate women from the household, and whether the food was served deliciously, cheaply and fast at the workers’ canteens.¹⁸ The reports were critical of the quality of the food served in both cities’ canteens. Apparently, in almost all of them service was flawed and food nearly inedible. For example, *The Female Worker* wrote the following about the food in canteen no. 16 in Penza:

“Normal and healthy food, is food eaten with appetite, food eaten with pleasure,” said the great Russian scientist and physiologist I.P. Pavlov. When saying that, he of course did not envision the quality of the lunches at Penza’s canteen no. 16. How can we speak about “pleasurable food,” if here they serve fish with a meat sauce, and the *shchi* [Russian cabbage

¹⁷ *ibid.* [*]

¹⁸ L. Travkin, ‘Zaidite v rabochuyu stolovuyu’ [Come to the Workers’ Canteen], *Rabotnitsa*, November, 1958, 23.[*] R. Rozova, ‘Zimoi i letom — odnim tsvetom’ [It Makes no Difference Whether it’s Summer or Winter], *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1961, 18.[*]

soup] is not like *shchi* at all?¹⁹

At the canteen of the shoe factory in Kursk, the journal's reporter mentioned receiving complaints about the quality from all sides. “The portions are small, there is only millet in the *rassol'nik* [pickled cucumber soup], and the *borshch* is nothing but water!” complained one worker. “I took a *shnitsel'*, but it was impossible to eat. So I left hungry,” lamented another. Furthermore, the same reporter noted, all cooks in Kursk seemed to suffer from *ovosheboyazn*, a fear of vegetables, which resulted in unhealthy and boring menus in all canteens. The one at the synthetic fiber factory was the only exception, and actually served vegetables.²⁰

In defense against these allegations, the staff of establishments in both Penza and Kursk apparently responded that: “You are not in a restaurant here, eat what is being served!”²¹ Such an attitude was obviously unacceptable. “No, comrades Podmarkov and Tsybulnov! Workers cannot and will not be content with neither your responses, nor with your production,” the reporter of the *reid* in Penza countered the excuses made by the cook and director of canteen no. 13 at the city's textile machinery factory — note he explicitly noted the names of these wrongdoers. This same reporter also argued, that it should be mandatory for canteens to publish the surname of the cook in charge on the daily menu so that the whole factory would know who was responsible in case unpalatable food was served.²²

The extent to which self-service and the possibility to take out meals were implemented in both cities' canteens was also negatively assessed. In Penza, the staff at the canteen of the chemical engineering plant did organize a *yarmarka polufabrikatov* on Saturdays, a “trade fair” at which female workers could buy half-finished meals with a 10 percent reduction to help them through the weekend. None of the other canteens in the city had followed this example. Furthermore, the report told readers that it was common to stand in line for the cash desks for at least forty minutes in almost all of Penza's canteens, because self-service and meal subscriptions had not been implemented.²³ In Kursk, chaotic and disgruntled crowds

¹⁹ Travkin, ‘rabochuyu stolovuyu’, 24. [*]

²⁰ Rozova, ‘Zimoi i letom’, 18. [*]

²¹ Ibid. [*] The report of the *reid* in Penza similarly noted that “Unfortunately, there are people amongst those that are entrusted with the issue of the social foodservice in Penza who are very indifferent, believing that a workers' canteen is not a restaurant, that here everything goes, and that everything will be eaten.” See Travkin, ‘rabochuyu stolovuyu’, 23. [*]

²² Travkin, ‘rabochuyu stolovuyu’, 23. [*]

²³ Ibid. [*]

were reported at the canteen of the city's shoe factory.²⁴

Both reports concluded that the situation would have been better if social control in the canteens had been stronger. At the Frunze bike factory in Penza the trade union had in fact set up a Commission of Workers' control, consisting of 74 activists. It had drafted legal acts to fight underweight *ponchiki* (doughnuts filled with meat) and *kotleti* (flat fried meatballs) served at the factory's canteen, but the local trade union had done nothing to take these cases to court. Workers' organizations at other factories did not even know how many inspectors they had at their disposal. In Kursk, social control was merely reported as “acting weakly and timidly.”²⁵

The provisions of the resolution were thus implemented at existing canteens through a concerted campaign to stimulate competition amongst canteens. *The Female Worker* celebrated canteens that implemented these provisions successfully, and relentlessly decried those that did not.

Social Control and *Zhensovety* at Canteens

As we have seen above, the Khrushchev regime blamed the local management of canteens when improvement of their services did not take off. Inadequate managers and bureaucrats were perceived to sabotage the construction of communism, and cause an arrears in the Soviet Union's competition with the capitalist West. Grass-roots movements were to be set up to provide social control (*obshchestvennyi kontrol*) that kept managers in check. Khrushchev himself allegedly once said that:

Only with the active support of workers, *kolkhozniks*, the intelligentsia and social organizations, we will be able to hermetically close all entrances and cracks for crooks, corrupt officials, parasites and bureaucrats, for all who stretch their hands towards public property [*gosudarstvennomu dobru*].²⁶

The resolution and the reports in *The Female Worker* often emphasize the importance of social inspectors (*obshchestvennye kontrolery*), of whom the regime

²⁴ Rozova, ‘Zimoi i letom’, 18.

²⁵ Ibid., 19. [*]

²⁶ Khrushchev cited in ‘Kontrolery prishli’ [The Inspectors Have Arrived], *Rabotnitsa*, February, 1963, 9.[*]

apparently expected to provide such control from below. Other than holding the trade unions as responsible for the organization of social control among the workers, these sources do not precisely identify the inspectors.

Other reporting in *The Female Worker*, however, does suggest that specifically women were expected to fulfill this role at canteens and the foodservice's other establishments. Reports on the work of the so-called Women's Councils, or *zhensovety*, in cities around the Soviet Union did appear in the journal. In 1957, it reported on the work of the *zhensovet* at the mines in Stalino (nowadays Donetsk) that performed *reidy* on food shops to ensure good, affordable prices. Its members also inspected food and services of the mine's canteen (see figure 1).²⁷ In February 1963, the magazine extensively reported on the activities of the *zhensovety* in Chelyabinsk, which gives us an idea of the size and activities of such organizations. In the city, 320 councils had been set up at the level of workplaces, comprising 10,000 activists among whom a total of 1,300 of them were part of the commissions for trade and everyday life (*torgovlye i bytovye komissii*). These had performed 95 *reidy* on canteens, shops, and other social institutions over the course of 1962.²⁸ Based on this information, we can identify the *zhensovety* as organizations providing social control at the social foodservice's establishments.

Ilic argues that the *zhensovet* should be perceived as the inheritor of the aforementioned *zhenotdel* — abolished in 1930. According to her, the majority of these councils were set up around the Soviet Union between 1957 and 1961. The *zhensovety*, like the *zhenotdel* promoted women's participation in politics and effectively lobbied for benefits for Soviet women. Ilic, however, has reservations about the regimes intentions with the *zhensovety*, and argues that these councils “provided a platform for the extension of women's participation in national economic development without providing concomitant relief from their domestic duties.”²⁹ The sparse proof found in the *The Female Worker*, does indeed support Ilic' claim in the context of the social foodservice's improvement. Women helped implementing a state policy without being compensated, which might seem ironic because this same policy was meant to unburden women.

²⁷ L. Pozdnyakova, 'Zheny shakhterov' [The Miner's Wives], *Rabotnitsa*, March, 1957, 24-25.

²⁸ Sily v nikh kroyutsya neischislimy'e [The Powers Concealed in Them are Beyond All Reckoning], *Rabotnitsa*, February, 1963, 8.

²⁹ Melanie Ilic, 'What Did Women Want. Khrushchev and the Revival of the *Zhensovety*', in *Soviet State*, 110-117, 109.



Figure 1. Wives of Miners in Stalino as Social Inspectors at a Canteen
Source: *Rabotnitsa*, March, 1957, 25.

Soviet Take-Away: the House Kitchen

Apart from improving existing canteens, the Khrushchev era saw the invention of a completely new type of Soviet food service establishment: the “house kitchen” (*domovaya kuchnya*). House kitchens were to be found, as the name suggests, close to living quarters, usually at the ground floor of newly built apartment blocks. A brochure published in 1961 described house kitchens as small establishments without eating halls from where prepared breakfasts, dinners and suppers could be taken out to the home with the same 10 percent discount that was applied in

canteens (see figure 2).³⁰



Figure 2. Artist Impression of a House Kitchen
Source: Pol'sky, *Nashei ulitse*, 6.

The first ones were opened in the winter of 1957, in cities like Chelyabinsk and Riga. House kitchens appeared in Moscow during the major construction of new apartment blocks in the beginning of February 1958. They would become most common in the capital, as a result of the massive construction of apartments there during the Khrushchev era.³¹ The resolution of 1959 called for the further spread of house kitchen throughout the Soviet Union, and from that year onwards official statistics kept the record of how many of them were built yearly.

This new type of establishment was the Khrushchev regime's pet project in the field of foodservice. Journals and brochures only emphasized the good quality and variety of food that was sold in house kitchens. A reader's letter published in *The Female Worker* in May 1958 said that one establishment on the 3rd Frunze Street in Moscow's South-Western District sold seven kinds of soups and nine kinds of main meals. The staff was said to know its customers very well, and could provide useful advice with regards to amount of food needed to feed the members of their families. "I have forgotten about the bustle to the shop," a housewife is quoted, "and I have

³⁰ V. I. Sakharov et al., *Obshchestvennoe pitanie v RSFSR* [The Social Food Service in the RSFSR] (Moscow: Gostorgizdat, 1961), 37.

³¹ Ibid.; M. Spektor, 'Produkty na dom' [Products Delivered at Home], *Rabotnitsa* February, 1958, 29. P. Kozhanyi, 'Pis'ma chitatelei. Domovaya kuchnya' [A Letter from the Readers. The House Kitchen]], *Rabotnitsa*, May, 1958, 29.

really been freed from the worries in the kitchen.”³² Two of the journal's journalists claimed in May 1960 that masses of women carrying pots, pans and *avos'ky* – compact grocery bags for unexpected purchases, from the Russian word for 'maybe' (*avos'*) – were making their way to the house kitchen on Moscow's Lyusinov street. One of the women the journalists interviewed had just ordered aspic and salads for the next day. “We are expecting guests,” she said laughingly, “I often do it this way. And the guests always compliment 'my' dinners.”³³

A brochure published in 1961 was specifically dedicated to the house kitchens told that:

“House kitchen – that means like at home,” – such requirement visitors to this establishment shall make, envisioning that they must cook as deliciously here as a good housewife does at home.³⁴

Soviet planners held onto the ideal that, under communism, the house kitchen would become the single cook for Soviet communities based around apartment blocks. It would replace the domestic kitchen with a socialized kitchen close to the home. As was the case with the other of the foodservice's establishments, housewives were expected to contribute as inspectors, and to transfer their knowledge. “The house kitchen eases my life.... We inspect the work of the kitchen ourselves, keep an eye on the procedure and the cleanliness, and we suggest some things to the cooks...,” one housewife was cited. The house kitchen was the comfortable, Khrushchevist take on Lenin's “all-out struggle against the petty household.” It would really free women from the kitchen, it would really bring about communism, but in a way that fitted well with a modern Soviet apartment life.³⁵

The Success of the Social Foodservice during the Khrushchev Era?

As was the case with many Soviet plans, however, the idea of the house kitchen

³² Kozhany 'Domovaya Kukhnya', 29.[*]

³³ S. Lapteva and M. Mikhailova, 'Kukhnya tsysyachi khozyaek', *Rabotnitsa*, May, 1960), 30.[*] For more on the *avos'ka*, see Reid, 'Cold War in the Kitchen', 211.

³⁴ M. Pol'sky, *Domovaya kukhnya na nashei ulitse* [The House Kitchen Down our Street] (Moscow: Gostorgizdat, 1961), 6.[*]

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.[*] Christine Varga-Harris has recently made the same argument about the house kitchen. See, Varga-Harris, *Soviet Apartment Life*, 65.

seems to never have materialized the way it was supposed to. The Russian émigré food writer Anya von Bremzen, who grew up in Moscow's Kuntsevo District during the 1960s unflatteringly remembers the house kitchen close to her flat as “a lopsided wooden hut... a dystopian apparition that sat teetering in a garbage strewn field.”³⁶ In comparison with how Soviet journalists described the house kitchen during the Khrushchev years, this was a rather disappointing image.

The number of house kitchens that were actually built was similarly disappointing. Official Soviet statistics show that since 1959 the growth of house kitchens declined yearly. By 1961, Moscow, which by that time had a population of more than 6 million, only counted 60 working house kitchens. In 1962, 1,352 house kitchens had been constructed throughout the Soviet Union, and from 1963 onwards the number of house kitchens was not included separately in official statistics any longer.³⁷ This suggests that Soviet authorities had given up on the construction of this new type of establishment.

On the basis of the declining growth of house kitchens, Reid claims that “the leaders appear to have lost interest” for the social foodservice.³⁸ But, if we look at the broader statistical data and compare this to the goals of the 1959 resolution on the social food service, the opposite might be concluded. Between 1959 and 1965, the Soviet regime had managed to expand the foodservice's network with 61,800 new establishments, increasing the number of dining seats with 3,07 million. So construction just barely fell short of the goals set by the resolution — with 3.9 and 0.9 percent respectively. Furthermore, the yearly output of dishes had increased by 70 percent in comparison to 1958. While it should actually have more than doubled, it still suggests that the introduction of self-service at canteens did have a positive impact on their capacity.³⁹

The sixth edition of *The Book* told its readers that “the social foodservice's network of establishments is expanding every day” and insisted on its use — imagine

³⁶ Anya von Bremzen, *Mastering the Art of Soviet Cooking. A Memoir of Food and Longing* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2013), 160.

³⁷ *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR v 1962 godu. Statisticheskii ezhedogodnik* [The People's Economy of the USSR in the Year 1962. Statistic Yearbook] (Moscow: Gostatizdat, 1963), 535; V. I. Sakharov et al., *Obshchestvennoe pitanie*, 38.

³⁸ Reid, 'Khrushchev Kitchen', 294.

³⁹ *Narodnoe khozyaistvo v 1964 g.*, 632, 648, 652; *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR v 1975 godu. Statisticheskii ezhedogodnik* [The People's Economy of the USSR in the Year 1975. Statistic Yearbook] (Moscow: “Statistika”, 1976), 647, 630.

a cookery book advising women not to cook, but to eat out.⁴⁰ After the Khrushchev era, the foodservice kept expanding. Between 1965 and 1975, a further 81,800 new establishments were built, and over the course of 1975 the social foodservice sold 110 million dishes on average per day. These facts show that the socialized kitchen did not succeed in replacing the domestic one as the Khrushchev regime had foreseen, but they also do show that Soviet leaders retained their interest in its expansion.⁴¹

Interesting, furthermore, is the fact that mainly women were employed in the social foodservice. Women's labor force participation rates published in *The Female Worker* in 1957, showed that women made up 83 percent of the labor force in the social foodservice.⁴² Such information was not published in the magazine eight years later, but statistics show that 72 percent of the labor force in trade, the foodservice, procurement, and material and technical in 1965 were women.⁴³ It is therefore assumable that during the Khrushchev years women also made up the majority of the foodservice's workforce. In its struggle for the communist way of life, the Khrushchev regime liberated some women from the shackles of the domestic kitchen, while it bound others in the shackles of the socialized one.

Conclusion

The resolution on the social foodservice's further improvement and development encapsulated a right for Soviet citizens to have access to well prepared food and good service at socialized canteens. Such a right was explicitly motivated by the ideological goal that communist *byt* should set women free from the stove. The massive system as envisioned by the Party did not materialize during the Khrushchev years and the decades thereafter. Furthermore, we might say that the foodservice's improvement provided an extra burden for women. They were expected to voluntarily contribute to it as inspectors, and made up the main share of the foodservice's labor force.

The Khrushchev regime did, however, succeed in introducing useful innovations. Self-service arguably did increase the capacity of existing canteens, while the organization of takeout meals and house kitchens made the Soviet

⁴⁰ Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 26.

⁴¹ *Narodnoe khozyaistvo v 1975 g.*, 647, 630.

⁴² 'Stroiteli kommunizma' [Constructors of Communism], *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1957, 19.

⁴³ *Narodnoe Khozyaistvo v 1965 g.*, 564.

foodservice compatible with modern Soviet apartment life. It was a communist solution applied to the circumstances of urban life that was increasingly modernized.

Chapter 3. Reduction and Alleviation inside the Soviet Home

In the first chapter we have seen that the development of a massive system of social foodservice was the Khrushchev regime's preferred way to relieve Soviet women from their responsibility to cook at home. In its new political program the Party had acknowledged that the foodservice would take precedence over domestic cooking after a period of ten to fifteen years only. Thus even though the regime was genuinely committed to the improvement of the social foodservice, the complete obsolescence of domestic cooking thus remained a long term goal.

In the meantime, the “reduction and alleviation” (*sokrashcheniya i oblegcheniya*) of the burden of cooking on Soviet women was a more immediate goal, and was to be achieved by reforming domestic life itself. So, what changes to domestic cooking did the regime promote to relieve and alleviate its burden on Soviet women?

A vision of a communist future in which domestic cooking was completely automatized, can be found in *The Female Worker*. A short comic strip on the back of the journal's December 1959 issue shows a man giving his wife a fully automated “housekeeper unit” (*domrabochii agregat*), a kind of robot capable of fixing dinner and carrying out all other domestic chores (see figure 3). A verse accompanying the comic strip claims such a unit is not a joke, but a dream that will soon become reality.¹ Such visions were politically sanctioned. “Whereas we are moving towards a communist society,” Khrushchev spoke during his presentation of the Seven-Year Plan in 1959, “we want machines to carry out all fundamental work, while man only directs them.”² As we now know, this *domrabochii agregat* remained a dream, but an insightful one. In the Khrushchevist vision of the radiant communist future, all heavy labor, including the domestic kind, was to be taken over by machines.

Despite this communist futurology, the Khrushchev regime did propose realistic solutions that interacted with the circumstance that existed within Soviet households. The regime's approach was twofold. On the one hand, the regime

¹ M. Skobeleva, A. Eliseeva, and V. Vinogradova, ‘Podarok’ [A Present], *Rabotnitsa*, December, 1959, back cover.

² Khrushchev, ‘O kontrolnikh tsifrakh’, 54.[*]

provided and promoted new kitchens, domestic appliances and industrially produced food, while providing advice on the use of these novelties and inculcating appropriate attitudes towards cooking through journals and cookbooks on the other hand. The latter grant us an official view on how domestic cooking was supposed to be like during the Khrushchev years. First, I show that the regime held that the new kitchen contributed to the liberation of women. Second, I will discuss the special Soviet meaning of new domestic appliances and industrially canned goods as products that helped women to reduce the burden of cooking. Third, I focus on new recipes that started to appear in *The Female Worker*, emphasizing the need for a delicious, but fast preparation. Lastly, I discuss the ways in which the other members of the family were supposed to be involved in the preparation of food.



Figure 3. The “Housekeeper Unit”
 Source: *Rabotnitsa*, December, 1959, back cover.

The Soviet Kitchen as a Comfortable Workshop

As a result of the housing campaign, millions of Soviet families could leave behind the shared kitchen in communal apartments, and enjoy their very own kitchen in a separate apartment. *The Book* shows that kitchens in these apartments came in three different standardized sizes: the small “niche-kitchen” (*kukhnya-nisha*) measuring 1,5 to 2,5 square meters built into the living room of a one-room apartment; the “separate kitchen” (*otdel'naya kukhnya*), a kitchen separated from the living area

measuring 4,5-5 square meters, and the latter's larger version of 6 -7 square meters.³ These kitchens functioned primarily as the space for the preparation of food. With the exception of the niche-kitchen, the new kitchen also functioned as a family's dining and laundry room.⁴ It is therefore understandable that these relatively small spaces were to be rationally arranged in order to support different functions. As archaeologist Victor Buchli has shown, the use of transformable and multi-function furniture — like a fold-away dining table — was promoted in household brochures and bigger household manuals like *The Short Household Encyclopedia of* (see figure 4).⁵

Soviet architects and interior designers, however, also explicitly argued that the design of these new kitchens contributed to the alleviation of women's domestic work. When the director of the Scientific-Research Institute of Housing, B.R. Rubanenko, was interviewed by *The Female Worker* in 1957, he was asked if architects and constructors took the magazine's audience's domestic labor into regard while planning and building new apartments. “Of course they have taken care of this,” Rubanenko answered, “[t]he conveniences [*udobstva*] found in apartments... relieve the work of the housewife.”⁶ Wall-mounted cabinets and shelves to store household items, a sink integrated into the kitchen's countertop, and multi-functional furniture were thus not merely promoted with regards to spatial considerations, but were modern conveniences contributing to the ideological goal to free women from their kitchen.

But such conveniences would not fulfill this task by themselves. Housewives were supposed to rationally organize their work, and make proper use of their kitchens. In an article published in *The Female Worker* in October 1959, architect A.Cherepakhova claimed that:

Coming home from work, the woman often immediately puts on an apron and starts to bustle around in the kitchen: she cooks food, does the ironing, does the laundry and mends clothing. She does not want to do everything merely better, but also faster, so there could be time to read, to go to the cinema and to spend time with the family. The kitchen is a sort of workshop [*svoeobraznaya masterskaya*], and the correct organization of work in it in many ways

³ Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 34.

⁴ *The Short Household Encyclopedia's* lemma on “the kitchen” defines the kitchen as “the space for the preparation of food; in the kitchen one can also do the laundry and ironing; in apartments inhabited by single families the kitchen also often is the dining room.” See Revin et al. *Kratkaya entsiklopediya*, 312.

⁵ Buchli, *An Archaeology*, 143.

⁶ ‘Bystro, deshevo, dobrotno’ [Fast, Cheap and Durable], *Rabotmitsa*, March, 1957, 3.[*]

relieves the housewife's domestic labor.⁷

Cherepakhova thus likened the kitchen to the workshop in a factory, commonly referred to with the word *masterskaya*. In this perspective, kitchen work, just like productive industrial labor should be optimally organized to get the highest yield — good food, clean clothes, et cetera — with the shortest expenditure of time and energy. In practice this meant that, when arranging the kitchen, the housewife should take to adapt furniture to her length so she does not have to bend or stretch too far to reach for objects. Cherepakhova also advised women to acquire a precisely adjusted chair that would make it possible for her to cut ingredients and wash dishes while sitting up straight. This could — as we might imagine — feel a bit unusual at first, but women would be less tired when accustomed to it, the architect argued. She also explicitly mentioned that such arrangements would be even more important in the case the kitchen was shared by multiple families.⁸

The housewife's burden of cooking could be relieved by the new comforts of Soviet kitchens, but planners relied on the housewife's — and her husband's — own capacity to optimally organize her *masterskaya*. Notwithstanding her emphasis on the need to carefully adjust furniture to the housewife's length, Cherepakhova merely provided measures for women with a length of 164 centimeters, as if these were universal (see figure 5). Moreover, she did not explain where such furniture could be bought or how it could be adjusted. The 1965 edition of *The Book* provided some clarification in this regard. In its section 'The Kitchen and Kitchenware', Cherepakhova's advice regarding the rational arrangement of kitchen furniture was exactly reiterated. Specifically adjusted furniture could either be ordered at special workshops or, if one was capable of doing so, such furniture could be self-made.⁹

⁷ A. Cherepakhova, 'Vasha domashnyaya masterskaya' [Your Workshop at Home], *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1959, 10.[*]

⁸ Ibid.[*]

⁹ Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 35.

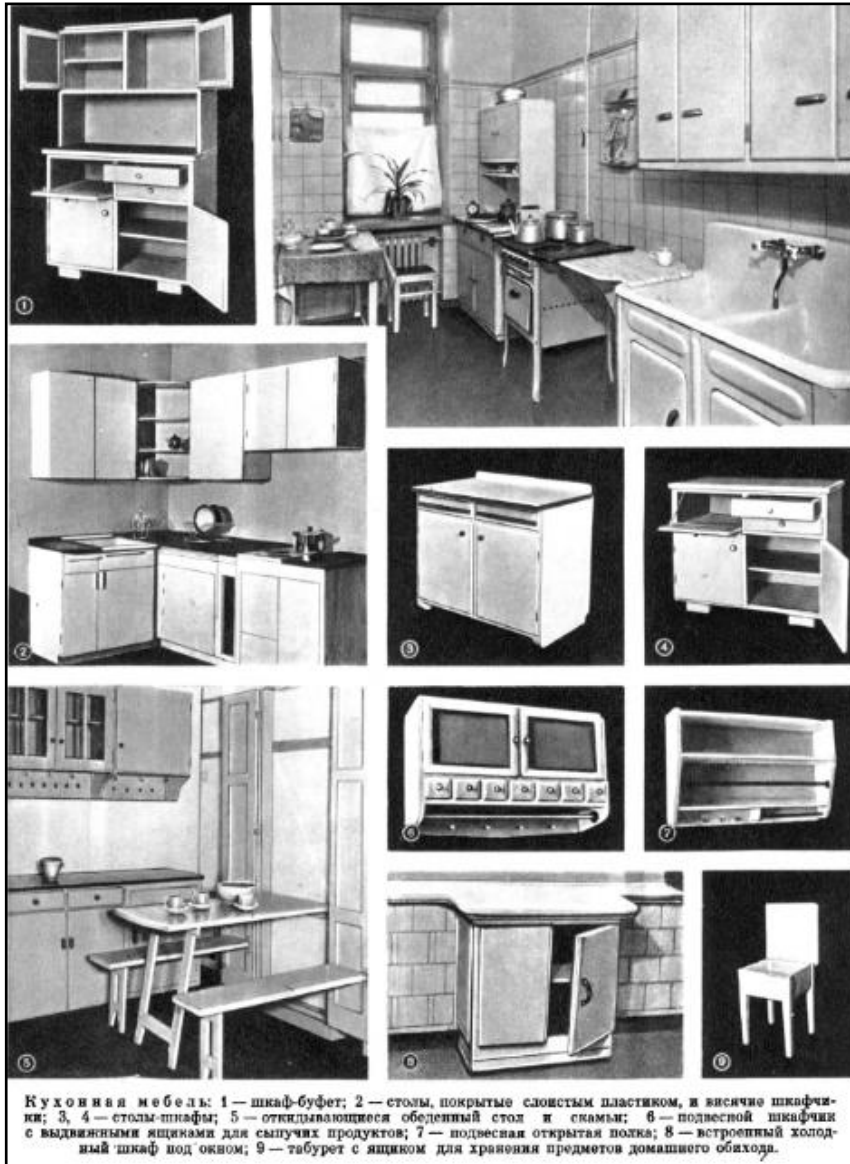


Figure 4. "Convenient" Kitchen Furniture
 Source: Revin et al., *Kratkaya entsiklopediya*, 312.

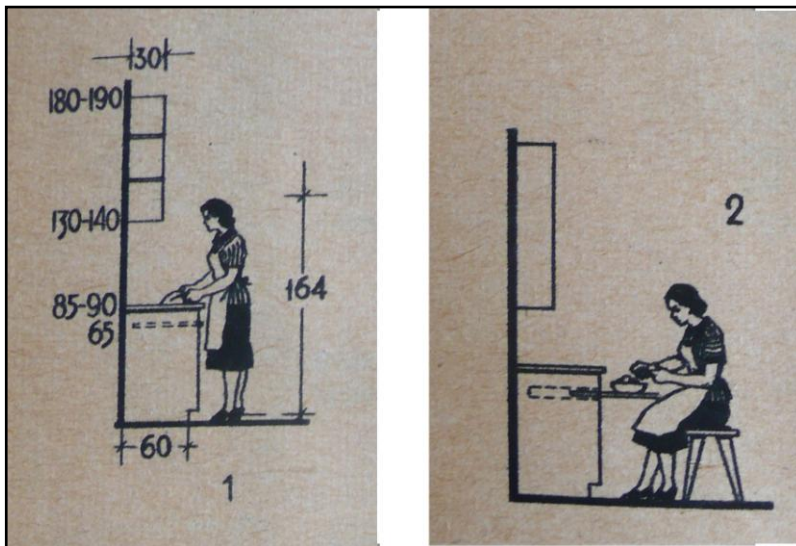


Figure 5. Cherepakhova's Measures for Kitchen Furniture
 Source: *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1959, 10.

The Soviet Refrigerator as a Real Helper of Housewives?

The burden of domestic cooking was also expected to be relieved by the abundance of new kitchen appliances promised in the Seven-Year Plan and the Party's new program. This promise was consolidated into policy by the October 1959 resolution 'On measurements to increase production, broaden assortment, and improve quality of goods of cultural-everyday purpose and domestic use'. Machines such as the electric potato peeler "TEMP," or the vegetable cleaner "Progress" were regularly promoted in *The Female Worker* as products that came "to the aid of the Soviet housewife."¹⁰

Special significance was given to the production of domestic refrigerators (*domashnie kholodil'niki*). Fridges such as the "Sever-3 KhSh-5," the "Minsk KKhS-125," or the huge "ZIL—Moskva—Kkh-240" were presented as "real helpers of housewives" (*nastoyashchie pomoshchniki khozyaek*).¹¹ A promotional brochure published in 1962 claimed that the average amount of time housewife spent cooking every year — 1080 hours — could be reduced by five times by using refrigerators, because the need to go shopping every day would disappear. This brochure linked the steady increase of the production of refrigerators directly to the progressive reduction of the time housewives needed to spend on the preparation of food.¹²

Although the yearly production of domestic refrigerators did in fact improve significantly during the Khrushchev era — from 360 thousand in 1958 to 1,675 million in 1965, they remained unattainable for the majority of Soviet families until they became real mass items during the 1970s.¹³ This did, however, not prevent the regime to use the improved production as propaganda. Even before refrigerators

¹⁰ M. Kaminskii, 'V pomoshch' domashnim khozyaikam' [To the Aid of Housewives], *Rabotnitsa*, March, 1960, 31; Kaminskii 'Dlya doma' [For the Home], *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1960, 28.

¹¹ 'Dlya vas, zhenshchiny!' [For You, Women!] *Rabotnitsa*, November, 1959, 22; For the different refrigerators, see A.P. Antonov and I.I. Malkov, *Dlya doma, Dlya sem'i. Domashnie Kholodil'niki* [For the Home, for the Family. Domestic Refrigerators] (Moscow: Gostorgizdat, 1962), 35, 47, 51.

¹² Antonov and Malkov, *Domashnie Kholodil'niki*, 7-8.

¹³ *Narodnoe khozyaistvo SSSR v 1965 gody. Statisticheskii ezhegodnik* [The People's Economy of the USSR in 1965. Statistical Yearbook] (Moscow: "Statistika," 1966), 238; Crowley and Reid, 'Introduction: Pleasure in Socialism?' in *Pleasures in Socialism*, 27. Reid notes that by 1968 there were 13.7 million refrigerators in the Soviet Union for approximately 70 million households, and given the fact that spare parts and repair services left much to be wished for, it can be assumed not even all of them were functioning. See Susan E. Reid, 'Khrushchev Kitchen', 228, n60. Technology at the time was apparently not evolved enough to enable domestic refrigerators to produce temperatures below zero degrees Celsius, even though this was widely claimed, see Jenny Smith, 'Empire of Ice Cream: How Life Became Sweeter in the Post-War Soviet Union', in *Food Chains: From Farmyard to Shopping Cart*, ed. Warren Belasco (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc., 2010), 150-152.

became a commodity attainable for the average household, magazines and cookbooks professed that the refrigerator was improving Soviet housewives' lives on a massive scale. David Crowley and Susan Reid, elaborating on the history of the appearance of the Soviet refrigerator, hence conclude that fridges were "in terms of discourse... already a 'necessity' before they arrived in ordinary homes." Therefore, the historians conclude, the history of the appearance of the Soviet refrigerator conforms to one of the key aspects of modern consumerism: "consumer societies are systems of representation in which it is not only the thing itself that is acquired but also its image."¹⁴

Crowley and Reid's thesis could be demonstrated by comparing how the refrigerator was represented in successive editions of *The Book*. In its chapter on the kitchen-inventory, the *The Book's* 1952 edition reads that "[f]or the storage of products in domestic conditions, the industry produces small, very comfortable cooled cupboards [*kholodil'nye shkafy*], cooled by means of special machinery which operates on electricity." In case one did not possess such a cupboard, "[t]he use of small iceboxes [*lednikov*] containing natural or synthetic ice or, in the extreme case, a small container with a lid for the brief storage of a small stock of products is recommended...."

Later versions of *The Book* show the progressive rise of the word *kholodil'nik* in the book's lexicon. In the 1962 re-print of *The Book*, the word *kholodil'nye shkafy* is simply replaced with *kholodil'niki*, while the text on iceboxes is retained.¹⁵ In the new 1965 edition of *The Book*, however, presented a completely different picture:

"The refrigerator [*kholodil'nik*] has firmly entered our daily lives. This is testified by the enormous demand for them and the increasing production of these excellent domestic machines."¹⁶

No further mention is made of cooled cabinets or iceboxes any longer. The modern refrigerator fully replaced the cooled cabinet in the Soviet household and made the use of iceboxes obsolete — at least on paper.

¹⁴ Crowley and Reid, 'Pleasures in Socialism?', 28.

¹⁵ I. Sivolap et al., *Kniga o vkusnoi i zdorovoi pishche* [The Book about Tasty and Healthy Food] (Moscow: Pishchepromizdat, 1952), 35-36; Sivolap et al., *Kniga o vkusnoi i zdorovoi pishche* (Moscow: Pishchepromizdat, 1962), 31. Note that these are different editions of the same book. Henceforth referred to in the notes as *Kniga* (1952), and *Kniga* (1962) respectively.

¹⁶ Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 35.

In practice, iceboxes probably remained in use as feasible alternatives for the still rare refrigerator. In 1959, *The Female Worker* provided instructions on how to make a *kholodil'nik*. The text did not require housewives to build a complicated electronic device from scratch. Instead, an enameled saucepan wrapped in gauze put on a pedestal in a large pot filled with water could pass for a refrigerator. Or, she could assemble a double-layered plywood box with a tightly closing door, isolate it with cotton-wool, paint its inside with white enamel, and fit special wooden compartment on its ceiling of the box to keep ice in. The *kholodil'niki* the journal taught women to build, were actually improvised *ledniki*.¹⁷ Thus, it might be considered that the history of the appearance of the refrigerator in the Soviet Union, indeed demonstrates how important the image of these domestic appliances was. In the case of the refrigerator the image was arguably even more important than the actual thing. This resulted in a strange situation in which journals and cookbooks gave the idea that Soviet housewives were liberated *en masse* by such appliances, while at the same time enticing them to improvise alternatives to make up for the lacking production of these same products.

The Food Industry's Products as Time-Savers

Next to an increase of the production of modern domestic appliances, the Seven-Year Plan also foresaw a triple increase of the Soviet food industry's output. In a Soviet context, the production of industrially processed foods such as canned foods and *polufrabikaty* (semi-finished products) was not only motivated by the extended shelf-life of such products, but also because their use could greatly shorten time spent on cooking. *The Book* was published by the food industry's publishing house, and therefore an important medium to promote the food industry's products. The foreword of the 1962 re-print of *The Book's* fifth edition claimed that:

The main objective of *The Book about Tasty and Healthy Food* consists in helping the housewife to prepare delicious and healthy food for the family with the least expenditure of effort and time, using for that the rich assortment of food products and semi-finished products (*polufarbitatov*) manufactured by the food industry.¹⁸

¹⁷ S. Sergeev, 'Sdelajte sami. Kholodil'niki' [Do-it-yourself. Refrigerators], *Rabotnitsa*, May, 1959, 30.

¹⁸ Sivolap et al., *Kniga* (1962), 3.[*]

This main objective had been in place since the initial publication of the fifth edition in 1952 with minor changes. In the context of Khrushchev's project, however, it gained extra importance. *The Book's* introduction titled 'Towards Abundance' linked the aims of the Soviet food industry to those of the Party and Soviet government with regards to the further liberation of Soviet women. It posited that the planned expansion of the social foodservice did "not at all suppose the liquidation of home-made dishes and the domestic nutrition of the family."¹⁹ The domestic preparation of breakfasts, lunches, suppers, and especially holiday feasts would persist, but the proper use of the food industry's products would ease the process greatly. In a later chapter explaining the procedure of cooking dinner, *The Book* argued that the use of the food industry's *polufabrikaty* — like chops, cutlets, frozen *pel'meny*, sauces and the wide assortment of canned meat, fish, vegetables and fruits "grant the opportunity... to prepare dinner or breakfast and serve it at the table within 10-15 minutes."²⁰

This statement became one of the food industry's slogans during the Khrushchev era. In November 1960, *The Female Worker* reported on a cooking course organized in Tbilisi's Palace of Culture as part of a larger campaign titled 'The Food Industry in the Seven-Year Plan'. During this course an instructor demonstrated how full-course dinners could be prepared exclusively from canned foods and *polufabrikaty*. While she was doing so, a special commission kept the time to confirm that a three-course was prepared within "somewhere between 10 to 15 minutes."²¹ In an article on the same page, a biologist of the Institute of Nutrition, S. Bessonov, argued that the "skillful use of canned foods and combining them with fresh products, could enrich the food ration and ease the heavy work of everyday cooking." He presented six different four-course dinners that could be prepared exclusively from canned foods and put on the table within 10-15 minutes. These were not a meager fare. For example, one could prepare a dinner that consisted of zucchini-caviar as an appetizer, followed by Ukrainian Borsch, a main course of tongue with green peas, and plum *kompot* for desert.²²

The food industry's canned foods and *polufabrikaty* could indeed have been

¹⁹ Ibid., 9.

²⁰ Ibid., 11, 23.

²¹ L. Zhukhovitsky, 'Prihodite v nash Dom kul'tury' [Come to our Palace of Culture], *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1960, 30.

²² S. Bessonov, 'Vkusno, pitatel'no' [Tasty, and nourishing], *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1960, 30.

very practical means to reduce the time spent on cooking. The question remains if Soviet housewives actually made use of these products. Official economic statistics show that the production of conserves had increased from 4072,7 million cans in 1958 to 7078,5 million in 1965. The total revenue of the sale of conserves had increased with 80 percent over the seven-year period. These numbers thus show that production and sale of conserves had significantly increased.²³ But the fact that the use of conserves had to be promoted in print media and cooking courses, suggests that housewives resisted the use of such products. In this regard it is especially revealing that Bessonov, in his article mentioned above, explicitly noted that “[e]ven nowadays one is still meeting people who consider canned food to be inadequate and even off-grade food.”²⁴

Historians do give indications that resistance to these new products waned during the 1960s. Reid refers to a 1967 Soviet sociological study of the home, that observed that the development of canned foods and *polufabrikaty* did effect domestic cooking.²⁵ Fitzpatrick, who was an exchange student in Moscow during the 1960s, noticed that whenever a dinner for guests was organized, “it seemed, you bought whatever you could find in the store (say, *polufabrikaty* rissoles), and threw in vodka if you were a drinker or wanted to make it an occasion.”²⁶ Industrially processed foodstuffs became a part of Soviet daily life during the Khrushchev era, but the extent to which these products were actually used to reduce the time spent on cooking to a mere ten to fifteen minutes remains open for discussion. It does, however, support Crowley and Reid’s thesis on the Soviet Union as a consumer society in which the image of a product is acquired together with the actual thing. In a communist view, canned food was not simply canned food; it was a means to liberate women.

²³ The total revenue on the sale of canned foods had increased from 1,008 million rubles in 1958 to 18,16 million rubles in 1965. Especially the sale of canned vegetables and fruits had increased — from 409 to 902 million rubles respectively, while the sale of canned meat and fish actually started falling after 1964. The same statistics report that the urban population of the Soviet Union consisted of 121,7 million people in 1965. See *Narodnoe Khozyaistva v 1965 g.*, 246, 635, 7.

²⁴ Bessonov, ‘Vkusno, pitatel’no’, 30.

²⁵ She refers to A.V. Baranov, ‘Sotsiologicheskie problem zhilishcha’ [Sociological Problems of Habitation] *Sotsial’nye problem zhilishcha*, ed. A.G. Kharchev et al. (Leningrad 1967), 14. See Reid, ‘Khrushchev Kitchen’, 294. I did not have the opportunity to study this source myself.

²⁶ Sheila Fitzpatrick, ‘Afterword’, in *Everyday Life*, ed. Chatterjee et al., 400.

Fast and Delicious Recipes in *The Female Worker*

Apart from the appropriate use of new kitchens, domestic appliances and industrially processed food, the time and energy spent on the preparation of food was also to be reduced by using practical, simple recipes specifically meant for the fast preparation of delicious dishes. Such recipes start to make an appearance in Soviet culinary literature during the Khrushchev years. For example, *The Short Household Encyclopedia*, published for the first time in 1959, claimed that the recipes it included recipes that would help “Soviet people” to “deliciously and quickly [*vkusno i bystro*] prepare lunch, breakfast and supper.”²⁷

From 1959 onwards, a “fast and delicious”-formula was applied to in *The Female Worker*’s recipe-columns as well. A brief review of the history of these columns demonstrates that culinary literature in this magazine completely transformed during the 1950s. In 1952, the last year of Stalin’s governance, the journal’s recipes were costly both in terms of time as well as ingredients. For example, in the February issue of that year, one could find a recipe for Jellied Zander. This recipe first required housewives to clean, debone, and cut a kilogram of the freshwater fish. She then had to prepare a broth from the fish’s bones combined with some vegetables, and cook the pieces of meat in it until tender. Finally, she was to arrange the meat in the original shape of the fish, boil the broth down to a jelly — a process that takes hours — and pour it over the fish.²⁸ One could wonder how an urban Soviet housewife could acquire such an amount of Zander while war-time rations were still in place. Moreover, a horrible amount of time was required to prepare this dish. Such impractical culinary instructions, however, were common in *The Female Worker*, during the early 1950s.

After the death of Stalin in 1953, recipes in *The Female Worker* gradually became less extravagant. In the October issue of 1959, a new format for the recipe column was introduced. Housewives, as a contrast to professional cooks, contributed practical recipes for dishes that were simple and required very little time to prepare. One example, a recipe for Fish without Bone sent in by A.Tyurina from Minsk, taught how any round fish could easily be deboned by making a cut in its back before baking it. Another one, by B.Burzhene from Kaunas, instructed readers on how to prepare a

²⁷ Revin et al., *Kratkaya entsiklopediya*, 3.

²⁸ ‘Kulinariya’ [The Art of Cooking], *Rabotnitsa* no. 2, February, 1952, 32.

cake that did not require baking from crumbled cookies and instant pudding.²⁹ The recipes suggested for the supper on New Year's Eve that year explicitly stressed fast and delicious cooking. "It is possible to very quickly prepare a delicious appetizer from hard-boiled eggs," wrote L. Boiko from Minsk in her recipe for Eggs Stuffed with Mushrooms. In a recipe for Stewed Pike, N. Gancheva from Kishinev wrote: "Many housewives stuff a pike well....But I think that stewed pike is not less delicious, and takes less bother to prepare."³⁰

Recipe columns in this format frequently appeared *The Female Worker* until at least 1965.³¹ They provided instructions that were, in contrast with the 1952 Zander-recipe, actually practical. Also, such recipes, especially the last one cited above, could be read as criticism of the ways in which many housewives supposedly cooked and provided faster alternatives. By actively promoting a different style of cooking, delicious and fast recipes in *The Female Worker* contributed to the reduction and relief of the burden of domestic cookery.

The Communist Family — Children in the Household

A last way in which the Soviet housewife's burden of domestic cooking was supposed to be alleviated was to involve the other members of the family in the process of cooking. This brings us to the discussion of the Khrushchev regime's attempt to restructure gender roles within Soviet families.

Historians who specifically studied this attempt, generally agree that it failed. But their explanations for this failure differ. Reid argues that the emancipation of women was to be achieved mainly through the modernization of the household, without a fundamental restructuring of the existing gender structures within the home. She notes that gender roles were discussed in the Soviet media, but argues that such discussions were limited to the period around Women's Day.³² Historian Lynne Attwood, specifically focusing on the discussion of gender relations in *The*

²⁹ 'Kulinariya' [The Art of Cooking], *Rabotnitsa*, October, 1959, 10.

³⁰ 'Dlya novogodnego uzhina' [For New Year's Supper], *Rabotnitsa*, December, 1959, 12.

³¹ For more examples, see 'Blyuda domashnei kukhni' [Meals for the Domestic Kitchen], *Rabotnitsa*, April, 1960, 30; 'Blyuda iz kartofelya' [Potato-dishes] *Rabotnitsa*, February, 1962, 28; 'K Obedu' [To Dinner], *Rabotnitsa*, January, 1965.

³² Reid, 'Khrushchev Kitchen', 314. International Women's Day (March 8) had been an official Soviet holiday since 1917, and was meant as a celebration of Soviet women's contribution to communist construction. Until 1965, however, it remained a normal working day.

Female Worker, argues for a more ambiguous picture. She notes a “clear tension between, on the one hand, the promotion of... a new form of gender relations, and on the other, the perpetuation of old gender stereotypes,” which resulted in “a confusing mix of radical and traditional notions about gender roles.”³³ We might wonder to which extent cookbooks and magazines helped in restructuring the gender roles regarding cooking within Soviet households.

Most cookbooks published during the Khrushchev era did not question whose responsibility it was to cook and presumed a female audience. The mission-statement of 1962 re-print *The Book* that was fully cited above, mentioned that it set out to specifically help out *the housewife* with the preparation of food. The same was the case for less popular cookbooks, of which the most telling example must have been a small cookbook titled *For You, Women: The Family at the Dining Table*, published in 1960 and even re-printed in 1963.³⁴ Only *The Short Encyclopedia of the Household* did not explicitly assume housewives to be its audience and used the gender-neutral “Soviet people” to address its audience.

We can read about a more earnest attempt at restructuring the responsibility for cooking inside the household in a less expected source: a book titled *The Nutrition of the Pupil*, published in 1959. Essentially, it is a collection of educational material — including a reasonable number of recipes — compiled to help pedagogues to organize proper nutrition, and education on nutrition at Soviet schools. One of the book’s chapters elaborates on how a culinary lesson should be organized. A chef should come to the school to tell pupils about his profession, in which the goal was not to encourage children to become real chefs, but to teach them to be able to take care of themselves. The writers of this chapter held this to be a necessity, because:

Many are such families, where the mother works and it is difficult for her to take full care for of the children. The pupil often comes to take care of dinner himself, because the mother has

³³ Attwood, ‘Gender Confusion’, 172-173.

³⁴ P. Ya. Grigor’ev and L.N. Semenova, *Dlya vas, zhenshchiny. Sem’ya za obedennym stolom* [For You, Women: The Family at the Dining Table] (Moscow: Izdatel’stvo “Znanie”, 1960,1963). There are countless other examples. N.V Fedorova stated in *Household Economics* that her book is meant in the first place for “young housewives, whom it will undoubtedly help with the first steps of their independent lives.” See Fedorova, *Domovodstvo:Kulinariya: 350 poleznych reshetov* [Household Economics: The Art of Cooking: 350 Useful Recipes] (Tula: Tul’skoe knizhnoe izdatel’stvo, 1959), 2. Vasil Mel’nik ‘s *Home Cuisine* explicitly aimed at “teaching housewives to deliciously and economically prepare a variety of foods.” See asili Mel’nik, *Domashnyaya Kukhnya* [Home Cuisine] (Chishinau: Gasudarstvennoe izdatel’stvo “kartya moldovenyaske”, 1960), 1. The quite popular *1000 Tasty Dishes* would “will help housewives in their work.” See, I. Fridaite (ed.), *1000 vkusnykh blyud* [1000 Tasty Dishes] (Vilnius: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’svo politicheskoi i nauchnoi literatury litovskoi SSR,1959), 5.

not come back from work yet at dinnertime.³⁵

Pedagogues were thus encouraged to make children more self-sufficient with regards to their own nutrition in order to take over responsibility from their mothers. In another of the book's chapters stressed that pedagogues should really take care that children, especially boys, were taught at school to take part in cooking, doing the dishes, and other chores at home:

The more demanding and persistent you will impart those skills to children, the easier will it be to rear a compulsory yearning in the child to help the mother, to awaken respect for her labor and the work of other adults.³⁶

The publication of this book, and the attempt to improve the culinary education of children should be understood in the context of Khrushchev's School Reform which took full effect in December 1958. During the summer of that year, Khrushchev had released a memorandum in which he held that education had become "divorced from life", and that children should get an education that really prepared them for "useful work, [and] for participation in the task of building a communist society."³⁷ Cooking lessons such those described in *The Nutrition of the Pupil*, had been organized already since August 1958.³⁸ In March 1959, *The Female Worker* informed women that parents could help to "psychologically prepare children for work" by involving them in domestic work from an early age onwards.³⁹ It could therefore be argued that Khrushchev's educational reform was meant to have impact on the situation at home, and opened up another way to reduce and relieve the women's domestic burden.

The reform led to a re-evaluation of the role of children in the household in the Soviet press. A great example of this is an article on the first page of the *The Female Worker's* September 1958 issue. It told the story about Evgeny Alekseevna, a working mother who studied to attain her engineering degree. It featured a picture in which she is seen preparing dinner with the help of a young man (see figure 6). The

³⁵ A. Ya. Manelis and O.V. Korobkev'y 'Uroki kulinarii' [Culinary Lessons] *Pitanie shkol'nika*, ed. V.N. Lyabova (Moscow: Gostorgizdat, 1959), 83.[*]

³⁶ L. Dubenskaya, 'Poleznie privychki i navyka'[Useful Practices and Skills], in *Pitanie shko'nika*, 92.

³⁷ Khrushchev, 'On strengthening the link between school and life, and on the further development of the educational system', *Pravda*, September 21, 1958, cited in Roy Medvedev, *Khrushchev*, translated by Brian Pearce (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Publisher, 1982), 130.

³⁸ A photo essay of a cooking class was published in the journal *Family and School*, see A. Shaikheta 'V zhizhni eto prigoditsya' [It Will be Useful in Life] *Semya i shkola*, August, 1958.

³⁹ A. Levshin, 'Chem pomoch'?' [To Help with What?] *Rabotnitsa*, March, 1959, 26-27.

caption read:

Meet Volodya, Evgeny Alekseevna's son He is her right hand in the house. He helps mother preparing lunch and supper. Today mother will go to class, but Volodya will serve his younger sister and father supper. ⁴⁰

Volodya thus was an example of the ideal son with a “compulsory yearning” to help his mother in her pursuit of self-development. This ideal that was to be replicated in other households through the improvements made in Soviet education.

Reid argues, however, that these discussions with regard to public education in modern housekeeping “reconfirmed the identification of housework as ‘women’s work’.”⁴¹ Reid supports this claim with letter from a pedagogue at a school in the Lithuanian SSR enthusiastically reported that girls were being taught everything that a good housewife needs to know: how to prepare three-course lunches, to clean the dishes, conserve vegetables and fruits, baking pies, and so on.⁴² The fact that children were taught to help their *mother* specifically, does support Reid's as well. But the culinary classes, which did explicitly also target boys, might have been meant to rear a new generation of Soviet people for whom it was not so self-evident that cooking was women's work.

The Communist Family — A Real Family Man

Children were expected to benefit from the culinary classes introduced at Soviet schools, and as a consequence mothers would ideally have some extra hands in the kitchen, but what about the fathers in the Soviet family?

The men of an older generation had not enjoyed such an education, and thus, according to Khrushchevist logic, remained incapacitated in the kitchen. In women's magazines, fathers were sometimes depicted cooking. In such cases their clumsiness that made them unfit for it was emphasized and ridiculed (figure 6). But their shortcomings in the kitchen were also increasingly criticized. A short comic published in *Family and School*, the Soviet magazine on parenting and education

⁴⁰ 'Rabotnitsa uchitsya' [The Female Worker is Studying] *Rabotnitsa*, September, 1958, 1.

⁴¹ Reid, 'Khrushchev Kitchen', 299-300.

⁴² See G. Sidiakova, 'Uroki domovodstva v shkole. Nash pervyi opyt' [Household Economy Classes at School. Our First Experience], *Semya i shkola*, March, 1959, 28.

published monthly since 1946, depicts what happened after a mother had to leave her two young sons with her husband for a single night. The father of course fails miserably when attempting to cook, takes his kids to a restaurant, stays too late and forgets to put them to bed properly. As a conclusion to this story the oldest of the two boys asked himself:

Why is it that our papa is so unfit for life? That is probably because they did not impart working skills to him at school. When I grow up, I will certainly be fit! After all, as everyone is saying – school will prepare us for life from now on!⁴³

Around Women's Day *The Female Worker's* issues often featured critique on men's role in the kitchen. In March 1960, for example, the father's incapability or unwillingness to cook dinner was criticized in an illustration. It shows a man returning from work, and then serving his family soup at the table, with the captions: “Good!... But, unfortunately... This it happens only once a year...”⁴⁴ Another example is a “women's story” by a certain Natal'ya Il'ina, featuring in the journal's February 1963 issue. It narrates how an anonymous Soviet woman had spent her free time on Women's Day cooking for guests her husband had invited over. The husband in this story did not even realize his wife had a paid job outside the home. Whenever she failed to serve him dinner right when he returns from work, he always said: “Are you telling me to head to the canteen after work? Hahaha!... Apparently, domestic responsibilities are a burden on you? Haha!”⁴⁵

Such critique was not limited to the period around Women's Day. A more intense discourse emphasizing the need for the active participation of Soviet fathers in the preparation of food at home was deployed in magazines.

⁴³ I. Fridmana, [untitled], *Semya i shkola*, March, 1959, 6-9.[*]

⁴⁴ *Rabotitsa*, March, 1960, 32.

⁴⁵ Natal'ya Il'ina, 'Kak ya provela prazdnik' [How I Spent the Holiday], *Rabotitsa*, February, 1963, 17.



Figure 6. A Clusmy Father in the Kitchen (left) and Volodya Helping out his Mother (right)
 Source: *Rabotnitsa*, November, 1957, 31; *Rabotnitsa*, September, 1958, 1.

In a feuilleton in the *Family and School* of January 1959, Oleg Kursky, apparently a young boy, wrote about how he tried to learn the meaning of the word “family man” (*sem'yanin*). His father, Oleg wrote, considered himself a family man, because he never ate at a canteen after work, and always returned home for supper. At home his father always expected that mother, whom he addresses as the “weaker sex” (*slabyi pol*), cooks dinner while he lays down on the divan to read a newspaper. He simply refused to help her out. On Sundays he was always staying in bed until eleven a.m., while mother already went shopping at the market and baked *pirozhki* (stuffed buns) by the time he rises. His mother never has time to read, nor does his father take her out to see a movie or go to the theater. Therefore, his mother says that father is not a *real* family man (*nastoyashchii sem'yanin*). The young writer was confused about the meaning of the word “real family man.” After the dictionary did not provide him with a satisfying explanation, he decided to ask his elderly neighbor, who told him that:

“A real family man... is he who helps his wife with everything. Let's say that he goes to the market during the weekend, and helps to clean the room. When coming from work he pays a visit to the shop, and buys what is needed. And in the evenings he goes to the cinema or the theater with the wife. Well, and of course he concerns himself with the kids in his free time. Understood?”⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Oleg Kursky, 'Moi papa — ne sem'yanin' [My Papa is No Family Man], *Sem'ya i shkola*, January, 1959, 37.[*]

Oleg concluded that his father did not fit this definition of a real family man, but did not put the blame on him. He had never been taught to help his mother out, like Oleg himself was at school. There was no one that set the right example for him, no one that showed him that he was in fact not a family man.

Six months later, the journal published a letter written by a girl responding to Oleg's story. She wrote that it was “[s]candalous, that one can come across such types among fathers.”⁴⁷ Her father, as opposed to Oleg's, was a real family man, because:

Though it is held to be woman's work, papa is the boss over the kitchen. He cleans the potatoes, fries the onions, and minces the meat....Comes Sunday, we never saw that our papa slept till 10 o'clock, and that mama went to the market alone. They go together. On that day we always go for a walk with the whole family, and during the evening papa goes to the cinema or theater together with mama. ⁴⁸

Such examples quite convincingly show that, against Reid's claims, the Khrushchev regime did make a genuine attempt to restructure gender roles in the kitchen, or at least criticize fathers for the fact they did not help their wives. A new ideal of the real family man that helped out in the kitchen was promoted. The fact that cookbooks did not adjust to such a change, confirms Attwood's thesis that the Khrushchevist project to restructure gender roles inside Soviet households was ambiguous and resulted in a confusing mix of gender assumptions. We must question, however, if it really was the regime's intention to restructure existing gender roles with regards to cooking. It assumed that communism would totally annihilate the need to prepare food at home. Rather than to restructure gender roles, men were involved in the kitchen to reduce and alleviate the burden of cooking at home, until it would become obsolete.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have reviewed a number of the Khrushchev regime's attempts to achieve the “reduction and alleviation” of the burden that domestic cooking on Soviet

⁴⁷ Tat'yana Morozova, 'Moi otets — nastoyashchii sem'yanin' [My Father is a Real Family Man], *Semya i shkola*, June, 1959, 32.[*]

⁴⁸ Ibid.[*]

women. These were manifold and proposed by a great variety of institutes and specialists. Architects provided convenient kitchens, and advised on their optimal use; the light and food industries both increased their production of modern consumer goods whose use would cut down the time and effort spent on cooking; “fast and delicious” recipes were promoted by *The Female Worker*, in a practical attempt to shorten the time women spent on cooking; pedagogues taught schoolchildren to help out their mothers in the kitchen, and magazines criticized fathers for their lack of assistance during the cooking process.

With these attempts the regime demonstrated that it could negotiate a synthesis between the goals of communist construction and Soviet families’ existing domestic situation. This was in the first place apparent in the specifically communist meaning it imparted to modern consumer goods that became more widely available. In the second place, it was apparent in the way the regime actually attempted to restructure existing patterns of families’ domestic lives. The liberation of Soviet women started at the stove, carried out by women themselves, their husbands and children. Lastly, the regime promoted tactics, such as the instructions on the do-it-yourself *kholodil'niki*, that would enable Soviet families to compensate for production shortages in the economy, and still conform to communist ideals.

Chapter 4. Nutritional Advice and Healthy Soviet Cooking

In the first issue of the journal *Problems of Nutrition* following the Twenty-First congress of the Communist Party in 1959, the Soviet Institute of Nutrition's director, Olga Molchanova, gave her views on what the Seven-Year Plan meant for the future of the Soviet nutritional science. She proudly wrote that the Soviet Union had transformed “from a country of continuous crop failures, which the former, prerevolutionary Russia was... into the country which has set the objective to realize the nutrition of the whole population on the basis of scientific-hygienic principles.”¹ An expansion and improvement of the social foodservice was one way to meet this objective, as was underlined by Molchanova and other scientists during this period.² But, as we saw in the second chapter, a network that could fulfill all of the population's needs was far from being established. This meant that most food was still prepared and consumed domestically. Therefore, it was logical that Molchanova concluded that “the organization of the population's nutrition conforming to scientifically grounded norms is unthinkable without broad and systematic propaganda of the present-day achievements of the science of nutrition.” In order to realize a scientifically sound nutrition at home, Soviet citizens, housewives especially, had to be educated in nutritional science through the press, lectures, cinema, radio and television.³

In this chapter I will discuss the implications of Molchanova's intentions for the domestic preparation of food on the basis of scientific “propaganda” in both cookbooks and *The Female Worker*. Her intention to organize all nutrition on the basis of scientific norms, I argue, were in conflict with policies to “reduce and alleviate” the burden of domestic cooking discussed in the previous chapter. As the social foodservice was insufficiently developed, the responsibility for the organization of a healthy diet based on the scientific principles had to be shouldered by Soviet housewives. In the Soviet Union, where vitamin-rich vegetables and fruits were

¹ Olga Molchanova, 'Perspektivnyi plan razvitiya narodnogo khozyaistva sssr i vazhneishie zadachi sovetsoi nauki o pitanii' [The Perspectives of The Plan of the Growth of the National Econom USSR and Important Objectives of the Soviet Science of Nutrition], *Voprosy pitaniya* 18, no. 1 (January, 1959) , 3.[*]

² Ibid.; S.M. Bremener, *Gigiena Pitaniya* [Hygiene of Nutrition] (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo torgovoi literatury, 1962), 6.

³ Molchanova, 'Perspektivny plani', 7.[*]

scarce and only seasonally available, this was a heavy burden. As I will show in this chapter, nutritionists instructed housewives to cope with the shortages of these foodstuffs by canning, fermenting, and preserving vegetables and fruits at home. Surprisingly, such burdensome instruction enjoyed official support and appeared in the same media as instruction that was meant to reduce the burden of the preparation of food at home. This is a demonstration that the Khrushchev regime's reform of cooking was, like its overall struggle for the communist way of life, riddled with contradictions.

This chapter will first briefly dwell on the history of nutritional science in the Soviet Union, in order to understand what “achievements” Molchanova hoped to impart to Soviet housewives, and how her institute's goals fitted within the larger historical context of Khrushchev’s communist project. Then, we will look at the form in which this science was presented to housewives. I will do so by reviewing chapters on “rational nutrition” (*ratsionalnoe pitanie*) of the fifth edition of *The Book* published in 1952, and its re-print and new edition published after 1959. These chapters were written by Molchanova herself and provided complicated nutritional advice to housewives. Lastly, I will discuss the nutritional advice in *The Female Worker* after 1959, which was easier to understand because of its focus on a vitamin-rich diet based on vegetables and fruits. In practice, however, this advice implied that women were expected to cope with the shortages of these foods by using burdensome methods of home-preservation.

The Soviet Science of Nutrition

The existence of a science of nutrition, the analysis of the relation between diet and the functioning of the human body, is validated by the fact that such knowledge is far from innate to man. Giard writes that it suffices to make a simple inquiry among our own family and friends to assemble “an amazing assortment of stupidity” in the field of nutrition. And, even worse, such stupidity is far from harmless: “Through ignorance, lack of concern, cultural habit, material shortage, or personal attitude ... people can ruin their health by imposing on themselves deficient or excessive diets,

and go as far as to die from what they eat.”⁴ Biographer Carter Elwood speculates that the Lenin’s disinterest for his diet — he subsisted on soup, bread and tea, after having moved to the Kremlin in 1918 — may have contributed to the decline of his health.⁵

With regards to revolutionary Russia's population, such disregard for the relation between nutrition and health was not an option. As many as 10 million Russians had died from starvation and disease during the wars between 1914 and 1921, a trend which the new government, who needed healthy “builders of communism,” could not allow to exacerbate.⁶ Historian Tricia Starks argues that the Bolsheviks had two main reasons to be interested in the rationalization of the population’s health. First, as mentioned, the government required healthy citizens with ordered lives, who would be happy, politically enlightened, and possessed “balanced minds that would... choose the most rational, equitable, and inevitable of political, social, and economic structures, namely socialism.” Secondly, and maybe more importantly, the healthy body “became the material manifestation of the revolution’s success.”⁷ Thus, regardless of his disinterest for his own health, Lenin insisted that “the fight for socialism is at the same time the fight for health.”⁸ The health of the Soviet population was thus not only a practical necessity, it also had a strong political dimension, which strongly influenced the Soviet science of nutrition.

As I mentioned in the first chapter of this study, the Bolsheviks’ dedication to healthy nutrition was reflected in the establishment of an institute for nutritional sciences under *Narkomzdrav* in 1920. Based on the physiologist Igor Pavlov’s work on the physiology of nutrition, scientists connected to this institute were poised to find a rational solution to the widespread malnutrition in the country, and to develop a diet deemed appropriate for the socialist population. Rothstein and Rothstein show that Soviet nutritional scientists promoted a variety of ideas, ranging from complete culinary asceticism that eschewed refined food altogether, to attempts to develop synthetic foods — to alleviate the existing shortage of fats and proteins, and adapting

⁴ Giard, 'Doing-Cooking', 167.

⁵ Carter Elwood, *The Non-Geometric Lenin. Essays on the Development of the Bolshevik Party 1910-1914* (London, New York and Delhi: Anthem Press, 2011), 128-133.

⁶ Tricia Starks, *The Body Soviet. Propaganda Hygiene and the Revolutionary State* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 4.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 209.

⁸ A. Slonimskaia, ‘V.I. Lenin ob okhrane zdorov'ia naroda' [V.I. Lenin on the Protection of the People’s Health] in *Ocherki istoriografii sovetskogo zdravookhraneniia*, ed. M. I. Barsukov, 13, cited in *ibid.*, 3.

prerevolutionary diets to revolutionary conditions.⁹ According to Molchanova, Soviet scientists during this period remained focused on establishing “scientifically grounded indicators of the norms of nutrition for various groups of the population,” essentially based on the “need of the human body in proteins, fats, and carbohydrates, needed to cover energetic expenses in the first place.”¹⁰ Thus, Soviet nutritionists treated the human body as a “complicated machine,” which needed a specific amount of calories in order to carry out a specific task. This was a rationalized perspective on nutrition, put in place to foresee in the most efficient distribution of calories amongst the population. The principles of this science were supposed to be applied to the diets served in the social foodservice’s establishments, and featured in dietary advice disseminated at special lectures and through print media.¹¹

During the decades after the establishment of the institute, the Soviet science of nutrition had grown and progressed considerably. During the period between 1929 and 1932, the institute had established branches in Leningrad, Odessa, Khar’kov, Rostov, Novosibirsk, Voronzeh, and Ivanova.¹² The publication of *Problems of Nutrition*, an expert journal dedicated to the promotion of the findings of Soviet scientists in the field of nutrition had started in 1932.¹³ In 1944, the institute had been reorganized under the Academy of Medical Sciences, as the Soviet Scientific-Research Institute of Nutrition, and greatly broadened its scope. By the 1950s, the focus of scientists did not merely include the relation between nutrition and the energetic needs of the human body — in other words, a focus on the *quantity* of nutrition. They now had developed a broad scientific interest for the *qualitative* aspects of nutrition too. This effectively meant that the effects of vitamins and minerals on the body were more scrupulously studied.¹⁴

By the end of the 1950s the life expectancy of Soviet citizens had drastically improved, and was on par with that of citizens in the West. This was a result of the improvement of the Soviet health services, sciences, and the rise in the standards of

⁹ Rothstein and Rothstein, 'Soviet Culinary Arts', 181, 184-192.

¹⁰ Molchanova, 'O nekotorykh vazhneishikh zadachakh nauki o pitanii' [On Some Important Objectives of the Science of Nutrition], *Voprosy Pitaniya* 11, no. 1 (January, 1952), 6.[*]

¹¹ Borerro, *Hungry Moscow*, 143; Starks, *Body Soviet*, 162-168.

¹² Rothstein and Rothstein, 'Soviet Culinary Arts', 182.

¹³ 'Ot redaktsii' [From the Editorial Board], *Voprosy Pitaniya* 11, no.1 (January-February, 1952), 3.

¹⁴ Molchanova, 'Nauki o pitanii', 7-8.

living of Soviet citizens in general.¹⁵ Logically, this success had not escaped Khrushchev's attention. In his speech on the Seven Year Plan during the Twenty-First Congress in 1959, the leader boasted that the mortality rate in the Soviet Union had decreased by four times, and that it now was the lowest in the whole world. "These are objective data, and they speak volumes," he concluded.¹⁶ Soviet health was again an important issue in the context of the full-scale construction of communism and peaceful competition with the capitalist West. In its new political program of 1961, the party expressed ambitions to liquidate mass infection disease and to improve Soviet life expectancy.¹⁷ Even though the relation between nutrition and health was not explicitly emphasized by Khrushchev, it was relevant in this context.

Spurred by the ambitions of the Party and the Soviet government expressed in the Seven-Year Plan, scientists of nutrition dedicated themselves to further progress. According to Molchanova, writing in 1959, the science of nutrition's main objective was to study and elaborate "scientifically grounded norms and regimes of nutrition for the healthy and the sick man, in accordance with all conditions of his development and existence." It was to further rationalize and distinguish norms of nutrition that took into regard peculiarities of individuals, such as age and sex, as well as environmental factors, such as climate, profession, and social-everyday conditions.¹⁸ It was this hyper-rationalized approach to nutrition which Molchanova desired to impart on the Soviet people through broad propaganda. In the next sections I will discuss nutritional advice in both *The Book* and *The Female Worker*, to find out what scientists expected from Soviet housewives in the field of nutrition.

Rational Nutrition in *The Book about Tasty and Healthy Food*

The Book was an important tool in the propaganda of Soviet nutritional science. Since its first edition's publication in 1939 it had been co-authored and endorsed by the Institute of Nutrition. From the second edition onwards, Molchanova herself

¹⁵ In prerevolutionary Russia the average age of death had been thirty-one for men, and thirty-three for women. In the post-war era this age climbed to sixty-one and sixty-seven respectively. See Starks, *Body Soviet*, 209.

¹⁶ Ibid., 209; Khrushchev, 'O kontrolnikh tsifrakh', 52.

¹⁷ 'Programma Kommunisticheskoi Partii', 392-393.

¹⁸ O.P. Molchanova, 'Sovremennoe sostoyanie problemy pitaniya zdorovogo i bol'nogo cheloveka' [The Current State of the Problem of Nutrition in Health and Disease], *Voprosy pitaniya* 18, no. 3 (May, 1959), 3.[*]

contributed a chapter titled ‘On the Principles of Rational Nutrition’ at the start of the book in which she introduced housewives to nutritional sciences and its application to the organization of the daily diet for the family.¹⁹ The distance between scientific work in the laboratory and the everyday cooking in the kitchen at home was thus supposed to be minimal. All cookbooks, published at the end of the 1950s included similar “scientific” chapters written — if not by Molchanova herself — by scientists of nutrition, food technologists, or those that bore the daunting title of “agronomists in household economics” (*agronomy po domovodstvu*).²⁰

As the single most popular of Soviet cookbooks, *The Book* gives a good indication of how the science of nutrition was presented to the average housewife. The importance of the science of nutrition was emphasized in the text of *The Book*, especially in its sixth edition. The 1952 edition’s foreword said that the book would teach housewives to apply scientific principles to cooking and the 1962 reprint’s mentioned these principles had been brought up-to-date with new scientific data. In the foreword to the 1965 edition, the publisher explicitly stated that “the need for a new edition ... was overdue with regards to... the new achievements of progressive Soviet science,” and that this new edition was to be “dedicated to the propaganda of scientific principles of a rational diet....”²¹ This mission statement replaced that of the 1962 reprint — to help the housewife to prepare delicious and healthy food with the least expenditure of time and effort, see previous chapter.

Also the composition of *The Book*’s editorial board was changed to emphasize the importance of science in cooking. Ivan K. Sivolap, one of the main directors of the food industry and had been the cookbook’s editor-in-chief since at least 1948, was replaced by the prominent biochemist Alexander I. Oparin.²² The latter wrote an

¹⁹ I.K. Sivolap et al., eds. *Kniga o vkusnoi i zdorovoi pishche* [The Book about Tasty and Healthy Food] (Moscow: Pischepormizdat, 1948), 3.

²⁰ In all “big” cookbooks published by Gostorgizdat and Pishchepromizdat in Moscow, such as *Kniga, Kulinariya*, or *Pitanie shkolnika* such chapters were written by Molchanova. See ‘Osnovy ratsional’nogo pitaniya’ [The Principles of Rational Nutrition], in *Kulinariya* (Moscow: Gostorgizdat, 1959), 7-14; ‘Kakaya nuzhna pishcha’ [What Kind of Food is Needed], in *Pitanie shkolnika*, 15-32. In other, less prominent cookbooks such introductory chapters appear under different titles, see for example ‘Pishcha — istochnik zdorov’ya i energii’ [Food — A Source of Health and Energy] in *1000 vkusnykh blyud*, ed. E. Drasutene et al. (Vilnius: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel’svo politicheskoi i nauchnoi literatury litovskoi SSR, 1959), 7-26; Fedorova, ‘Rezhim pitaniya’ [The Regime of Nutrition], in *Domovodstvo*, 44-49, or Grigor’ev and Semenova ‘Chto nado znat’ o pishche i pitanii’ [What You Need to Know about Food and Nutrition], in *Dlya vas, zhenshchiny*, 5-11.

²¹ See Sivolap et al., *Kniga* (1962), 3; Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 5.

²² Oparin was a Soviet scientist who enjoyed global fame for his application of biochemistry on the problem of the evolution of life, worked out in his book *The Origin of Life* (1936). Though he was the director of the Soviet Institute of Biochemistry he was connected to the field of nutrition through his study of the role of

introduction to the cookbook in which he argued that the Soviet science of nutrition had progressed from treating the human body as a “really complexly structured machine,” for which food was only important as a fuel to cover energy needs, to treating it as “living body” (*zhivoe telo*). In this living body, he wrote, organs, tissues and cells are constantly disintegrating, a process which results in new parts of protein. These, in their turn, could be synthesized into new parts of the body, provided that proper care was taken of the qualitative content of nutrition.²³

Oparin’s ideas about nutrition were not new, and had been in vogue among Soviet scientists already since the beginning of the 1950s. The main difference between *The Book’s* sixth edition and its predecessors consisted in the attempt to transfer these complicated ideas to housewives directly. This might be explained as an effect the “cult of science” that emerged during the Khrushchev year on the science of nutrition. After the launch of *Sputnik 1* in October 1957, the regime portrayed the prestige of Soviet science as the ultimate proof for the coming victory of communism.²⁴ *The Book’s* sixth edition iterated such view with regards to the science of nutrition, and linked it to the construction of communism. “Everyone needs at least an elementary understanding of food,” one of *The Book’s* authors writes in a chapter titled ‘The Organization of the Family’s Nutrition’, “without that, even in a situation of abundance, it is difficult... to grow a strong, physically and spiritually potent generation of people of communist society.”²⁵

The doctrine of “rational nutrition” (*ratstionalnoe pitanie*), developed by Molchanova over the preceding two decades, was meant to inculcate such an understanding. In *The Book’s* 1952 and 1962 versions, she summarizes the doctrine as “the correct combination of all nutrients in a person’s daily ration... adopted in amounts which completely cover all expenses of the body with regards to quantity, as well as to quality.”²⁶ This effectively meant that the Soviet housewives needed to determine their family members’ nutritional needs according to their age, their profession, and the climatic conditions in which they lived and worked. It was not enough to merely determine the calorific value of a meal, the housewife should also

enzymes. See Engelbert Broda, ‘Obituary. Alexander Ivanovich Oparin (1894–1980),’ *Trends in Biochemical Sciences* 5, no. 11 (November 1980), IV–V. Gronow and Zhuravlev have noted this shift in emphasis as well, see ‘Soviet Haute Cuisine’, 40, 55n17.

²³ Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 7–10.

²⁴ Marko Dumančić, ‘De-Stalinizing Soviet Science: Rethinking the Moral Implications of Scientific Progress in Khrushchev-Era Film’, *Studies in Russian and Soviet Cinema* 6, no.1 (2012), 76.

²⁵ Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 21.

²⁶ Sivolap et al., *Kniga* (1952), 22; Sivolap et al., *Kniga* (1962), 18.

distinguish between the different nutrients – proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, calcium and water – that could provide this calorific value. Adults performing heavy non-mechanized labor, for example, needed 4500-5000 calories from which exactly 14 percent was derived from protein, 30 percent from fats, and 56 percent from carbohydrates. Exact amounts of vitamins and minerals were to be included in the diet. For example, an adult needed 50 milligrams of vitamin C daily, and 100 milligram when performing heavy labor.²⁷

Molchanova's doctrine dictated exactness in the preparation of food at home. The fifth edition of the book, however, did not indicate in which amounts nutrients appeared in various foodstuffs. The chapter on rational nutrition in the 1965 edition of *The Book* was meant to make up for this shortcoming. It was significantly larger than those of the previous versions, covering nine pages instead of four, but its content was essentially the same as those in previous versions. The main difference consisted in the inclusion of detailed tables with exact data on nutrition. One indicated the amount of calories a person needed to perform a task for one hour relative to his bodyweight. For example, for sleeping the body needed 0,93 calories per kilogram its weight. Other tables gave information the nutritional value of different foodstuffs. This kind of information would allow housewives to exactly and rationally structure the nutrition of individual family members.²⁸

All this emphasis on scientific exactness in the preparation of food did not mean that housewives should forget to cook deliciously. Molchanova explained that the skillful culinary treatment of food causes a “watering mouth” (“*slyunki tekut*”), allowing for the better assimilation of nutrients by the body.²⁹ This probably explains Pavlov's oft-quoted words: “Normal and healthy food is food eaten with appetite, food eaten with pleasure.”³⁰ In the Soviet Union, even the pleasure derived from food was rationalized.

The application of rational nutrition was “a guarantee of health, of a normal ability to work and longevity.”³¹ By adhering to this doctrine, housewives would contribute to a social goal, namely the organization of the Soviet population's nutrition on scientific principles. In a way, they were expected to don a lab coat

²⁷ Sivolap et al., *Kniga* (1952), 23; See *Kniga* (1962), 19.

²⁸ Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 20.

²⁹ *ibid.*, 19; Z. Kochetkova, 'Sekrety pitaniya' [The Secrets of Nutrition], *Rabotnitsa*, July, 1962, 30.

³⁰ It is found at the beginning of the chapter on rational nutrition in the fifth edition of *Kniga*, paraphrased by Oparin in the foreword to the sixth edition of *Kniga*, and used as the motto of *Kulinairya*.

³¹ *Kniga* (1965), 20.

herself and use the kitchen as her laboratory, or as a Soviet professor in medical sciences put it: “a good cook is a doctor.”³²

The Vegetable and Fruit Campaign in *The Female Worker*

Because it was quite complicated, the actual application of the doctrine of rational nutrition of *The Book* to the domestic preparation of food might have been impractical. But the scientists of nutrition were also on a less complicated mission: to ensure the Soviet population's sufficient vitamin intake. In the 1965 edition of *The Book*, for example, Oparin voiced his concern that “[t]he optimal amount of vitamins is not always received with food.”³³

After 1959, this concern for the sufficient daily intake of vitamins became also increasingly apparent in the advice of specialists in *The Female Worker*. In the journal it was translated into the practical advice to serve as much vegetables and fruits as the season allowed. This is not to say the good qualities of vegetables had not been emphasized before. A household column in the summer of 1957, for example, said: “Radices, green union, tomatoes, cucumbers and young potato have appeared. The heart of the housewife fills with joy: delicious food will be on the table.”³⁴ But from the summer of 1959 onwards the tone grew more urgent and the benefits of eating vegetable-rich diets were stressed in what could be called a “vegetable and fruit campaign.”

Nutritional scientist Z. Kochetkova, who regularly contributed articles and answers to readers' questions, played an important role in this campaign. “Carbohydrates and fats, which are contained in food products, provide the necessary energy to us. But the value of food is not limited to these ...”, she wrote in an article in 1962, echoing the same line as Molchanova and Oparin had in *The Book*, “[t]herefore it is necessary to use various products for nutrition... especially vegetables and fruits.”³⁵ Contrasted with *The Book's* complicated doctrine of rational nutrition in, the application of Kochetkova's no nonsense advice seems easier. To make the

³² F. Men'shikov, 'Polnota ne priznak zdorov'ya' [Obesity is not a sign of health], *Rabotnitsa*, 1960, February, 30.

³³ Oparin et al., *Kniga* (1965), 9.[*]

³⁴ 'Polezno znat' [Useful to know], *Rabotnitsa* 1957, June, 1957, 31.

³⁵ Kochetkova, 'Sekrety pitaniya', 30.[*]

campaign complete, Kochetkova's articles were almost always accompanied by illustrations by V.Kashchenko, featuring excessively happy vegetables and fruits marching towards the cooking pot, helping to shred each other to pieces, or parading around carrying their vitamins (see figure 7).³⁶



Figure 7. Examples of Kashchenko's Illustrations of Vegetables
 Source: *Rabotnitsa*, August, 1959, 30; *Rabotnitsa*, April, 1959, 30

Vitamins in the Daily Diet in a Deficit Economy

Even though the advice to eat more vegetables and fruits was relatively easy to understand, chronic shortages of these foods made adherence to it difficult in practice. During the Khrushchev years fresh vegetables and fruits were still only widely available during summer and autumn. The Seven-Year Plan had promised to increase the production of them to “quantities sufficient to satisfy fully the needs of the population,” but harvests remained disappointing.³⁷ Moreover, these shortages were obvious. Historians Nikolai M. Dronin and Edward Bellinger found that Soviet media reported on the shortage of vegetables in many large cities, including Moscow during the summer of 1962, and conclude that “the very fact that Soviet media published this kind of information was an indication of food shortages throughout the years.”³⁸ Even Khrushchev himself lamented in his memoirs: “... it's precisely

³⁶ Other examples, Kochetkova, 'Vkusno i pitatel'no' [Tasty and Nutritious], *Rabotnitsa*, June, 1959, 31;

Kochetkova, 'Ne zabyvaite o vitaminakh' [Do not forget about the vitamins], *Rabotnitsa*, March, 1963, 31.

³⁷ In 1965, 17.6 million tons of fresh vegetables and fruits were produced in compared to 14.9 million tons in 1958, see Grey Hodnett, ed., *Resolutions and Decisions of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Volume 4. The Khrushchev Years, 1953—1964* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 126.

³⁸ Dronin and Bellinger, *Food Problems in Russia*, 210.

vegetables that the population needs. You can't make a good meal without them. They can't be found in the stores, and if some are delivered, there is a long waiting line for them."³⁹

The Female Worker implicitly addressed the shortage and seasonality of vegetables and fruits by providing instructions on how to optimally use their nutritional value. In the spring of 1959, N. Kovalev, a food technologist, wrote an article arguing that "[e]ven the most economic housewives sometimes happen to be wasteful when cooking. They do not suspect that together with the waste they throw away most of the valuable nutrients...." He instructed housewives not to peel any vegetable before cooking; forbade them to cut them with a knife which is not made out of stainless steel, or to wash them with cold water before putting them to boil in order to prevent wastefulness.⁴⁰

During that year's summer, Kotchetkova advised housewives to focus on the intake of vitamins as long as fresh vegetables and fruits were available, even if this meant a decrease of the calorific value of the diet. She provided recipes for healthy vegetarian dishes, like one for a salad named "Health" — consisting exclusively out of raw cucumbers, carrots, apples and tomatoes — or another for Soup From the Cooking Liquid of Vegetables.⁴¹

Another way in which specialists helped housewives to deal with the shortages and seasonality of fresh vegetables and fruits, was by providing regular advice on home canning and preservation. During the Khrushchev years, articles bearing titles like 'The Preparations for Winter' or 'Vegetables and Fruits During Winter', routinely appeared in *The Female Worker* during the end of summer and autumn.⁴² Kochetkova, also prevalent in this field, often answered questions regarding the possibilities and techniques of home preservation.⁴³ This home canning-trend is reflected in *The Book* too. The 1952 edition did include recipes for home conserves, pickles, and jams, but in its 1962 reprint a whole new chapter titled 'Home Canning', which told readers that "it is very nice to serve home-made conserves during winter

³⁹ Sergei Khrushchev, ed., *The Memoirs of Nikita Khrushchev. Volume 2. Reformer (1945-1964)*, transl. George Shriver (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 398.

⁴⁰ N. Kovalev, 'Ne bud'te rastochitel'ny' [You will not be wasteful], *Rabotnitsa*, April, 1959, 30.[*]

⁴¹ Kochetkova, 'Vkusno i pitatel'no', 31.

⁴² For examples, see Kochetkova 'Zagotovki na zimu' [The Preparations for Winter], *Rabotnitsa*, August 1960, 31; Kochetkova; 'Ovoshchi i frukty na zimu' [Vegetables and Fruits during Winter], *Rabotnitsa*, November, 1964, 31; Kochetkova, 'Frukty i yagodi na zimu' [Fruits and Berries during Winter], *Rabotnitsa*, August, 1959, 30.

⁴³ Kochetkova, 'Vse li mozhno konservirovat!' [Whether it is possible to Conserve Everything!], *Rabotnitsa*, March, 1961, 28.

time.” It included very detailed descriptions and illustrations of the necessary equipment.⁴⁴

It is interesting that this official support for this traditional method to ensure the year round availability of vitamin-rich foods has received scant attention in Western academic literature. For example, historian of agriculture Jenny Smith, argues that innovation in the food industry during the 1950s made “the year-round availability of vitamin-rich tomatoes and peppers” possible. She bases this mainly on a comparison of the fifth edition of *The Book* and its reprint of 1955. She observes an increase in the quantity of recipes using canned tomatoes or tomato paste which leads her to conclude that: “No longer limited by what was seasonably available ... everyday Soviet diets benefited from canning and other methods of preserving that introduced a wider range of foods.”⁴⁵ But the fact that in 1964 Kochetkova wrote a column exclusively dedicated to conserving tomatoes at home, might suggest a need for the home-canning of tomatoes, which would mean that industrially conserved tomatoes were not sufficiently available even nine years later.⁴⁶

Other historians note the persistence of home-canning, and explain it in the context of Soviet *dacha* culture. The *dacha*, a cottage located on a plot of land at the rural outskirts of big cities, provided Soviet urbanites with the opportunity to grow their own fruits and vegetables to supplement the provisions made by the state.⁴⁷ Reid and Crowley note that Soviet refrigerators during the period from the 1960s to the 1990s were not filled with the food industry’s products, “but with jars of home-preserved fruits grown at the dacha or gathered in the forest, hold-overs of a pre-industrial subsistence economy.”⁴⁸ Gronow and Zhuravlev write that the advice with regards to home preservation was “certainly highly appreciated in Soviet *dacha* culture.”⁴⁹

The prevalence of advice on home preservation of food in culinary literature can be explained in the context of *dacha* culture, but only partly. Fruits and vegetables bought at state-owned shops or semi-private kolkhoz markets, whenever

⁴⁴ Sivolap et al., *Kniga* (1962), 379.

⁴⁵ Jenny Leigh Smith, *Works in Progress. Plans and Realities on Soviet Farms, 1930-1963* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), 178-180.

⁴⁶ Kochetkova, 'Tomaty' [Tomatoes], *Rabotnitsa* no. 9, September, 1964, 31.

⁴⁷ Stephen Lovell, *Summerfolk. A History of the Dacha, 1710—2000* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 5.

⁴⁸ Crowley and Reid, 'Pleasures in Socialism?', 28.

⁴⁹ Gronow and Zhuravlev, 'Soviet Haute Cuisine', 26.

they were actually available, could also be preserved for later use.⁵⁰ This advice was the regime's way of helping Soviet households to cope with chronic shortages and unreliability of official supply. This is reflected by the sheer volume of raw material that is prescribed in recipes in *The Female Worker*. A recipe for sauerkraut (*kapusta kvashenaya*), for example, required one hundred kilograms of cabbage and many kilograms of apples, carrots, cranberries and salt. Moreover, this recipe demonstrates how much effort housewives were supposed to make, as it required the assembly, preparation and sterilization of a wooden container (*derevyannaya tara*) in which fermentation could take place.⁵¹

Housewives were, I argue, deployed to remedy the shortfalls of Soviet agriculture under Khrushchev. Notwithstanding all the efforts to "reduce and alleviate" the burden of cooking from Soviet women as described in the previous chapter, the nutritionists' concern for the population's vitamin-rich diets in the Soviet deficit economy, reproduced this burden.

Conclusion

During the Khrushchev era, Soviet scientists of nutrition dedicated themselves to the goal to organize the nutrition of the whole Soviet population on the basis of their science. Though such a goal was not explicitly sanctioned by Khrushchev, the regime's concern for the further improvement of the health of Soviet citizens did support it. Because a social foodservice that embraced all food needs of the population was not yet established, housewives were responsible to prepare food at home in a scientifically appropriate way. Soviet scientists presented a doctrine of "rational nutrition" in cookbooks, such as *The Book*, by which they attempted to modernize the housewife's understanding of a healthy diet. This was a complicated, often impractical, and burdening matter.

Other nutritional advice, such as that in *The Female Worker* emphasized the

⁵⁰ Kolkhozniks, collective farmers, were, opposed to Sovkhozniiks, state farmers, allowed to keep a private plot from which they could sell a part of their produce privately. Though the Seven-Year Plan foresaw that this private sector would have been pushed back by 1965 and would have to be completely eradicated when the material-economic base for Communism was constructed in the 1970s, they remained an important part of Soviet food economy, see Karl-Eugen Wädekin and George Karcz (ed.), *The Private Sector in Soviet Agriculture*, translated by Keith Bush (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1974), 274-315.

⁵¹ 'Ovoshchi na zimu', *Rabotnitsa*, September, 1961, 31.

importance of fresh vegetables and fruits in the diet. Putting such instruction in practice was hampered by chronic shortages of these foodstuffs. As a result, the same nutritional scientists that looked to modernize Soviet housewives' cooking with a doctrine on rational nutrition, instructed them to cope with these shortages by preserving fruit and vegetables at home, a burdening and old-fashioned method to provide vitamin-rich foodstuffs all year round.

In the first chapter we have learned that the Bolshevik feminist Alexandra Kollontai declaring that preparing pickles and jams for winter was doomed to oblivion under socialism. More than fifty years later, the Soviet regime enticed women to remedy the socialist economy's shortfalls by doing exactly that. We thus see that in pursuing the goal to organize the nutrition of the Soviet population on the basis of scientific principles, the regime undermined its other goal to relieve the burden of domestic cooking.

Conclusions

The question I aimed to answer with this study was on how the Khrushchev regime attempted to reform domestic cooking to make it fit with its visions of communist way of life (*kommunisticheskii byt*). By studying all kinds of official Soviet publications, I hope to have demonstrated that the Khrushchev regime's struggle for the communist way of life included a broad offensive on the kitchen front, fought with socialized canteens, domestic appliances, canned foods and all kinds of household advice. In Khrushchev's Soviet Union, cooking at home was a public affair.

The first chapter of this study showed that the Khrushchev regime ambioned to make domestic cooking obsolete within a period of twenty years. This happened in the contexts of the full-scale construction of communism and peaceful competition with the capitalist West. Leninist attitudes towards cooking were almost exactly revived in the wake of Khrushchev's secret speech. Soviet women had to be freed from their drudgery at the stove at home so they could develop their talents in Soviet society on equal footing with men. So, how did domestic cooking fit in the communist way of life? It simply had no place in it. In the Khrushchev regime's vision of the communist future, cooking at home would be a thing of the past.

In the remaining chapters, I have studied how the regime attempted to reform domestic cooking on the basis of policy documents, women's journals and cookbooks. The second chapter focused on the further development and improvement of the social foodservice (*obshchestvennoe pitanie*) during the Khrushchev years. Under communism, cooking would be outsourced to a massive network of canteens and other eateries through which all members of Soviet families could be provided with healthy, tasty, and cheap food. A policy was implemented in 1959 with the aim to expand and improve the social foodservice throughout the Soviet Union. Innovations such as self-service and take-away dinners were introduced, and the number of foodservice establishments grew significantly. The regime organized socialist competition among canteens and other establishments in order to improve the quality of their services.

Even though the Khrushchev regime was really committed to turn this ideal into a reality and succeeded in implementing changes, the foodservice did not become a massive phenomenon during the Khrushchev years and the decade

thereafter. But the Party's new political program did in fact acknowledge that the foodservice would only start taking precedence over cooking at home in the long run.

In the meantime, the reduction and alleviation (*sokrashcheniya i oblegcheniya*) of the burden of domestic cooking was a more immediate goal. I have elaborated on the reforms that were meant to achieve this goal in the third chapter of this study. The idea was that cooking would be gradually phased out of the household, until it could be completely outsourced to the foodservice. The regime applied a twofold approach in this regard. On the one hand, it planned an increased production of modern consumer goods such as fridges, industrially canned foods, and new kitchens. The modernization of Soviet domestic cooking showed many parallels with what was happening globally, but it was explicitly framed as a part of the struggle for the communist way of life. On the other hand, the regime combined this modernization with advice in magazines and cookbooks, in order to inculcate appropriate communist attitudes towards cooking. Soviet women were expected to organize their work at the stove in such way that the effort and time required for the preparation of food were reduced. Also their children and husbands were increasingly expected to help out in the kitchen.

But, as the fourth chapter demonstrated, not all of the regime's policies with regards to cooking were geared towards the liberation of women. Soviet scientist of nutrition, who had enjoyed authority with regards to cooking since the 1920s, aspired to organize all nutrition in the Soviet Union on the basis of scientific principles. This aspiration found official support in the context of the regime's claims that it would further improve Soviet public health. To achieve that goal, scientists formulated a doctrine of rational nutrition (*ratsionalnoe pitanie*) which was widely disseminated through culinary literature.

In the absence of a massive system of social foodservice, the scientists of nutrition relied on Soviet housewives to provide families with a healthy diet. In *The Book about Tasty and Healthy Food* these scientists presented the doctrine of rational nutrition in an increasingly complicated form. They required an exactness from Soviet housewives, as if the latter were scientists themselves. In *The Female Worker* the doctrine was translated into the easier to understand advice to eat as much vegetables and fruits as possible. In the Soviet deficit economy, however, such vitamin-rich foods were only seasonally available, and scarce. In turn, Soviet nutritionists advised women to cope with the chronic shortages of vegetables and

fruits by preserving them at home. The modern Soviet science of nutrition thus contributed to the domestic burden on Soviet women.

The findings of this study with regards to Soviet domestic cooking support the conclusions of other researchers who studied *byt* in the Khrushchev era. The regime intruded in the personal, domestic spheres of the lives of Soviet citizens in an attempt to change cooking. Likewise, the findings of this study confirm Kharkhordin's thesis on the "rise of the social" during the Khrushchev era. In the perspective of the Party and the Soviet government, cooking at home was bound up with the societal goals to emancipate women and to improve public health. It was a matter that thus transcended individual households. In the ideal communist future domestic cooking would be outsourced to Soviet society; it would cease personal affair at all, and become purely social instead.

This at least was an aspiration that the Khrushchev regime held. This study also supports Field's notion that the policies that were implemented in practice, were often in conflict with each other. While some policies, like the further development of the social foodservice, indeed amounted to the further regulation of cooking at home, the planned improvement of the production of foodstuffs and the provision of individually owned kitchens to families, actually improved the latter's personal control over it.

Moreover, to achieve the organization of the Soviet population's nutrition on scientific principles, the regime in fact relied on the private labor of Soviet housewives. It thus essentially undermined the policies that were aimed at the reduction and alleviation of the burden of domestic cooking. Actually, this could be said too about the latter. The regime required women's own active participation in the communist struggle that would liberate them, and in the process, they were burdened further. The regime thus had social aspirations with domestic cooking, but it relied on women's work in the private sphere to realize those aspirations.

Because I have studied Soviet daily life purely on the basis of official publications, I have not been able to study how the regimes policies with regards to cooking were experienced by Soviet citizens themselves. How was the social foodservice used? In what did Soviet women receive the advice published in women's magazines and cookbooks? Did they actually experience these as an alleviation from their domestic burdens, or was it experienced as nothing but rhetoric? Further

research on Soviet cooking could use the issues explored through this study to find answers to such questions. Memoires or interviews could form a basis of such a study. Because the generation of housewives that lived through the Khrushchev years is fading. Time to conduct interviews is short

The contribution this study made to our understanding of Soviet daily life in the Khrushchev era, consists in the demonstration that the regime's approach to daily life was not immutable. It was not as if a communist monolith entered into the private sphere and started to change everything as it saw fit immediately. It did in fact account for, and adapted to the realities of everyday life. The struggle for the communist way of life was limited by these realities, and the regime had to make do with it. The shortages in the Soviet economy always hung as dark clouds above the regime's claims. But the instruction on how to make refrigerators, or on home canning for example confirm that the regime was well aware of shortages, and responded to these. It helped Soviet women to cope with such realities while still aiming for the establishment of a communist society.

It worked the other way around as well. Rising living standards required a communist framing. Domestic comforts — canned foods, refrigerators, new kitchens — were not to be enjoyed simply as such; they were contributions to communist goals in the first place. The regime thus negotiated a synthesis between communist ideals and Soviet realities.

We could imagine the Khrushchev regime itself as a cook. This cook had a cookbook full of Marxist-Leninist recipes for Soviet society. Like recipes in actual cookbooks, these recipes required ingredients that were not available and assumed circumstances that did not exist. But the cook did the best he could with what he had at his disposal in order to acquire results that did at least come close to those assumed by his cookbook. The Khrushchev regime was improvising, and trying to make do. In trying to make communism work, it was cooking its way towards it!

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Appendix A: Russian Originals of Cited Texts

Original Russian texts many of the cited Soviet sources are given below. Not all of them are included. These are indicated with an asterisk between square brackets ([*]) in the footnotes to the main text of this study.

Chapter 1

Alexandra Kollontai on page 16, note 3:

Вместо того, чтобы мучиться со стиральной, тратить свои последние свободные часы на кухни, на варку обедов и ужинов, в коммунистическом обществе широко будут развиты общественные столовые, центральные кухни. ... Коммунизм раскует домашнее рабство женщины, с тем чтобы сделать ее жизнь богаче, полнее, радостнее и свободнее.

Vladimir Lenin on page 17, note 4:

Женщина продолжает оставаться домашней рабыней, несмотря на все освободительные законы, ибо ее давит, душит, отупляет, принижает мелкое домашнее хозяйство, приковывая ее к кухне и к детской, расхищая ее труд работою до дикости непроизводительною, мелочною, изнервливающею, отупляющею, забивающею... Настоящее освобождение женщины, настоящий коммунизм начнется только там и тогда, где и когда начнется массовая борьба (руководимая владеющим государственной властью пролетариатом) против этого мелкого домашнего хозяйства, или, вернее, массовая перестройка его в крупное социалистическое хозяйство.

Nikita Khrushchev on page 21, note 19:

... которые дают возможность нашей стране вступить теперь в новый важнейший период своего развития — период развернутого строительства коммунистического общества.

Khrushchev on page 22, note 20:

Советская власть вызволила женщину из того позорного полурабского положения, в котором она находилась при царизме и еще находится во многих капиталистических странах....Но многие женщины заняты домашним хозяйством, уходом за детьми, что затрудняет им активно участвовать в общественной жизни... Теперь мы имеем уже не отдельные ростки, а целую систему различных организаций коммунистического типа, и

наша обязанность — умножать эти организации, улучшать и совершенствовать их работу.

Khrushchev on page 22, note 21:

Товарищи! Необходимо подчеркнуть исключительно важное значение общественного питания. Надо еще шире развернуть сеть фабрик-кухонь, столовых на предприятиях, в высших учебных заведениях, в школах, иметь общественные столовые в жилых домах, чтобы члены семей трудящихся могли ими пользоваться и лучше организовать свое питание. Ставится задача снизить цены на продукты общественного питания.

Third Program of the CPSU on page 23, note 23:

Партия тождественно провозглашает: нынешнее поколение советских людей будет жить при коммунизме.) (остатки неравного положения женщины в быту.

Third Program on page 23, note 24:

Необходимо обеспечить условия для сокращения и облегчения женского труда в домашнем хозяйстве, а затем создать возможности для замены этого труда общественными формами удовлетворения материально-бытовых нужд семьи.

Должно быть коренным образом улучшено обслуживание потребителей и качество продукции столовых с тем, чтобы обеды в столовых были вкусные и питательные и обходились семье дешевле, чем при домашнем приготовлении пищи....Благодаря всему этому общественное питание в течение 10-15 лет сможет занять преобладающее место по сравнению с питанием в домашних условиях.... Во втором десятилетии начнется переход к осуществлению бесплатного общественного питания (обедов) на предприятиях и в учреждениях...

Third Program on page 25, note 32:

С этой целью широкое распространение в домашнем хозяйстве получают усовершенствованные дешевые бытовые машины, приспособления, электроприборы.

Khrushchev on page 25, note 34:

Надо не только обеспечить человека хорошим жильем, но и научить его правильно пользоваться общественными благами, правильно жить, соблюдать правила социалистического общежития. Это не приходит само по себе, а может быть достигнуто в длительной и упорной борьбе за победу нового, коммунистического быта.

M. Lifanov on page 27, note 41:

Надо не только обеспечить человека хорошим жильем, но и научить его правильно пользоваться общественными благами, правильно жить, соблюдать правила социалистического общежития. Это не приходит само по себе, а может быть достигнуто в длительной и упорной борьбе за победу нового, коммунистического быта.

Chapter 2

Lifanov on page 29, note 1:

чтобы женщина была активным членом общества, по-новому надо организовать наш быт...

Lifanov on page 29, note 3:

Таким образом, эта форма общественного быта значительно освободит женщину от кухни. В настоящее время важное значение придается расширению сети магазинов и домовых кухонь по продаже полуфабрикатов и изделий кулинарии. Это ускоряет и делает труд хозяйки у плиты легче. Но постепенно приготовление пищи в домашних условиях изживет себя, как уже отошло в прошлое, например, домашнее ткачество.... Коммунистический быт окончательно и навсегда освободит женщин от тягостного домашнего труда.... Мы, женщины... очень хотим больше времени отдавать общественной деятельности, чаще в театры ходить, книг больше читать.

Resolution 'On the Further Development and Improvement of the Social Foodservice' on page 31, note 8:

...не только обеспечивает экономию материальных и трудовых ресурсов общества, но и в корне изменяет быт семьи, освобождает женщин от тягот домашнего хозяйства.

Resolution 'On the Further Development and Improvement' on page 32, note 10:

Однако в нынешних условиях уровень развития общественного питания еще отстает от возросших потребностей населения и не обеспечивает выполнения поставленной задачи - сделать общественное питание более массовым, удобным и выгодным для населения.

Resolution 'On the Further Development and Improvement' on page 33, note 12:

необходимость усиления общественного контроля за работой предприятий общественного питания. Общественные контролеры из среды рабочих, служащих,

учащихся, домохозяек, ревизионные и столовые комиссии потребкооперации должны сыграть важную роль в борьбе за высокую культуру обслуживания трудящихся, в улучшении качества пищи и удешевлении стоимости питания, в строгом соблюдении норм закладки сырья и установленных цен на продукцию общественного питания.

Mikh. Shchelokov on page 35, note 16:

Разве соберешь дома такой богатый и разнообразный стол на эти деньги? Да и приготовить так искусно не сумеешь.

Shchelokov on page 35, note 17:

Общественное питание нас всех интересует ... Ведь домашняя кухня отнимает очень много времени, а мы хотим и в театр и в кино сходить, многие из нас учатся в вечерних школах и техникумах, да и дети требуют немало внимания.

L. Travkin on page 35, note 18:

что же делается в Пензе, чтобы облегчить домашний труд работниц, освободить их время? Как организовано в городе общественное питание? Умеют ли в рабочих столовых кормить вкусно, дешево, быстро?

R. Rozova on page 35, note 18:

Что же делается в Курске, чтобы освободить женщин-работниц от домашних хлопот, а на производстве в столовой вкусно, дешево и быстро накормить?

Travkin on page 36, note 19:

(“...Нормальная и полезная еда есть еда с аппетитом, еда с наслаждением”, — говорил великий русский ученый-физиолог И.П. Павлов. При этом он, конечно, не имел в виду качество обедов в пензенской столовой № 16. Уж о каком “наслаждении едой” может идти речь, если рыбу здесь подают с мясным соусом, а щи и на щи не похожи?

Rozova on page 36, notes 20 and 21:

Порции маленькие, в супе-рассольнике одно пшено, возьмешь борщ — одна вода! Взяла шницель, а есть нельзя. Так и ушла голодой.

“Здесь вам не ресторан, кушайте, что дают!”

Travkin on page 36, notes 21 and 22:

Все это не случайно. К сожалению, есть еще среди тех, кому в Пензе доверено дело общественного питания, люди очень равнодушные, считающие что рабочая столовая не ресторан и здесь все сойдет, все съедят.

Нет, товарищи Подмарьков, Цыбулов! Рабочие не могут и не будут довольны ни вашим ответами, ни вашей продукцией.

Travkin on page 37, note 23:

Постоять в очереди у кассы или раздаточной сорок минут и больше в 30-й, 18-й, 13-й и других столовых Пензы не редкость.

Rozova on page 37, note 25:

Но рабочий контроль в столовых Курска действует слабо, робко. Осень со своими щедротами стучится в двери рабочих столовых Курска.

Khrushchev on page 26, note 26:

Только при активной помощи рабочих, колхозников, интеллигенции и общественных организаций мы сможем наглухо закрыть все ходы и щели для жуликов, взяточников, тунеядцев, бюрократов, для всех, кто тянет руки к государственному добру.

P. Khozhanyi on page 40, note 32:

“— я забыла беготню по магазинам — говорит она, — и совершенно освободилась от кухонных забот.

S. Lapteva and M. Mikhailova on page 41, note 33:

“Мы ждем гостей. Я часто так делаю. И гости всегда хвалят “мой” обеды,— сказала она, смеясь.”

M. Pol'sky on page 41, note 34:

“Домовая кухня — значит по-домашему”, — такое требование предъявляют посетители к этим предприятиям, имея в виду, что здесь должны готовить вкусно, как хорошая хозяйка готовит дома.”

Pol'sky on page 42, note 35:

Домовая кухня облегчает мою жизнь... А главное — ходит недалеко. Сами мы контролируем работу кухни, следим за порядком, чистотой кое-что подсказываем поварам...”

Chapter 3

Khrushchev on page 45, note 2:

Мы же идем к коммунистическому обществу, мы хотим, чтобы машины выполняли все основные работы, а человек только управлял ими.

B.R. Rubanenko on page 47, note 6:

Конечно, позаботились. Эта одна из важнейших проблем, которая волнует архитекторов и строителей. Удобства, создаваемые в квартирах, о чем я только что рассказал, облегчают труд домохозяйки.

A. Cherepakhova on page 48, notes 7 and 8:

Вернувшись с работы, женщина нередко тут же надевает фартук и начинает хлопотать на кухне: готовить еду, гладит, стирает, чинит. Все хочется сделать получше, а главное, побыстрее, чтоб осталось время почитать, сходить в кино, посидеть в кругу семьи. Кухня — это своеобразная мастерская, и правильная организация труда в ней во многом облегчит хозяйке домашнюю работу.

Очень важно, чтобы размеру кухонной мебели соответствовал росту хозяйки: тогда ей не придется часто наклоняться или тянуться за далеко лежащим предметами.

The Book about Tasty and Healthy Food on page 53, note 18:

Главная задача “Книга о вкусной и здоровой пище” состоит в том, чтобы помочь домашней хозяйке при наименьшей затрате труда и времени приготовить для семьи вкусную и здоровую пищу, используя для этого богатый ассортимент пищевых продуктов и полуфабрикатов, вырабатываемых пищевой промышленностью.

A. Ya. Manelis and O.V. Korobkevy on page 58, note 35:

Много есть таких семей, где мать работает и ей трудно полностью обслужить детей. Часто школьнику приходится самому позаботиться о своем обеде потому что в положенный для этого час мать не пришла еще с работы.

I. Fridmana on page 60, note 43:

отчего это наш папа такой не приспособленный к жизни? Это, наверное, от того, что ему в школе не прививали трудовых навыков. Я, когда вырасту, обязательно буду приспособленный! Ведь теперь — все говорят — школа будет готовить нас к жизни!”

Oleg Kursky on page 61, note 46:

“Настоящий семьянин, я так понимаю, это тот, кто во всем помогает своей жене. Ну, скажем, в выходной на базар ходит, в комнате поможет убрать. С работы идет — в

магазин заглянет, купит что нужно. А по вечерам в кино или там в театр с женой пойдет. Ну, и с детьми, конечно займется в свободное время. Понял?

Tat'yana Morozova on page 62, note 47:

Несмотря на то что это будто бы и женская работа, главный по кухне — папа. Он чистит картошку, жарит лук, провертывает мясо....Наступает воскресенье. Мы никогда не видели, чтобы наш папа спал до 10 часов, а мама одна шла на рынок. Они ходят вместе. В этот день мы всегда всей семьей идем гулять, а вечером папа с мамой уходят вместе в театр или в кино.

Chapter 4

Olga Molchanova on page 64, notes 1 and 3:

Из страны постоянных недородов и голодовок, какой была прежняя, дореволюционная Россия, она превратилась в могучий Советский Союз, в страну, которая впервые в мире поставила задачу осуществить питание всего населения на научно-гигиенических основах.

Организация питания населения в соответствии с научно обоснованными нормами немислима без широкой и систематической пропаганды современных достижений науки о питании. Необходимо во много раз усилить популяризацию научных знаний в этой области с помощью печати, лекций, кино, радио и телевидения.

Molchanova on page 67, note 10:

На первых этапах внимание ученых было сосредоточено преимущественно на том чтобы установить научно обоснованные показатели норм питания для различных групп населения. Главной задачей являлось установление потребности человеческого организма в белках, жирах и углеводах, необходимых в первую очередь для покрытия энергетических трат.

Molchanova on page 68, note 18:

Основная задача науки о питании состоит во всестороннем изучении и разработке научно обоснованных норм и режимов питания здорового и больного человека в зависимости от всех условий его развития и существования. Прежде всего необходимо учитывать, с одной стороны, возрастные, половые и индивидуальные особенности человека, а с другой — характер влияния на него таких факторов внешней среды, как климатические, профессиональные, социально-бытовые и другие условия.

Alexander Oparin on page 72, note 33:

Однако с пищей далеко не всегда может поступать оптимальное количество витаминов не только ввиду ... но и вследствие все возрастающего потребления рафинированных продуктов, бедных витаминами или совершенно не содержащих их (сахар, белый хлеб, макароны, кондитерские изделия и т.д.)

Z. Kochetkova on page 73, note 35:

Углеводы и жиры, содержащиеся в пищевых продуктах, доставляют нам необходимую энергию. Но значение пищи не ограничивается только этим.... Поэтому необходимо использовать для питания разнообразные продукты — как животные, так и растительные, особенно овощи и фрукты.

N.Kovalev on page 74, note 40:

Даже самые экономные хозяйки подчас бывают расточительными, когда готовят пищу. Они и не подозревают, что вместе с отходами продуктов выбрасывают часть ценных питательных веществ, нужных человеку.