261

Stillborn Environments: The New Soviet Town of the 1960s and Urban Life in Russia Today

by

Aleksandr Vysokovskii

Aleksandr Vysokovskii is head of the Urban Environment Research Department at the Institute of the Theory of Architecture and Town Planning and directs the urban planning firm "Polis-3" in Moscow. Dr. Vysokovksii was a Short-term Scholar at the Kennan Institute in November 1992.

The Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies
The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

The Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies is a division of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Through its programs of fellowships, meetings, and publications, the Institute encourages scholarship on Russia and the former Soviet Union, embracing a broad range of fields in the social sciences and humanities. The Kennan Institute is supported by contributions from foundations, corporations, individuals, and the United States Government.

Kennan Institute Occasional Papers

The Kennan Institute makes Occasional Papers available to all those interested in Russian studies. Occasional Papers are submitted by Kennan Institute scholars and visiting speakers, particularly those who wish to receive timely feedback on their work. Copies of Occasional Papers and a list of papers currently available can be obtained free of charge by contacting:

Occasional Papers
Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies
370 L'Enfant Promenade, SW, Suite 704
Washington, D.C. 20024-2518
(202) 287-3400

This Occasional Paper has been produced with support provided by the Russian, Eurasian, and East European Research and Training Program of the U.S. Department of State (funded by the Soviet and East European Research and Training Act of 1983, or Title VIII). We are most grateful to this sponsor.

The views expressed in Kennan Institute Occasional Papers are those of the authors.

Translated by Peggy McInerny and Natasha Zanegina, edited by Peggy McInerny

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STILLBORN ENVIRONMENTS: THE NEW SOVIET TOWN OF THE 1960S AND URBAN LIFE IN RUSSIA TODAY

I. INTRODUCTION

Almost five years ago a group of deputies from the Zelenograd City Soviet came to my institute.[1] They urged me to undertake a study of their city and elaborate a concept for its development. This was something brand new. Orders for such work usually came from a ministry or from city authorities, but here were recently elected deputies who wanted to comprehend the problems of urban development themselves and to figure out their own positions on the issues. I agreed to undertake the project and was thus drawn into researching Zelenograd, elaborating urban development codes for the town, and, finally, into active town politics. Today, one of the most important stages of the project has been completed: the fundamental provisions developed by our group for the social, economic, and urban development of Zelenograd have been ratified by the Moscow city government, under the watchful eye of the capital's mayor, Iurii Luzhkov.

The entire project consisted of two major parts. The first was analytical and included research on the history and culture of the city and the social bases for its possible transformation; the opinions and preferences of various groups; the town's residential environment; the employment structure of the population; the town's housing stock and the mechanisms for its management; the spatial structure of the town and its use of territory; and the town's social service and transport systems. The second part of the project entailed elaborating town development regulations and additional materials required for such regulations, including urban development statutes (consisting of legal injunctions and a zonal regulation plan); municipal land and housing programs; a plan for the territorial and structural development of the city; and property appraisals of land and residential housing.

The most essential part of the project for me, however, was not the regulations, design work, or even the research, but the social actions we planned and carried out in order to change people's behavior and create a new mentality among them. It was precisely this task which united and gave meaning to the different components of the project. The research described below is but one fragment of this larger project. Perhaps in the practical sense this fragment is not the project's most important result, but for me it is the key. This research deals with the cultural values of the late 1950s and early 1960s that determined the first stage of Zelenograd's development, the residential environment which came into being on the basis of those values, and the transformation of these values in today's urban environment.

Two digressions are necessary here. The first concerns the term "cultural values" used in this text, by which I mean the intellectual constructions that are the fundamental regulators of social activity. Cultural values are born in a

1. Institute of the Theory of Architecture and Town Planning, USSR Academy of Architecture.

process of numerous social interactions and, as a rule, are universally recognized by a large group of people.[2] The carriers of cultural values rarely think about these values—the values "circulate" in the form of verbal, sometimes behavioral, clichés or emblems.[3] Cultural values also differ from moral values, which touch on the deep foundations of a human being's existence and do not have a social–cultural origin.[4] In order to understand this usage of the term, it is important to emphasize that cultural values are not identical to real behavior and are rarely entirely actualized in behavior, serving instead as a point of reference for evaluating and developing one's own behavior and the behavior of others. Nevertheless, peoples' actions can never be understood or interpreted outside of these values.

The second digression concerns the question of why, exactly, Zelenograd served as the stimulus for this paper. Zelenograd is a "new town," founded by a decision of the USSR Council of Ministers in March 1958. By the end of that same year, a general plan and detailed designs for the city's layout and construction had been developed. Construction began promptly in 1959 and proceeded rapidly. At present, 175,000 people live in Zelenograd.

Zelenograd is, first and foremost, a town in which all stages of post-Stalinist "Soviet town-planning doctrine" have been realized. Conceived and built by the authorities as the standard model of a satellite town, a beautiful area with a huge pine forest bordered by the Skhodnia and Garetovka Rivers was chosen as its site. The town was situated twenty kilometers from the then non-existent Moscow ring road and forty-three kilometers from the city center. It was conveniently linked to the latter by two major transportation arteries: the Leningrad Shosse and the Oktiabr'skaia railroad line. Since 1960, Zelenograd has been the center of the electronics industry of the former USSR, at the time considered one of the economy's high-priority industries. The Ministry of Electronics became a customer of construction in the town, investing enormous financial and material resources in Zelenograd right up until the Ministry's liquidation in 1991.

In accordance with the state's views on the construction of living quarters, all types of multi-storied, standard, prefabricated and panelled apartment buildings were successively erected in Zelenograd—from the modest, four-story ugly little buildings (*gaden'ki*) of 1959 to the huge contemporary blocs of densely populated twenty-two-story apartment buildings. Celebrated architectural monuments were built for which designers received the awards due them. Finally, Zelenograd received a one-of-a-

2. See, for example, Max Weber, "O nekotorykh kategoriiakh ponimaiushchei sotsiologii," in *Izbrannye proizvedeniia* (Moscow: Progress, 1990) [In German: Max Weber, "Uber einige Kategorien der verstehenden Soziologie," in *Gessamelte Aufsatze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, v. 7 (Tubingen: 1951)]; this article was first published in Russia in 1913 in the annual four-volume publication *Golos*); George H. Meade, *Mind, Self, and Society* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1967); and Alfred Shutz, *The Phenomenlology of the Social World* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1967).

3. See H. Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnometholdogy* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1967) and Aaron Cicourel, *Generative Semantics and the Structure of Social Interaction* (Rome: International Days of Sociolinguistics, 1969).

4. See Vladimir Solovëv, *Kritika otvlechënnykh nachal*, v. 1 (Moscow: Mysl, 1988); and Martin Heidegger, *Holzwege*, v. 6 (Frankfurt: Aufl., 1980), 205–64.

kind, unique status: it was established as a district (*raion*) of Moscow, but with the rights of an independent town.

Yet, in spite of all this, if one looks at Zelenograd with a neutral eye, one understands what an unsuccessful, uninteresting city it is. It would be hard to imagine a more poorly organized, confusing transport system or more monotone districts of drab, poor-quality apartment buildings notable for their ontological absence of everyday street life. But that's my view. Among the population of Moscow, Moscow *oblast'* (or province[5]) and Zelenograd itself, the town enjoys a very high rating. In fact, Zelenograd is a favorite child of official town planning. There were quite a few such loudly acclaimed, officially recognized towns in the USSR: Tol'iatii, Naberezhnye Chelny, Volgodonsk, Dubna, Akademgorodok, and others. The latter, however, never commanded the same prestige. Official propaganda labored over Zelenograd and the town was lavished with press coverage and every possible award; yet Tol'iatti and Akademgorodok received the same awards and press coverage.

In my opinion, in addition to the positive factors enumerated above, the phenomenon of Zelenograd—it's peculiar singularity—can be explained by looking at the time of its founding (1958–64). More precisely, it can be found in the particular culture of that short-lived period of Soviet history called "the sixties." It is with this idea that our theme takes real shape. Although my study of Zelenograd prompted me to undertake this theme, the theme itself goes beyond any one concrete example, as it concerns the interaction of the cultural values that influence the creation of a place with the current, actually experienced values and environment of the inhabitants of that place. The research presented here began precisely with an inventory of the values that shaped the creation of Zelenograd.

II. The Cultural Values of the 1960s and the Founding of Zelenograd

At the beginning of the 1990s, the sixties were recalled rather frequently in Russia. The very word "sixties" popped up on the pages of newspapers and magazines and on television screens, mostly due to the superficial reason that a number of representatives of that generation had entered political life. The sixties in Russia are understood to begin with the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956, when the cult of Stalin was disavowed. The first mass rehabilitations followed, although repressions did not cease altogether.[6] From that moment on, a very slow recovery of society, customarily called the "Khrushchevian thaw" began.

As with any other cultural phenomenon, it is difficult to delimit the philosophical boundaries of the sixties in Russia. As a rule, the

5. The Soviet Union was divided into fifteen Union Republics that were subdivided in one of three types of territorial/administrative units: *oblasti* (provinces), *kraiia* (also provinces, generally inhabited by a specific small nationality, similar to a territory), and autonomous republics (provinces based on specific nationalities). These administrative units were further subdivided into *raiony*, or districts. [See, in particular, Jerry F. Hough and Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union is Governed*, 2d ed. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1979)]. —Ed.

6. See Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, vol. 1 and 2 (New York: Harper & Row, 1974) and *Bodalsia telënok s dubom: ocherki literaturnoi zhizni* (Paris: YMCA Press, 1975).

period is used to designate a certain political stand, with its principal metaphysical core encapsulated today by the formula "socialism with a human face." What is of interest to us, however, goes far beyond the parameters of this formula and is tied to peoples' everyday lives—in the first place, with their attitude towards the town of Zelenograd. This attitude is recalled far less frequently.

The 1957 Festival of Youth

The most important event for sixties' culture in Russia was the Festival of Youth and Students which took place in July and August of 1957. Despite the rigorous cleanup (*chistka*) of Moscow—all suspect characters (in the opinion of the NKVD) were removed one hundred kilometers from the capital and the city was closed to visitors—an enormous number of "simple Soviet people" saw the "other world" with their own eyes for the first time. Hundreds, possibly thousands, of young people from all cities of the USSR stole their way past all the truths and untruths of Moscow. It's impossible to establish the exact number of people who attended the Festival, but I myself know many of them in Rostov-na-Donu, Voronezh, Tver', and Sochi. Subsequently, they all became carriers of a new, unofficial knowledge about Westerners—about their clothes, modes of behavior, and so forth. Moreover, a massive number of meetings, speeches, and programs took place over the course of the festival (according to the testimony of I. Dmitriev, no less than 100 foreign films were shown). Rumors of the festival soon began to snake their way throughout all of Russia.

The "thaw," together with new stereotypes of behavior, became first and foremost the property of Muscovites. For Muscovites, the sixties was of paramount significance and, in so far as Zelenograd was built by Muscovites and its first inhabitants were on the whole Muscovites (by my estimate, they accounted for 60–65 percent of the initial population), these "cutting edge" cultural stereotypes were transferred to Zelenograd. Nothing of the kind could have occurred in any other Russian town in 1958—the first circumstance that distinguished Zelenograd from all other, similar "new towns" of the era.

The Sixties' Attitude Toward Nature

Let's begin our discussion of the cultural values of the time with the prevailing attitude towards nature, or, more precisely, the attitude towards nature within the context of the environment. The name Zelenograd, which includes the word "green" (*zelënyi*), itself points to the importance of this attitude. Characteristically, the town did not receive this name right away. In the documents of 1955–56, and even 1957, the town was still called "town in the Kriukovo station district."[7] Only in 1958, when the general plan of the town was concluded and construction began, was the town given its present name. Prior to that time, according to the geographer Boris Borisovich Rodoman, several areas around Moscow had been selected as possible construction sites for towns with the same name.[8] That, in the end, this name was entrusted to the first satellite town

7. This so-called "settlement" (*posëlok*) and railroad station were not far from Zelenograd. Today, Kriukovo has been swallowed by Zelenograd and now serves as the latter's administrative district.

8. Related to the author by Rodoman in a personal interview.

speaks to the importance this characteristic possessed for the culture of the era. One could even say that the name Zelenograd was one of the first actualizations of the cultural values of the Thaw; before then, the majority of new towns in the USSR were given ideological names along the lines of "Komsomol'sk" or the names of prominent Soviet public figures.

Beautiful nature, the unity of urban neighborhoods and the forest, the generous planting of trees and gardens—all this was attractive to the European town dweller of the new era. In the period under examination, untouched forests and meadows—"virginal nature," so to speak—had a particularly meaningful nuance. Throughout the world, one observed a recurrent tendency to "return to nature" in the 1950s as values of non-urban life began to be affirmed. One can find a series of characteristic examples in America, where there was a burst of interest in such writers as Thoreau, Longfellow, and Melville, whose ideas were experienced both seriously (by such avant-garde writers as Allan Ginsburg and Jack Kerouac, for example) and ironically (in the humorous poem about Hiawatha written in the style of Longfellow by mathematician M.G. Kendall, for example).

Against the background of the massive suburbanization unfolding at the time, Buckminster Fuller, an architect and engineer, created a design for gigantic, completely autonomous structures which did not need to be linked to any kind of urban engineering or social infrastructures.[9] In the strange images of this design, enormous mechanized buildings swim slowly over an endless landscape like floating, purposeless clouds. Frank Lloyd Wright created a more understandable, but equally strange, design.[10] In Wright's design, extremely tall house-towers are spread out freely on a plain that extends to the horizon, interrupted by small grain fields, tracts of forests, and the slender lines of roads.[11]

But let us return to Russia. There in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a new, romantic stereotype of life in nature surfaced in popular consciousness. This was not a rural, but precisely non-urban stereotype. An image arose of the romantic town dweller subduing untamed nature, as if he were the first to traverse the taiga—be he geologist or sailor, analyst or tourist. There, in nature, he felt free, lived according to his conscience, and paid infrequent visits to the city. The sailor–writer V. Konetskii sang of workdays at sea;[12] In his reporting

9. See the photographs of this design in Robert W. Marks, *The Dymaxion World of Buckminster Fuller* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1960).

10. Frank Lloyd Wright, "Broadacre City: A New Community Plan," *Architectural Record* 77, no. 4 (1935); and "The Mile High Office Tower" in *Architectural Forum* (November, 1956): 106–7.

11. In the opinion of numerous scholars, periods of urbanization and anti-urbanism are locked into culture in one cyclical maelstrom. In the anti-urban part of the cycle, everything suddenly scatters, leaves the city for points far off, distances itself from the city center. Then, just as suddenly, everything strives anew to contract, to concentrate in several centers, to transform a vacuum into the delineated space of a city. See, for example, Vladimir Papernyi, *Kultura "dva"* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Ardis Publishers, 1985).

12. See V.V. Konetskii, *Kamni pod vodoi. Rasskazy* (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1959; *Zavtrashnie zaboty* (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1961); *Luna dëm. Povesti i rasskazy raznykh let* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1963); and *Morskie sny* (Leningrad: Sovietskii pisatel', 1975).

and songs, Iurii Vizbor was the poet of humdrum geologists and oil workers.[13] Vassily Aksyonov wrote of everyday young doctors serving in small village hamlets;[14] Robert Rozhdestvenksii sang (with the accent of Edith P'ekha[15]) of imagined "sky-blue cities not on the map." The talented cinematographers Gennadii Shpalikov and Andrei Mikhailkov–Konchalovskii made their first films about such themes.[16] I can personally recall the "in" style of the times: to appear in the city after distant wanderings and descend without warning on "rock solid" (*zheleznye*) friends who were always waiting for you; to be bearded without fail; to wear worn-out jeans and a windbreaker; to carry the "smell of fog and the taiga." Popular songs composed and sung again and again about such types now stick in one's throat:

> Flying into the distance,
> In your heart keep safe
> that under your wing, singing of something,
> Is the green sea of the taiga.

In addition to the universal flight of city dwellers from the city, there were specific national reasons for this escape in the USSR. In some sense the old city had betrayed man. For a long, long time the city had been the place where repression, terror, and mistrust had been concentrated. Reading parts of the memoirs of Veniamin Kaverin or Lydiia Chukovskaia about Anna Akhmatova allow one to understand the kind of horror that, say, the space underneath gates, or deserted streets, or footsteps on the stairs inspired in previous years.[17] At the beginning of the 1940s, Anna Akkmatova, carrying messages to her arrested son, could not decide to step down from the sidewalk onto the street for what seemed like an age, even though the street was absolutely empty. She knew of several incidents when NKVD operatives had organized automobile attacks on friends. Even without this story, one can perceive that beautiful St. Petersburg appears terrifyingly icy in her poetry and writings of the time. Of course, such an incandescent feeling of surviving the city was not a part of the consciousness of its everyday inhabitants, with whom this text is primarily concerned. Still, the echoes of these horrors permeated popular culture and passed into popular behavioral clichés.

It's thus altogether understandable why both the educated and not so well educated "new" young people of the sixties who went into poetry, literature, film, and theater were often the children of those who had been repressed—singing of "untouched nature," they developed an image of

13. Iurii Vizbor, *Nol' emotsii (rasskazy)* (Murmansk: Knizhnoe izdatel'stvo, 1966).

14. Vasily Aksenov [sic], *Ozhog* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Ardis, 1980).

15. Edith P'ekha, born 31 June 1937, was a strikingly beautiful Russian singer of Polish heritage who became famous in the 1950s for her slight Western pronunciation of the Russian language.

16. Gennadii Shpalikov (1937–1974), screenwriter, director, poet. Author of the screenplays of the famous films *Tramvai v drygie goroda* (1962), *Zvezda na priazhke* (1963), *Ia shagaiu po Moskve* (1964), among others.
Andrei Mikhailkov–Konchalovskii, screenwriter and director, made his debut in 1962 with *Mal'chik i golyb'*, which he co-directed with E.V. Ostashenko (he also wrote the screenplay). In 1965, he made the film which made him famous, *Pervyi uchitel'*, based on the famous novel by Ch.T. Aitmatov, a Kyrgyz writer famous in the USSR.

17. See Veniamin Kaverin, "Epilogue. Glavy iz knigi," *Neva* 8 (1989), and Lydiia Chukovskaia, "Zapiski ob Anne Akhmatovoi," *Neva* 6, 7 (1989).

the "stern truth of everyday life" without lies or deception, where only genuine people could live. The image of untamed nature and the brave people who subjugated it became fashionable and turned into one of the era's popular clichés.

The Zelenograd which was just barely beginning to be built at this time—a town surrounded by the forest—was accurately described by this idea of austere nature. Despite the fact that Moscow was only twenty kilometers away and one could pass through the entire forest in half an hour, the first "citizen-settlers" saw authentic, "untamed" nature in the Zelenograd forest. This became clear in numerous interviews with people who have lived in the town since the moment of its founding. They recalled with rapture hikes of several days' duration and ski outings that began at the doors of their homes. Some even made the trip back and forth to work through the woods on skis, with knapsacks on their backs.[18]

The planners were not far behind the townspeople.[19] Of course, they were carrying out professional assignments, but they, too, were strongly inspired by their proximity to a genuine forest. In their planning documents, the planners paid special attention to "facilitating pedestrian and bicycle paths linking places of residence with places of work, as well as with the green zone."[20] The word combination "forest's edge"—rarely found in town planning texts—is twice encountered in the first article on the design of the future Zelenograd:

> In the new town, where neighborhood units will be of comparatively small depth, all schools are projected to be located at the outer limit of these neighborhoods, that is, essentially at the edge of the forest. . . . Kindergartens and nurseries are, as a rule, projected to be located at the center of groups of apartment complexes, close to the forest's edge.[21]

A town in the forest, dissolving the town into nature, the forest in the town—the entire design concept of Zelenograd was deeply infused with this spirit. Clearly, Zelenograd's forest gave the town more than its name. It also gave people the feeling of an authentic life—here "real guys" and gals (friends as well as genuine pals) built a new, natural environment.

Unity with the World

Let's move on to another important theme: the value of unity with the entire world and being part of the world community. One of the vital achievements of the Twentieth Party Congress was the abolition of the "iron curtain" that had kept the population of the USSR in virtually total isolation. The 1957 Festival of Youth, as well as other acts of Khrushchev, was an important demonstration of the "openness" of new state policy. After the festival, information from abroad—cultural,

18. At the time, the first massive apartment blocks, institutes, and manufacturing enterprises were located far from one another and there was only one bus route in the entire city; buses rarely ran and were always overcrowded. Curiously, even today, when everything has changed, this bus route remains the same—it stops exactly at those places where the first stops were located. True, the route has become rather inconvenient.

19. Background on the history of the construction of Zelenograd in this article has been drawn partially from M.D. Tumarkin, "Istoriia goroda Zelenograda," in *Sbornik statei obshchestva istorikov arkhitektury* (Moscow: ITs-Garant, 1992).

20. I. Pokrovskii et al., untitled article, *Arkhitektura SSSR* 10 (1969).

21. Ibid., 3.

political, and economic—slowly but surely began to reach the country, where it was rapidly put to use by elite groups and later assimilated into popular consciousness.

A general passion for the West began. I was ten years old at the time and remember perfectly the delight with which we almost openly fished for the songs of Elvis Presley and Bill Haley on homemade wireless receivers made by quiet schoolboy radio enthusiasts. Even long after that memorable year of 1958, listening to foreign radio broadcasts was done secretly, aside from the fact that such broadcasts were always jammed. In 1963, Iurii Trifonov's newest novel was published and all the characters suddenly began speaking the language of Hemingway.[22] In 1963, the first Moscow Film Festival took place and Grigorii Chukhrai, who headed the jury, awarded the first prize to Fellini. By that time everyone was already talking about neorealism and its demise. Films by Marlen Khutsiev, Gennadii Shpalikov, Georgii Danelia, Mikhail Kalik, and Tengiz Abuladze, which were closer to the style of western cinema of that time, were also shown. Twenty years after these events, Vassily Aksyonov—a *shestidesiatnik* (a man of the sixties)—nostalgically created the formulation:

> We longed to be part of the life of the whole world, part of that same 'freedom-loving mankind' in whose ranks our older brothers had so recently been fighting.[23]

This phenomenon of wanting to belong to the world community was distinctively reflected in Zelenograd, reverberating throughout the town-planning design process during the period 1957–64. Before the planning work even commenced, Igor' Evgen'evich Rozhin, who had been appointed director of the project, travelled to England on business. This fact alone tells us a great deal. Having decided to create a model satellite town, the authorities looked for its prototype abroad, as if silently agreeing once again that 'the new' must come to Russia from 'over there.' While in England, Igor' Evgen'evich became acquainted with the new towns of Harlowe and Cooke and met with Sir Patrick Abercrombie, the famous designer of the greater London suburbs. Rozhin himself told me this story; it was never published anywhere and I remember how his eyes blazed when he told me so. Rozhin very much liked Harlowe and Cook, towns constructed according to the idea of functionalism then flourishing in the west. The small apartment complexes placed precisely side by side and wallowing in greenery produced a particularly strong impression on him.

A short explanation is required here. Until the late fifties, Soviet town planning had created sizeable pseudo-classical compositions. As a rule, these kinds of housing projects were not entirely realized, but those which were built are pleasing today. Such pseudo-classical compositions can be seen in the restored city centers of Voronezh, Minsk, and Volgodonsk rebuilt after the Second World War; the Leninskii, Komsomol'skii, and Kutuzovsii prospects in Moscow; Krishatika Street in Kiev; and Stalinskii (now Moskovskii) Prospect in St. Petersburg. True, the individual

22. Iurii Trifonov, *Utoleniie zhazhdy* (Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel', 1963).

23. Vassily Aksyonov, *The Burn*, trans. Michael Glenny (New York: Random House; and Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), 35. For the original Russian, see Aksenov, *Ozhog*, 32.

weight of these projects in these cities' overall housing stock is not great.

Thus, when Rozhin saw Harlowe and Cooke with his own eyes, he saw a type of residential environment that in his immediate perception was new. He was struck by these housing complexes, in the first place, due to the human scale of the environment and, in the second place, because the environment was the visible embodiment of Russian avant-garde ideas of the turn of the century and the 1920s—ideas prohibited in Soviet architecture thereafter. For Rozhin, who as a student of Shchuko and Gel'dfreikh had worked on the studio design for the celebrated constructivist theater in Rostov-na-Dony, it was both flattering and important to be one of the first architects to return to the ground-breaking architecture of the twenties and the thirties, even to extol this architecture, especially as his project had been officially sanctioned by the authorities.

Thus the environmental image brought from England became the guiding idea of the Zelenograd design team. Rozhin did everything possible to combine this idea with his official assignment: that of creating a model satellite town which embodied the Khrushchevian ideal of building completely pre-fabricated apartment complexes according to standard plans. Of course, the Zelenograd apartment complexes were simple and ugly—they bore no essential resemblance to the private, block-type constructions of Harlowe. The first pre-fabricated complexes, however, were of moderate height (at four stories, the trees surrounding them were taller than the roofs of these buildings) and short length (sixty meters), and stood divided by gaps no larger than twenty-five meters. All this allowed for an approximation of the image of small houses hidden in greenery very much like those Rozhin had seen in England.

Rozhin had something to be proud of—he had sincerely expressed his idea in an entirely humane environment. Moreover, he had built a town that reflected one of the leading trends in western town planning while creating something innovative at the same time. Obviously, his actions can be described according to the stereotype we have already discussed—that of unity with the professional world community. Only this fact can explain what happened next. Beginning in 1962, the era of genuine Khrushchevian five-story apartment buildings (*piatietazhki*) began and, in accordance with the decisions of the Party and government, Rozhin was expected to add a fifth floor to the apartment buildings under construction. An experienced courtier of the powers-that-be who held high official status and had never risked a confrontation with the authorities, Rozhin then and there categorically refused to add the extra floor. A scandal erupted, intrigues arose, and in the end, Rozhin was forced to resign from his prestigious post as Chief Architect of Zelenograd. Nothing similar occurred in his life either before or after this incident. Naturally, the first thing his replacement, Igor Pokrovskii, did was to add a fifth floor to the building plans.

I think that Rozhin was in his own way defending his idea of the town's environment, which for him was something more than just an architectural idea. Certainly the difference between a four- and five-story version of the same, pre-fabricated building is rather small. In addition to his professional qualities, Rozhin's firmness was another product of those surprising times—the result of a small gulp of

freedom brought back from the West. In this strange manner, he laid the foundation for the spirit of novelty in Zelenograd's residential environment which, in full accordance with the cultural values of the period and independent of their quality, created the prestige and myth of the town.

Architectural Uniqueness

Another important stereotype of popular consciousness—that of unique architecture—was also linked to Zelenograd, although it came into force a bit later, toward the end of the 1960s. For any totalitarian power, architecture is a means of demonstrating the might and well-being of the regime. Zelenograd is of interest because it was the first of the new towns of the USSR where architecture was successively made "unique" as a means of improving the residential environment. By 1964, it became clear that a town constructed of only one type of panelled building could in no way pretend to the elevated rank of a model satellite town and serve as yet additional proof of the creativity of socialism.

In truth, the town had turned out to be squalid and drab. Igor Pokrovksii and Feliks Novikov, possessing the lofty prestige of modern-thinking, capable architects, were called in. By this time the famous "Palace of Pioneers" complex had been built in the Lenin Hills (in Moscow) under Pokrovskii's leadership. In Zelenograd he would undertake the design of industrial buildings and scientific research institutes.

In the social sense, one could characterize the essence of the new design team's work as increasing the town's prestige by creating expressive architectural compositions. Yet despite the emphasis on expressive composition, the principles of constructing apartment complexes and design plans for neighborhoods remained virtually the same. All housing stock in the town—present and future—now became the background for public buildings built according to individual designs–first and foremost, for the town center. I'll give the designer the floor here:

> We will build everything that does not serve as housing in contrast to these simple standard buildings. Moreover, this contrast must not be stylistic, but plastic; it is intended to create tension in the construction of the town so as to humanize it.[24]

It's quite interesting that these architects believed they could "humanize" any environment by such means. Pokrovskii was right when he asserted, "In the given case, one can say without reservation that the architects built the town."[25] As for what followed, these proud words reflected still another change in the official mood that occurred ten years after the town was planned. In 1953, during the struggle against "excesses" (*izlishestva*) of Stalinist architecture, one couldn't even think about compositional accents or plastic contrasts, much less design them. In 1968, however, the creative originality of architects had been inspired, even if that year already belonged to the Brezhnev era.

It was precisely in these early years of the Brezhnev era that Zelenograd's public buildings and Youth Square complex were designed and built and the town center ensemble began to be constructed. The latter, which the

24. "Zelenograd," *Dekorativnoe iskysstvo* 4 (1970), 43.

25. I. Pokrovskii, "Zelenograd," *Arkhitektura SSSR* 10 (1969).

designers considered the heart of the town, is a great empty square on which three large-scale structures are arranged: the *raikom* building (where the offices of the district Communist Party and town executive committee were located), the House of Culture (with a concert hall), and a hotel, which also houses a store and a restaurant. The terraced square overhangs Victory Park, a patch of greenery in the shape of an orchestra pit that descends toward the river.

As could be expected, the officially-sanctioned architecture—not without signs of craftsmanship—was received extremely favorably by public opinion. The liberal intelligentsia, for example, in the guise of the journal *Dekorativnoe iskusstvo* (*Decorative Art*), did not fail to take note of Zelenograd. In the jubilee Lenin edition of April 1970, the journal carried articles on two "new towns:" Zelenograd and Tol'iatti, signifying these towns' membership in the premiere class of Soviet architecture. Zelenograd received the place of honor among professional critics. All the significant new buildings, as well as the town center "ensemble," invariably received good press. Famous people with names like Vasilii Simbirtsev, Andrei Ikonnikov, and Marietta Astaf'eva-Dlugach wrote reviews.[26] In 1975, Zelenograd's popularity reached an apogee when the design team led by Pokrovskii was awarded the USSR State Prize. Rozhin was not among the recipients.

The desired goal had been reached. The town's prestige had been elevated and people were starting to talk about it anew. The popular cliché of the mid-1960s, "the uniqueness of architecture guarantees the high-quality of the environment," in which official and philistine ideas were united, was realized in full measure. In conclusion, I cannot resist citing one more programmatic statement of Pokrovskii:

> Arranging the basic neighborhood units of the town and grouping horizontal and vertical structures in models, the designers sought an expressive panorama of the central neighborhoods . . . A group of four 16-story towers on the western side, in combination with the rhythm of the rear faces of buildings of lesser height, flank the central square of the town on which the 514-meter extensive "Flute" building is arranged, creating a pause in the vertical rhythms of the panorama.[27]

Such were the words. Reading them, one can only be astounded that the residential environment of hundreds of thousands of people was entrusted to such people in the USSR.

Faith in Technological Progress

Faith in technological progress was another stereotype of popular consciousness of the sixties without which it would be difficult to understand Zelenograd. Official journalism of the time used this theme to good advantage in the conflict between "physicists and poets" in the early 1960s. Physicists were in fashion. A romantic aura hovered over "experimental physicists" in atomic, thermonuclear, and theoretical physics. In general, science in the USSR was very animated at the time, as if rehabilitated. In the 1950s,

26. Vasilii Simbirtsev, "Zelenograd — tridtsatyi raion stolitsy," *Stroitel'stvo i arkhitektura Moskvy* 2 (1975); Andrei Ikonnikov, "Dvadstat' let spustia," *Arkhitektura SSSR* 3 (1981); and Margarita Iosifovna Astaf'eva-Dlugach, "Kak postroit' gorod," *Stroitel'stvo i arkhitektura Moskvy* 3 (1984).

27. I. Pokrovskii et. al, untitled article, *Arkhitektura SSSR* 10 (1969), 7.

In Soviet ideology, as in other cultures, city utopias were endowed with a life-building force. A new kind of life, new relations between people, were supposed to spring up in Soviet cities. It was not by chance that Vladimir Mayakovskii used the architectural lexicon of city utopias in various of his poems of the late 1920s:

Remember
every day
that you,
architect
of new relationships
and new loves —
the love affair
will
become
a trifling
the love of a Liuba
for a Vova[30]

In another place, the poet added:

Communal homes
instead of huts!
Mass action to
replace MKhATs![31]

Created as the official standard for the "new town," Zelenograd was intended to be a place where new "socialist" relations could develop. Alla Gerber expressed the state's point of view on this score in 1961 in the journal *Iunost'* (Youth). The future Zelenograd ". . . of fantasies in action," she wrote, "is the tomorrow of Soviet town planning, a little island of communism, a symbol of everything at the cutting edge," including "rules of harmonious communal life."[32]

Gerber was not deceived. Such rules *were* developed for the planners in 1959 and, from 1961 on, actively inculcated in Zelenograd. It was proposed that the town's construction, and through it, the life of the inhabitants—their relations with one another and the way in which they spent their leisure time—be regulated through these rules. Here is a characteristic specimen of such "life-building" regimentation: justifiably presupposing that there would be no free space in the small apartments, the designers decided it was necessary to provide general use areas in neighborhood units. These general use areas were intended to be used as amateur repair workshops, halls for family celebrations, and even storerooms for the domestic belongings of the inhabitants.[33] It appeared that the belongings one needed in everyday life but could not fit in one's apartment would be surrendered to the storeroom. By necessity, one would take them, use them, and return them anew to the storage area. One can only be astounded by the cunning intelligence of those who developed such rules of "socialist communal living." These accommodations were partially built and, of course, no one ever used them. People were tormented in their cramped apartments, but they did not take their belongings to the storeroom and did their repairs at home on the balcony.

30. "Marusia otravilas'" was first published in the newspaper *Komsomol'skaia pravda* in 1927. For the complete Russian version, see V. Mayakovskii, *Polnoe sobranie sochenenii* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo khudozhestvennoi literatury, 1958), 188-95; 434.

31. MKhAT stood for the Moskovskii khudozhstvennyi akademicheskii teatr. Mayokovskii's epigram, critical of the MKhAT, was the slogan for a 1929 production of "Bania." See Vladimir Mayakovksii, *Sobranie sochinenii v 12 tomakh*, v. 10 (Moscow: Pravda, 1978), 137.

32. Alla Gerber, " . . . I nazovut ego — Iunost'," *Iunost'* 10 (1969), 110.

33. G. Dykel'skii, "Pervye mikroraiony pervogo gorodasputnika," *Stroitel'stvo i arkhitektura Moskvy* 4 (1960).

At about the same time, town dwellers began to be pulled towards informal interactions, mutual understanding, and close personal relationships. After years of universal atomization, fear of one another ceased to be the fashion among people and displays of casual friendship came into vogue, especially among the young. Everyone was supposed to be acquainted with everyone (in fact, groups of "the initiated" solidified along hard lines under these auspices). The point of this activity consisted in hiding mutual understanding in a special, seemingly meaningless jargon or divining this understanding in unpredictable, slightly absurd behavior. An example of such "live and feel" (*i zhit', i chustovovat'*) behavior can be seen in the singer of this type depicted by Aksyonov in his novel *Ozhog*:

> "I knew it!" he roared so that the whole café could hear. "I knew this lousy genius was on to something! It's revaluation, isn't it, Samsik? You've revalued, isn't that right? You've undervalued, right? OK you bastard, let's have it. Play! Come on, Samsik. Let your hair down!
>
> . . .
>
> This is incredible, thought Samsik, this stool pigeon, this faggot, this alcoholic, understands my music better than all my friends.[34]

The pull towards socializing, towards friendly (and not very friendly, at that) gatherings and collective ways of spending time was so consciously affected that it occurred only in one's early youth. Gennadii Shpalikov, the wonderful poet, dramatist, and director, gave this style its sharpest expression in both art and life.[35] His life, according to Sergei Solov'ëv's apt phrase, could be described as a "happy homelessness." He lounged around friends' houses all day, worked in any corner, wrote poetry in loud company, endlessly organized escapades and took part in the escapades of others, slept wherever night found him. And drank, of course . . . back then, everyone drank, and drank a lot.[36] This lifestyle ended tragically for Shpalikov—either he could not or did not want to crawl out of it.

Another well-known social phenomenon also arose at the time, that of socializing in the intellectual kitchen. Small kitchens became a sort of family club, packed with people singing, drinking, talking, working, writing, and, unfortunately, suffering.[37] In Zelenograd, as in all intellectual centers of Russia at the beginning of the 1960s, young people took sincere delight in socializing. Young people, mainly "physicists," sang with guitars, wrote poetry, organized theatrical skits, socialized with one another, sat in kitchens. Memories of these times continue to live among the older residents of the town today. Even Pokrovskii created and ran a satirical theatrical group called "Kohinor" [38] in the USSR Union of Architects, where he spent a great

34. Aksyonov, *The Burn*, 45. For the original Russian, see Aksenov, *Ozhog*, 40.

35. See Gennadii Shpalikov, *Izbrannoe. Stsenarii. Stikhi i pesni. Razroznennye zametki* (Moscow: 1977).

36. This information comes from the television program "Istoria o Gene Shpalikove," shown on Russian television on 22 May 1992. Director Sergei Solov'ëv was both author and commentator of the program.

37. The novels of Iulii Kim depict this phenomenon.

38. "Kohinor" was the name of a quality pencil for architects produced by a Czech firm at the time.

deal, if not, as nasty tongues contend, the better part of his time.

To young people, it seemed that a new life had taken hold in Zelenograd, a conviction linked to the fact that it was a "new town," a satellite town, a model town. Living in the youth-oriented culture of the time, the pull toward socializing coincided with these peoples' actual youths and, by chance, the youth of Zelenograd itself. This linkage was of such strength that it gave rise to the myth of Zelenograd that still lives among and within the people of the town to this very day.

Thus, the romantic attitude toward nature, the feeling of unity with the entire world, the sense of the uniqueness of the town, the prestige of science in general and electronics in particular, and finally, experiencing the value of relationships—all these strata of popular consciousness of the late fifties and early sixties were fused with and reinforced one another. A certain social group in Zelenograd took these values and transformed them into a residential environment. Official propaganda did not lag behind and extolled Zelenograd in the mass media as the model satellite town. The image of the town was formed by all these elements: a town with a full-blooded, high-quality, prestigious environment.

III. Zelenograd Today

Time passed. The town was built and cultural values, stereotypes, and clichés of popular consciousness all change. Let's examine whether peoples' expectations of the town were fulfilled and what has happened to the town's environment to date, using the results of a 1991 sociological study conducted by the Institute of the Theory of Architecture and Town Planning.

Zelenograd Residents

First, let's characterize the contemporary residents of Zelenograd, beginning with the length of time they have resided in the town. Although there is no direct correlation between length of residence and acclimation to one's surroundings, certain researchers have nevertheless noted the important role of this factor.[39] This correlation would seem to be critical in a study of Zelenograd, as the town seems to be an anomaly: population turnover (migration) generally occurs at faster rates in younger cities, yet the situation in Zelenograd, a young city, was altogether different. This difference is made clear in the answers we received to the survey question in Table 1.

One's initial acclimation to a neighborhood generally occurs after the first year of residence; acclimation to a city as a whole, after five to ten years. One can say with

Table 1. "How many years have you lived in Zelenograd?"

Born here	6%
More than 20 years	47%
11–20 years	32%
6–10 years	7%
Up to 5 years	6%
No answer	3%

39. See Cicourel, *Generative Semantics*.

Table 2. Employment Structure of Zelenograd, 1991.

Electronics		28%
Scientists, scholars, and engineers	14%	
Workers	14%	
Other state enterprises		28%
Engineers, office workers	14%	
Workers	14%	
Nonindustrial intelligentsia		5%
Officials of state institutions		1%
Private business (cooperatives, small enterprises, joint ventures with foreign firms)		4%
Trade and services		5%
Students		6%
Housewives		5%
Retired		11%
Unemployed		1%
No answer		6%

certainty that in a town the size and complexity of Zelenograd, an inhabitant would certainly have become acclimated to its environment after ten years of residency. Some 85 percent of respondents in the study had been living in Zelenograd precisely that long, including those who were born there; another 7 percent had been living in the town from five to ten years—itself not an inconsequential duration. Population turnover being the same as in other new cities, it would thus follow that in Zelenograd the overwhelming majority of the population should have succeeded in fathoming the city—assimilating its environment and establishing their own personal space, or micro-environment, within it. If such a development has not occurred, reasons other than length of residence must be responsible.

Next, let us address the employment structure of the town's inhabitants at the end of 1991 (see Table 2). This employment structure is not that of a new town, but of an average, settled Russian town with a particular emphasis on scientific production and corresponding research activities. Moreover, the rate of those employed in research and production has declined from 73 percent in 1964 to 56 percent in 1991. Despite the fact that the percentage of intelligentsia in the town is still high (20 percent), the size of this group has dropped sharply since 1964 (32 percent). It is also important to note the high percentage of retired people and housewives (16 percent), a percentage 1.7 times greater than average for Russian towns, as well as two groups indicative of the times: people employed in the private sector and the unemployed. Four percent of Zelenograd residents work in private business (in comparison with the city of Moscow, this figure appears low, but it is actually higher than the average for Russia) and 1 percent are unemployed.

Evaluation of the Ideal

Let us now return to the main theme of our discussion. From the very beginning, Zelenograd set out to be the standard model for a satellite town. This idea became the town's defining characteristic and many people believed it to be true. Let's look at contemporary

residents' evaluation of this ideal, seen in Table 3.

According to 80 percent of respondents—half of whom were absolutely certain on this score—the model was not successfully realized. This figure reveals feelings of disappointment, unfulfilled expectations, and the fact that the originally planned environment never materialized. Nevertheless, the town still enjoys high prestige in its residents' eyes, a conclusion born out from responses to the question in Table 4.

Although only 10 percent of residents believe unconditionally that the originally proclaimed lofty goal of Zelenograd (i.e., that it would be a "model of a new life"), almost 80 percent consider the town a better place to live than comparable Moscow neighborhoods developed at the same time. Thus, we immediately run into the most typical feature of Zelenograd: the contradictory attitude of residents towards the town and, as a consequence, the contradictory nature of their everyday environment. What precisely attracts present residents to the town becomes clear when one examines Table 5 (see next page).

Only one characteristic dominates the viewpoint of Zelenograd's residents: the town is green. One should note here that the percentage of residents who consider Zelenograd better than other Moscow neighborhoods (78 percent) is close to the percentage of those who describe Zelenograd as "green" (69 percent). One can thus state that the town's attractiveness is overwhelmingly linked to its "green" characteristic, while other characteristics—positive or negative—are insignificant. Greenness was a part of the town's image in the 1960s and continues to be Zelenograd's most stable feature. On this point, at least, neither the residents nor the designers were deceived. Interviews, however, make obvious that the romantic halo that gave Zelenograd's forest such striking expressiveness has disappeared. After twenty-eight years, Zelenograd's Moscow-area forest is no longer "virginal nature," but simply a forest, a park—a nice place to rest.

At the same time, the absolute domination of the characteristic "green" cannot help but provoke bewilderment in the observer. This concept can and should correlate

Table 3. "Zelenograd was created in the 1960s as a model satellite town, an ideal place to live. Do you believe this idea was realized?"

Yes, absolutely	10%
Not quite	44%
No	37%
Difficult to say	9%

Table 4. "Do you think Zelenograd is better or worse than other Moscow neighborhoods developed at the same time, such as Khimki-Khovrino, Kuz'minki, and Cherëmushki?"

Zelenograd is better	78%
Worse	2%
More or less the same	8%
Difficult to compare	12%
No response	1%

Table 5. "What impression does Zelenograd produce on the onlooker today?" (in percents)

	Zelenograd	Staraia Russa
Comfortable	13	6
Green	69	41
Beautiful	20	5
Cozy	15	11
Modern	20	—
Scattered/Disconnected	11	—
Poorly designed, neglected	15	49
Faceless	7	—
Boring	25	38

with those components of nature that are part of the town—in the jargon of town planners, a town should live "in natural harmony" with nature, not be dominated by it. Let us look at the responses to the same question by residents of Staraia Russa, an old provincial town of 42,000 inhabitants located 60 kilometers from Novgorod. The image that Russa residents have of their town is more complicated and includes several major characteristics: Staraia Russa is green (41percent of respondents), but it is also boring (38 percent) and neglected (49 percent). True, in the perception of it residents, Russa is in worse shape than Zelenograd on many counts. Nevertheless, the fact that the residents of Russa found it boring and neglected at least shows that they consider the town to be "theirs," whereas in the case of Zelenograd, only one stable feature—"green"—colors its image, signifying that its residents have an extremely weak sense of the town and town life. The image of Zelenograd is dominated by this single characteristic because its residents either do not like the town or are indifferent to it.

Let's look at the population's attitude towards their place of residence and their living quarters, detailed in tables 6 and 7, respectively (see opposite page). The housing situation in Zelenograd is better than that in historic towns. People there usually live in poorly-built, though modern, apartments with all modern conveniences. More residents are satisfied with their housing in Zelenograd than in Russa or, especially, in Tver'.

When residents evaluate their neighborhoods, however, the picture is altogether different. The majority of Zelenograd residents are much more negative about their neighborhoods than are residents of the historic towns, where about 40 percent of the population also live in standard, faceless, modern five- and nine-story buildings. In Staraia Russa, for example, where only 11 percent of residents like how their town looks, 52 percent like their neighborhoods. In Zelenograd, by contrast, among the 58 percent of residents who like their "green" town, only 3 percent are satisfied with their neighborhoods—a very small number. Only residents of the worst area in Tver' feel the same about their neighborhood. Thus one should not believe Pokrovskii's assertion that "each of Zelenograd's micro-districts was built in a different way . . . "[40] Clearly, he has something altogether different in mind than do the town's residents.

40. "Zelenograd", *Dekorativnoe iskusstvo* 4 (1970): 20.

Table 6. "Do you like your neighborhood?" (in percents)

	Zelenograd	Staraia Russa	Tver'
Yes	39	52	67
Not entirely	36	32	19
No	22	13	10
Difficult to say/ no answer	3	3	4

Table 7. "Do you like your place of residence?" (in percents)

	Zelenograd	Staraia Russa	Tver'
Completely	39	3	24
More unsatisfied than satisfied	22	38	34
Completely unsatisfied	37	28	36
Difficult to say/ no answer	3	1	5

For a short period of time in the 1960s, Zelenograd's residents believed its designers without question—that moment is long gone. Today, at least 60 percent of the town's residents dislike their neighborhoods and react to the buildings in these districts with irritation.

The City Center

Let us now turn to the another subject: the city center. As mentioned previously, the designers of Zelenograd loudly proclaimed the value of architectural uniqueness in general and of the town center ensemble in particular. However, in the course of our research, it turned out that the majority of residents (52 percent) believe the town center to be in a totally different place: Youth Square. As for the unique structure designed so lovingly by the architects, it is considered adjacent to the center, not the center itself. Only 19 percent of residents recognized this group of buildings as the center. About the same number (12 percent) defined the center as the section of Tsentral'nyi Prospekt (Central Avenue) between Youth Square and the central complex.

The designers, meanwhile, persistently built up the officially designated social center and categorically opposed any development of the real center of town—Youth Square. The result of this obstinacy is very sad: the residents feel disoriented within the town itself. Sixteen percent could not answer the question concerning the location of the town's nucleus—about twice as many as in the other towns where we conducted our survey. As one might expect, Youth Square—the genuinely functioning town center—is considered the most attractive locale in town by the largest number of residents (24 percent) asked to name this site. Five additional areas were identified by residents as attractive, including the town's administrative center, but to a significantly lesser degree. None of the remaining sections of town provoked positive emotions in any significant group of residents.

Another interesting part of town is the so-called Kriukovo Square. It is an old square, part of a railroad station settlement later subordinated to the administrative and zoning authority of Zelenograd. Slowly but surely, the settlement is being erased from the face of the earth by high-

rise concrete apartment buildings. Not surprisingly, the area has a depressing environment. Even though the neighborhood is well assimilated and tightly bound with people's lives (a topic to which we will return), it is intentionally being destroyed as a result of town-planning policy. An additional cause of the area's degradation is the location of a prison there. Yet, in spite of all these factors, only 7 percent of respondents believed Kriukovo Square spoiled the town's appearance.

Given this background, it is significant that the administrative center provoked the most negative feelings among town residents (36 percent of all responses, or five times the number who negatively evaluated Kriukovo Square). In fact, the "unique" ensemble that has been commemorated with prizes is the only place in Zelenograd that received both positive and negative appraisals, a fact that makes sense if one considers the ensemble not as a part of the town's environment, but as an object of art. Works of art can and should inspire conflicting feelings—one person may like the ensemble, with its particular composition and particular aesthetics, while another may not. The administrative ensemble, it turns out, is not the center of town—the place where the essence of town life is maintained and stereotypes of town behavior come to life and are translated into everyday life. Instead, the ensemble plays a different role—the role of a symbol—embodying in art the idea of the new satellite town, an architectural dream based on values of Khrushchev's "Renaissance" and Brezhnev's "*zastoi*" (stagnation).[41]

Thus, the cultural value of architectural uniqueness that raised the prestige of Zelenograd to such heights was, in the end, uselessly wasted. Its imprint—the central ensemble—has not been assimilated by the town's residents, nor has it become part of their real-life environment. Rather, it has become a symbol of the town's ambivalence. The uniqueness stands by itself, the people stand by themselves, and, unfortunately, no bridge connects the two.

Place Nicknames

There is one more tool that can allow us to penetrate the unintelligible depths of the average existence of the town: the names people give to the places where they live. When acclimating to a neighborhood or a dwelling, people establish their own particular contact with an environment, which they unconsciously anthropomorphize and make into a partner. Interaction with this "partner" requires giving it a name in order to distinguish it from other surroundings. Townspeople can resurrect old, previously existing names for places or, if they are unfamiliar with such names or these names don't respond to their views of a place, ignore the old names. As a rule, words associated with the name of a place are usually connected with geographical or historical toponyms, but they can also be formed by remaking or "renaming" official names. Most important, popular names or nicknames, as opposed to official names, express peoples' attitudes towards their own area of town. Familiar, cherished places usually have many such names, in as much as these places are quite different and distinctive.

As a rule, the names themselves have a cordial nuance, with affectionate diminutive suffixes that

41. These terms were sarcastic appellations given to the two regimes by Soviet citizens. —Ed.

produce a play on words or a cheerful association. For example, a small neighborhood along Bakulev Street might be transformed into "Bakulëvka;" a shopping area located close to a fire station, "Za pozharkoi" (behind the fire station); Trubnaia ploshchad' (in Moscow), "Truba" (trumpet); the central square in Kostroma, "Skovorodka" ("Frying Pan"). There are few names for unpleasant areas that are difficult to assimilate—people do not want to make contact with such environments. In such cases, people usually use the official name, or even the postal address of a place. If such a locale has a popular name, it usually has a negative ring.

Let us now turn our attention to official and popular names in contemporary Zelenograd. [42] The results of our survey showed that 43 percent of the town's residents did not believe their neighborhood had any special name. Thirty-one percent did not have a clue as to what this question meant! An overwhelming majority (74 percent), moreover, used postal or planning designations such as "fourth micro-district" for their neighborhoods. For the sake of comparison, 43 percent of respondents to an analogous question in Staraia Russa (what name they actually used for their neighborhoods) either did not answer or said their neighborhood had no name; in Tver', this number was 39 percent, or about half the number of respondents who identified (an official) name for their neighborhood in Zelenograd. After thirty years of existence, residential neighborhoods in Zelenograd have not become sufficiently intimate or familiar for people to give them nicknames. Three-fourths of Zelenograd residents have acclimated to the town only with great difficulty. In general, people there live in an alienating environment.

The remaining one-quarter of town residents, however, have nevertheless given unofficial nicknames to their neighborhoods or have preserved these neighborhoods' old names. The list of these names is a bit depressing, with the largest group (85 percent of the total) made up of pejorative place names. This latter group includes such names familiar to the Russian ear as "Khrushchëvka" (Khrushchev's) and "Trushchëba" (slum), and the combination of the two—"Khrushchëba"—as well as several foreign variations on the same theme: "Garlem" (Harlem), "Negritianskii posëlok" (Negroes' Settlement), "Shanghai," and "Kamennye dzhungli" (Stone Jungle). Affiliated with this group are names that emphasize the isolation of a neighborhood from the center of town, such as "Okraina" (Outskirts), "Kamchatka" (a peninsula in the Russian Far East), "Vyselki" (Remote Settlements) and, finally, the puzzling "Tastorona," a one-word combination meaning "the other side." [43] If we add names like "Raion dlia razvedënnykh" (Divorced Neighborhood), "Tsyganskii Tabor" (Gipsy Camp), "Nochlezhka" (Lodgings), and the thoroughly mocking "Proletarskii" (Proletarian), "Derevnia" (the Village), and "Dom sbyta" (House of Sales),[44] the picture of residents'

42. Our survey, conducted in twelve neighborhoods of Zelenograd selected according to special territorial criteria, contained the question: "Does your neighborhood have a popular name used by local residents?"

43. It is significant that some of these neighborhoods are not far from the town center. Their feeling of isolation results from a poor transportation system and poor street grid (liberal planning!).

unusually negative and depressive acclimation to the town is complete.

There were very few normal, "human" nicknames for places in Zelenograd—altogether, they accounted for only 15 percent of popular names identified by respondents. Such names included "Kriukovo," "Shkol'noe ozero" (School Lake), and "Zelënyi" (Green). "Kriukovo," an unofficial name, was encountered far more frequently than any other positive nickname, testifying to the fact that the Kriukovo area is quite well assimilated by townspeople. Grouped together with this set of names are certain official names such as Youth Square and Central Avenue, as well as ironically prestigious names in both the traditional Russian manner("Tsarskoe selo"—Tsar's Village; "Dvorianskoe gnezdo"—the Manor's Nest) and in a foreign manner ("Brodvei" —Broadway; "Fe-Er-Ge"—the abbreviation of the German Federal Republic).

The strong correlation between the attitude embodied in a popular name for a neighborhood and its rating by residents confirms that nicknames describe the real environment of a given area. Thus, those neighborhoods of Zelenograd named "Dvorianskoe gnezdo" i "Tsarskoe selo" received the highest rating (94 percent of respondents in these districts said they liked their neighborhoods), whereas a new district on the town's periphery comprised of sixteen-story block apartment buildings received the absolute lowest rating (only 12 percent of its residents evaluated this neighborhood positively). Popular names for the latter district combined semantic nuances expressing, on the one hand, peoples' reactions to its buildings ("Kamennye dzhungli"), and, on the other, its remote location and isolation from town life ("Nochlezhka," "Vyselki").

We have already mentioned Kriukovo Square—one of the most negatively evaluated areas in town. Despite its negative environment, however, this area has been closely assimilated by townspeople, a contradiction expressed in its popular names. Although the official name, Kriukovo Square, is most often used, people also call the square by the negative ironic appellations of "Pleshka" (Little Bald Spot) and "Brodvei" (Broadway). To complete the picture we should note that Kriukovo residents' high evaluation of their place of residence is a tribute to a neighborhood of individual, private houses. A tribute, that is, to a place that was deprived of its right to exist by the architects and designers of the general plan, but has nevertheless survived for years—tormented by new construction, the fear of being demolished, and the lack of modern facilities and maintenance.

I should strongly emphasize here that the sharply negative assimilation of urban territory described in this paper is not characteristic of Russian towns in general. This negative assimilation of an urban environment became the prerogative of the "new town" of Zelenograd—designed, ironically, to be *the* beautiful model satellite town. To compare it for a moment with Tver', out of 35 normal, everyday, homey, and ironic nicknames such as "Koptilka" (Smoky), Tver' has only one negative name, "Negritianskii posëlok." In Staraia Russa, there is likewise also only one negative name, "Shanghai" (also part of Zelenograd folklore), out of

44. These last three names are part of the Soviet lexicon. —Ed.

27 positive names that play up one or another of the town's specific qualities.

Thus, the realization of the urban planning doctrine of the "New Town," which seemed so attractive and was trumpeted so loudly in the early 1960s, led to a disheartening result long ago anticipated throughout the world. Either people do not acclimate themselves to Zelenograd at all, or they do so with the greatest of difficulty and—particularly striking—with negative and irritated emotion. There is only one way to come to terms with such a town: stop paying attention to it. And that's precisely what the residents of Zelenograd did.

Unity with the World

What about unity with the entire world and the striving to become a part of the world community? The wave of euphoria of 1957 subsided, of course, but the value placed on openness in the country and the vital interest (accompanied by respect) in life abroad endured.[45] As this situation was true for Russian culture as a whole, the question is whether or not the situation of Zelenograd residents differed in any way from this general scenario. Had not the Zelenograd resident once seen himself or herself as a champion of progress, not only in his or her own particular country, but on a worldwide scale? Wouldn't this perception be all the more salient thirty years later, after the town had indeed become the electronics center of the entire country?

It only recently became possible to answer these questions. In May 1991, Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet Boris Nikolaevich Yeltsin signed a decree to create a free economic zone in Zelenograd. The first lines of the document announced that a free economic zone would be created "to increase production of high-technology goods on the basis of international cooperation in economics, industry, science and technology, with the participation of foreign investment." The decree represented a qualitative change in Zelenograd's situation—the previously abstract unity with the entire world had become a concrete project. Documents suggesting various organizational schemes appeared and an active battle for leadership of the project began. Newspapers were full of discussions of government resolutions and rumors as to which international companies wanted to come to Zelenograd; who would be hired by western firms or factories; whether Zelenograd in the future would feature only the assembly type of production (*otvertochnoe proizvodstvo*) for which Hong Kong is known, or whether it would remain a scientific research center; and, in general, what would happen when a western way of life came to the town.

Despite the fact that international cooperation developed with great difficulty, for the first time, links with foreign businessmen, people, and norms of life became a social reality for the majority of Zelenograd's residents, forcing people to define their position towards these phenomena, at least to some extent. There could be no better way to find out how peoples' old expectations of the 1960s had changed than to survey their attitudes toward the proposed free economic zone (see Table 8 on following page). As might have been expected, if one includes the number of respondents who claimed "It

45. According to a poll conducted in Moscow in fall 1991, however, only 7 percent of the city's residents had travelled beyond the borders of the USSR at least once.

depends on the specific project," the majority of those surveyed (50 percent) were suspicious of the idea of integration with foreign partners. Nevertheless, the percentage of residents who expressed a positive attitude (23 percent) towards such integration was many times greater than the percentage of those who were unreservedly negative towards the idea (3 percent), demonstrating that favorable social preconditions for contacts with foreign countries existed. The most interesting result of the survey was that the opinion of professionals working in electronics in both production and research was in no way distinguishable from the opinion of the bulk of the population. Those who in the mid-1960s had such special hopes for electronics and exhibited such zeal in associating themselves with the "new" and "progressive" do not differ today from the average Zelenograd resident.

Other social groups have become champions of the idea of integrating with the world community. These are first, managers of state enterprises and administrative workers, who supported the idea of the free economic zone almost without reservation. Second, new Russian businessmen, whose positive attitude towards the zone greatly exceeded that of the average inhabitant, although, typical of businessmen, they were circumspect in their views. Third and final, members of the intelligentsia outside of the production sector, a group who were even more enthusiastic about international cooperation than those who worked in electronics (the former "physicists" of the 1960s).

One cannot say that professionals working in electronics did not expect that a free economic zone would not improve their lives, as demonstrated in Table 9 (see opposite page). In this case, the first group—that of physicists, engineers, and researchers in the electronics industry—had the most optimistic expectations (43 percent). The remaining groups, although they also had favorable expectations of improving their situations for the better, were far more cautious, demonstrating a reasonable trust in their professional, creative, and commercial potential. Both Russian and foreign experts believe that scientific and technical specialists working in electronics (those familiar with modern technologies, foreign languages and terminology) and those working new commercial structures represent the most adaptable social groups and are best prepared for cooperation with foreign partners. In this case, the expectations of these groups

Table 8. "What is your attitude towards the creation of a free economic zone in Zelenograd?" (in percents)

	Average Response of all Groups	Applied Electronics Engineers and Researchers	Managers	Staffs of small businesses joint ventures, cooperatives	Intelligentsia not working in production (teachers, doctors)
positive	23	27	67	52	37
depends on the specific project	38	36	17	30	29
suspicious	12	11	—	7	24
negative	3	5	—	—	7
indifferent	8	6	—	7	3
no answer	8	5	—	4	—
other	8	10	16	—	—

Table 9. Could the free economic zone significantly change your work conditions? (in percents)

	Average Response of all Groups	Applied Electronics Engineers and Researchers	Managers	Staffs of small businesses joint ventures, cooperatives	Intelligentsia not working in production (teachers, doctors)
will change for the better	26	43	33	37	30
may change for the worse	9	11	—	4	10
no significant changes	23	18	50	26	33
changes are not dependent on free economic zone	3	7	17	19	10
don't know	27	19	—	11	10
no response	6	2	—	4	7

Table 10. "Do you have a group of friends with whom you spend your free time?" (in percents)

	Zelenograd	Moscow	Orel
yes	52	69	72
no	28	10	17
difficult to say	15	21	11

coincided with the appraisal of the experts.

Interviews with both production and research professionals at different levels in the electronics industry, however, clarified a very important detail: these people do not have any illusions about themselves. After ten to twenty years of working in the Zelenograd system of electronics production and research, they know the worth of this system better than anyone else and understand that foreign partners will be chiefly attracted by cheap labor and existing production facilities, not in Zelenograd's factories and even less in the products they produce. This clarification appears to shed light on the real state of mind in Zelenograd. So intoxicated with pride in the 1960s, the calm attitude of today's electronics professionals toward integrating with the world is tied to their professional inferiority complex. Whatever their personal qualities, these specialists know how far behind electronics in Zelenograd lag behind world standards and, more importantly, what constitutes the daily work routine in Zelenograd's institutes and enterprises. Disappointment with electronics, the town's most important business, has added additional tension and depression to the town's environment.

Informal Contacts

In the 1960s, one of the most important features of the environment arising in Zelenograd was the multiplicity of friendly, informal contacts between people. Let's take a look at the state of informal contacts today, as shown in Table 10.[46] The table shows that Zelenograd sharply differs from other Russian towns and cities. The proportion of residents in Zelenograd who usually spend their free

46. To explore this issue, the author used the methodological approach suggested by I.V and T.V. Abankina in their article, "Sostial'no-ekonomicheskie problemy organizatsii dosuga," in *Tendentsii i perspektivy razvitiia sotsial'noi infrastruktury*, ed. S.S. Shatalin (Moscow: Nauka, 1989).

time in the company of friends is considerably less (by approximately 25 percent) than in other towns. Particularly sad is that about one-third of Zelenograd residents do not have any friends at all with whom they can spend their free time—a number two to two-and-one-half times greater than in other towns. But isn't this a special town? Perhaps this result is coincidental and we shouldn't rely on these figures. Let's turn to another question on a similar theme, seen in Table 11.

Again, the inhabitants of Zelenograd seem to be people who are not inclined to socialize with others. Only one-third of the town's residents spend free time in an active way, that is, in the company of others. This is a number one-and-a-half to two times less than in other cities. Similarly, those who are not interested in much and do not usually go to the movies amount to 40 percent of residents—a figure two to two-and-a-half greater than in other Russian towns.

Of course, the overload of the daily routine of work, study, everyday errands, and commuting is so high that free time is understandably not a simple matter—it requires a special effort to make free time and to spend it properly. The very existence of leisure activities is itself evidence of a certain breadth one actively creates for one's life. Material and social conditions in Kaluga, Orel, and even Moscow are not very different from those in Zelenograd—with the exception of Moscow, these towns are roughly the same size, located in the same region, and have no claim to superior development. Nevertheless, the percentage of people who felt they had absolutely no free time at all were 29 percent in Zelenograd, 5 percent in Moscow, 4 percent in Kaluga, and 7 percent in Orel. What a busy town is Zelenograd, where there are five to six times fewer free, or liberated, people that in these other towns. The explanation is simple. The majority of contemporary residents of Zelenograd (62 percent) prefer to stay home and watch television or read a book than to visit with friends.

Let's look at some additional questions from our survey in tables 12 and 13 (see opposite page). A glance at the answers to the question in Table 12 reveals that almost twice as many people prefer to spend their free time at home in Zelenograd than in Moscow, Orel, or Kaluga, and one-and-one-half times as many as in Staraia Russa, which is a small provincial town. Zelenograd residents also visit one another and walk around town less often than do people in ordinary traditional Russian towns—we did not encounter such figures in any other town where we conducted our survey. One is forced to admit that Zelenograd is a unique town: a town of homebodies. The aged romantics of the 1960s have simply shut

Table 11. "Do you try to see interesting films, exhibitions, or concerts?" (in percents)

	Zelenograd		Moscow		Kaluga	
yes, by all means	6	34	11	55	13	65
as a rule, yes	28		44		52	
if invited	20		17		11	
practically never	32	40	22	24	12	16
not interested	8		2		4	
difficult to say	5		4		8	

Table 12. "Where do you spend your free time?" (in percents)

	Zelenograd	Moscow	Orel	Staraia Russa
home	62	34	36	41
in the country	33	32	52	31
visiting friends	25	49	26	15
in town, walking around	19 *	33	21	15 **
cafes, movie theaters, exhibitions	8	36	19	16

* Another 7 percent walked around Moscow.
** Another 23 percent walked around a nearby resort town.

Table 13. "What do you prefer to do most with your free time?" (in percents)

	Zelenograd	Moscow	Orel	Staraia Russa
rest, relax, have a change of scenery	19	60	57	39
meet friends and talk	29	54	44	15
stay home and watch television or read	48	34	36	48
play sports	10	23	15	5
participate in public and/or political life	2	19	4	no data

themselves up in their apartments, avoiding social interaction, friends, or any other type of active social or political life. As for young people, they simply have not joined in any social life.

As a principal repository of spiritual culture, the essence of a town is imprinted in its architecture, in the historical events linked to its buildings and places, in its various traditions, in its style of life, specific gestures, rules—that is, in the entire variety of everyday culture that makes its environment attractive. Outwardly difficult to perceive, but happily experienced in one's easygoing mood and the chance events one encounters in the city, this essence prompts people to initiate contact with one another. If absent, one has what we observe today in Zelenograd: a difficult and poorly assimilated environment, an impoverishment of the town's culture, and a lack of specific town traditions that have wiped creative leisure out of citizens' lives. Even worse, these factors have destroyed local social ties and reduced the complexity of human interactions. I would argue that the negative consequences of violating a town's environment are more apparent in Zelenograd than in other Russian towns because social regulations for harmonious communal life ("the rules of a friendly dormitory" in Alla Gerber's formulation) were inculcated there in a particularly intensive manner.

IV. Conclusion

A persistent theme of hopes deceived and expectations unrealized permeated the stories of long-time residents of Zelenograd. "We lived better before," they said to a man, "before" meaning the time when the first apartment buildings, institutes, cafés, and shops were just beginning to be built on Youth Square. Right at that moment, when the city itself didn't exist except for

its "green" name, the town's environment was wonderful. True, this environment was, for the most part, inculcated in people's imaginations, but as long as the town did not exist, it didn't prevent this environment from existing and developing according to its own rules, that is, according to the values and contours of sixties' culture.

Time passed. The town was built rapidly. The values of the 1960s, which had endowed Zelenograd with an aura of a chosen, elite town possessing an attractive environment, retreated into the distance and degenerated. The miracle did not occur. People long ago understood that the model town experiment had failed, especially its idea of creating a new way of life and new kinds of social relations. In fact, residents have had a hard time acclimating to the new town—the more it developed, the wider the gap became between peoples' genuine residential environment and their image of this environment. Nevertheless, traces of the values of the sixties and the image of the town's environment at that time live on in peoples' memories and family legends. This image, associated with their youth and the youth of the town, has proven amazingly tenacious. Even now, after more than thirty years, the majority of the town's residents still believe that Zelenograd is far preferable to other new districts of Moscow and, indeed, other towns, even though they admit that the satellite town—the town of dreams—never came to be.

Instead of uninterrupted development which saw the town's environment gradually become richer and more diverse, it was as if the environment of Zelenograd split in two. (The least I can say is that the nature of any environment allows for tricks.) One of its parts—the beautiful ideal—exists as an embryo of old values and relationships. It has ceased to develop and is not susceptible to the wear and tear of time. The other part—the unacceptable and unimpressive—exists today in the details of real life in Zelenograd. This part changes with the times, aging as residents grow older, their children grow up, and they change jobs and places of residence. People experience the town's depressing reality very sharply, yet this negative impression barely influences their image of the town's environment. For residents of Zelenograd, this image is made of another substance, exists in another dimension, and is therefore not subject to ordinary standards. In some way, this attitude reminds one of how parents relate to their good-for-nothing offspring. Parents generally know good conduct from bad, but tend not to apply this knowledge to such children. "My child—he's an altogether different matter," they say, all the while remaining condescending. This imperceptible psychological substitution of values that allows people to judge a reality that is insensible to them is one of the principal findings of our research on Zelenograd.

The case of Zelenograd seems to me to be both atypical and instructive. It is sufficiently rare that the image of an earlier historical period of such a young town remains a compelling presence in the town's everyday reality, yet simultaneously comes into such intense conflict with this reality. Obviously, Zelenograd's image of its environment in 1964 is impeding its further normal development. When we set about making recommendations for the town's future development, we had, first and foremost, to do battle with this phantom of the sixties. Only after having transferred the phantom image from the world of actual

experience to that of cultural history, that is, separating it from reality and registering it in the town's architectural museum, could we seriously change the course of the town's development. But that's another story, one still in process. We'll see what will happen next..