

Conceptual foundations of anarchitecture and guerrilla urbanism as an alternative to the repressive mode of late capitalist urban planning

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Growing megacities and the vast number of high-rise buildings, the construction of which is driven by the weakening of building regulations dictated by the bourgeois desire for increased profit and resource concentration, prompt reflection on the role of architecture and urban planning in modern globalized society and their repressive potential. It is characteristic that the theme of repressive architecture and urbanism is poorly covered not only in anarchist discourse but also in the scientific community as a whole. This theoretical shortcoming leads to an insufficient philosophical rethinking of the phenomena of contemporary post-industrial society and, as a consequence, to the fact that these phenomena can and already do cause irreparable harm to society.

The analysis of the issues from an anarchist perspective on repressive architecture and urbanism is particularly acute, as the urban environment is one of the sources of “invisible hierarchies.” By focusing only on “visible hierarchies,” such as the state, capitalism, patriarchy, racism, and other accompanying explicit forms of oppression, anarchists, while being subjects of hierarchical relationships, may take certain aspects of life for granted or fail to give these aspects the attention they deserve. Unfortunately, or fortunately, such “blindness” is characteristic not only of anarchists but often of the general public as well. It is difficult to understand why, despite the obvious psychological pressure exerted by monstrous buildings and “cell-like” apartments without windows, balconies, or separate bathrooms, there is virtually no discussion about the repressive role of modern architecture and urban planning in the media. Moreover, in Russian media, the term “human hive” for modern residential buildings has already become established.¹

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This article attempts to define the concepts of “repressive architecture” and “repressive urbanism”—and to place these concepts in the context of contemporary, predominantly Russian, society and, in a broad interpretation, anarchism. At the same time, an attempt will be made to define what anarchitecture is and what its principles are.

There is a certain irony in the fact that Russia, with the largest area in the world, is striving to expand cities not in width, but in height, like densely populated areas of Asian countries (however, the construction of horizontal ghettos is no better than high-rise ones, and “high-rise” is a consequence of ignoring the social role of the building and the complex of buildings in particular, so the criticism is directed not simply at “high-rise buildings in a vacuum”, but at the phenomenon of replacing the intended purpose of buildings and streets with their structural aspects). Although this aspiration is not unique to Russian urban planners, it is most appropriate to consider the problem of accelerated construction of “human hives” from the perspective of Russian realities. If the “Chinese specificity” of such construction can be attributed with a certain degree of conventionality to the rapidly growing population and already existing overpopulation, then such development in countries where there is no such acute shortage of territories raises many legitimate questions.

Upon prolonged reflection, it becomes clear that there are no rational considerations for such an organization of urban space, and the only reason why high-rise buildings, absurdly and inharmoniously scattered everywhere, dominate the city is the pursuit of private profit combined with a complete lack of public control over the streets. The reason for this lack of control is also quite trivial: the result of state repressive policies.

To connect these two considerations into one general postulate, let's consider separately both the economic feasibility of building “human hives” and the role that the state plays in this process (here we deliberately omit its “regulatory function” in the field of construction, since in favor of capital these norms are weakened to the utmost, and if capital sufficiently lobbies its interests, this function will be practically completely abolished - this thesis will be proved later).

I

James Scott in his book *Seeing Like a State* gave a brief characterization of modern “high-modern” urban culture:

Until recently, the ability of the state to impose its schemes on society was limited by the state’s modest ambitions and its limited capacity. Although utopian aspirations to a finely tuned social control can be traced back to Enlightenment thought and to monastic and military practices, the eighteenth-century European state was still largely a machine for extraction. It is true that state officials, particularly under absolutism, had mapped much more of their kingdoms’ populations, land tenures, production, and trade than their predecessors had and that they had become increasingly efficient in pumping revenue, grain, and conscripts from the countryside. But there was more than a little irony in their claim to absolute rule. They lacked the consistent coercive power, the fine-grained administrative grid, or the detailed knowledge that would have permitted them to undertake more intrusive experiments in social engineering. To give their growing ambitions full rein, they required a far greater hubris, a state machinery that was equal to the task, and a society they could master. By the mid-nineteenth century in the West and by the early twentieth century elsewhere, these conditions were being met.

I believe that many of the most tragic episodes of state development in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries originate in a particularly pernicious combination of three elements. The first is the aspiration to the administrative ordering of nature and society, an aspiration that we have already seen at work in scientific forestry, but one raised to a far more comprehensive and ambitious level. “High modernism” seems an appropriate term for this aspiration.

[...]

What is high modernism, then? It is best conceived as a strong (one might even say muscle-bound) version of the beliefs in scientific and technical progress that were associated with industrialization in Western Europe and in North America from roughly 1830 until World War I. At its center was a supreme self-confidence about continued linear progress, the development of scientific and technical knowledge, the expansion of production, the rational design of social order, the growing satisfaction of human needs, and, not least, an increasing control over nature (including human nature) commensurate with scientific understanding of natural laws. High modernism is thus a particularly sweeping vision of how the benefits of technical and scientific progress might be applied—usually through the state—in every field of human activity. If, as we have seen, the simplified, utilitarian descriptions of state officials had a tendency, through the exercise of state power, to bring the facts into line with their representations, then one might say that the high-modern state began with extensive prescription for a new society, and it intended to impose them.²

Scott's description of the "high modernism" phenomenon is the best illustration of the role the state plays in shaping the look of modern cities. One thing to agree with is that the drive for comprehensive urban planning is dictated by technocratic aspirations. What is probably not possible to agree with is that "high-modern" architecture and urbanism took its most ugly form specifically in Western society. The reason why industrialization in Asian countries (or in countries adopting the Asian path of development, such as Russia) has been associated with a multiple increase in high-rise buildings and the expansion of "sleeping areas" without social amenities, while in Europe this process is more restrained, is that in countries with an authoritarian culture, it is not customary to involve the public in the process of organizing urban space.

The quality of multi-storey housing is steadily declining in accordance with the idea that housing should only perform one function—the retention of labor resources. If at the dawn of industrial capitalism, the role of the “social stable”, designed to fit a person into certain unifying frameworks, was assigned to institutions such as schools, psychiatric hospitals and the army, now such unifying frameworks are set by default even outside of being in these institutions. And it’s not even about the fact that this is the consequence of a global conspiracy. The only reason is the high profitability of building “human houses”, state lobbying and a complete lack of social responsibility for the adopted urban planning decisions.

This neglect of the social role of a multifunctional and durable building, as well as the social role of the urban space itself, can be easily traced by considering, for example, the latest changes in Russian construction and urban planning legislation. From September 1, 2024, a new edition of the federal law FZ No. 384 ‘Technical Regulations on the Safety of Buildings and Structures’ came into force. This regulation establishes minimum requirements that buildings and structures must meet. Russian lawyers provide an explanation of these changes:

In the new edition of Law No. 384-FZ, changes also affected the methods of justifying compliance of design solutions with the requirements of this law. Starting from September 1, 2024, a person preparing design documentation has the right to justify the compliance of design solutions with the requirements of Law No. 384-FZ in one of the following ways:

1. results of research;
2. calculations and/or tests;
3. modeling scenarios of the occurrence of hazardous natural processes and phenomena and/or man-made impacts, including in the case of an unfavorable combination of hazardous natural processes and phenomena and/or man-made impacts;
4. risk assessment of the occurrence of hazardous natural processes and phenomena and/or man-made impacts.

Justification of design solutions aimed at the safety of buildings and structures by special technical conditions is not provided for in accordance with the new edition of Law No. 384-FZ.³

Thus, decisions on the expediency of erecting a building are made by private organizations affiliated with large construction monopolies.

The list of national standards and codes of practice, which ensures compliance with Federal Law No. 384 “Technical Regulations on the Safety of Buildings and Structures”, effective since 2010, has lost its force.⁴ Currently, 37 regulatory legal acts are in force, ensuring compliance with the requirements of technical regulations only in the field of safety of buildings and structures,⁵ and the number of “mandatory” regulatory documentation is steadily decreasing, either by its abolition, or by transferring these requirements to “voluntary” and “non-mandatory” for execution.

City planning is becoming the prerogative of the state and construction monopolists, who buy up land for a pittance and build high-rise buildings on it that are as compact as possible - as a rule, without taking into account the opinions of the people who live in this locality. Public spaces, such as parks, forests, squares, gardens, are being cut down, and the only reason these green zones are sometimes preserved is the active struggle of citizens. In Russia, due to the repressive state policy, it is becoming impossible or problematic to fight for street space (sometimes you can only resist the demolition of architectural monuments), since it is practically impossible to obtain any agreement for a citizen's meeting on the streets of Russian cities and, in principle, to win the right to defend street space contrary to the right of the developer to property.

On March 14, 2022, Russia adopted Federal Law No. 58 “On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation”, which legally allows the approval of urban planning projects without public hearings.

The term of public discussions or public hearings on draft general plans, draft land use and development regulations, draft territorial planning projects, draft land surveying projects, projects providing for amendments to one of the approved documents, from the moment of notification of residents of the municipal entity about the holding of such public discussions or public hearings to the day of publication of the conclusion on the results of public discussions or public hearings, cannot exceed one month. *At the same time, normative legal acts of the Government of the Russian Federation, the highest executive bodies of state power of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, along with the cases provided for by the legislation on urban planning activities, may establish cases of approval of these projects, amendments to these projects without holding public discussions or public hearings* [italics for emphasis].⁶

Similarly, the architectural and urban design of buildings is not discussed. In accordance with recent changes in legislation, it is only necessary to coordinate the architectural and urban design of capital construction objects in cities of federal significance—Moscow, St. Petersburg and Sevastopol⁷, for other cities such provisions are not provided:

18. In case this is provided for by normative legal acts of the highest executive bodies of state power of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation - cities of federal significance Moscow, St. Petersburg and Sevastopol, when implementing projects for the construction of a capital construction object, along with the measures provided for in Article 52 of this Code, the following may be carried out:

- 1) coordination of the architectural and urban design of the capital construction object;
- 2) issuance of a conclusion on the conformity of the design documentation to the consolidated plan of underground communications and structures.

It is not surprising that for citizens who are forced to exist under such rules, the street turns into *terra incognita*, into a hostile “outside,” where it is uncomfortable and even simply dangerous to be. Modern streets do not have their own history and urban legends because they are not created for the reproduction of grassroots social structures. Modern high-rise ghettos, built for the temporary accommodation of labor migrants and workers, are becoming a symbol of social inequality and economic instability. These areas, as a rule, lack the infrastructure necessary for a full life: there are no shops, parks and recreation areas, hospitals, schools, kindergartens, and nursing homes. The modern era of the boom in socially un-oriented and non-fitting into the fabric of the city housing will end with colossal problems for society.

Why does society, which allows the city to grow with “human nests,” react weakly to the possible harmful consequences of such development? The point, of course, is not only in *anomie*⁸, but also in the fact that Western societies have already gone through the stage of building “profitable” ghettos - and received the most unfavorable consequences. In the USA, the Pruitt-Igoe housing project became known. The ghetto, liquidated only recently - the Cabrini-Green houses - was also a breeding ground for crime and social distress for a long time. Other unsuccessful urban planning projects of this kind include the Magnolia Projects, the Robert Taylor Homes, and the Queensbridge Houses.⁹

France faced a similar situation. Initially, the idea of mass resettlement arose as migrants flowed into the country, when the created temporary accommodation camps (“camps d’hébergement”) proved insufficient to accommodate the large number of refugees. As indicated in the study devoted to social districts in France:

In the 1950s and 1960s, at the initiative of the French government, migrants began to be settled in social districts (*Cite*), complexes of social housing for the poor. As migration flows increased and families arrived, the hostels built for migrant workers became insufficient, and the arriving families needed apartments. Therefore, social housing districts began to be seen as places for the temporary residence of foreign

workers. Migrants tried to settle near their compatriots, creating communities based on the principle of country of origin within the district. Over time, its own infrastructure began to develop here - migrants opened shops with goods from North African countries, cafes aimed at compatriots, prayer rooms. Gradually, within the districts, an environment began to emerge in which the migrant felt comfortable - almost like at home - and many had no desire to leave “their” areas and interact with the host society.¹⁰

In post-war France, the paradigm shifted, and the idea of mass construction began to be criticized. Kenny Coopers points out:

In the wake of the students’ and the workers’ revolts of 1968, the ideas of participation in the realm of the built environment transformed in two directions. On the one hand, intellectuals from the left – under influence of a renewed Marxism – advanced more fundamental critiques of the state apparatus and its role in the built environment. Manuel Castells’s 1974 *Monopolville* used the case of Dunkerque to reveal the complicity of mass housing provision with industrial capitalism. Edmund Preteceille’s *La production des grands ensembles*, published that same year, described them as expressions of capitalist contradiction. Other scholars, in particular at the Centre for Urban Sociology (Centre de sociologie urbaine) which at that time brought together some of France’s most fervent Marxists, advanced similar critiques of stateled urbanism. On the other hand, ideas of participation were taken up in a series of government initiatives during the early 1970s, meant to overcome social critique and change existing practices and urban problems.¹¹

Despite the fact that studies devoted to this topic^{12, 13, 14} are mainly based on the thesis that the main factor in the construction of ghettos is the influx of migrants from neighboring or distant countries,

they do not pay attention to internal migration, which has become widespread in the 21st century, that is, resettlement from small settlements to large megacities. In Russia, the construction of high-rise ghettos is not associated with ethnic segregation, but is a necessity dictated by the expansion of large cities. Moreover, unlike the situation with ethnic migration, this process does not occur spontaneously, but purposefully.¹⁵ To a large extent, this fact is generated by the problem of defining the concept of ‘ghetto’. The Great Russian Encyclopedia gives the following definition:

In a broad sense, a ghetto is a closed community within cities, formed on ethnic, racial, or religious grounds. As a rule, they are located in slum areas, characterized by social distress, low living standards, and high crime rates. The ghetto is seen as one of the forms of territorial existence of minorities when their rapid assimilation into the surrounding (dominant) society is impossible. There are “voluntary ghettos”, created by minorities themselves to preserve their cultural identity, and “forced ghettos,” established by law. The classical concept of the ghetto as a territorial-cultural community was developed by L. Wirth. Since the late 1960s, the term “internal colony” has been used as an equivalent of the term “ghetto.”¹⁶

An analogue of the word “ghetto” could be the concept of “reservation.” However, the concept of reservation is historically reflected as “a specially designated self-governing territory for the residence of Native Americans.”¹⁷ In a broad sense—an ethnically isolated group.

Thus, researchers dealing with the designated problem study the phenomenon of the ghetto from the standpoint of its lexical definition. There are studies¹⁸ on the problems of mass housing¹⁹, and the assessment of this phenomenon is ambivalent²⁰: in a number of studies, mass housing is assessed as a positive, rather than a negative phenomenon, considering it as a solution to the housing problem for a large number of workers.²¹

The reason why the concept of “mass development” is inappropriate to apply to modern urban development policy is that this concept does not reflect all the social aspects that are characteristic of ethnic ghettos and is a neutral concept. Therefore, there is a need to combine “ghetto” and the concept of mass development. In the absence of a more suitable term, it was decided to designate such development as “high-rise ghetto”—districts without social infrastructure, built up with monotonous low-quality houses—“human nests.”

II

Consider the high-rise type of development in the context of authoritarian culture and indicate why the ‘high-rise ghetto’ serves as an ugly hybrid of both ‘mass development’ and ‘ghetto’.

The lack of research devoted to the topic of mass development lies in the fact that, as a rule, it is analyzed as a kind of utilitarian component that provides relatively cheap and compact housing for a fairly large number of people. At the same time, the social aspect is not considered. As mentioned above, studies devoted to ghettos consider the social aspect of mass isolated housing of people in neighborhoods without the necessary infrastructure, but do so in the context of policies aimed at external migrants. To a large extent, these studies are fixated on the same ethnonationalist and racist paradigm, since they believe that migrant workers are somehow different from those citizens of a particular state who came from small towns to large cities and are forced to settle in cheap and socially unoriented housing. To overcome this paradigm, it is necessary to place the process of mass resettlement into “human nests” in the context of class division.

Before discussing what authoritarian urbanism and authoritarian architecture are, it is necessary to briefly outline what authoritarian culture is. Authoritarian culture is a culture that has a negative impact on personal freedom through political and economic oppression. Its role is to maintain micro-hierarchies that support macro-hierarchies, that is, the state and capitalism directly.

Authoritarian culture is divided into two components: state-capitalist and neoliberal. State-capitalist authoritarian culture denies individual good and focuses solely on the public, while presenting society in the most abstract form. Neoliberal authoritarian culture recognizes the existence of individual good, but breaks social ties between people, destroying the altruistic principle. Such a culture recognizes both the individual and society, without denying them, but opposes them, turning into an industry. “Culture industry” is a term first used in the work of Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno “Dialectic of Enlightenment”, which describes the process of producing uniform, standardized novelties in the spheres of art, painting, literature, cinema, etc. Such a culture at best does not carry value orientations, at worst promotes destructive messages that undermine social relations. Its role is purely entertaining. Thus, alienated neoliberal culture reproduces alienation, driving society into a vicious circle, which can be broken by a culture of a fundamentally different, libertarian type, taking into account the most important function of culture - the function of constituting social relations.

Yugoslavian philosopher Miladin Životić exhaustively described authoritarian culture in the article *Between Two Types of Modern Culture (Između dvaju tipova savremene culture)*, where he also divided culture into authoritarian and hedonistic. I would not agree with the division of authoritarian culture into directly authoritarian (that is, bureaucratic) and hedonistic (neoliberal), since a culture that puts consumer pleasure at the forefront also has a corrupting influence on human relationships, serves as a factor of alienation and exposes social inequality, conditioned by the difference in access to pleasures and their qualitative difference. Nevertheless, this is one of the most comprehensive works on the subject, and the “splitting” of modern society is consistent with the current economic model of late capitalism. Životić writes:

The splitting of modern man is evident in the field of culture in the form of the coexistence of two types of culture. Although these two types of culture are in conflict, they are also mutually conditioned and complement each other, as there is both conflict and

interaction between the bourgeois and the citizen, between man as an individual and as an abstract citizen, between the public and private spheres of modern bourgeois society. This conflict gives rise to the “confused consciousness” of modern man in a mixture of authoritarian culture and modern hedonistic-utilitarian culture.

Among the main components of our era is the phenomenon of bureaucracy as the main regulator of social processes and the emergence of a ‘consumer society.’ In the sphere of culture, these features manifest themselves as new forms of authoritarian censorship and control over the individual, as well as in the form of modern hedonism.

Both authoritarian and hedonistic cultures are repressive. Authoritarian culture is one where heteronomous norms and values prevail. These norms and values regulate the behavior of the individual in a bureaucratic-state social context. Such a culture embodies a system of values in which a person is defined as a rational animal, consciously adapting to existing living conditions and the existing social environment. Within this type of culture, the main social function of cultural values is to control and direct the impulsive, instinctive side of human nature and to accustom it to the limitations of existing social censorship in order to protect this society from exaggerations and distortions of the conscious perception, needs, and behavior of the individual. In such a culture, protection from excesses is established in the context of an authoritarian, alienated system of values, that is, through the inequality of people and the power of man over man.

Global hierarchical relations, statist and capitalist structures actively influence all spheres of society, including urban space. Therefore, it is impossible to analyze the appearance of the city and specific build-

ings in isolation from the context of modern capitalist society. Despite the presented division into state-capitalist and neoliberal authoritarian culture, their aspirations in terms of urban planning policy are absolutely the same, since the role of modern development is the cultivation of atomization and alienation. Alienation is characteristic of extremely hierarchical societies, the only difference is the mechanism that instills this alienation. Multifunctionality, inherent in systems that recognize diversity, is abolished:

The logic of such a rigid isolation of functions is perfectly clear. It is much easier to plan an urban area if it has only one purpose. It is much easier to plan pedestrian movement if their roads do not have to intersect with roads for cars and trains. It is much easier to plan a forest if your goal is to maximize the yield of furniture-grade timber. When the same plan has to serve two purposes, it is annoying. When you need to consider several or many goals, the number of variables that the planner has to operate with is frightening.²²

Thus, authoritarian culture as a phenomenon does not exist in isolation from the bureaucratization of society and the replacement of various interests of its individual groups and individuals with 'effective functionality.' The scope of such a reductive technocratic perspective is extremely large, starting from the relationship 'worker-employer' (even if the employer is the state, as in state-capitalist societies), ending with public space. The socialist perspective is obliged to go beyond such a narrow understanding of culture, where either one social hierarchy (in the form of bureaucracy) or another (in the form of consumer capitalism) prevails. Životić clearly articulated the goal of a new, liberating culture:

If the de-bureaucratization of society does not necessarily imply that society becomes consumerist, that is, proclaiming exclusively hedonistic values, then the movement against bureaucratization must consider culture as a factor that allows a person to realize their

personal potential, abolish various forms of authoritarian manipulation and cease to be simply an object of influence of authoritarian social forces. The goal is for a person not to flee from one authoritarian environment to new forms of it, into consumerism and meaningless entertainment, but to become a subject and creator of their own history.²³

The “high-rise ghetto” is notable precisely for its “single-functionality.” And although its role is far from being one of the forms of “territorial existence of minorities,” particularly ethnic ones, its social role is analogous. The “high-rise ghetto” provides economic isolation of individual urban areas, divides urban space into “zones intended for the sleep of the main part of the working population” and “zones intended for the work of the main part of the working population.” Similarly, for representatives of the wealthy minority, there are also their own separate functional zones that do not come into contact with “proletarian” functional zones. No architectural project for a wealthy consumer provides for indulgence in relation to the surrounding space. Obviously, the country house of a high-ranking official or the apartment of a “white-collar worker” will never be located next to dormitories for industrial workers - factory workers and builders, teeming with mice and insects.

To understand the market logic of such placement of real estate objects in the city, you need to know what makes up the final cost of real estate objects. In fact, the developer does not think about how to make the urban environment comfortable for everyone (otherwise he will face the factor of lost profit). It is important for him that the property is acquired at the maximum cost with minimal costs, and each of its varieties is intended for a specific type of consumer. For a left-wing social researcher, this is a perfectly logical conclusion. However, it is wrong to assume that the principles of real estate valuation do not include the social and psychological component of consumer behavior. In many ways, this is the only factor that generally allows real estate to be valued, since the investor (purchaser of real estate) simply will not purchase the object if this object does not meet certain utilitarian, aesthetic, hedonistic goals.

The principles of real estate valuation are as follows:

1. The principle of utility: a valuation principle that characterizes the ability of a particular valuation object to meet the needs of the user;
2. The principle of substitution: a valuation principle that states that the maximum price of a valuation object is determined by the minimum amount for which an analogous object can be acquired;
3. The principle of expectation: a valuation principle that characterizes the user's point of view on future benefits and their present value;
4. The principle of incremental productivity: a valuation principle that states that incremental productivity is determined by the net income attributable to land, after compensating for labor, capital, and management costs;
5. The principle of contribution: a valuation principle that states that contribution is determined by the amount by which the value of the valuation object changes due to the presence or absence of any element in the factors of production;
6. The principle of increasing and diminishing returns: a valuation principle that states that as any resource increases in one of the factors of production, the growth of net return first increases and then begins to decrease;
7. The principle of balance: a valuation principle that states that the maximum income from a valuation object and its maximum value can be obtained by observing the optimal values of the factors of production;
8. The principle of economic size: a valuation principle that states that there is an optimal amount of factors of production in the market that is necessary for the most efficient use of valuation objects;
9. The principle of economic separation: a valuation principle that states that property rights to a valuation object should be divided and combined in such a way that the value of the valuation object increases;
10. The principle of dependence: a valuation principle that states that the value of a valuation object depends on the nature of the surrounding environment.
11. The principle of conformity: a valuation principle that states that the maximum value arises when the level of

design, amenities, and nature of use of valuation objects meet the requirements of the market. The principle of conformity is implemented in the form of two principles—regression and progression;

- a) The principle of regression: a valuation principle that states that with excessive improvements (over-improvements), the value of the valuation object decreases or does not increase;
 - b) The principle of progression: a valuation principle that states that the value of a valuation object that does not have improvements increases as a result of the operation of neighboring objects that have improvements that meet modern market requirements;
12. The principle of supply and demand: a valuation principle that states that the price of a valuation object is determined by the ratio of supply and demand for analogous objects in the market;
 13. The principle of competition: a valuation principle that states that if profits in the market exceed the level necessary to pay for the factors of production, then competition in the market increases, which leads to a decrease in the average level of income;
 14. The principle of change: a valuation principle that reflects the change in the value of the valuation object or the prices of analogous objects over time;
 15. *The principle of highest and best use: a valuation principle that states that the most probable and reasonable use of an asset is the use that does not violate the law, is physically feasible, financially feasible, and results in the highest value of the property.*

As you can see, the costs of building the facility are also taken into account. However, the fundamental principle in real estate valuation is the principle of highest and best use. In a capitalist economy, “efficient” is equivalent to the concept of “economically profitable”: “Under capitalism, it is not individual need or ‘utility’ as such that is maximised, rather it is effective utility (usually called ‘effective demand’)—namely utility that is backed up with money”²⁴ Hayek gently pointed out that “spontaneous order produced by the market does not ensure that what general opinion regards as more important

needs are always met before the less important ones.”²⁵ While millions are starving, and the affluent minority throws away food for fun, this is considered “efficient.”

Each person, instead of exercising their right to influence decisions affecting society and themselves, has to rely on market mechanisms and uncoordinated actions of individuals within the framework of the modern economic system. Criticizing anarchic projects for their utopianism, apologists of capitalism cite the consequences of the “tragedy of the commons” as an argument - a non-cooperative game where participants cannot negotiate with each other (or this is not provided for). It is quite ironic that when considering the prospect of an anarchist society (that is, a truly equal management of common resources), one should rely on examples of cooperative games (a conclusion reached by Elinor Ostrom²⁶). At the same time, the “tragedy of the commons” is characteristic of capitalist societies with a closed decision-making system—a conclusion illustrated by the example of the accelerated construction of socially unoriented housing, which cannot be influenced by non-market mechanisms.

Thus, if at the dawn of industrial capitalism the city was considered a place of equal coexistence between the worker and the capitalist (not always desired by the capitalist), today’s workforce has turned into an alienated resource unit. Increasingly, the words “labor resources” are heard in the speeches of economists—words unimaginable for those who lived in the early 20th century. Human self-ownership has become an unaffordable luxury for people living in modern society. And while reactionary governments used to pass laws against vagrancy, today’s representatives of the upper class have no need for such laws, because the places where vagrants dwell will never be trodden by the foot of a person of money. From ethnic and racial ghettos, society has gradually “evolved” into class-based divisions.

Addressing the issue related to urbanism and the organization of urban space as a whole, one cannot overlook the architectural appearance of the constructed capital facilities. The main scourge of ‘mass construction’ is not that it is mass-produced, but that it is unifying and devoid of independent architectural solutions. The course to-

wards the ‘unification’ of housing infrastructure in the Soviet Union was set during N. S. Khrushchev’s time. As researchers Gorlov V. N. and Artemov S. N. point out in the article ‘Khrushchev’s Thaw and the Destalinization of Architecture in the 1950s’:

The Decree of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Council of Ministers of the USSR “On Eliminating Excesses in Design and Construction” of 1955 identified the issue of “uneconomical” elevators, kitchens, corridors, high ceilings, etc. The solution to the housing crisis was seen in the standardization and industrialization of construction, which were considered a saving grace in this dire situation. The uneconomical nature of the excesses of post-war architecture became obvious to all. But this was not the only reason for the restructuring of housing policy.

Many questions were raised by the problems of intra-block spaces. It seemed that the “aesthetic approach” to architecture was finally closed. Utilitarianism in housing policy was considered a panacea for all ills. The campaign against aesthetics and excesses in Soviet architecture destroyed style and creative professions in architecture in one fell swoop. Engineering and construction specialties came to the fore, and the art of architecture gave way to construction production.

[...]

In the mid-1950s, elements of standardization were constantly being introduced into housing construction (standard sections, then standard residential buildings), and a mass transition to construction according to standard designs began. The increase in the economic efficiency of housing and the general installation of standardization of projects were determined by the understanding of architecture as a means of direct regulation of social life. The tasks of housing construction in the mid-1950s did not correspond to the laws

of beauty by which architecture was judged. Architects began to develop standard projects, which was previously considered secondary work. The conditions for Soviet architects became very difficult, as they had to find variety in their composition and grouping from several types of houses.

The Khrushchev housing revolution transformed the Soviet architect into an engineer designing standard houses. Already in 1963, 98% of residential buildings in the capital were built according to standard designs. The projects of buildings under construction were revised with the removal of porticoes, sculptures, colonnades, arches, turrets, spires, bay windows, etc. Beautiful Stalinist architecture was replaced by unattractive five-story buildings, as the pace of construction of Stalinist houses did not at all correspond to the tasks of resolving the acute housing crisis in the post-war years.²⁷

Although one can criticize such a “Khrushchev” approach to architecture and urban space, in particular, it contributed to the fulfillment of purely utilitarian functions of providing housing in conditions of its post-war shortage. However, the typification of development in the conditions of post-Soviet capitalist Russian society is not amenable to understanding, because modern urban planners and developers do not have the social goal of providing housing for a large number of people. Equally, they do not face the problem of lack of space, which is characteristic of European countries, and therefore, the need to build a large number of identical high-rises. Russia is a vast country, nevertheless, it seems paradoxical that its government seeks to drive the population into megacities and “labor reservations.” This paradox, however, only seems like a paradox. The motivation becomes clear if one realizes the function of such a distribution as an attempt to hide the consequences of the socio-demographic crisis that began after the collapse of the USSR and continues to this day.

Another, no less important reason for such luring into large agglomerations is the solution of the managerial crisis through the introduction of digital ecosystems.²⁸ The benefits of a digital ecosystem are obvious. Such a system is necessary to create a “digital portrait” of each resident of the state and to link this digital copy to the physical body of the citizen in order to simplify surveillance and control over him. An effective system of surveillance of citizens allows reducing management costs and makes the authoritarian system politically stable due to a faster response to unauthorized state actions. This project has been implemented in the People’s Republic of China and is gradually being implemented in Russia through the introduction of a “meaningless” social rating and periodic disconnection of the Runet from the global network²⁹³⁰, which, obviously, can be interpreted as an attempt to create a Russian firewall.

III

Researchers of anarchism offer an interdisciplinary approach to architecture. There are not many works devoted directly to anarchist architecture (which I will also call anarchitecture). Some believe that the problem is that there are not so many anarchist architects, and for this reason, reflection on this topic is not so widespread. Partly this is so. But it is not important how many architects or theorists of anarchism there are in general, since the usefulness of a particular theory is not measured by the number of publications or by wide citation, but by their quality. Two or three “narrowly focused” researchers are already enough provided that their research broadly reveals the topic and leads to the right conclusions, since there are many who set out abstract theories that have no practical use. Therefore, it makes no sense to say that we do not have enough materials to consider the topic, since they are there (and a few researchers are just finding these examples). What we should regret is the lack of discussion.

Paul Dobraszczyk, a researcher of anarchitecture, wrote a work titled *Architecture and Anarchism: Building without Authority*, where he provided numerous examples of architectural monuments reflecting anti-authoritarian values. The significance of such a specific study is quite difficult to underestimate:

The production of urban space is always a multifaceted activity. Cities are vast agglomerations of private and public, human-created and ‘natural’ spaces governed by myriad formal and informal laws and social codes. Thought of in this way, architecture isn’t so much a discrete activity derived from professional expertise, but rather a whole field of opportunity for the many, an arena of possibilities rather than one for the implementation of formal plans. This is architecture from the ground up, a fully participatory architecture that promotes liberty for the many rather than the few.

It is what this book calls an ‘anarchist’ architecture, that is, forms of design and building that are motivated by the core values held by ‘mainstream’ anarchism since its emergence as a distinct kind of socialist politics in the nineteenth century. These are autonomy, voluntary association, mutual aid, and self-organization through direct democracy.³¹

The advantages of his work include not only an extensive list of architectural structures, where the influence of various anarchist values can be traced, but also an overview of ideas set forth by such anarchists and Marxists as Colin Ward, Paul Goodman, Murray Bookchin, and Henri Lefebvre. The views of these thinkers are widely reviewed in a number of scholarly publications,^{32, 33, 34} so there is no point in dwelling on them in detail. Similarly, there is no point in dwelling on an overview of the ideas of architects such as Le Corbusier and his followers, since criticism of these ideas accompanies any text of an anarchist and leftist orientation devoted to architecture and urbanism. Moreover, this does not contribute to either a reassessment of existing ideas or the creation of alternatives. There is a need not only to criticize the status quo, and not only to write about the principle of participation and equality in an attempt to present the future of an anarchist society, but also to announce on what foundation these ideas stand.

The lack of work, as in many works³⁵ exploring similar themes,³⁶ is that these examples seem to hang in the air.³⁷ It is enough for the author to indicate that the architectural structures he has designated were inspired by anarchism, and in what elements this influence can be seen. But what is “anarchitecture” essentially—this is a question to which we have not yet received an answer. The theory of such interdisciplinary studies is superimposed on anarchism, when in fact we need to mix. This is not a criticism of Dobraszczyk’s work and certainly not a diminution of his merit. The work he wrote is unique. However, such research is interesting not as a theory of anarchism as such, but as a historical and cultural review. In pursuit of canonical examples, researchers forget to say what exactly they want to illustrate.

Thus, the task to be solved is not to rewrite the works of predecessors or to point to vivid historical examples, but to indicate what makes an anarchist city and the buildings in it anarchist. Murray Bookchin partially solved this problem by incorporating the concept of a free city into the theory of libertarian municipalism. However, the city in Bookchin’s view is presented primarily as an autonomous and independent political unit. Bookchin practically does not consider the social role of urban planning, pointing only to the decentralized principle of decision-making in a free society and the ecological orientation of future cities in contrast to modern highly centralized cities:

It is equally demonstrable that the state—and, again, the nation-state—parasitizes the community, denuding it of its resources and its potential for development. It does this partly by draining the community of its material and spiritual resources; partly, too, by steadily divesting it of the power, indeed of its legitimate right, to shape its own destiny. Despite recent rhetoric to the contrary, nothing has seemed more challenging to the state than demands for local self-management and civic liberty. Decentralization, a term that is often abused these days for the most cynical ends of statecraft, is not merely rich in geographic, territorial, and political values; it is eminently

a spiritual and cultural value that links the reempowerment of the community with the reempowerment of the individual.

Municipal freedom, in short, is the basis for political freedom and political freedom is the basis for individual freedom—a recovery of a new participatory politics structured around free, self-empowered, and active citizens. For centuries, the city was the public sphere for politics and citizenship, and in many areas the principal source of resistance to the encroachment of the nation-state. In its acts of defiance it often delayed the development of the nation-state and created remarkable forms of association to counteract the state's encroachment upon municipal freedom and individual liberties.³⁸

In an ecologically oriented perspective, Bookchin contrasts city and village, and the absorption of the village by the city is called urbanization. For this reason, he believes that the concepts of “urbanism” and “city” are not equivalent. Modern bourgeois society advocates for urbanization, libertarian municipalism advocates for the city. In my opinion, this attempt to rewrite and update communist theory can only confuse a person who is trying to understand the topic and look at the problem from the perspective of socialist perception. The foundation of the city itself is a process of urbanization and is not considered something bad, since in the early stages of its existence, cities were the center of industrial production, connected to the village. The complication of people's lives leads to the complication of economic relations and, as a result, the emergence of capitalism, which prioritizes the expansion of the city at the expense of the village. In other words, urbanization existed from the moment the first cities were founded, but under certain unhealthy social conditions, this process became uncontrolled and harmful.

In other words, to be against urbanization and a supporter of the city is an oxymoron, even if you try very hard to explain these contradictions in the spirit of the communist program. The rhetoric of anti-ur-

banism leads to anarcho-primitivist views. It seems sensible to speak not of the opposition of the city to urbanism, but of the concept of city decentralization. It is clear that such a change in the conceptual apparatus does not significantly change the essence of the ideas presented, but eliminating this error allows us to correctly designate the goal we are striving for, without contradictory clarifications: a compact city-village, a society in which there is no production and class segregation. The goal of the future anarchist society is not simply de-urbanization as such, since this requirement can be taken as a desire to return to a pre-industrial society, but *alternative urbanization*.

In the introductory article to the collection *Anarcho-urbanism: Anarchist Theses on Urbanism and Architecture* (Анархо-урбанизм: анархические тезисы об урбанизме и архитектуре), I attempted to outline some considerations regarding the need and mechanism for the decentralization of cities and the departure from urban centrism. The key aspect is not that we need to move away from urbanism as such, since “such a statement of the problem would be vulgar, and the solution would be averaged.” The main problem lies in the global division of labor, the existence of a global village and a global city, and the need to “reconsider the internal structure” of the city and the village. Unfortunately, in this short note, I was only able to outline the solution in general terms:

There is an urgent need to radicalize our perception: regions with a high specific concentration of capital should become a springboard for the development of regions with a low specific concentration of capital. How exactly this can be done in the context of the current strict division of countries and, consequently, economic zones is an even more interesting question that will go beyond the scope of this discussion, because we should start small, namely with the decentralization of states, and for each individual country, the strategy of such a transformation will be its own.

And similarly for the city:

Within individual districts, in order to preserve their autonomy, as mentioned above, it is rational to consider the concepts of new urbanism. In particular, gradually move from a model of continuous development to a mixed one. Build low-rise houses. Greening the urban space. It is clear that in modern conditions, the implementation of such projects is an unprofitable event, first of all, for those who profit from people, because “human houses” are built not because of the maliciousness of developers and their desire to turn the urban districts they have built into a marginal ghetto decades later, but a mercenary short-term interest. And therefore, it is clear that the promotion of the idea of decentralized, balanced from the production and environmental points of view, spaces begins with the promotion of the idea of a social revolution and the need for such a change.³⁹

The main idea of alternative urbanism is to make cities geographically polycentric and politically decentralized. The concept of a “big village,” of course, is not new. Not only are the advantages of the subcentric model highlighted, but also its disadvantages⁴⁰: the problem of imbalance between the amount of residential development and employment within individual subcenters has not been resolved. Paradoxically, the solution in this situation is seen in increasing the density of development, not in reducing it, because otherwise each individual subcenter becomes attractive to everyone, as in the case of a monocenter. The proposed alternative solution consists of the cultural diversification of each individual subcenter, which makes city districts not only economically but also culturally independent.

To implement this model, both an anarchitecture and the implementation of tactical urbanism practices as a private variety of new urbanism are suitable⁴¹. The main principles of new urbanism are set out in the “Charter of New Urbanism”⁴² and include the following points:

- Pedestrian accessibility: 10 minutes of walking should be enough to reach most of the necessary places, and streets should be pedestrian-friendly.
- Connectivity: a network of wide and narrow streets should distribute traffic and facilitate pedestrian routes.
- Diversity: life in the area should be represented in all the diversity of buildings—shops, offices, residential buildings—and people of all ages, social levels, and cultural backgrounds. This principle negates both the division of the city into “residential” and “office” areas, and the sad practice of creating ghettos for the poor or ethnic minorities.
- Mixed development: new urbanists believe that in addition to private houses designed for one family and high-rise buildings, the city should offer “intermediate options” in a wide range of sizes and costs.
- High-quality architecture and planning: beauty and convenience, a sense of comfort in public places.
- Traditional residential area structure: with clear boundaries and a center that houses a multifunctional public space, concentrating public life around it. This planning is analogous to the structure of a medieval city, which Lewis Mumford considered a benchmark.
- High density: cities should not “spread out,” isolating people and forcing them to get into cars. Closely located infrastructure facilities are convenient to visit and are used more rationally.
- “Green” transport: convenient pedestrian and bicycle routes for everyday use and developed rail transport connecting cities and districts.
- Sustainable development: environmental protection, self-sufficiency, and rational use of resources.
- Quality of life: the final criterion, reflecting the success of the implementation of all the principles of new urbanism.

Tactical urbanism is an addition to these principles. As the creator of the tactical urbanism concept, Mike Lydon, says, his idea “involves a well-planned and consistent approach to change; local solutions to address local problems; short-term actions and realistic expectations;

low risk with the potential for high reward; development of residents' social capital, building and developing social capital between citizens; improving the organization of work between public, private, and non-governmental institutions.”⁴³

Tactical urbanism, or “do-it-yourself” urbanism, is a completely egalitarian concept of spontaneous-partisan change in urban space, as it does not make great demands on the knowledge and qualifications of those who practice it, allowing residents to realize their right to the city. However, despite the fact that this idea is so attractive and anarchic in nature, it does not cover the “global city”—the city as a collection of buildings, structures, and communications. It is impossible to spontaneously build a building, and it is impossible to spontaneously eliminate it. If within the framework of the anarchist model, the issue of zoning and the placement of buildings in each specific area is resolved consensually at a meeting, where residents vote for the projects they like, then it is worth asking what the architectural appearance of such a city is. Under anarchism, there is no structure that would impose its projects, including architectural ones, so the process of their creation should remain grassroots, as is the process of organizing urban space.

Here is exactly where the answer to the question of what an anarchist city and anarchist architecture is. Anarchitecture as a concept is architecture that realizes the potential of spontaneous creativity. In contrast to an authoritarian culture, where creativity is limited or even prohibited, a libertarian culture rejects the bare “functionalism” of buildings and the city, taking away from capitalist and state institutions the right to change the city. People themselves change the space in a way that meets their current needs. And it is precisely the process of spontaneous, popular creativity that is the subject of research by such architects as Paul Dobraszczyk, who has not only outlined the retrospective that laid the foundation for the concept of anarchitecture, but also presented many different embodiments of this spontaneity, mentioning both tactical urbanism and “open-source” architecture:

Open-source architecture claims that, in the digital age, all aspects of design can be thoroughly decentralized. Using platforms like the Open Architecture Network and OpenStructures, anyone can contribute and modify architectural plans and specifications. Some building projects are now funded by crowd-sourcing platforms like Sponsume and Kickstarter, breaking down the traditional architect/client hierarchy. In open-source architecture, standards would be devised by open collaboration rather than imposed top-down—a move pioneered by Wikipedia.

At the same time, construction would exploit the open-source hardware movement pioneered by MIT's Fab Lab in the early 2000s. Here, tools like CNC machines and 3D printers are shared to enable users to produce and manipulate materials themselves, bypassing inefficient and expensive middlemen. Finally, the built spaces themselves would be fully networked, allowing constant feedback on their performance as they 'intelligently recognize and respond to individual occupants.'⁴⁴

Another confirmation that anarchitectural design moves away from the conventional understanding of architecture as a servant catering to the utilitarian interests of compactly placing people in the city is the unexpected example of Dobraszczyk—the use of Minecraft as a medium for architectural design:

Architects have also seen potential in Minecraft to radically change the culture of design and planning, opening it up to a much wider range of participants. The company Blockworks, founded in 2013, uses Minecraft as a design tool: in 2015 they ran a Brutalist Build workshop at the RIBA's Day of Play event in London, in which 120 young people were assigned a plot in Minecraft and asked to build a Brutalist-inspired structure. Blockworks have also used Minecraft to envisage future sustainable cities: an alternative

‘green’ London for the Guardian newspaper in 2015 and a vision of Dublin in 2066 for Ireland’s 200th anniversary celebrations in June 2016. Going further, Danish architect Bjarke Ingels, founder of design firm BIG, has argued that real-life buildings should be more like those in Minecraft. His concept of ‘Worldcraft’, the subject of a film he presented in 2014, is an impassioned call to democratize design by making it more participatory and populist.

Anarchism, as an embodiment of radically free creativity, encourages projects that have a low barrier to entry for anyone. Thus, anarchi-
tecture is architecture created by creative non-professionals, while an anarchist city is a canvas on which strokes of a spontaneously emerging picture are placed. I compare an anarchist city to a painting only because there is no more important or less important part of an anarchist city. Just as there are no places on a good painting where everything is drawn in detail and places where there is no paint at all, so in an anarchist city there is complete functional balance. Such a city is in harmony with the village and complements it and, importantly, it is completely free from capitalist-dictated conventions, such as “the best and most efficient use” and a clear division into urban zones with monofunctional architect.

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