

# The Development of Consumer Credit in France (1900-1960s): How the regulation reshaped the market

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# How did the French come to modern credit (bank credit)?

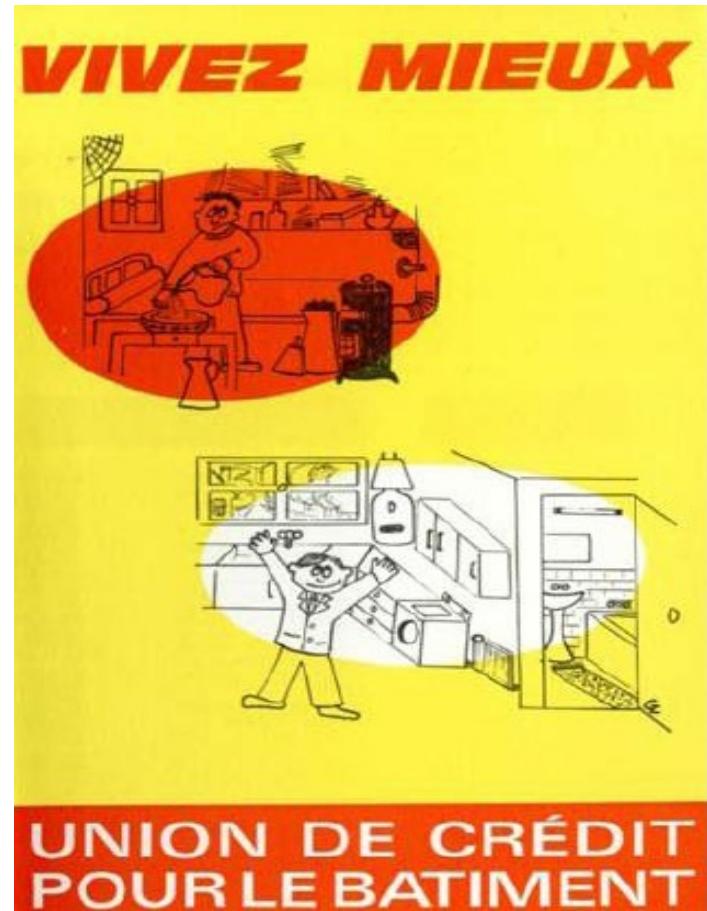
## How have they gone into bank debt?

- 1<sup>st</sup> step of my research : the **Financing of Housing**, Real Estate Credit, Mortage Loans
- 2<sup>nd</sup> step: the Financing of Households Equipment (cars, appliances, furniture,...), **Consumer Credit**

# Slums (1951) and New Housing Building (1964)



# A main stake: the domestic equipment



# The research on consumer credit: focused on the finance and political players

- How the consumer credit market was reshaped by the regulatory constraints in France 1950-1960 (nationalization of credit in December 1945)?
- The main point: from commercial credit (vouchers, subscription) to bank credit
- **Archives:** Policymakers and regulators (Ministry of Finance, Bank of France, National Credit Council); Lenders (Consumer Credit Companies: Sofinco and Cetelem)

# Before the banking regulation: the subscription technique or Dufayel system

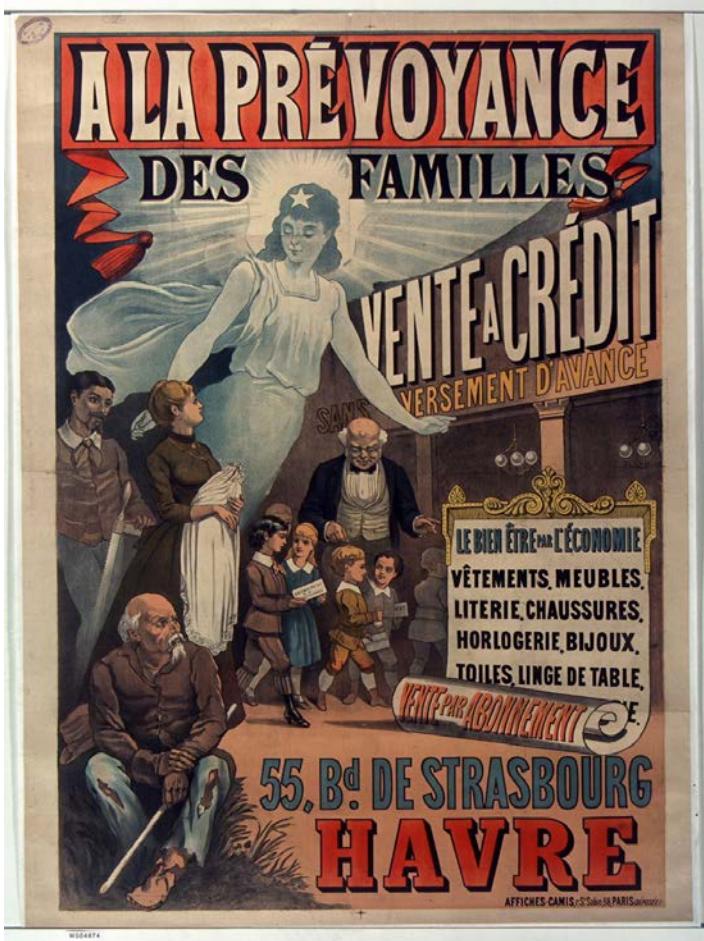
- Large department store in Paris (Barbès) 1880s (commercial revolution)
- Furniture sold on credit



# The 1920s: the creation of automakers subsidiaries (Citroën, Renault, Peugeot)



# Consumer Credit in France: From commercial credit to bank credit (1890-1953)



# The three main steps of the consumer credit policy in 1950-1960 France

- I. Opposition to consumer credit regarded as illegitimate: the priority is to rebuild so to produce before consuming



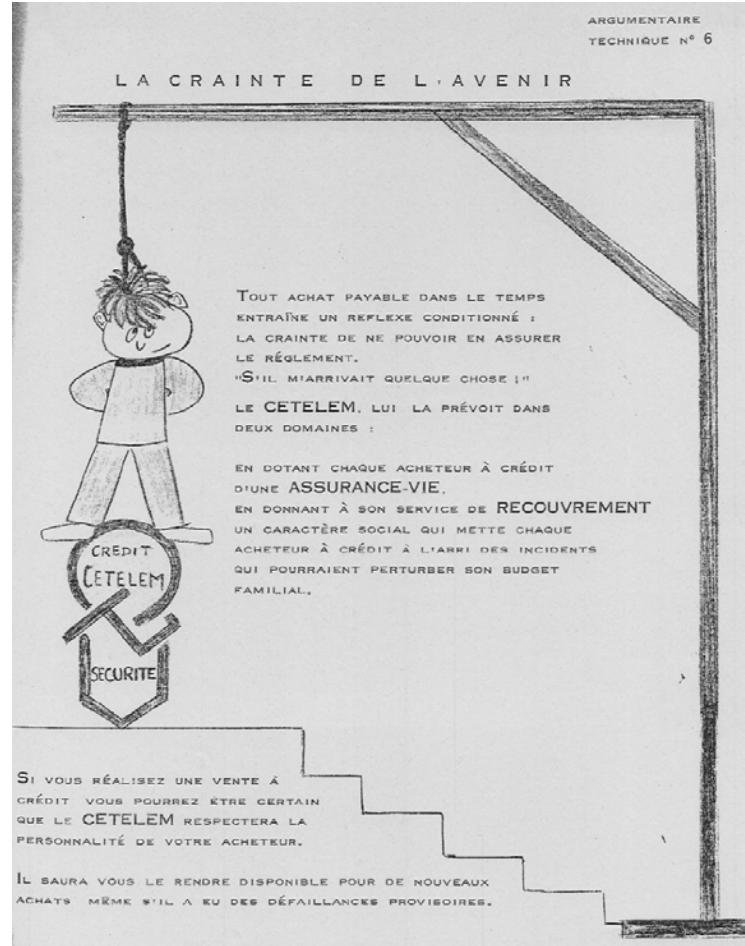
# Salon des Arts ménagers (French Ideal Home exhibition)

- II. Necessity to boost the economy(1953)... : the Ministry of Economic Affairs put forward a plan to develop consumer credit in order to prevent usury and to support industry



- II. ... So to regulate (1954): to clean up the market and to support industry

Significant cash flow and share capital; Interest rates publication (no cap); Minimum downpayment and maximum repayment period depending on goods



### III. The consequences of the regulation (1): consumer credit legitimised only by supporting industry



### III. The consequences of the regulation (2): Few and new lenders set up by a bank-industry partnership (Sofinco & Cetelem)

The image displays three vintage French advertisements for Cetelem credit services, arranged side-by-side.

**Left Ad (Blue Background):**

- Pourquoi attendre?**
- ACHETEZ DÈS MAINTENANT**
- I l'appareil ménager de votre choix et PAYEZ - LE**
- au fur et à mesure de son utilisation grâce aux crédits du**
- CREDIT A L'EQUIPEMENT CETELEM ELECTRO-MENAGER**
- CRÉDIT A L'ÉQUIPEMENT ÉLECTRO-MÉNAGER**
- S. A. au capital de 150.000.000 de francs R. C. Seine 375.969 B**
- 19, rue Lapérouse PARIS - 16<sup>e</sup>**
- KLÉ. 66-12 — PAS. 01-91**

**Middle Ad (White Background):**

- L'ÉQUIPEMENT MÉNAGER EST UN CAPITAL PRODUCTIF**
- RA 1965 Des D 210**
- CREDIT CETELEM**
- CONSTITUEZ-VOUS UN CAPITAL GRACE AU CRÉDIT**

**Right Ad (Blue Background):**

- Facilités nouvelles pour l'équipement de votre foyer...**
-

# New banking lenders



1250 Millions du 01/11 - Jours ouvrés ou 5/10  
La Vie Catholique du 1/3 - Sélection/Consolidation d'octobre

si vous vous mariez,

si vous vous installez,

si vous réparez votre maison,

si vous attendez une naissance,

si vous établissez vos enfants,

(ou pour tout autre événement familial important)

venez au

...le Crédit Lyonnais peut vous aider grâce à sa formule nouvelle du

**"PRÊT PERSONNEL"**

durée : 1 à 2 ans.  
Formalités les plus réduites  
aucun dépôt de garantie  
assurance-vie prise en charge  
par le Crédit Lyonnais

adressez-vous directement  
à l'une des 1650 agences du

**CRÉDIT LYONNAIS**

The right side of the image contains a vertical column of text describing various life events (marriage, moving, home repair, pregnancy, establishing children) followed by a list of services offered by Crédit Lyonnais, including a "Prêt Personnel" loan. It also includes a small illustration of a couple and a family.

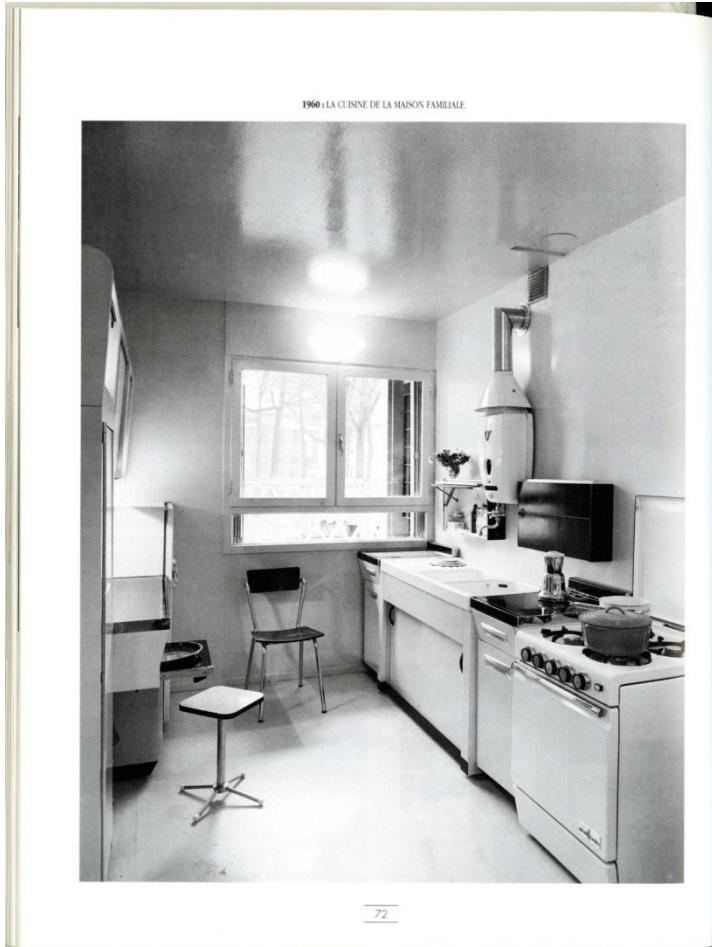
### III. The consequences of the regulation (3): A weak competitive market (low indebtedness)

Average household indebtedness (1965, Francs)

- France: 154
- West Germany: 163
- Great-Britain: 212
- United-States: 1037

A reduced development of the consumer credit market before the 1966 reform of the banking system

# A weak competitive market (backwardness in home equipment): The dream kitchen of French Women



# The dream of comfort: a vacuum cleaner presented like a baby



## To conclude

- New lenders (Cetelem and Sofinco): a bank-industry partnership (car, domestic appliances, furniture)
- A small number of lenders: a restrict access to the market.
- A reduced development of the consumer credit market before the 1966 reform of the banking system

Thank you for your listening

<http://youtu.be/y-xkII6tl48>

