

The new challenges for urban development: global and local

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British council International workshop

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**UNIVERSITY OF
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Aims of the workshop/project

- British council wish to explore how to increase public and enterprise participation in urban development/planning
- Idea is to stimulate discussion between Russian and UK partners about the key issues, problems, requirements and practices
- Larger grant scheme is to be launched later in the year
- Part of a persistent resilience project run at University of Birmingham looking at urban areas in Birmingham, Bari and Moscow

- Also to share research ideas and theories and to develop a two way dialogue between interested groups
- Both semi-formal presentations, informal discussions and site visits
- Return trip to Birmingham in September to further develop ideas
- Issue very high on the agenda of Federal, Moscow and Kazan governments
- Project part of boarder Tempus teaching/research agenda

Outcomes

- Edited book based on presentations and discussions
- Development of ideas for research proposals
- New research relationships – comparative papers
- Position in emerging academic and policy debates

The role of social networks and knowledge in urban development

- Can we theorise everyday life?
- Why this matters in urban development
- The importance of place in everyday life – how practices are developed and used in urban areas
- Successful use of knowledge in urban regeneration in Birmingham
- The failure of urban change schemes in the Russian north
- Future directions for research and teaching

A (non)theory of everyday life?

Lefebvre (2000:98), arguing that it is not possible to construct a singular theory of everyday life, stated;

‘Furthermore there is no system because there are so many sub-systems situated, as we have seen, not *within a single system* but at *different levels of reality*, the lacunae and gaps between them filled with floating mists... (emphasis in original)’

Strategies or coping tactics?

[s]trategies are able to produce, tabulate, and impose these spaces, when those operations take place, whereas tactics can only use, manipulate, and divert these spaces

de Certeau, 1984:36

The role of social capital and networks in everyday life

“On your basic wage you can get by with a basic life. But if you want anything else such as clothes or to go to a cafe once a month then you need to do extra work”

“You have your main job say from 9 to 4 and the rest of the time is yours to find the extra work you need to do. So often you have two parallel jobs. How do you find such work? Just through my networks, word of mouth and people letting me know that work is available.”

Why are networks and knowledge so important in development debates?

‘Is the government developing policies to assist people in moving out of Moscow?’

‘There is no need. The market will do it for us. There are various things that we can do to help but there is no need to have an official policy.’





Spaces of practice



Most practices take place through networks which operate across spaces

- Apartment buildings
- From the household to another location
- Across communities
- At/through the workplace
- Between locations

Castle vale – the importance of community involvement

- Building began in 1965 and quickly became known as a region of crime and social deprivation, with unemployment running at 26% in 1993
- 1993 Housing association – with significant community involvement took over the running of the area from the state – thus power given to the community
- Main aim to re-house people in low rise housing, reduce crime etc but also ‘holistic regeneration’ – health, environment, education, community safety



Economic led as well



Symbolic regeneration



- Only 4 high rise buildings remain
- Unemployment at 6%
- Many more people reporting they feel safe to walk alone at night (fear walking alone at night was 35% in 2005 down to 12% in 2007)
- Real sense of community
- All sectors of society have a say in the development – youth council leads the regeneration of playgrounds etc
- People want to move into the area

Projects	Funding source
<i>Health</i>	
Walk 2K	Neighbourhood Renewal Funding
Exercise On prescription Extend	Endowment Trust Fund
Smoking Cessation	Primary Care Trust
"Here for You"	Castle Vale Community Housing Association
Teenage Pregnancy	Big Lottery Fund
Health roadshows	Terence Higgins Trust
Healthy Schools	Neighbourhood Area Agreement
Substance misuse	
Community garden	
Outreach services	
Sexual health and relationship programme	
Men's health	
Mental health support	
Alcohol and young people	
Older people	
<i>Youth</i>	
Youth club	Neighbourhood Renewal Funding
Dance club	West Midlands Police
Holiday and term-time activities	Endowment Trust Fund
The Database – IT facility for young people	Castle Vale Community Housing Association
Outreach – work	Connexions
Youth Council	
Activity residentials	
Football	
Inter-generational project Training for volunteers	
NEET provision	
<i>Environment</i>	
Climate Change	DEFRA
Renewable energy	
<i>Resident Support Services</i>	
Information, advice and guidance	Castle Vale Community Housing Association
Tenancy support	Big Lottery Fund
Worklessness – employment support	

“I hate going to the unemployment centre. They make us feel like benefit thieves and want us to take jobs that are an hour and a half away – how would I take my daughter to school and get to work in time? At the job club people help you and listen to any other problems you have. Also you make friends with people in a similar situation and you share information with them about work opportunities.”

Unemployed woman, late 30s, Castle Vale, April 2011

“I work as a health care educator running small courses at the community centre – but people know and trust me and stop me in the street and ask for advice on all types of issues, not just about health but about employment and housing problems for example. They would rather ask someone they know and trust then talk to the government.”

Community worker, Castle Vale, April 2011

For use the state is the housing association. We turn to the people there for all of our problems whether they are to do with housing or not. If they don't know how to help you they will know someone who can. All the city council want to do is to close down things such as the kindergartens and swimming pool. As for the government in London they have no idea about our lives and do not care about them.

Employed Man, mid 40s, Castle Vale, April 2011

Urban development in the Russian north



From a region of plenty to a peripheral problem

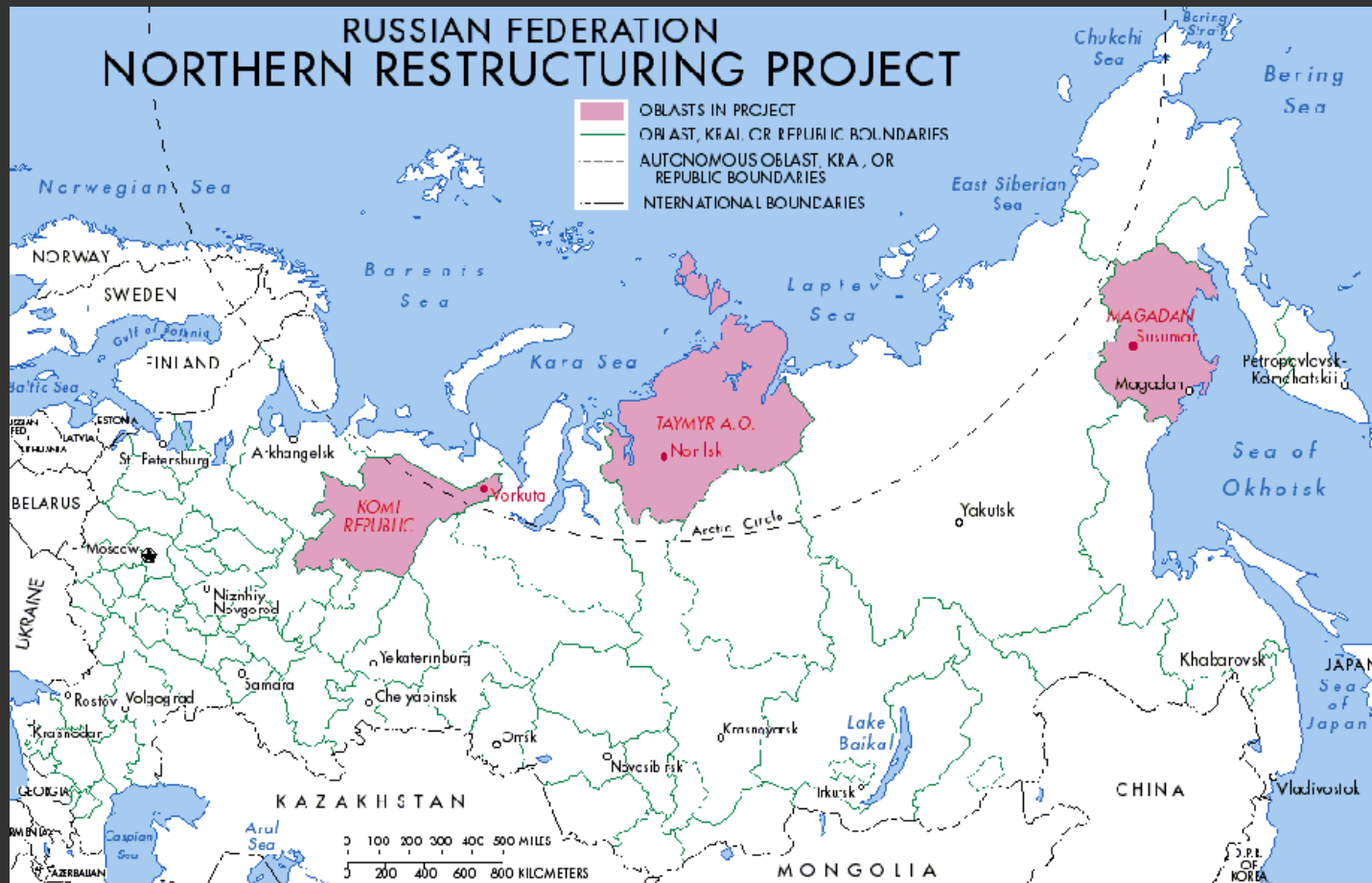


When winter arrives networks become vitally important as they see;

- The sharing of food amongst the group – if, for example, one member's crop failed or was stolen
- Physiological support given amongst the group – depression is common – the telephone becomes an important survival tool
- Regular meeting arranged amongst the group – bulk purchases

Central to these networks is that they are deeply entwined in the spaces that take place within

Moving people out?



“How could I move anywhere else, I know I can survive here but what chance would I have on the materik? People look after each other here and they don't do that anywhere else. I know that I would die if I left the region.”

“At least here I have my land, I know I can grow something to eat. If I moved would I get land as well? Would it be as near to me as it is here? Would my new neighbours be willing to help me take my tools to the dacha?”

“In Magadan I am a tree. My friends are my roots. I know that if I stay here I can stay standing and survive. If I have to leave my roots I know that I will fall over and die.”

Will attempts to 'guide' people out of Moscow work?



“Memories tie us to that place... It’s personal, not interesting to anyone else, but after all that’s what gives a neighbourhood its character.” ... Places are fragmentary and inward-turning histories, pasts that others are not allowed to read, accumulated times that can be unfolded but like stories held in reserve, remaining in an enigmatic state, symbolizations encysted in the pain or pleasure of the body. “I feel good here”: the well-being under-expressed in the language it appears in like a fleeting glimmer is a spatial practice.

de Certeau, 1988: 108

Overview

- Development schemes need to listen to the wishes and needs of a wide range of stake holders in order to succeed
- For many networks and relationships to place are extremely important in their everyday lives
- Organizations, enterprises and the state need to work together to develop best practices
- Modules need to be developed to ensure that students develop critical approaches and placement modules help develop two way learning