



Another Place: Towards the New Patterns of (Co)Habitation

THE OTHER PLACE

Polina Filippova

Artem Kalashyan

We started to search for another place far from from the relationship between man and ownership, from the relationship between man and governance. But with each new step that deepened our own expert knowledge, came the thought: the current system has nothing to do with human values or self-realisation, nor with common sense. In a country where free will gets constantly challenged by different obstacles, we propose to find freedom in a place that is yet invisible for everyone and to use this time for the creation and discovery of its potential. We are going to explain what this place is, how we found it, what exists there and what can potentially be.

GOVERNANCE

BY ARTEM KALASHYAN

The studio is looking for effective models of human co-existence. The result will be a model designed to organise the spontaneous chaos of the metropolis and to reach a compromise at least on a single site that will hopefully expand into other places.

I'll take the study of governance system and other regulations. In fact, I am allergic to the word 'governance,' but it must be faced. The value is obvious: how can we bring improvements to a system hoarding a lion's share of resources?

BETTER THAN NOTHING

Let's start. The initial focus is on Moscow and the Moscow Oblast – the federal and municipal government in the centre of the country – and the two are closely linked: it is difficult to understand the details without understanding the system as a whole. Indeed, we are well embedded in it as an institute, therefore it must somehow function well.

HORIZONTAL AUTHORITY

The first thing that catches your eye is the ubiquitous presence of horizontal associations, violating the principle of separation of powers. In fact, they are part of the control system despite the fact that they have been declared. Such groups are consolidated around certain financial interests, and the protection of their territories is determined by the size of the hierarchical level of income.

Any stable company X has strong informal ties with the judge, a prosecutor, a representative of the administration and the head of the superstructure (MVD) of the site location. In the event of a conflict with a company that is not in a union, the interests of the latter are not taken into account: the decisions taken within the framework of informal consultations within the group, and only broadcast through specialised bodies: the court, the prosecutor, the police, the local branch of the executive power. It is almost impossible to reverse the paradigm – even for the most ex-members of 'horizontal groups' such as former employees of the company X.

A particular example of such 'spikes' is so-called 'price fixing'. The father of my friend raises wheat and pigs in one of the black soil regions. In the business season of spring, he is required to buy fuel, fertiliser and feed – in this period, the prices of suppliers increase by 40-50 per cent. The buyers, despite previous agreements,

reduce the price by 40-50 per cent. Having spent in the summer happens to remain the debtor. They buy raw materials and sell products in other regions: a fuel truck can 'accidentally' burn down the road. Claims in court and statements to the police do not work – but you can meet at a local gang watering hole and agree on acceptable terms, and with certain skills and desire, can even join the cartel.

Horizontal laws are unpleasant, useless and dangerous – Khodorkovsky is an example. There is the notorious Magnitsky of Hermitage Capital. He got off lightly, but lost his business. Vladimir Nekrasov, the former owner of 'Arbat Prestige' is another example – there are hundreds of thousands of examples.

CENTRALISATION – THE CAPTURE OR RELEASE

Changes in the fall of the USSR in the early 1990s were made by a small group of important representatives, nothing like the French Revolution. Democratic innovations proposed by enthusiastic enthusiasts have been rejected, and Vladimir Putin's team has replaced the 'transition period.'

The legacy of the USSR's unitary system has remained the same – only the same people share the branches of government. Those who do not understand the difference keep trying to make futile efforts to make change. The authors of the textbook 'Political Science' Rod Hague and Martin Harbor, who have analysed a longer time period, believe that the historical preconditions for democracy in Russia will not emerge during the next half century, although in the last edition they were surprised to note faint hope and positive change. It seems premature.

'Democratization' has generated a lot of poles – mayors, governors, heads of administrations, informal and criminal leaders – essentially the same as before and far from the principles of individual freedom. With separate kingdoms, it is the return to an old era.

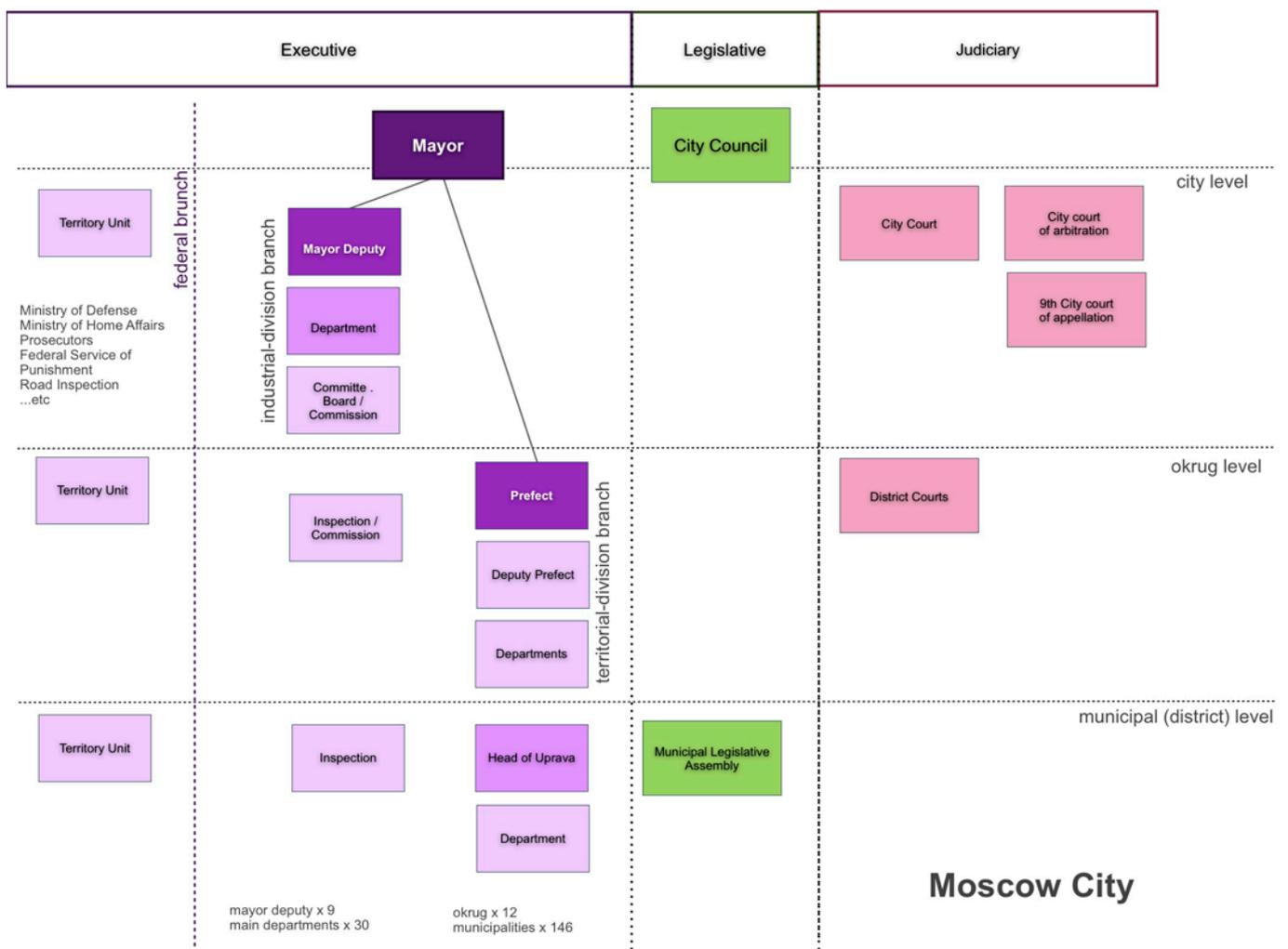
Putin's team returned control to the centre, having to make the exterior superstructure introduce additional major administrative divisions in the federal district (link) to introduce the institution of plenipotentiary representatives of the President. Personal governors (link) add other parallel structures of control at each territorial level. The notorious vertical power in fact been built in parallel, gradually taking away powers from 'predecessors.' As a result, in the 2000s, the country was again united unitarily, retaining its formally democratic shell. With this method of taking power, the absolute number of officials increased

threefold compared with the Soviet Union while reducing the population by almost two. The latter is due to the increase in mortality and emigration.

While living in Moscow, the largest of the centres, we see a deepening political darkness, but the law of conservation of energy says: excessive concentration in one place indicates the appearance of a vacuum in the other. The area previously occupied by a uniformly planned administrative system of the Soviet Union is systematically released. A political winter in one hemisphere indicates spring on the opposite. Judging by the map, the distance that the modern world covers is less significant due to high-speed transport

and telecommunications. The sunny side is not too far away.

Most importantly, we can change the purpose of the existence of the whole structure – turning a system of control into a system of enrichment. The Central Committee of the Communist Party dreamed of control over the territory. Current managers dream of a material income, resources – important symbols of confirming their status and wealth. The area of interest is reduced on the basis of the absence of significant short-term profits – the actual presence sticks to administrative centres.



SYSTEM OF GOVERNANCE IN RUSSIA: EXISTING HORIZONTAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN BRANCHES INDICATE CLOSEDNESS OF THE SYSTEM FOR OUTSIDERS

OWNERSHIP

BY POLINA FILIPPOVA

I want to tell you about how the boundaries that appeared in the world a thousand years ago have become the most important institutes of our days.

In order to clarify this topic, which might be found boring by many – and to show these many why they're wrong, it would be logical to start from the very essence of land relations.

BRIEF HISTORY OF LAND RELATIONS

The need for ownership appeared as soon as one human encroached on the piece of planet considering by another human as his property.

The emergence of the state and governance brought a new perspective: since the land was formally the main resource of the state and at the same time it didn't bring any value without a human, there was a crafty solution created: land was sort-of rented out or given away in exchange for payment costs in the face of taxes.

The transitional period from being a feudal to a centralised state increased the need for tax collection: in these terms, tax was a means of sharing the costs of war, of ambitious projects and common good (such as roads) among all the country's citizens.

As a consequence, there was some order needed in records of land in order to know precisely how much each citizen owned and how much tax he had to pay.

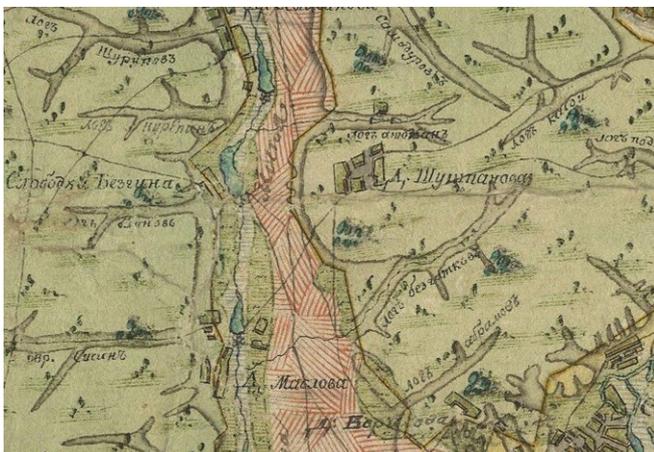
The more territory one owned, the more he or she had to give back to the state. In order to consider land's difference in quality and fertility, land use categories appeared.

This is all found reflection in the system called Cadastre. The very first cadastres appeared in ancient Rome and then were invented again in the medieval Europe of 15-16th Centuries.

CADASTRE

A REGISTER OF THE PUBLIC SURVEY OF LAND FOR THE PURPOSE OF TAXATION SHOWING DETAILS OF OWNERSHIP AND VALUE.

REGISTRATION OF LAND IS A MAJOR INSTITUTE OF LAND OWNERSHIP



OLD RUSSIAN CADASTRE MAP ACCOMPLISHED DURING GENERAL SURVEYING UNDER QUEEN ELIZABETH (XVII)



MAJOR FUNCTION OF MODERN CADASTRE IS TO SHOW BOUNDARIES OF THE PLOTS AND PARCELS.

LAND REGISTRATION AND CADASTRE

As far as boundaries had appeared before any registration, the first systems of measurements (e.g. metes and bounds, used for centuries in England) were describing domains physically: 'Beginning from a stone rock one mile until the apple tree and then two miles to the North'. The USA brought in its own specific system. Not suffering from lack of territory, on the contrary, the country required land development. A different system was created aimed at firstly forming huge plots of land, then sub-dividing them into smaller ones: this hugely influenced the appearance of American cities.

In Russia, the first significant surveys were held under Peter the Great and then Elizabeth (General Surveying). It was accompanied by many arguments for boundaries and there was a whole list of difficulties between landlords and peasants.

The primary functions of the modern cadastre include, along with taxation purposes, facilitation of the land market increasing its transparency and making information accessible for everyone.

However, that is not fully reflected in the situation in Russia.

OWNERSHIP IN RUSSIA

The relationship with ownership is painful in Russia. In 80 years, country grew used to the specifics of communal ownership, but then 1993 came and drastically changed the whole picture: the notion of private ownership was adopted again. The country literally divided all that was communal before between all its citizens – and that all happened in one moment.

During Soviet times, when people couldn't fully implement their feelings of ownership in their apartments, they rented out dachas from the government, which bore the brunt of people's desire to create. Dacha was a partial freedom, a possibility

to escape from the city. Actually they haven't lost their value even today and maybe also caused the Dacha Boom of the 1990s.

Apart from the main reasons that made dachas so popular in Soviet times, it was also about having a physical relation with the land – so important for a citizen, used to relying on air and walls.

However, having control of your own land is hugely restricted around the cities.

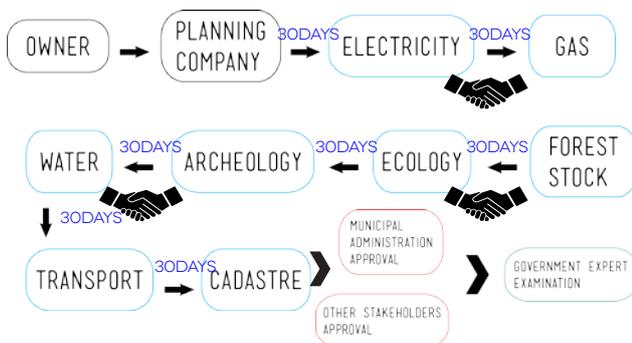
LAND REPURPOSING

Talking about practical issues of Russian reality, I can't skip the curious process of land repurposing. There are certain restrictions of land use in the face of land categories – one can't fully dispose of his property. In order to repurpose land one has to go through a complicated process.

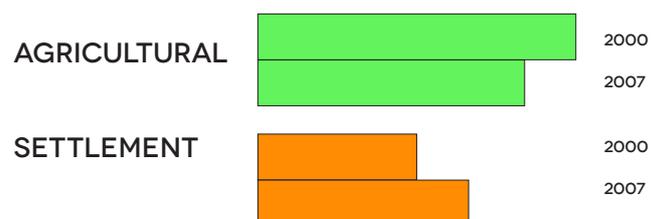
To find out what is generally permitted you have to get information from all these departments – you have to make sure that there isn't any archeologically valuable stuff and that you won't be obliged to build a new electric plant (which costs more than all your projects).

Having your project ready, you can't help waiting to start it. But please stop for a while. You have to make the circle again and it's going to last longer than last time. The problem is not even that the approval period is 30 days and you have to wait, but that if there's the slightest mistake in your documents they will be returned after the 30 days and you'll have to start again. And again (the scheme is given on the picture below). Of course, that is not how business is done, so you hire a mediator who may guarantee (not reduce) the period of 30 days. Then you get municipal and other stakeholder approval, and finally it happens.

However complicated, the process is commonly spread: data shows that agricultural land in Moscow region is shrinking. The conclusions that can be drawn out of this are elaborated upon in the next chapter.



SCHEME OF LAND REPURPOSING: LIST OF DEPARTMENTS AN OWNER HAS TO GO THROUGH IN ORDER TO CHANGE LAND CATEGORY



DYNAMICS OF LAND USE TYPES IN MOSCOW OBLAST: AGRICULTURAL LAND SHRINKING WHILE SETTLEMENT LANDS GROW

EMERGENCE OF THE VOIDS

BY POLINA FILIPPOVA AND ARTEM KALASHYAN

LACK OF OWNERSHIP

The main thing about the land repurposing mentioned above is that despite being complicated, this process and the restrictions serving as a base for it were not initially adopted by chance. Land category is a regulation primarily aimed to balance land where people can live, land where they can grow food, land of forests, water, etc. So what changes in the picture when so much repurposing happens?

After the collapse of the USSR, migration from villages and small towns to bigger towns and cities has become common. It has mostly influenced bigger cities since they had a lower loss of population. As a result, lots of housing was demanded and built accordingly causing huge repurposing of agricultural land around cities in order to create space for new construction.

It also caused a decrease in food production around Moscow: there is not economic sense to do low marginal businesses on such expensive land. At the same time, whilst agricultural land around centres was shrinking, some places became completely abandoned,

I tried to reflect this process on the images below and marked voids of ownership white. What is remarkable about this void is that it still possess particular intangible resources such as land of settlement ready for construction or any other projects.

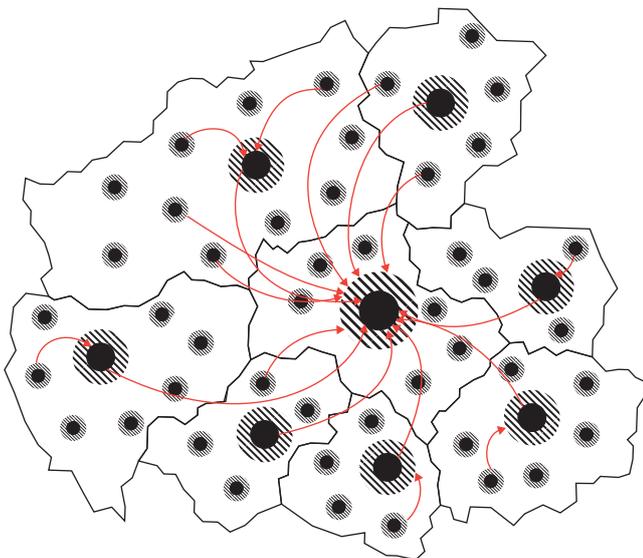
LACK OF GOVERNANCE

Centralisation policy pursued during Putin's era resulted in a disproportion in appearance of a governance system.

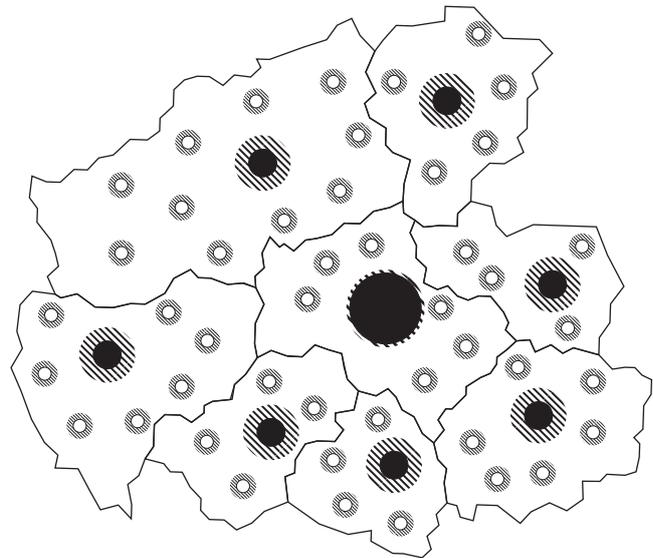
Evenly spreaded before (government system in USSR was focused on ubiquitous spread of governmental bodies, covering all layers: from a federal region to a small village), the power started to concentrate in the centres at all levels: from regional to federal (schemes on the right page).

It left the lowest part of the system empty, causing the appearance of the voids at the level of municipal entities. Outflow of population from non-centrally located municipalities also added to the general decay of governance: a lack of people to govern means a lower budget and, as a consequence, lower interest.

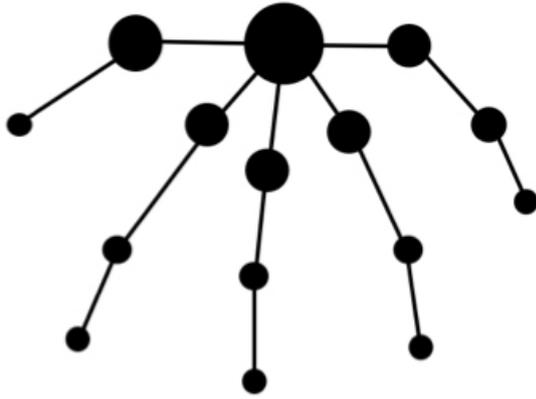
Some municipalities merged together and the result of that process was a shift of a regional centre towards a bigger one: actually taking the centre away from this weak municipality, making it even more empty.



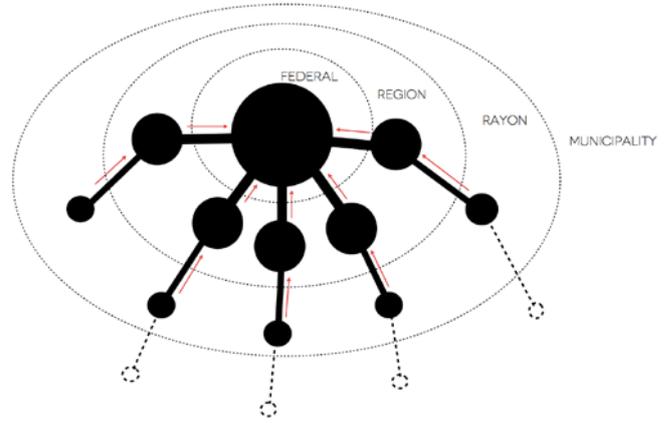
CENTRE-DIRECTED MIGRATION PROCESSES HAPPENING AFTER 1991 LEFT MUCH SETTLEMENT SPACE EMPTY



DISHARMONY OF MIGRATION RESULTED IN OVERCROWDED CENTRES WITH VOIDS AROUND THEM



THE GOVERNMENT SYSTEM IN THE USSR AND IN THE 1990S WAS FOCUSED ON UBIQUITOUS SPREAD OF GOVERNMENTAL BODIES, COVERING ALL LAYERS: FROM A FEDERAL REGION TO A SMALL VILLAGE



CENTRALISATION OF POWER AFTER 2000: A NEW DIVISION INTO FEDERAL DISTRICTS WAS ADOPTED IN ORDER TO DIMINISH THE POWER OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE: THIS SERVED AS ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THE CENTRALISATION OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM

OVERLAPPING: THE VOID

Two types of voids have appeared: one in governance, which we have defined as places where a weak presence of current power can serve a platform for a new sort of self-governance; and the others are voids of ownership – abandoned places, inhabited before but left by people.

It turned out that both researches have merged together in these voids: places where a lack of ownership have caused or intersected a lack of governance (image on the right). Theoretical and practical correlation between these two directions allows us to say that there's uncovered value stored in the places where both are lacking.

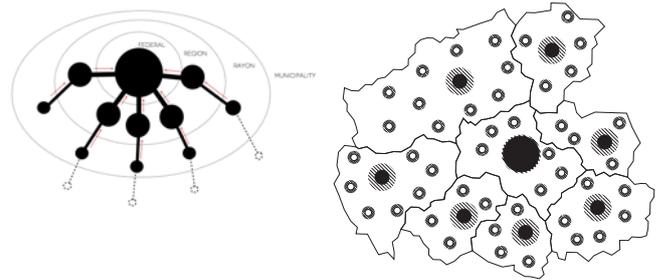
We see that a place where control is lifted and at the same time all prerequisites are ready for new creation possesses new potential.

PARAMETERS OF THE VOID

In order to create anything new, one should have clear image of what he or she possesses.

The most interesting resource of the void we explore is intangible.

As far as it used to be inhabited and governed previously there is a legitimate base already. One shouldn't underestimate this asset in conditions of our country. There is registered land in particular categories: land of settlement ready for construction and one doesn't have to make any repurposing. There is a registered municipal entity, which apart from the



OVERLAPPING OF THE VOIDS: CENTRALIZATION OF GOVERNANCE AND DEPOPULATION OF THE SETTLEMENTS.

possibility of influence or self-governance, means the presence of governmental obligations: social help and federal programmes should be available as soon as the first person makes a registration in this place.

However there are tangible assets as well: houses, infrastructure represented by roads, water towers, electric plants and gas pipes (this set may vary). They reduce a lot costs of entry barriers.

What is common in terms of both ownership and governance is that as far as the notion of ownership is inextricably connected with the notion of a man as an owner and so having the notion of governance, the outflow of population turned out to be the most important parameter in the overlapping of both.

We are going to explain further and more precisely, is what these voids look like, what resources can be found and what can be done there.

TYPES OF THE VOID

We've found different types of voids, abandoned because of different reasons: villages that suffered in a general decay of agriculture, ex-workers or ex-industrial settlements built in order to serve as some kind of infrastructure and becoming desolated as soon as their reason for existence expired.

TYPES OF VOIDS

- Abandoned villages
- Former military villages
- Former workers' villages

TYPES OF INHABITANTS

What is happening in those places where people are gone, governance is gone and even ownership is gone? There are different types of life in them. These can be:

- illegal migrants
- special services who have training in the settlement, different illegal groups: nationalists, bandits, etc
- homeless people, naturally
- former citizens

In terms when Muscovites seemingly don't know

about life outside MKAD, it was thrice more fascinating to reveal that some citizens moved consciously to the village, especially to those abandoned places.

And since our focus here is on Moscow, we went and explored who they are, these pioneers, what made them leave the city and exchange their cozy dacha in suburbia for a chaotic piece of nature far away.

The profiles of some of the pioneers we interviewed are given above. The main questions were about the driving forces that led them away from the city.

They are just ordinary people driven by the common values: a desire to have better air for their children, be closer to nature, eat real food and have possibilities for self-realisation and control of their life and surroundings, which they don't have in the city.

We're not even talking about farmers here: these are people of different occupations, from doctors to businessmen – anyone who can manage their working schedule and work out of the office.



ABANDONED VILLAGE



WORKERS' VILLAGE



EX-MILITARY VILLAGES



WORKERS' VILLAGE SHADEEVO

THE PIONEERS



Mikhail Shlyapnikov
Koliotovo, Moscow Oblast

Occupation **before:**
banker, financier, entrepreneur

Occupation **now:** Farmer
and de facto head of the
settlement



Ekaterina Gritsevich
Knyazhevo, Yaroslavl region

Occupation **before:** doctor

Occupation **now:** doctor



Boris Akimov
Knyazhevo, Yaroslavl region

Occupation **before:**
journalist, artist

Occupation **now:**
entrepreneur (food farmer),
farming promoter, artist



Roman Kulikov
Tsapushevo, Tver region

Occupation **before:**
entrepreneur

Occupation **now:** village
entrepreneur and carpenter
(wood furniture production)



Svetlana Kulikova
Tsapushevo, Tver region

Occupation **before:**
student (Masters degree in
agriculture)

Occupation **now:**
cheesemaker

COMMON GROUND

Despite being different in occupation and backgrounds, these people have many things in common especially concerning economic models of their existence.

They all are:

- ex-muscovites
- keeping a professional connection with Moscow (clients, markets)
- have sufficient income
- work and spend most of the time in the village, rarely visiting Moscow
- have some occupation directly connected with place where they live

They all are not idealistic followers of utopia, but are very practical and successful people. They have managed to build their schedule in a way that allows them to spend most of their time in the village and visit Moscow less than twice a week.

The places they live in are situated far enough away to have the possibility of buying huge portions of cheap land and gaining fresh air, calmness, nature and other benefits of rural life. At the same time, Moscow

and its economic benefits stay accessible: one might get to the centre by 10am, starting at 6am – a routine that many Muscovites have adopted in suburbia.

Speaking in terms of voids, the pioneers act as agents of sorts who choose the weakest places in the country, obtain them cheap and get the opportunity to create changes.

Potentially, a pioneer can be a citizen who desires to create, to make his own choices, to take responsibility of his life and its surroundings. Those who want to change the proportion existing in the city between creation and struggle with the obstacles: documents, certificates, officials, regulations.

Previously, interaction between people living in one village made their life more significantly easy than the physical benefits of the place, its location in relation to natural resources and other factors. That is also why outflow of people caused a snowball effect.

And as it happened when people were leaving – one following another – the same way they will come back: one pulling another after him.

The more people gather together, the less risks a newcomer carries both psychologically and economically. That's why presence of pioneers significantly adds value to a place.

PORTRAIT OF THE VOID

THE NEW VILLAGE

Places that attracted the pioneers: what do they look like? What is this void and what are its basic parameters?

- Absence of inhabitation (lack of ownership)
- Lack or weakness of municipal governance (lack of governance)

At the same time the place used to be inhabited before and it possesses all necessary legislative bases.

So we wondered whether it is possible to build a self-governed, independent system within an existing one, using these voids as places where nobody's interests can be disturbing and existing infrastructure can reduce entry barriers in terms of costs, registration, legal status and land.

SELF-GOVERNANCE

There's potential for self-governance and active actions that one can barely imagine in a city. It can either be performed in the form of local elections (where a prominent local can easily be elected) or in the form of collective governance – TOS (territorial public self-governance) – a type of direct governance by people over the territory where they live.

RESOURCES

As a first step regarding the assets of the void, we made a list of the resources which can be found there:

- Land plots purposed for settlement
- Agricultural land owned by villagers or local administration in form of pies
- Abandoned collective farms with buildings and engineering infrastructure
- Abandoned houses in satisfactory condition
- Cheap massive land parcels

Infrastructure:

- Paved road
- Electricity lines or its remains (poles and substations in a short distance)
- Gas, water, sewage

Government obligations – social duties carried out by the state:

- Snow cleaning during winter
- Electricity and gas supply (may be in the form of compensation)



ABANDONED WATER TOWER



HOUSE IN A SATISFACTORY CONDITION IN VASILIEVO

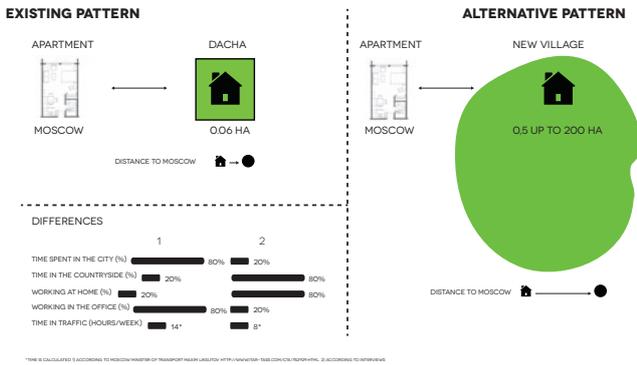


ABANDONED CHURCH



LAND PLOT WITH A HOUSE

NEW MODEL OF LIVING



SCHEME OF MODELS OF LIVING: COMPARISON OF EXISTING PATTERN AND NEW PATTERN

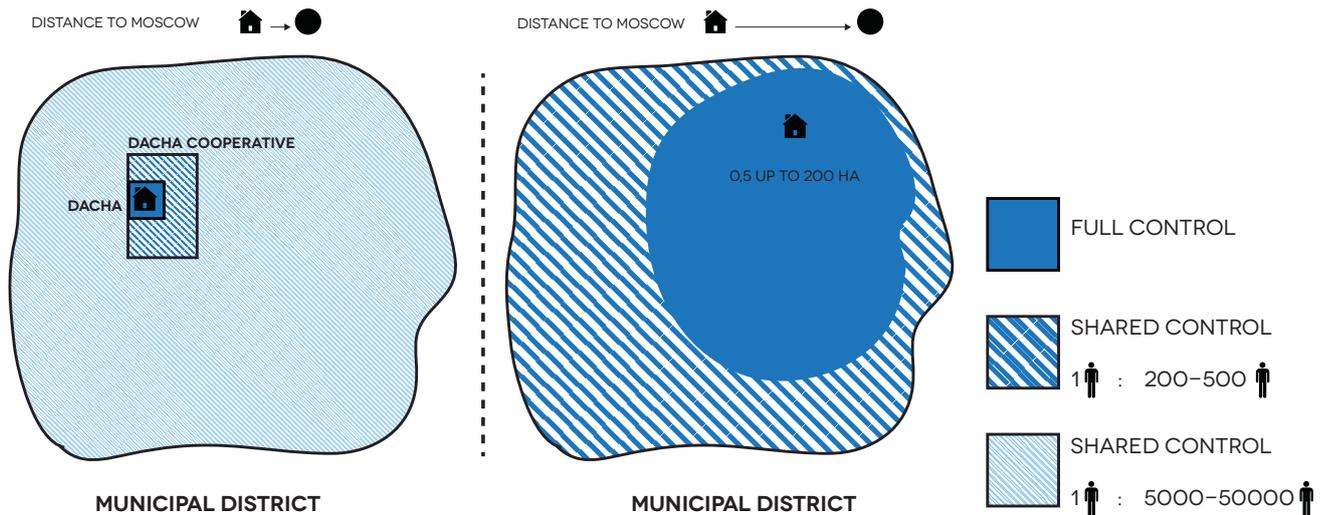
Regarding intersections of the pioneers and our voids – that is where a new model of cohabitation emerges.

There is different relationship with time spent on work, dachas and traffic, there is a different lifestyle and a different control of the surrounding environment.

In the image, there's a comparison between traditional model apartment + dacha, and the alternative one.

Among the important factors in how this model has become possible are the development of transport and technology: on the one hand, people are technically able to reduce office visits, on the other there are new means of transport, such as the Sapsan expansion zone of 4-hour access from Moscow allowing people to go there and back in one day (on at least a few times per week basis)

OVERREGULATED CITY AND PERSONAL CONTROL



SCHEME OF PERSONAL INFLUENCE: COMPARISON OF DACHA AND NEW VILLAGE

And here we approach the question of regulations in the city and city surroundings. In a dacha you have full control and ownership only of your package and shared co-operative governance where decisions are made by 200-500 people.

There's also formally shared governance at the level of municipality. But the scale is so huge – a few thousands of people – that one small landowner can barely have any influence.

But when we talk about the village, that is a place where one can fully implement his free will – the number of stakeholders is low and you can have more influence at the level of municipality, too. Moreover, in as far as land is extremely cheap (e.g. in Bogatkovo

settlement of Tver region it costs as little as €200 per acre) the land plot in property can be a lot bigger (e.g. a few hectares) – which makes you a significant landlord on a local scale.

Here, a question might be why that is needed: in order to prove potential of activism we explored side factors indicating its growth in the city such as flat replanning (reaching 300,000 flats per year), growth of communities of property owners, growth of protest activity, rise of internet services supporting participation in governance etc.

The system of the city is planned in such a way that a person is not supposed to do any active independent action – therefore the unmet demand is still stored.



Another Place: Towards the New Patterns of (Co)Habitation

PROPOSAL

ALTERNATIVE TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

- 1 Identification of potential places
- 2 Implementation of pioneers' experience
- 3 Consolidation of audience potentially interested in this type of territorial development

POTENTIAL OF THE VOID

Changing the perspective and regarding a place where everyone sees only decline and emptiness as powerful voids, we propose criteria and solutions to find and evaluate potential areas and to find people who already do something outside the city.

The practice of living in Russia shows that successful development of anything is a reason for unfriendly interests. Based on the intersection of the voids and pioneers, a network of communication should be developed. This network will not only share experiences and knowledge – but will later serve as protection, because communities are better at fighting for their property than an individual.

WHY WOULD IT WORK?

Why would government and private investors be interested?

At first, this approach facilitates development of villages by means of private investors and individuals. Then, it may also reduce inefficient spendings on low-inhabited territories (through government obligations). At the moment, the Government has to provide basic services (such as road cleaning and electricity provision), even to a single babushka in an abandoned village, and this is very inefficient.

We've talked to experts in order to understand the business processes behind development. Briefly, the alternative approach we propose is slower, it takes more time, but it is more sustainable. On this scale, some developers are already working around Moscow, buying up to 80 per cent of the municipality and becoming almost its owners.

They invest relatively small amounts of money and experiment with non-traditional (for Russia) long-term development projects. A little further on – after five or seven years, land value will grow as these areas will become closer to expanding Moscow.

So we wondered whether it's possible to build a self-governed, independent system within existing one,

using these voids as places where nobody's interests can disturb and existing infrastructure can reduce entry barriers in terms of costs, registration, legal status and land.

The existing legislation provides a canvas for creating your own environment, the void parameters provide freedom to complete the project and there is some time to prepare it and to protect until they become visible for everyone.

VALUE OF THE PROGRAMME

1 SUGGESTION OF ALTERNATIVE PATTERN

The city provides a certain set of scenarios one should take, certain patterns – apartment, dacha and traffic jams in between. The alternative scenario as another model is needed to provide a means of choice that few people actually have at the moment.

2 ECONOMIC SENSE FOR SOCIETY: RECENTRALISATION OF WEALTH

Since our country is centralised in terms of economy and finance, this approach allows to redistribute wealth from centre to periphery.

3 ECONOMIC SENSE FOR INDIVIDUAL: LOW RISK INVESTMENTS

Since land is extremely cheap in the periphery it is affordable for many people who can't afford desirable life in the city. Moreover, it is low-risk investment which may pay off significantly in future.

4 EMERGENCE OF SOURCES FOR GROWING OF CIVIC SOCIETY

The combination of legal freedom and interested people in the voids may lead to the emergence of alternative governance models.

The image on the left illustrates the scale of abandonment in regions adjoining Moscow. The massive figure – around 15,000 – of abandoned villages is both promising and scary: the issue of selection comes to the scene. In the next pages the methodology of place identification will be described.

AMOUNT OF BANDONED VILLAGES IN REGIONS ADJOINING MOSCOW. SOURCE: AGGREGATED DATA FROM ROSSTAT.RU

PRINCIPLES OF THE VOID

1 CONNECTED BUT REMOTE

2 EXISTING BUT NOT GOVERNED

3 EMPTY BUT REVIVING

4 SELECTED BUT ABANDONED

CONNECTED BUT REMOTE

Following factors of economic connection to the centre, the void should be accessible: it is no further than 4 hours from Moscow. It is possible to travel there for business and be back within one day. However, in order to circumvent interests of developers and any external users, to prevent abuse of the results of territorial development and disturbance of inhabitation, the last section of the road to a place should be hardly accessible: bad quality or other obstacles – that are easy to pass through for the dwellers but make the whole area seem unattractive.

EXISTING BUT NOT GOVERNED

In our realm's conditions, we clearly understand that the absence of necessity to deal with governmental bodies (for any issues of legislation) increases the probability of a conceived project to happen. That is why a powerful void should already possess a legal status and belong to a municipal entity. At the same time, this entity must be weak which means it should conform to at least one of certain criteria: be abandoned in terms of people, underfinanced in terms of budget and/or consist of more than one merged municipality as a sign of abandonment and physical shift of governance.

EMPTY BUT REVIVING

The historically economic model of the peasants was hugely reliant on the community: there was a list of expenses they shared – e.g. for technical equipment. That's why first people leaving the village in search of a better life were immediately followed by the rest: the less inhabitants stay the harder their life becomes. It explains also why we include the presence of pioneers around the place as a huge positive addition to the void ranking: every newcomer has lower entry barriers and brings something into community.

SELECTED BUT ABANDONED

Since ancient times, people didn't choose places randomly. In order to exclude places founded in order to serve industry or as a governmental directive, which was common during Soviet times, we set a few criteria, and at least one of them should be performed:

- Presence of the settlements, whose population reduced by more than three times over the past 30 years*, as evidence of decline.

- There is, or is used to be, a monumental building of cultural or religious purpose built before 1917**, as a proof of informed choice and desire to live in the area permanently, regardless of the state and industry directives.

- The existence of archaeological remains*** or traces of ancient settlements that existed here more than 300**** years ago, as a historical confirmation of non-random selection of the site.

*Why 30? - The remains of Soviet infrastructure, inclusion in the modern system of the municipal division, the presence on the cards.

**After 1917, the construction of cultural and religious purposes was a matter of governmental initiative.

***Based on the statement that sites for living were not chosen randomly.

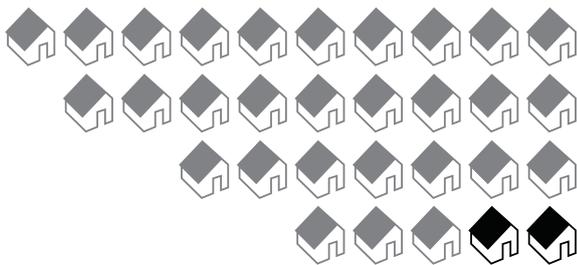
****According to archaeological data, the most recent settlements belong to the 17th Century.

MEANING OF DYNAMICS

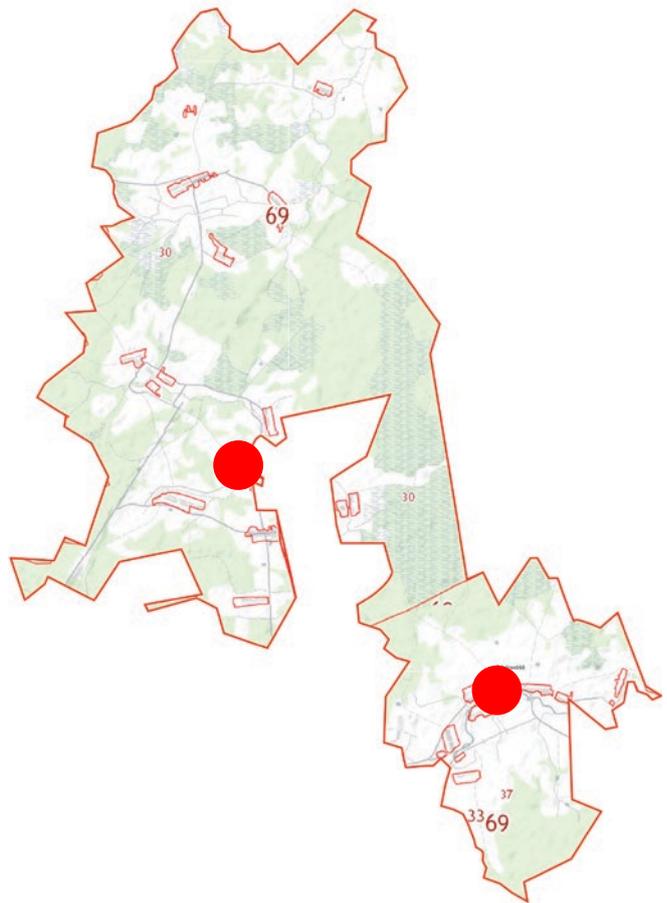
Dynamics shows how significant the amount of people leaving the settlement was in the last decade. Why that is important? Territories abandoned recently still possess houses, roads and infrastructure in satisfactory condition – this allows us to significantly reduce the costs of renewal and construction.



POPULATION OF THE VILLAGES OF BOGATKOVO IN 1996, 2002 AND 2008.



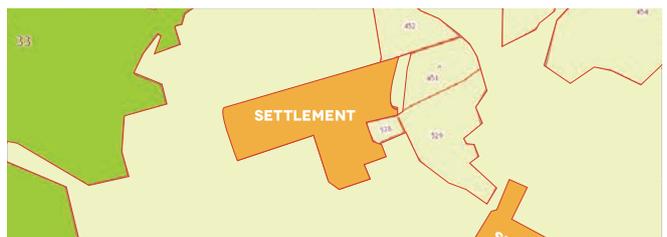
VILLAGE WITH HIGH DYNAMICS (E.G. THE ONE WHICH DECREASED IN POPULATION FROM 32 TO TWO) IS MORE VALUABLE AS FAR AS IT POSSESSES MORE RESOURCES IN SATISFACTORY CONDITIONS, COMPARED TO THE VILLAGE WITH LOWER DYNAMICS (E.G. THE ONE WHICH DECREASED IN POPULATION FROM 10 TO 0)



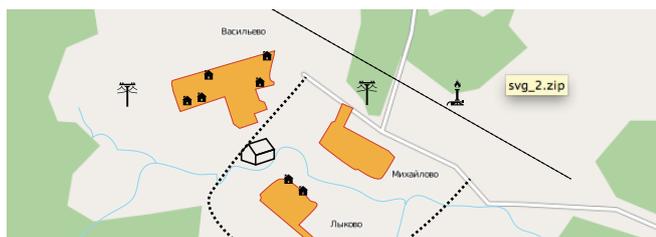
ANALYSING THE MUNICIPAL FORM OF BYGATKOVO WE FOUND OUT THAT IT IS THE RESULT OF THE MERGENCE THAT HAPPENED IN 2005: THE CENTRE OF ONE DISTRICT (1) SHIFTED TO THE CENTRE OF SECOND DISTRICT (2) WEAKENING THE INFLUENCE OF A MUNICIPAL HEAD (THE MORE TERRITORY, THE MORE VAGUE THE SITUATION IS).



THE ASSUMPTION WAS THAT THE VOID POSSESSES CERTAIN FEATURES AND LAND USE TYPE WAS ONE OF THEM: HOWEVER THE CADASTER DOESN'T HAVE THIS INFORMATION.



IN ORDER TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT LAND USE TYPES, ONE CAN GO TO THE MUNICIPALITY AND MAKE A REQUEST: THE LAND OF THE ABANDONED VILLAGE VASILIEVO IS, IN FACT, LAND OF SETTLEMENT



MAP OF ALL THE RESOURCES LOCATED IN VASILIEVO VILLAGE (INFRASTRUCTURAL OBJECTS, HOUSES, ROADS, SETTLEMENT LAND)



EXAMPLE OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE IN VASILIEVO: ROAD IN GOOD CONDITION, ABANDONED HOUSE

