

FURNITURE IN THE RENAISSANCE - BULGARIAN DESIGN OR NOT?

Aleksandrina Parvanova

University of Forestry, 10 Kliment Ohridski blvd, 1756 Sofia, Bulgaria

e-mail: allia_devoll@abv.bg

ABSTRACT

Renaissance is a turbulent period of change, both economically and socially. Interior and furniture plays a big role socio-cultural environment. The design and taste of the Bulgarians are formed on the basis of already occurred European styles. Chair schools that have been appearing are trying to adjust our own culture to that which is modern in Europe during this dynamic period. Despite the difficulties faced with Bulgarian designer, he found a back door to national development in this area.

Key words: furniture, design, Renaissance, Bulgarian design

INTRODUCTION

Upsurge in Bulgaria began the accumulation of capital and the emergence of a society of shopkeepers and artisans. During the early Renaissance (1762 – 1830) and especially the late Renaissance (1860 – 1878) until the middle of the XX century, from about 30 plants build up to hundred-fold. Other capitalist countries suffer from the limited domestic market, which does not allow an industrial boom. But our country overcomes this problem by, taking laws to encourage domestic industry creates rules for professional education and purposefully began attracting foreign capital. Most of cities like Varna, Burgas, Svishtov, Ruse and Vidin modernize and successfully apply internal and external trade. Western and Russian culture, art and lifestyle guide us away from oriental inertia. Fast growing cities begin a new life through the construction of public buildings and wealthy residential homes. At the beginning due to lack of Bulgarian architects and engineers are attracted foreign, mainly from Austria, Germany, Russia and France. Establish BIAD in 1893 and began his successful business to incorporate Bulgarian specialists. Styles used in this period are Neoclassicism, Roco-

co, Baroque and Art Nouveau. They are a source of ideas and inspiration for the development of national design and engineering.

1. FURNITURE IN REVIVAL

Interior and furniture in early renaissance (1762 – 1830)

There are two types of houses: fence made from wood frame and dugouts - wooden houses dug into the ground, which is just above the roof pitch. Designs and planning scheme is simple and heavily dependent on the hearth. The rooms are built mainly around him. There are three premises: „hut“ in which the been an outbreak and had been used for a kitchen, in a later appear „soba“ for sleeping and „Breg“ for storage. Dugouts interior is dimly lit and coziness in creating through cover the floor with leather, fabric and heat of fire. A special floor is made of earthen plaster. The furnace dominates the household and construction has a personal character for every home. The only furniture is arranged around the fireplace. These are cooking racks boilers, spoons and more, tables facing the wall and “small chair” ordered it. Today the houses are rich contemporary - modern, aesthetically arranged and the subject of globalization, but

today is still the same furnace integral part of the interior.

Interior and furniture in mature revival (1830 – 1860)

The second period was characterized by economic opportunities and grown cultural-ly significantly – bit blown in public and residential architecture. Typical type house: „western – house“ already is with two floors. The height of the stand is about two meters with small windows. The entrance is from the courtyard through a wide staircase and balcony. The ground floor is for profit, and the top is for the residential environment. The fence is the wood of the porch and very low, with an equally low wooden „small – door“. The importance of the porch

in the western – house, justify centralization of modest decorations on it. The outbreak is opened and it's located near to one of the inner walls. Gradually, the floor begins to be made of wide oak or pine boards covered with woolen mats and rugs. Most walls are plastered with white lime or colored (beige, yellow, blue) or completely covered with paneling and cupboards. The interior of a typical western – home was poor. Is held „vodnik“ (space for pots with water) - near the front door, trunk Flour, trough for kneading, table, shelf for kitchen utensils and wooden hooks on the walls for hanging various items, tripod, swing and wedding chests (Fig. 1).



Figure 1: Example of a kitchen in Dandolov home in the city of Sevlievo.

Interior and furniture in late revival (1830 – 1860)

The requirements of the home are changing again. The rooms are divided appropriately. The house became a label for social status. The bustling commercial and cultural life of the rich bourgeoisie, requires new and upgraded amenities to the house. The trends are for development of axial symmetrical house with rich plans, „façade“ and bulk solution. Murals are characteristic of Koprivshitsa, Plovdiv and Sliven. The paintings on the walls are: medallions, deco-

orative friezes even simulated marble walls (Fig. 2). Ceilings, doors and windows build the decorative interior. They are creatively shaped threaded or not depending on the region in our country. Ceilings are highly decorated using central composition. Attention to them is acquired with the ascension of the ceilings, which make the interior more - representative and ceremonial. There are a variety of artistically designed in relation to the master who made them (Figure 3).



Figure 2: Oslekov house was built in 1856. for Nencho Nikolov Oslekov of Samokov master builder Usta Mincho and truly representative of the type of Plovdiv symmetrical house.



Figure 3: Ceilings - Sun in Daskalovata house Tryavna.



Figure 4: Built-in cupboard in Raikov house, Tryavna 1846.



Figure 5: Long couch in Oslekov house, Koprivshitsa.

Built-in closets are binders with ceiling, doors, shelves, fireplace and windows. Doors are with different profiling of grouped or wood chess compositions (Fig.

4). At both ends cut holes which are ventilated internal parts. There is also one built-in furniture - couches. They are attached to one or two walls of the room and have multipur-

pose for sleeping, seating and storage (Fig. 5). And during this period there are freestanding furniture such as three-legged stool, table, chests, etc., but with the rapid economic development and foreign influences and it seems to freestanding furniture from abroad.

2. FURNITURE IN POST-LIBERATION PERIOD (1878 – 1914).

Bourgeois public order and increasing economic development were created. Cities

with the economic importance of domestic and foreign market quickly become rich cultural landscape. A typical bourgeois interiors with a blend of imported Viennese furniture and typical Bulgarian saloon furniture can be seen in „Calliope House“ in Ruse (Fig. 6). Today the museum of urban life is preserved valuable exhibits of furniture (Fig. 7) and a beautiful painting of Charles Shausberg on the ceilings and walls (Fig. 8).



Figure 6: Calliope House, built in 1864. Levant style.



Figure 7: Furniture in a typical bourgeois house in Ruse.



Figure 8: Painting ceilings of the house museum of Calliope, Ruse.

Growing modernization draws people's attention to the furniture and interiors. In this regard, 1883 the state has establish a crafts school in the village Knyazhevo to improve joiner in Bulgaria. It transpires later

divided into four new schools: hardware – in Samokov, named „Public School Practical hardware“ potter – in Trun, titled „Practical Public School“; joiner – in Ruse, as „National School practice“; weaving – Sliven

under the name „State practice weaving painting school“. Czech specialist Joseph Vondrak was summoned. He got a job as a top manager – master in chairs and later transferred to Ruse as the first director of the National School joiner practical. From where are started the first steps in the construction of national identity and style in this area. Although in poor conditions, lack of textbooks, material, tools and superficial knowledge of our native language, the master managed to develop and show a very good teaching system. His contribution is the construction of the present school build-

ing (Figure 9, 10), and thanks to a bunch of students which spread knowledge in the furniture industry throughout Bulgaria.



Figure 9: The construction of a new school building with sanitary workshops and classrooms 1905 – 07.



Figure 10: Furniture shop, engine room and carving department 1910 – 11.

„Upon learning of students with mastery of performance skills focuses on building artistic flair, developing an aesthetic sense of beauty, deepening knowledge of classical forms“. (Parvanov 2005). So this stranger laid the foundation of the Bulgarian joiner and complete description of the furniture of the Renaissance period. Of this fact talked - high honors at international exhibitions for decorative and industrial arts in Liège (1905), London (1907) and Paris (1925). One of the first clear examples is made cabinet designed by J. Vondrak joiner at the State School in Ruse, who won a gold

medal with innovative decoration influenced by Chiprovtsi carpets (Fig. 11).



Figure 11: Cabinet made especially for the exhibition in London awarded the „Grand Prix“.

3. FURNITURE IN THE INTER-WAR PERIOD (1914 – 1944)

Able Master works with students and sets the tone for the format and design in furniture art, not only for the city but largely in the country. First-year apprentices made lightweight items for household use: stools, chairs and even the back seats. Subjects were invented during Renaissance and Baroque styles, and the last year, a journeyman furniture develops throughout the modern art Sesseccion, Vienna-based catalogs (figure 12, 13, 14, 15).



Figure 12: Cabinet made of students in 1933 – 34year.



Figure 13: Cabinet made of students 1938 – 39.



Figure 14: Bedroom with foreign manufactured veneers 1938 – 39.



Figure 15: Mahogany Bedroom 1940 – 41.

From these pictures we can trace the development of the furniture in this period and we can not deny the superior quality of their performance. There are, and innovations such as veneers with a distinctive texture. Materials are imported from abroad – often Romania. The most common are: walnut, rosewood, mahogany, oak, maple and cherry. To increase the cost and the artistic qualities of decorative furniture using intarsia inlays and a few trees or nacre. There is also improvement in the preparatory operations – sanding, filling the joints with a visible kit of chalk and glue, stain animal, vegetable or chemical origin, with shellac varnish. Besides veneered furniture, great development gained some chairs and armchairs a „tonet“ of beech, round or rectangular. Their apparent mastery of a complex bent part without the use of this technology. National style is built by old carpentry innovation traditions combined with the technique and materials used with great elements of modern European styles. It's popular to be used in the halls of modern urban home furniture with national elements (Fig. 16).



Figure 16: Furniture lounge with Bulgarian patterns from 1940 – 44.

After 1935 began construction of the many condominiums and houses a rich bourgeoisie. Their wish to develop in the interior contribute to the modernization by importing furniture from abroad. There is a tradition - or rather fashion, each new family to go on a honeymoon in Vienna and from there to buy a new family bedroom. Based on the report of Le Corbusier – „Domestic saving and economic construction“ since 1930, appears in the new fashion furniture. His idea is to cut the freestanding furniture and replacing them with built – in to relieve rational space. But this feature can say that in Bulgaria omit from early Renaissance houses when basic furniture were couches, table and hidden cupboards.

CONCLUSION

The interiors of public buildings and the rich are seen striving for modernization, but with a hint of unquenchable wish for national style. We thank the authors and the favorable conditions for the modernization of the state, helping to lay the foundation in this industry. Undoubtedly influenced by the great masters and experienced joiners in joiner schools develop technology, form and style in the furniture industry nationwide.

The question I asked myself at the beginning of this article is a clear response to a later study. Yes, we have a history in furniture art and notable achievements in our style. But we also have to add: in Bulgaria is still considered that the design comes out. The disadvantage of our development comes from not becoming clear to keep good schools and develop the designer name in society. Examined period furniture have a Bulgarian national style, but not entirely. We see the use of elements characteristic of different stylistic eras in Europe, and our goal to make us the same. Now that we are part of the European Union, we have more chance to show creative ideas and style equal to the global level.

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