THE BALTIC PEARL IN THE WINDOW TO EUROPE:

ST. PETERSBURG'S CHINESE QUARTER

by

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A DISSERTATION

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In 2005 ground was broken for the largest foreign investment project in St.

Petersburg, Russia, since the end of the Soviet era. The so-called Baltic Pearl

development will occupy over 200 hectares (495 acres) to the southwest of the city's port

area; it will contain housing as well as commercial and recreational objects. Financed by

a consortium of firms based in Shanghai, China, the project reflects growing political

cooperation between the Russian and Chinese governments; it also parallels an increase

in economic partnership, including the growing use of Chinese labor. However, the

project's apparent success in drawing Russia and China closer masks social processes at

the scale of the city, where local resistance has shadowed its progress. Some city

residents have expressed alarm over the Baltic Pearl because they associate it with

rumors of a Chinatown inhabited by poor labor migrants; others, already resentful about

being left behind in the economic transformation, associate the project with the city administration's neglect of their needs. A closer examination of the Baltic Pearl reveals some of the forces shaping xenophobia and claims of dispossession in the city today and provides a more nuanced picture of the prospects for Sino-Russian cooperation.

Applying the lens of a socio-spatial paradigm rooted in Henri Lefebvre's *The Production of Space*, the study analyzes the spatial ideas and assumptions surrounding the vision and plan for the Baltic Pearl. The role played by the *dvor* (courtyard) in negotiations over the project's form between Chinese and Russian officials, planners, and architects highlights contrasting views of residential space. Local protest and support for the quarter as articulated in newspaper articles, blogs, a survey, and interviews reveal what is at stake in the transition. Finally, individual narratives of experience in the city as recounted in a survey and interviews show possible spaces of cooperation between Chinese and Russians.

The analysis delineates factors in St. Petersburg's struggle to adapt to global pressures related to economic restructuring and migration streams, and to become a truly "world city." It also demonstrates the need to incorporate information gained at finer scales into analysis of urban development.

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INTRODUCTION

> Accepting that any observation suffers from the
> personal qualities of the observer, that is, that it
> reflects in part more the observer's own psychic
> condition than the condition of the contemplated
> reality, I suggest that one should take everything
> that follows with a dose of sarcasm—if not with
> complete disbelief. Nevertheless, the one thing
> that the observer can assert in his justification is
> that he, in his turn, possesses a specific degree of
> reality, yielding perhaps in quantity—but not in
> quality—to the observed object.
>
> Joseph Brodsky
> *Journey to Istanbul*

In Russia, one set of societal assumptions seems to be waning as another takes

shape. This process is particularly visible in cities, where entry into the global economy

has dramatically altered the life of the elites as well as the ordinary residents.

What is the best way to study this transformation? This dissertation chooses to

examine the shift in assumptions through questions related to the conception of urban

space, employing primarily ethnographic methods among actors involved in negotiations

over the meaning and use of space at a variety of scales in the city of St. Petersburg.

The specific empirical focus of the study confronts two important questions

simultaneously, and was chosen for this reason. While there are many situations that

could productively represent the disruptions in prior societal assumptions and their

manifestation on city landscapes, one project offers a heightened opportunity not only to

examine the disruptions but also to place the changes in a broader framework of globalization: this is a development project outside St. Petersburg financed by a consortium of firms based in Shanghai, China, called the Baltic Pearl. Promotion of the project by the city administration and protest against it by many residents raises the two ultimately intersecting issues. On one hand, the Baltic Pearl is one of many planned "urban glamour zones" that signal the entry into Russian space of international economic, architectural, and social modes which threaten persistent longstanding assumptions about the connection between definitions of the "urban" and local collective values. On the other hand, the Baltic Pearl signals growing economic ties between Russia and China and the probable increase in the city's Chinese population; this will force yet another reexamination of the "urban" through confrontation with the implications of migration. Both issues touch on St. Petersburg's—and by extension Russia's—capacity to adapt to globalizing markets for capital, labor, and identity. The two questions thus are:

- What do reactions to the Baltic Pearl project as a globally networked urban node tell us about this adaptive capacity?
- What do reactions to the Baltic Pearl as a phenomenon of "Chinese" entry into Russia tell us about this adaptive capacity?

Focused on close examination of negotiations over the form and purpose of the Baltic Pearl, these questions permit exploration through the same lens of the related themes of resident protest over changing land use practices and resident anxiety about the changes that migrants are bringing to urban life—that is, of dispossession and xenophobia. Both themes are related closely to the weak economic position of many of Russia's citizens, although they tend to elicit opposite reactions from observers: we sympathize with those

who are losing their place, while we criticize those who are not making room for newcomers.

In spite of worries about overemphasis on the "local," a truly insightful evaluation of the intersection between these two questions must be built on evidence gathered at a scale far "below" geopolitics. In focusing on microscale phenomena in order to address these two questions, the study aims not to privilege the local per se or one group of "locals" in particular, but rather to confront a larger question about how information gathered at this scale can inform our readings of phenomena at scales that are more privileged in discussions of world city status, geopolitics, or Kremlin-watching. Exploration of this case study joins the discussion of the problem of "locality studies" (Massey 1994).

On one hand, the study avoids a recent warning about excessive sympathy for local dispositions in calls for a "right to the city" (Purcell 2006). Detailed attention to the nature of local dispositions combined with the *same* attention to the dispositions of new arrivals avoids the "local trap" that Purcell warns about (Purcell 2006, 1925ff.), in which the researcher adopts the position of those he studies.

The effort rather is to work against a certain lens that operates—perhaps particularly in Russia—in order to reduce the salience of phenomena that exist outside the visible power structure. In a talk given in Moscow in November 2004, independent cultural geographer Vladimir Kaganskii briefly described a micro-level process taking place around Russian cities: urban people are acquiring new dachas and are engaging in hobby gardening. Kaganskii regrets that "as with all real processes, this completely fails

to attract the attention of the experts, because the experts are occupied, in the main, with commentary on the authorities" (2004).[1] To a certain extent, I see the focus of my research as on processes that fail to attract the attention of the experts, or even fail to meet statistical criteria for significance. Yet I observed them, they exist, and they deserve analysis.

Kaganskii in the same talk called for extensive fieldwork to discover what is happening below the surface of usual observations in Russia (2004); in May 2007 he repeated this call, adding "just not through massive surveying; you won't capture anything in a large mass" (2007). This need for close observation of phenomena in contemporary Russian life that fall into new categories is restated by Glazychev (2005).

In the epigraph, the reader should not focus on Brodsky's recommendation to approach his travel notes from Istanbul with sarcasm, but should admit the author's irreducible possession of reality. In the attempt to capture significant features of Russia's current transformation, voices that speak about transformations in the conception of space from the scale of local park to Northern European region offer evidence that is equal in value, if not in volume, to what we can learn via study of the Kremlin, political parties, or measures of city rankings. The hope is that such a study can contribute to making those broad interpretations more nuanced. While the geopolitical scale often seems to trump the scale of the city or of everyday life, this probably still happens because of an epistemological orientation to this scale. We can only begin to change our epistemology if we begin to articulate more meaningful ways of capturing knowledge of processes at

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[1] All translations from the Russian are mine, including scholarly texts, newspapers, blogs, and interviews.

different scales. Thus, even though the renewed focus on nation-states since 9/11 seems to contradict the multiplication of lower-scale studies of globalization processes, we must remember that these other processes have not disappeared—they have merely been masked to our view by the hypnotic effects of geopolitical posturing.

Elaboration of the Initial Questions

Underlying the notion of a city's capacity to adapt to globalizing markets is the assumption that a city can best do this by achieving a global "urbanity" that bears certain characteristics. Beyond simply becoming a "world city" measured in financial terms, a successful city achieves a cultural and political worldliness that promotes flexibility and economic productivity.

For Ulf Hannerz, this can be described as the city's capacity to provide spaces of opportunity, or to become a heterogenetic node of anonymous culture and wealth; this allows the city to generate sources of new culture. In Hannerz's reading, the migrant groups which a city must accept are transnational business elites, Third World populations (i.e. labor migrants), specialists in expressive activities, and tourists (1993, 68). In the case of St. Petersburg, this can be rephrased as a test of whether the Russian city can allow Chinese migrants as equal partners in reconceiving and re-"enacting" the city.

Blair Ruble essentially frames a similar aspect of "urbanity" when he describes a city's need for the capacity to create "diversity capital" (2005). His study of new migrant impacts on Kyiv, Washington, and Montreal recognizes that a complex synergy occurs between prior residents and new arrivals, and also asserts that a city benefits most from

its migrants when it allows "the arrival of migrant communities [to] transform urban social, economic, and governance systems rather than strengthen existing power relationships" (2005, 7). He defines as "pragmatic pluralism" the practice of cooperation between different groups that "ignores questions of virtue and community"—that is, that does not insist on assimilation of arrivals into a assumed pre-existing cultural entity but rather constitutes a "middle ground" of "urban social sustainability" which presupposes "the emergence and maintenance of 'policies and institutions that have the overall effect of integrating diverse groups and cultural practices in a just and equitable fashion'" (Ruble 2005, 81). Ruble emphasizes study of the political process.

Scholars concerned with the capacity of a city to provide politically equitable public space (such as Purcell 2003; Mitchell 2003; see also Chapter V) share a vision of urbanity in the tradition of Sennett and Habermas. Tajbakhsh describes the underlying component of this modern city as "radical democratic ideas [that] are clearly inspired by [the] goal of openness to the voice, dignity, and autonomy of the other, of not decrying the fact that there are more questions than answers" (2001, 162). Many scholars discuss this issue precisely in the context of immigration of ethnic Others (e.g. Ash and Thrift 2002; Watson 2006), but in fact many cities desperately need a more equitable sharing of power in urban space among their ostensibly Same-As residents as well as among newcomers.

Moving towards an analysis of space

St. Petersburg is confronting the need to become more heterogenetic—to create diversity capital—and to grow in radical democracy. How is the city both enabling and resisting this process? And what factors help to explain the cooperation and resistance?

In approaching these issues through cultural geography, I reframe these scholars' questions: Does St. Petersburg have the capacity to let its spaces become heterogenetic to the point of being used for divergent practices by different groups, or to the point of allowing new groups to redefine important spaces or uses for existing spaces? Are there spaces that permit a "middle ground" to emerge, or that allow incoming migrants to transform them? What is the constitution of spaces that are open to the autonomy of the other? While not asserting that answers to these questions will solve the respective issues, I do assert that they can offer insight into the two main questions about the Baltic Pearl raised above.

Further, the diverse ethnographic basis for this study allows me to reframe the definition of migrant, allowing me to knit the two questions together even more tightly. "Chinese" are migrants of various kinds—investors, students, entrepreneurs, laborers. But "Russians" are migrants, too; both groups are caught up in a multi-scaled global reorganization of space that is nevertheless perceptible to different degrees depending on an observer's location. As Sassen wrote provocatively in her influential study, "we are still using the language of immigration to describe the process" of the transnationalization of labor (1998, 15). She adds,

> What we still narrate in the language of immigration and ethnicity, I would argue,
> is actually a series of processes having to do with the globalization of economic

activity, of cultural activity, of identity formation. Too often immigration and ethnicity are constituted as otherness. Understanding them as a set of processes whereby global elements are localized, international labor markets are constituted, and cultures from all over the world are de- and reterritorialized, puts them right there at the center with the internationalization of capital as a fundamental aspect of globalization. (1998, 15)

While I err on the side of naming "immigration and ethnicity" as otherness in this study due to the dominance of this orientation in Russian society, I adopt as one of the goals of this study the achievement of a new "language" to describe the processes to which Sassen refers. As described further below, a careful consideration of how space may be used and conceived will ground this attempt. I suggest that Russian residents in St. Petersburg who were among my interviewees are involuntary migrants into a new globalized world, rather as a prominent St. Petersburg writer described his own sensation in 1991 of completing a *Journey from Leningrad to St. Petersburg* (Kuraev 1996). Based on Sassen's principles, one could also argue that labor becomes transnationalized not only through the arrival of new groups called "migrants" but also the local restructuring of labor roles to more resemble a global hierarchy; for Russia we might think here of the rise of managers, or "*menejery.*" This restructuring is also often accompanied by social polarization among the prior residents even before "labor migrants" arrive.

Tajbakhsh reinforces Sassen's assertion and suggests its extension into analysis of urban space:

continued global immigration flows have created a heightened degree of cultural, ethnic, and linguistic pluralism among the identities of the city's inhabitants. In conjunction with vastly expanded communication technologies and media, this has led to intensified exposure to other cultural identities, resulting in conflict, mutual influence and interpenetration, or forms of accommodation. This is not a wholly new phenomenon. It is an acceleration of dynamics that have

characterized much of modern history, but *we do need new ways of understanding it.*
... the transformation of urban space [which he discusses for the United States] means that *the relevant spaces within which individuals create meaning and that structure their world are more numerous, fluid, and overlapping than in the past.* (2001, 163; emphasis added)

As described in Chapter II, the methodology of the empirical section of this study aimed to capture thick descriptions of "the relevant spaces within which individuals create meaning and that structure their world," assuming that "mutual influence and interpenetration" take place during meetings between city residents in these spaces. However, this study also hopes to treat "conflict" honestly; thus, as well as making space for and giving voice to the comments of Chinese migrants to St. Petersburg, it articulates locals' description of "relevant spaces" as an active, dynamic factor in accommodation as well as resistance to newcomers. Placed into the context of higher-scale processes, as outlined in Chapter I, such descriptions offer considerable information about these "relevant spaces" and, by extension, about St. Petersburg's capacity to adapt to globalization.

I initially set out to do two different research projects simultaneously: one about the post-Soviet transformation in conceptions of space per se, and one based around the Baltic Pearl about the post-Soviet reaction to a new migration stream, i.e. Chinese. Principally, though, I saw the second project as embedded in and surrounded by the first one. I did not want to do research on transnational identity; I wanted to focus on perception of space and modes of capturing that perception. So a project focused on the Baltic Pearl became a project about how soliciting spatial perceptions from a new

"migrant" group of residents—simultaneously insiders and outsiders—could introduce new insights into an examination of post-Soviet space.

Chapter Summary

Chapter II lays out the context essential for an understanding of the case study chapters. The first part sketches St. Petersburg's history and the crossroads at which the city finds itself. This part is followed by three sections that provide essential factual information and theoretical context for the study at the "privileged scales" of geopolitics and global urban development. The first section summarizes relevant contextual literature on the post-Soviet transformation. The second section summarizes work on urban mega-projects. The third section outlines what we currently know about Sino-Russian geopolitical relations as a frame for city-to-city relations.

Chapter III develops the theoretical model which I propose in order to interpret data gathered at different scales in chapters 3-5. It lays out the design and goals of ethnographic interviews and mapping, and develops the model for spatial analysis at various scales based on a discussion of "legibility" that draws on the work of several scholars and a new analysis of Lefebvre's *Production of Space*.

Chapter IV analyzes texts relating to the Baltic Pearl; the design books produced for investors and city advisory committees; and numerous interviews with city planners, architects, and Baltic Pearl employees. It examines the different vocabularies of legibility used by those closely involved in conceiving and building a transforming city and show the Baltic Pearl caught in the confrontation between different actors within St. Petersburg.

Chapter V analyzes over 1500 entries on a *Nevastroyka* chatroom covering the Baltic Pearl development; a survey of 350 city residents in districts adjoining the project site; protests against a wide range of construction in the city; interviews touching on issues of ethnicity and space; and participant observation with three groups of protesters at demonstrations and city hearings. Protests over large urban renewal projects are framed as a struggle over legibility that pits resident needs and visions against the transformation of St. Petersburg into a symbolic landscape for attracting international capital and a transportation node at the international scale.

Chapter VI makes use of extensive ethnographic interviews and a classic geographical subject-mapping approach to create an individual-scale angle on transnational adaptation. Paired Russian and Chinese resident interviews produced maps of urban legibility at the individual scale as well as commentary on the legibility (and usability) of the city as a whole.

Chapter VII concludes by addressing the contradictions and complementarity between the data gathered at different scales and offering a summary of new avenues for research and interpretation suggested by the work as a whole.

CHAPTER II

THE BROADER SPATIAL CONTEXT OF POST-SOVIET ST. PETERSBURG

In June 2006, high-level government representatives from Russia and China broke

ground for a massive construction project in St. Petersburg financed by five firms from

Shanghai, China, called the "Baltic Pearl." The plan for a 205 hectare multi-use district is

projected to include more than one million square meters of housing, 400-800 thousand

square meters of retail and office space, parks and schools (see Map 2.1). According to

reports, this is the largest single investment project that Chinese firms have initiated

outside the borders of China, totaling at least 1.25 billion dollars—the first installment in

a reported 30 billion dollars of investment planned over the next five years. The project

has already drawn St. Petersburg into the international circles of architectural design

competition, and signals its increased prominence within Russia and in northwest Europe

as a transportation hub and terminus for oil exports. Some observers feel that the

Petersburg administration offered the land for the "Chinese quarter" in a kind of

geopolitical exchange—for Chinese investment in improvements to the Moscow-

Petersburg highway and railroad infrastructure, or to sweeten conditions for Russian

delivery of oil to China (Zasul'kin 2005).

The Baltic Pearl embodies Russia's confrontation with the globalizing pressures

of new economic processes and new migration streams. The aim of the case study

presented here is to develop a way of studying this confrontation through the spatial
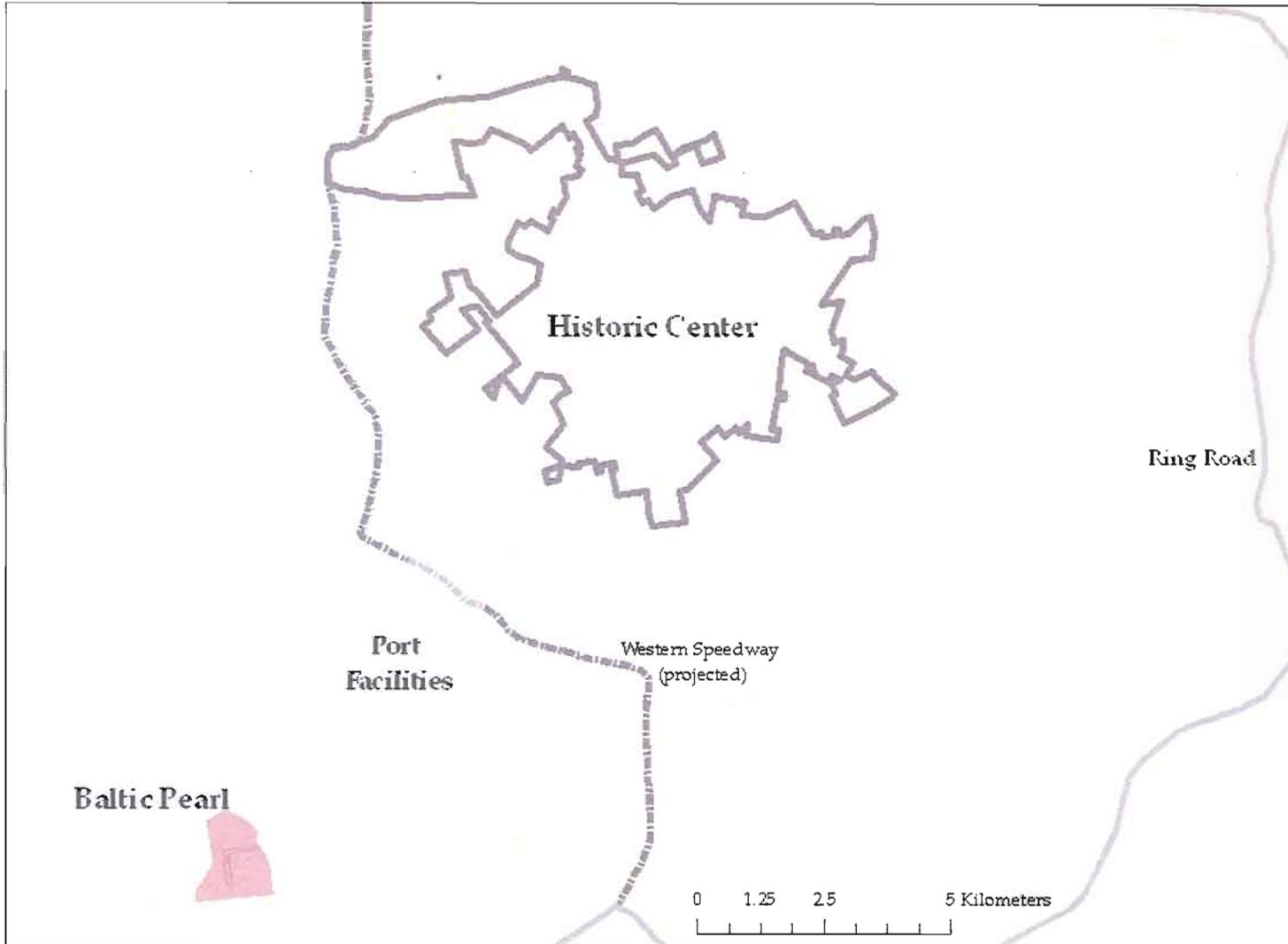
Map 2.1. The Baltic Pearl relative to the historic center, including the boundary of the Historical Preservation Zone.

diversity impelled by globalization—both of different types of discrete expanses (such as mall spaces) and different smaller forms that occupy space (such as architectural forms). Russian residents of St. Petersburg are objects of economic dispossession, while Chinese residents are objects of xenophobic reactions to their presence. However, these two groups (ostensibly) share the same urban spaces. This fact allowed consideration of the ways in which the same site could be the site of dispossession for Russians and exclusion for Chinese; it also allowed exploration of the ways in which Russians and Chinese could come to share narratives and practices for the same space.

The study treated both Chinese and Russian respondents as inhabitants of St. Petersburg, with equivalent abilities to judge the city's success as an "urban" phenomenon. Using qualitative methods and spatial analysis, I conducted in-depth study of the attitudes of and interactions between city institutions and average residents in order to generate new conceptual categories for evaluating Russia's current and future development. I posed questions focused on the microscale interactions of city residents with the urban environment, such as: How do different individuals and groups in Russia (and in China) see and describe the elements of a new spatial diversity? How understandable is it for them? What vocabularies do they use to describe it? And what results when different understandings of the same material spaces have to overlap and coexist? Study of the negotiations that take place over "new" spaces helps to reveal the outlines of contrasting spatial assumptions that operate in the efforts of different groups, and thus helps to explain the prospects for future cooperation or misunderstanding.

Chapter Summary

While phenomena at fine scales must be studied in order to grasp important elements of this development, certainly there is a larger context. There are factors affecting St. Petersburg's growth, both those remaining from the Soviet era and those resulting from new economic pressures. There are also factors operating at broader scales involving global economic forces, allegedly essential infrastructure projects, and state-to-state relations. This scale of the context is of course essential, and the first part of this chapter outlines three important issues that affect the Baltic Pearl.

The first of these is Russia's transformation—its confrontation with globalization and the resulting policy steps to place itself politically and economically vis-à-vis the United States, Europe, its former Central Asian republics, and its erstwhile rival China. Second is the trend to create urban mega-projects as an economic motor for a city, related to Putin's desire to raise St. Petersburg's profile and the associated need that the Russian economy has as a whole to make better use of this neglected port city with the potential for bridging infrastructural connections to prosperous Scandinavia, the Baltics and Central (and thence Western) Europe. Third is the trend to cooperate at a geopolitical level more closely with China over the past several years, especially marked by the formation of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2001, and the contradictory rise in xenophobia which has marked much of the post-Soviet period.

Frequently it is assumed that information gathered at these "privileged scales" exhausts what we need to know in order to understand a broad trend in geopolitics or socioeconomic change. The role played in the ongoing broad transformation by the issues

of dispossession and xenophobia—both significant "spoilers" for the success of all grand plans—cannot be captured at this scale. A Russian scholar of Chinese migration helps to explain why: Vilia Gel′bras notes a disjuncture between the attitudes of the national governments and the reality "on the ground" for populations trying to adapt to each other:

> The federal authorities have concentrated their attention on political relations with the PRC, on the development of "mega-projects." Together with the Chinese side they have declared the need for cooperation of separate territorial-administrative entities, both countries' firms, but have in sum done nothing to facilitate *essential conditions at the microlevel for productive economic interaction* between independent subjects of the two countries, for the civilized entrepreneurial activity of the population. (2001, 110; emphasis added)

Gel′bras's observation supports this study's rationale for examining phenomena at the "microlevel." In order to set the stage for a finer-scaled analysis of why Russian residents feel either dispossessed or xenophobic and how this affects Chinese migrants, the second part of the chapter sketches out the recent history of St. Petersburg including relevant commentary on the built environment. The chapter concludes with excerpts from an interview with a transportation planner that demonstrate some points of connection between the three broader "prestige scale" issues and the reality of urban life on the ground in that transforming city.

Context at the "Privileged Scale"

In order to understand the impact of the Baltic Pearl on microscale processes in St. Petersburg, it is important to establish how it fits into the wider scale of St. Petersburg's and Russia's development. First, I discuss literature on Russia's transformation, including the theoretical issues of regionalism and Soviet vs. post-Soviet space. Then, I review literature on urban mega-projects, particularly in Europe and North

America which have been the focus area of most Western-based scholars, but also in China. Finally, I review literature on what we currently know about Sino-Russian relations, and the issues raised for concepts of space at varying scales.

Russia's spatial transformation

Transition to where?

The end of the Soviet Union as a political entity provoked considerable discussion. Some observers acclaimed this positively as "the end of history" (Fukuyama 1992) and announced that all formerly communist countries would now commence a "transition" to a market system. Other observers, chiefly on the left, began to insist on "path dependency" related to the historical legacy of communism, and to caution that this transition would not happen either as quickly as expected or in the way that was expected (Pickles and Smith 1998; Segbers 2001). (The left had for a long time been evaluating the Russian system in particular based on expectations for a "real" Marxist economy, and Russia fell short for various reasons but not usually for the real ones; see Lefebvre [1974], Brenner [2004].) Russian scholars and commentators began to react with impatience to the idea that their economic destiny was predetermined, protesting that they might take a third way; nationalist writers claimed that Russia could unite with China against the capitalist West and form an anti-globalization coalition (Dugin 2004). Sykora (2008) insightfully points out that most of the former Soviet bloc made a systemic change that certainly took those economies out of their previous form depending on central planning, and suggests the word "transformation" instead of transition in order to capture the remaining degree of uncertainty (which is rather low for most Central European

countries, especially those with existing or impending EU membership). He recommends a more flexible understanding of "path dependency," which includes the formation of new path dependencies created by current choices (not only negative Soviet legacies) that will determine the outcome of ongoing changes.

As a result of these debates during the 1990s, an important tendency affecting Russia's spatial organization was substantially overlooked. Numerous articles at that time linked the market transition (an economic decentralization) to a parallel decentralization of government; scholars considered links between sections of the Russian Federation and nearby countries, and studied the impact on regional economies of growing political independence. Yet while Boris Yeltsin had famously told the federal subjects to "take all the power you can" in his struggle to weaken Mikhail Gorbachev, the result of the decentralization that ensued alarmed many observers in the state apparatus and sometimes in the private sector. The disorganization and low social and economic indicators of Yeltsin's tenure as president discredited many of the phenomena taking place in the 1990s, including political decentralization; for some, the dissolution of the Soviet Union itself came to be seen as a conspiracy induced by the West (some even accused Gorbachev of planning it, in spite of its being partially a ploy by Russian Federation President Yeltsin to reduce USSR Communist Party General Secretary Gorbachev's leverage against him).

Studies such as those by Turovskii (2003) and Petrov (2003) suggest a growing regionalism and lack of interest in nationalism, but by the time they were published, these phenomena were already being reversed. The political governance reforms that have

taken place over the years of Putin's terms have focused on returning power to the federal center and consolidating it there. Gel'man (2007) even uses the word "unification" to clarify this goal. The unification of power into one "vertical" structure has parallels in the unification of space. The situation thus resembles in some ways the type of homogenization of "global spaces" discussed in the West, but has specific Russian characteristics associated with arrangement of power and the (lack of) potential for public discussion or for elected officials to affect the process of decision-making.

Studies published at the end of the 1990s or early 2000s that were more alert to persistent mechanisms of the organization of Russian space provide still-useful frameworks for understanding what is happening now. For instance, in the same collection as the essay by Turovskii mentioned above, Manakov notes several persistent qualities:

> *Aspatialness* is the particularly weakened reaction of Russian culture to geographic space, in part to distance, borders and place. However, L.V. Smirniagin, who proposed using this term in relation to Russian culture, emphasizes the especially large role played by administrative boundaries in Russian space. In his opinion, in connection with the fact that Russian culture has a highly weakened ability to self-organize in space, 'it must perforce depend for this on the help of the state with its network of administrative-territorial divisions.' (Smirniagin 1999, cited in Manakov 2003)

Kaganskii provides an analysis of Soviet space and its structure that for its time was prescient (2001). He noted of general Soviet space that "it is almost impossible to put down roots [in it]" (2001, 143); Glazychev adds that "in the symbolic world of the Country of the Soviets there were no other points [of meaning]."

> The conventionality (adjusted for time zone) and uniform burden of the parades and demonstrations evoked the uniformity of the spatial structure of city centers independent of their size. (2005, 131)

That is, there was only one place (Moscow), where everything happened; all other places only repeated the same actions and participated in the same spatiality, were essentially in the forcefield of all Moscow's spatial solutions. Most of the sustained discussions of the lack of "ability to self-organize in space" proposed in these discussions usually focuses on the meso-scale, where true "regions" are unable to form on the expanse of the Russian polity.[1] Thus, it is important to discuss instances of "self-organization" when they occur at any scale; it is all the more crucial to understand the persistent forms of socio-spatial consciousness at subregional scales, for example in St. Petersburg, and later to ask whether they are transferable.[2]

Arguably, such concentrations of identity alternative to that proposed by the central state must occur in material places where the environment provides the material for constructing resistance (Scott 1998; see Chapter III). A certain amount of evidence suggests that areas far from Moscow often provided this opportunity during the Soviet period, but the opportunities were narrow in scope. Cities would seem to have this potential, but cities also face increasing pressure from the centralized state to do the work of connecting that state to global processes.

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[1] In fact, using the word "region" in Russian is deceptive because the term refers to the political-administrative divisions into *oblasts*, *okrugs*, and *respubliki*, many of which have differing political constitutions; Axenov uses the literal translation "federal subjects," which refers to these political subunits. Beyond terms such as Siberia and the Far East, scholars argue that Russia does not yet have self-organizing unique regions (Kaganskii 2007; Glazychev 2005).

[2] Not necessarily transferable for political reasons, but simply for the sake of healthy spatial development in Russia as a whole (Kaganskii 2007). Also note that in this context the concerns of Massey about locality studies (1994, 2007) are well taken, but possibly not as relevant to the post-Soviet situation where, as Kaganskii implies, all of the *real* and truly catalyzing processes are currently taking place, beneath the radar scope of the "experts" (2007 or 2004).

Trends in post-Soviet space

In fact, Russia/Moscow/the Kremlin may increasingly resist the idea that the Soviet Union should necessarily have dissolved, but it recognizes the economic exigencies of globalization. The challenge of how to prepare Russian space for this challenge looms large in discussions at all levels. Here, of course, the crucial question is whether to focus on isolated points on the Russian expanse that are more amenable to development and adaptation to globalization, or whether to try to spread development (and its benefits) evenly across the entire country.

This issue has been discussed thoroughly for Western Europe by Brenner (2002), where the conclusion can be generally summed up in this way: Western European states blunted the socialist-inspired political resistance nascent in the twentieth century by offering the sop of socio-economic development evenly distributed across space, co-opting local governments and workers' movements. In the new era of globalization, states have retreated from these efforts and now focus their energies on isolated sites which Brenner calls "premium networked spaces" (citing Graham 2000; Brenner 2004, 244; see discussion of "urban megaprojects" below). As Brenner puts it, "Global restructuring has entailed the systematic destabilization of inherited national political geographies and the construction of new scalar configurations" (2004, 174). But what is the "inherited national political geography" in Russia?

In the Soviet Union, while similar debates took place in the 1920s, the general consensus is that policies succeeded to a certain mechanical degree in spreading new cities evenly across the country's expanses, and economic plans attempted to equalize

well-being across widely divergent republics. However, Kaganskii also notes the stark

contrast between centers and peripheries at any scale, with Moscow as the primary Center

(2001, 2004); residents of the "socialist" USSR would have been grateful for a modicum

of the capitalist socio-economic-development sop that Brenner critiques in Western

Europe. The fact is that "premium networked spaces" have developed in Europe, but

there was a concurrent development of horizontal connections between places at various

scales that did not occur in the Soviet Union. Brenner worries that in post-1970s Europe

there occurred "an increasing functional disarticulation of major urban areas from their

peripheries and from other marginalized areas within the same national territory" (2004,

190), and while this may not have been ideal in European space, the Russian case is

arguably even more drastic. Kaganskii maintains his major critique of a lack of horizontal

connections between points in Russian space and the stubbornly-maintained (by the

Kremlin) primacy of the connection between everywhere and Moscow (2007); as

Vendina summarizes his thesis, "Contemporary Russian space has inherited the

fundamental particularities of Soviet organization of space, which was characterized...

by the domination of 'vertical, hierarchical, power relations' over 'horizontal, territorial,

everyday (*obydennye*)' relations" (2005a, 310).

Vendina proposes an approach that seems to privilege globalization and to retreat

from the philosophy of spreading the state's efforts evenly across space. She writes,

> In a 'compressing' world, where distances play an ever lesser role, the importance
> of the evenness of the exploitation [of space] recedes into the background, giving
> place to connectivity. ... To avoid [problems], it is essential to concentrate
> resources in the actual already established centers or aureoles of influence, and
> not fling them towards potential centers for the sake of even exploitation of space.
> (2005a, 330)

Some might argue that it is wishful thinking to hope for connectivity in the face of aggressive state control of the media and public space, but both scholars see potential for spontaneous spatial development in phenomena that they sense below the state's radar. The basis for Vendina's argument for accepting "archipelagoes of globalization" is the gradual development of ties not merely between Moscow and a range of locations, but also cross-border ties (between St. Petersburg and Helsinki, or between towns in the Russian Far East and northeastern China); she also sees promise in the rise of secondary cities in the "federal subjects," often the economic engines that can connect to the global economy and provide some political competition to the nominal capitals ("oblast center," etc.). Ultimately, these alternate nodes can promote the development of polycentrism instead of the Soviet hyper-centralization, a healthy condition for Russia's economy. (Kaganskii has an extended passage on this phenomenon in a talk that he gave in Moscow [2004].) In the cases of Brenner (and Harvey, below), the critique of point development contains a critique of the state's focus on isolated sites; in Vendina's endorsement of point development, the subtext is in fact processes that will escape the state's overt control once entrained. Further, Vendina is arguing for the very survival of Russia as an economically healthy entity, and thus she sees a need to support the "strongest focal points in Russian space" that can sustain direct contact with globalization and provide a web of connections to which other sites can link.

The Baltic Pearl is a project that will create a direct link with globalization in the forms of external investment, international architectural currents, and possibly migration; Vendina's is an argument that probably has cities other than Moscow and Petersburg in

view, but can still raise important questions about Petersburg and these projects. Will the Baltic Pearl ultimately promote the kind of polycentrism for which Vendina hopes? Gauging whether or not such projects can promote that kind of change in the structure of Russian space is a research agenda for the future.

Urban megaprojects

While Vendina and Kaganskii hope for polycentrism, it is important to remember that an even-more-common mechanism for, as Vendina has it, "concentrat[ing] resources in the actual already established centers or aureoles of influence" is urban megaprojects. Since the Baltic Pearl is itself an urban megaproject and occurs in the context of the growing resort to these projects to increase Petersburg's status, it is essential to consider what scholars have established about this phenomenon.

Harvey (2001) links urban megaprojects with the shift from urban "managerialism" to "entrepreneurialism," perceiving the growth in this governance trend at an early date. The contrast in emphasis that he perceived between the two approaches is that between "political economy of place" (entrepreneurialism) and "political economy of territory" (managerialism), where the latter intends "primarily to improve conditions of living or working within a particular jurisdiction," that is, spread over a larger area. By contrast, entrepreneurial projects that focus on isolated places "have the habit of becoming such a focus of public and political attention that they divert concern and even resources from the broader problems that may beset the region or territory as a whole" (2001, 353). Thus, what Harvey sees is the "repetitive and serial reproduction of certain

patterns of development… at the expense of local collective consumption for the working class and poor" (2001, 358).

This "repetitive and serial reproduction of certain patterns of development" is also formed by the "premium networked spaces" that Brenner and Graham noted, including stadiums as well as "skyscrapers, conference centres, hotels and luxury shopping streets" (Saito 2003, 292). Newman and Thornley (1996) note the way that such projects were increasingly used in Europe in order to promote cities in an interurban competition for capital investment, the Olympic Games (Newman 2007), and their population's loyalties. The general consensus at first was that such projects were an example of local sites taking on responsibility for economic improvement (e.g. Vicario et al. 2003); or a case of a local growth machine (see e.g. Logan and Molotch 1987) getting away from the state, constructing spaces that escaped the state's influence and connected directly to a global city network (note the parallel in sanguine enthusiasm to the rash of regionalism in Russian studies).

In the 2000s, numerous scholars have pointed out that urban megaprojects can actually fit quite closely into the project of a national state to increase its own competitiveness and prestige; in particular, scholars looking at China have made this point frequently (Gu & Tang 2002; Wu 2003; for Japan see Saito 2003). Discussing megaprojects in several Asian cities, Marshall calls them "global urban projects [,] very large and expensive urban projects at the forefront of a nation's development agenda." His further comments resonate directly with Harvey's concerns and speak to Vendina's hopes:

> These projects are produced with the purpose of enabling a stronger interrelationship with the global economy. As such, they have a very specific role to play. Because of this these projects do not represent broad visions of what a contemporary urbanity might be. ...[They] represent relatively narrow visions. ... There is a rather particular environment that is deemed appropriate to attract and keep the global elite and it should come as no surprise that these spaces are indeed remarkably alike. (Marshall 2003, 3)

Certainly some scholars have perceived the need of the Russian authorities to "perform" a visual similarity with world cities and spaces of economic success, even as the specific content of the sites created raise questions about the substance of their commitment to the principles that operate behind economic practices that produce profit (Sidorov 2000; Pagonis and Thornley 2000). Wu (2003) also perceives a mechanical driver behind the state's support of isolated spectacular projects, though; for former Second World countries such as Russia and China, "the only way to catch up with advanced nations is through state-backed strategic intervention to overcome the constraints of development" (1681).

In his study of urban megaprojects in Shanghai and Vancouver, Olds (2001) notes of the Pudong development in Shanghai that it was regarded as a *national* development zone, not just a municipal one (193), because it was seen precisely (as Marshall describes) as a vehicle for connecting to the global economy. It was treated as empty space, perhaps a hint that the national state tends to erase prior historical signification from a site targeted for development (in the case of Pudong, farms; in the case of St. Petersburg, Finnish villages). Further, he notes the concept in Chinese of "*zhongdian chengshi*" or key point cities (2001, 198) which become, in Harvey's words, "landing strips" for foreign capital. This raises several questions about the Baltic Pearl

development: how "national" is the chosen site itself for either China or Russia? What sorts of promises does it hold for actually locating increased global connections or for helping Petersburg to gain an international presence? How great a role do conversations play about how the Baltic Pearl will integrate with the rest of the city's space, or does it seem adequate that it relate to a global space? And in each case, of what do the integrated connections consist?

Although Harvey phrases the problems resulting from urban megaprojects as losing sight of "local collective consumption for the working class and poor" (2001, 360), a more basic problem that must be isolated (and that he must perceive somewhere!) is the construction of justifications for privileging the body of the state over the individual bodies of citizens—that is, what images are used, embedded in what scales and contexts, to persuade people that the national scale of economic ambition trumps their daily scaled experience of individual success? Such large projects are always promised to bring broader benefits (Crot 2006). In a case where an urban megaproject coincides with such a dramatic transition in socio-spatial norms as is taking place in St. Petersburg, what elements of the process can be isolated for further analysis?

If municipalities and regions have been gradually deprived of all political and economic autonomy, and such autonomy is seen as threatening, how will a self-contained project such as the Baltic Pearl affect the surrounding space?

Sino-Russian relations

The Baltic Pearl offers an excellent empirical example for examining the state of Sino-Russian relations at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In addition to the aspects already indicated above, the project allows us to observe how this cooperation plays out "on the ground." That is: where in space is the connection between Russia and China enacted?

The most familiar aspect of the rapprochement between Moscow and Beijing is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a treaty group that unites Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kirgizia and Tadjikistan. The original document, the "Russian-Chinese Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Co-operation" was signed by Jiang Zemin and Vladimir Putin in Moscow on July 16, 2001. One Russian commentator (Gusev 2007) suggests that the main rhetorical reason given for the SCO is defense against Islamic-based terrorism that has supposedly arisen in Central Asia (including among the Uighurs in western China and Muslims in south central Russia). There is some thought that in the post-9/11 era Russia and China are seeking to present a unified front against the Western groupings that link the EU and the U.S.

There is some disagreement among scholars of Sino-Chinese relations about whether closer relations with China are a good idea. Galenovich (2003) claims that the SCO treaty was initiated by Jiang, but in further discussion complains that it is not a treaty of alliance, just of "friendship between peoples" (instead of between "states"; 2003, 342-352) and expresses considerable reservations about the transparency of China's goals. Rakhmanin (2002) by contrast supports strongly the idea of China as the

chief geopolitical partner for Russia, suggesting that they have "almost identical interests in foreign policy" (2002, 389) and should stand against "thoughtless Atlantic passions" (2002, 396).

A sketch of relations between "Russia" and "China" in the twentieth century shows why there is some room for multiplicity in evaluations of their friendship.

Chinese migration to Tsarist and Soviet Russia.

The topic of Chinese migration to Russia has its roots in the complicated ethnic and territorial interactions in what is today the Russian Far East, particularly around what Russians call the Amur River and the Maritime Province area.

Russian explorations of the eastern part of the Eurasian continent brought explorers into contact with Manchu and Han peoples in the 17th century. Native peoples, Manchu, and Han Chinese were living in the area just north of the Amur River when Russians arrived; the relationship of these inhabitants to the imperial center of Beijing was peripheral and was constituted through tithes and taxing rather than strict border control. Thus, this area was loosely controlled, and in subsequent history went back and forth between "Russia" and "China." The consolidation of certain of these territories as "Russia" from roughly 1689 to 1909 redefined "Chinese" migration into them, since in fact the Yongzheng Emperor banned outward migration per se of Chinese until 1893 (Saveliev 2002). There was an oscillation in Russian attitudes to previously settled Manchu, Daurian, and Han Chinese and to additional labor migration that occurred as Russian authorities developed cities and trade infrastructure, including the railroads.

Construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway began in 1891, and unskilled Chinese labor came to work on it. A large number of Russian peasants flowed into the Russian Far East from 1900-1914 as part of Petr Stolypin's program for land reform and far eastern development, based partly on the work of the Committee for Populating the Far East, established in 1909. As the idea of the Russian state developed in the Far East, anxiety grew that a large Chinese presence in what became the "border" regions would threaten control over these territories, and thus the unity of the Russian state. Early anxiety about Chinese migration into Russia is reflected in the limitation on Chinese residence permits to Smolensk, Murmansk, Riga, Novgorod, Karelia, St. Petersburg, and Moscow.

After the victory of the Chinese Communist Party over its rivals for governmental power in 1949, Mao Tse Dong visited Joseph Stalin in Moscow. Two months of talks culminated in several years of exchanging students and experts (Galenovich 2003). "During the years of cooperation [1951-1962], about 38, 000 Chinese citizens studied or did internships in Soviet tertiary institutions, research and planning institutes, enterprises and construction sites" (Larin 2003, 153). A large number of China's best students (more than 11, 000) came to study engineering and other industry-related topics, creating a cadre of Russian speakers in China. Thousands of Soviet experts in industry, dam building, and infrastructure also spent years in various parts of China in the early 1950s, helping the new Chinese Communist government to develop its economic base. Still, apart from a focus on educated migrants and political rhetoric, anxiety remained. From 1950-1955 there were roughly 350,000 Chinese in Russia who came to solve the post-war

labor shortage (Saveliev 2002). In 1954 Khrushchev even formulated a plan to invite up to one million workers into the USSR to work on lumber processing, but this plan was reversed due to fears of a Chinese takeover in the Far East (Larin 2003, 154).

In 1959, the Soviet leadership and Mao quarreled over communist ideology. Chinese were deported from Russia in mass numbers, and Mao instituted a ban on out-migration which lasted through the 1970s. In 1959, about 26, 000 Chinese were left in Russia. Throughout the period from 1960-1980 there were minimal numbers of Chinese in the Soviet Union, including the Russian Federal Republic. In 1989, there were reportedly 11, 335 Chinese living in the Russian part of the USSR, of whom only 3700 still spoke Chinese as their first language (Larin 2003). Thus the phenomenon of large numbers of Chinese migrants which followed in the 1990s surprised many Russians, for whom Chinese had become exotic.

Chinese migration to the Russian Federation

After Mao Tse Dong's death in 1978, the stigma attached to emigration was reversed (Nyiri 2002). A new Chinese law in 1985 liberalized travel abroad. From 1986 onward, after Gorbachev had made an agreement for work visas, roughly 20 000 Chinese contract laborers were invited to Russia yearly. In 1992, Russia and China even agreed on visa-free travel between the two countries, but the numbers of migrants were so high that the Russian government pulled back from this agreement and reinstituted visa-based travel in 1993. Yet the numbers of Chinese crossing the border to engage in trade in the Russian Far East and Siberia was in many cases exceeded by the numbers of Russians

crossing the border into China in order to buy cheap goods for resale in Russia (Larin 2003).

The main sources of recent Chinese migration are concentrated in the four northeast provinces which lie closest to the Russan Far East: Heilongjiang, Jilin, Liaoning, and Inner Mongolia; the overwhelming percentage of migrants to Irkutsk, Khabarovsk and Vladivostok have come from here (Gel'bras 2004). Urban areas in the Far East are the main destinations, but Moscow also has a large Chinese community. In St. Petersburg, more than two thirds of the 8000 Chinese are students.

Anxiety over political control of the Far East has resurfaced in the post-1990 period, mostly in the western part of the country. Residents along the Russian-Chinese border tend to recognize the economic necessity of Chinese labor and trade. At the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in April 2008, regional scholars asserted that migration numbers are exaggerated by local politicians who seek more attention from Moscow and thus warn of millions of illegal Chinese migrants (N. Ryzhova, T. Troyakova). Examination of border control records show that 99% of Chinese entering Russia return to China (Primorsky Krai 1998 [Larin 2003]), but those who see Chinese migration as a threat argue that the decreasing population of the eastern areas—so far from the political center of Russia and so poorly served by decaying transportation infrastructure and expensive overland travel—will not be able to sustain Russian control of the area, and that China will accomplish a slow takeover, first economically and then politically. There is an associated perception that China would

like to control the extraction of Russia's natural resources, including natural gas and timber, rather than pay for them.

Developments since 1990

Although the SCO marks a new chapter in Sino-Russian relations, considerable groundwork had been laid for this cooperation in the 1990s. In 1991, Gorbachev signed an agreement with the Chinese government moving the two countries towards a final agreement about the eastern border, which had remained in dispute (further negotiations in 2000 and 2005 completed the agreement). In 1996, Boris Yeltsin traveled to Beijing to meet with Jiang Zemin where the two leaders signed the Joint Declaration on the Guidelines for Mutual Relations between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation. In 1997, prime ministers Li Peng and Chernomyrdin signed an agreement about regular meetings between the two countries' heads, which took place five times before 2000; these meetings also established a basis for cooperation in trade, although friction over financial aspects, such as banking regulations, remained (Rakhmanin 2002, 371-373). The Chinese government sought cooperation with the Russian government for natural resource projects, achieving the promise to construct "a pipeline from the Kovyktin condensed gas source in the Irkutsk oblast to [Shandong Province in] China" (Rakhmanin 2002, 377). In 1999, Chinese government officials signed agreements about acquiring real estate in Moscow for a Chinese business center.[3]

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[3] This is probably the Huamin Park project northeast of Moscow near the Botanical Garden and exhibition center. In spite of controversy, this project seems to be going forward. Although this project also seems to have government support, no text relating to it ever mentions the Baltic Pearl project in St. Petersburg, and public statements call it, too, the "largest Chinese investment project" in Russia.

Along with the SCO treaty in 2001, the two governments formed the "Russian-Chinese Committee on Friendship, Peace and Development." Conditions for the migration of Chinese capital into Russia have been sought actively. In June 2004, the first Russian-Chinese Investment Forum was held in Khabarovsk, where agreements for several investment projects were signed; the second was held in St. Petersburg in June 2005, during which the Baltic Pearl consortium signed another agreement for the development of their 180-hectare site southwest of the city. A third forum was organized in Shanghai and Beijing in November 2006, and some meetings with Chinese contacts were part of an Economic Forum held in Sochi in September 2007. Russian Minister of Finance German Gref has noted that Russia must move away from trade based on commodity exports and must develop export of value-added products and Russian technological expertise to Chinese industry. These policies, however, focus on financial flows and not on the flows of human labor.

At the 2005 forum, Finance Minister German Gref emphasized the need for cooperation between the two countries. As reported online by InvestMarket.ru on June 9, in his speech at that meeting Gref asserted an important role for St. Petersburg in channeling Chinese investment: "[This city] should facilitate the widening geography of Chinese investment not only in the regions of Eastern Siberia and the Far East, but also the European part of Russia." He expressed the hope that Russia could expand its exports of expertise and products in the area of technology, transport, and telecommunications, as well as metallurgy; he also suggested that China should hire Russians as subcontractors to help rebuild factories originally built in China with the help of Soviet Russian experts.

However, he foresaw obstacles to the flow of mutual direct investment; he acknowledged that corruption and administrative barriers created problems for all investors in Russia (*St. Petersburg Times*, 6/10/05).

Some Chinese investors see Russia as an attractive destination because its economic regulations are not yet as strict or thorough as in the West; since the competition is lower, Chinese can attain a higher status more quickly (Li, interview, 2008). Many have opened Chinese restaurants in the cities (there are reputedly more than 200 in St. Petersburg). Many may have other business interests as well, such as importing Chinese consumer goods and construction materials.

Chinatowns, Labor Deficit, and Investment Conditions

Three important issues complete the context for the Baltic Pearl as it represents Sino-Russian relations and as it enters into Russian space. These are: attitudes to concentrations of Chinese and to enclaves in general; the issue of Russia demographic decline, labor deficits, and migration; and local investment policies that promote the in-migration of capital.

"Chinese" space

There are rarely concentrated neighborhood enclaves of Chinese living in Russian cities (Saveliev 2002); they do not tend to live in compact areas, although scholars have reported observing individual buildings and street-scale areas that allow only Chinese to enter (Gel'bras 2004). A low proportion of Chinese resident in Russia obtain citizenship. The 2002 census reported a total of 34, 664 naturalized Chinese across the Russian

Federation; but for example the census reports 12, 801 naturalized Chinese in Moscow, while estimates of the total number in fact range from 20 to 40 thousand (Gel'bras 2002). Gel'bras (2004) estimated that there were about 400-500 thousand Chinese in Russia at the time of his surveys.

Russian commentators often express anxiety about the criminality of the Chinese migrant community, but scholars who study the issue have noted that Chinese criminality is conditioned by the "criminal character of Russian reality" (Larin 2003; see also Gel'bras 2004; Zaionchkovskaia 2005). In the Far East, for example, local regulatory conditions do not favor the establishment of Chinese small business (Shkurkin 2002). Gel'bras suggests that Russia must change its policies in order to reduce the tendency to form Chinese "*zemliachestva*" which exist to channel profits back to China and not into the Russian economy. His 2002 surveys showed that only from 10-15% of resident Chinese intend to stay in Russia permanently. The difficulties of obtaining citizenship and integrating into Russian society suggest that Chinese migration to Russia will continue to be characterized by sojourning and chiefly economic motives.

Galenovich, who expresses suspicion in his evaluation of China's intentions towards Russia, cautions about the presence of "Chinese" space:

> On our territory appear 'micro-Chinatowns' where Chinese live with their own rules and into which neither our citizens nor the representatives of our authority structures are permitted to enter. In fact, on our territory functions a huge mechanism isolated from the life of Russia, her laws and authorities, a kind of 'Chinese world' or even a 'Chinese octopus' which in a centrally organized way sucks from us tens of billions of dollars yearly. (2003, 374)

By contrast, Gel'bras notes in his study of Chinese migration to the Russian Far East that a successful strategy for settlement in the cities he studied have been mini-fiefdoms run

by Chinese businessmen, where the entrepreneurs maintain closed compounds for workers and their small manufacturing facilities. Gel'bras suggests that these compact self-governed units—at once a protection from anti-ethnic feeling and a way of avoiding inefficient Russian work practices – may be a "new form for mastering the Russian expanses" (*novaia forma osvoeniia russkikh prostorov*; 2001, 54).

Migration and labor shortages

In certain circles of Russian policy and scholarship, there are debates raging over two issues that relate to Chinese migration and Russia's demographic decline: the Russian labor deficit and the low population of the Russian Far East. Some scholars (Zaionchkovskaia 2005) have argued that Russia will not be able to supply its future labor needs with its own population, even if the birthrate increases drastically as a result of government policies. She suggests that Russia will have to fill its labor gap with Chinese migrants. In contrast, other scholars (Larin 2003) see an increasing Chinese presence as a threat and suggest that the labor deficit can be filled with Russian migrants from the former republics; in this view, the population of the Russian Far East must be sustained with ethnic Russians and not allowed to become Chinese, because of the risks of political loyalty to Beijing rather than to Moscow. The proportion of ethnic Russians willing to leave the former republics or the near abroad and move to the Far East is, however, probably quite low.

Currently, as reflected in data gathered for this project, low-skilled jobs in construction are filled by Tadjiks and Moldovans. At the beginning of research, use of Chinese workers for construction of the Baltic Pearl was a highly controversial question

and the city administration promised that the project would employ Russian labor.

However, in July 2008, staff at the site stated that all construction laborers were Chinese

and that more would continue to arrive; dormitories and a cafeteria building were visible

from the main building. Whether this will have a permanent effect on the labor market in

St. Petersburg remains to be seen.

Some recent research on Chinese migration to Russia suggests that the proportion

of unskilled labor (of the sort needed to fill Russia's needs) is not as high as some might

think. In fact, many Chinese migrants are educated entrepreneurs who seek to establish

their own businesses, not to work for Russians (Gel'bras 2004).

Strategic investors in Russian space

In October 2003, Valentina Matvienko was elected City Governor of St.

Petersburg. In December, her administration created a new Committee on Investment and

Strategic Projects. The mandate of this committee was to reach out to investors who

could bring substantial investment to the city. Any projects that required planning

supervision, such as the Baltic Pearl, would also fall under the jurisdiction of the

Committee on Urban Development and Architecture (KGA).

Andrei Mikhailenko was the first chairman of this new committee. On December

22, 2003, the weekly *Delo* reported that he promised a change in the city's investment

policies.

> … the newcomer chairman himself has already managed to share his opinions
> about the investment policy of St. Petersburg with the public. In part, he
> announced the necessity of forming in Petersburg 'a unified investment window.'
> And he also specified a series of strategic projects, the realization of which would
> become the first task of his committee. In that group is the construction of a

second stage for the Mariinsky Theater, the Western Diameter of the ring road,
and also unnamed 'projects of private capital without state interests.'
(Gladyshcheva, 12/22/03, http://www.idelo.ru/307/8.html)

In June 2004, Maksim Sokolov replaced as chairman of the committee (Basic

Characteristics), and continues to serve as of early 2008. Sokolov was thus the

committee's chairman at all stages of the official negotiations between St. Petersburg and

the Baltic Pearl investment consortium.

Given the growing reluctance of Western institutions to invest in St. Petersburg

and other Russian locations (Buckley and Mini 2000), the large sums promised by the

Chinese hold great appeal. In May 2005, the *St. Petersburg Times* reported that Chinese

investment might reach $12 billion by 2020 (*St. Petersburg Times*, 5/17/05). The Baltic

Pearl alone promised $1.5 billion (*St. Petersburg Times*, 6/10/05). Other city officials

hope that Chinese firms and the Chinese government will invest in local infrastructure,

such as projected tunnels under the Neva River.

Contemporary Shifts on the Horizon

Given this broader context, what is the nature of the material landscape into which

the Baltic Pearl enters?

A sleepy, dim Petersburg emerged from the 1980s suddenly to reclaim its original

name in 1991 as a gesture towards its pre-revolutionary status as a governmental,

industrial, and cultural center of modernizing Russia. The city that I first knew was

thickly layered in stories of history and literature that helped local residents to sustain a

sense of self independent from state rhetoric, and the surfaces of its buildings were

covered in plaques commemorating famous residents, events, and flood levels. It was a

paradoxical mixture of the pseudo-democratic access brought by Soviet ideology (parks, museums, cheap—if almost nonexistent—restaurants and cafeterias) along with patches of anti-Soviet resistance sustained by local memory and subcultures oriented to recovering the city's past. It combined a shocking level of urban decay (softened by the culture-inspired affection) and a high level of attendance at cultural events.

This unique position as an island of place-identity in fact makes Petersburg an excellent site through which to examine the kinds of changes facing Russia as a whole. Its long neglect by official building policies brings it closer to its provincial counterparts, even as its relative prominence between those counterparts and Moscow has made it a logical destination for globalizing trends seeking to gain a foothold in post-Soviet Russia (i.e. it has more resources and services than smaller cities, but seems to promise a better chance of success than highly competitive and highly controlled Moscow). The kinds of changes taking place affect the sleepy backwater identity by reconnecting St. Petersburg with Europe on the one hand, and reestablishing its place in the hierarchy of Russian cities on the other; both trends have powerful implications for local landscapes and for the socio-political identity of late Soviet Leningrad.

Petersburg as "space of representation" for cultural Europe

Associating St. Petersburg with Europe in almost any context seems irreproachable and transparent (e.g. Turovskii 2003). St. Petersburg has extensive connections with European culture, given its architecture and many pro-Western traditions, right down to the different character of its street names (Buckler 2005). Of course St. Petersburg is European; of course in its development, it would strive to build

on that legacy. There was a period in the 1990s, associated with the mayoral terms of

Anatolii Sobchak, when serious discussions took place in St. Petersburg about whether

the city should seek a separate federal status and recreate itself as a segment of Russian

space able to connect with Europe—in particular—on its own terms, without the control

of Moscow (see e.g. Kotsiubinskii 2004).[4] Petersburg's historical connection to Europe

seemed to offer independence from Moscow and the space that Moscow controls.

With the accession of Vladimir Putin to the role of president in 2000, this changed

dramatically. The move by the "center" to recall powers that had been relinquished to the

"regions" began almost immediately in a bid to remedy the many failures of the policy of

regional autonomy.

City Governor Valentina Matvienko mentioned "Europe" or used the adjective

"European" between ten and twelve times in each of her first four Annual Addresses

(2004-2007); in her 2008 speech she uses a form of the word five times. The persistence

of this usage demonstrates at least that the invocation of "Europe" in the St. Petersburg

context remains useful, if not necessary, in communicating with her audience and in

setting out her ambitions for the city's future. She only uses the word "Eurasia" once, and

makes little reference to China beyond mentions of the Baltic Pearl (see Chapter IV).

This belies the substantial hopes placed in Chinese investment by many city

officials. In 2005, Matvienko stated that "Petersburg has become one of the most

attractive platforms for investment in Europe" (Annual Address, March), even as she

looked to the large amounts of promised Chinese investment (*St. Petersburg Times*,

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[4] This collection's date of publication is significant. Although by publishing inertia, as in the West, articles promoting regional independence continued to appear into the 2000s, the time of regionalism had passed. All articles collected in *Petersburg without Russia* were actually written and published in 1998 and 1999.

5/17/05). In 2006, she warned that "we must dynamically and flexibly react to the world paradigm (*mirovaia koniunktura*)," emphasizing the need to adapt (Annual Address, March). She presents St. Petersburg as European space in order to link it to its history and the vision of European prosperity, but meanwhile looks to China for an influx of capital.

Petersburg as "space of representation" for Russian state spatial practices

Meanwhile, "Moscow/the Kremlin" (impelled largely by Putin, according to rumor and many observers) is now reshaping Petersburg according to its own notions of Russian urban hierarchy, including transferring some federal-level functions to the city. Understood at this scale, within Russia, St. Petersburg would take on the role of industrial engine, freeing Moscow as the post-industrial global city to solidify its position as a "world city" (Solodilov, interview, 10/17/06).

City Governor Matvienko provided an official statement of this policy in her 2004 speech:

> The point of orientation for us is the speech made by the President of the Russian Federation to the Federal Assembly, for the basic goals and tasks of St. Petersburg are inseparable from the goals and tasks of Russia. ... The historical mission of our city consists in becoming the leader of Russian modernization and becoming the center for birth and realization of innovative ideas as well as the conservation of the national cultural heritage and the intellectual potential of Russia. (Annual Address, June)

As part of embodying this symbolism in the built environment of the city, plans to shift the federal-level Constitutional Court from Moscow to Petersburg have been underway for several years. While this transfer of a politically powerful state organ brings clear potential benefits to Petersburg in prestige, the intrusion of this single event into the existing urban fabric and socio-spatial traditions is drastic. The building in which the

Court is now housed is the former compound of the Senate and Synod, the two matching buildings of Russian governmentality established by Peter the Great. On the square before these two buildings, the Decembrist Uprising took place in 1825, the most significant show of opposition to the Tsarist regime until 1905. The statue of Peter the Great stands in that square. During the Soviet period, the buildings housed the State Archives, a notoriously closed space but a source of intellectual liberation and historical memory when access to them was loosened in the 1990s for both local and foreign researchers. The removal of this collection to a location far outside the city center enraged some locals, and the insertion of a space of state power (instead of this musty, frumpy embodiment of knowledge against the state) strikes many as significant. Additionally, the area targeted for construction of housing for the Court staff was Krestovskii Island; this area is fast becoming a neighborhood of wealthy enclaves, but "average" residents still live there and the western half of the island has long been a huge and beloved public park. Thus, while the new presence of the Constitutional Court might be intended to inspire pride, it also intrudes violently into spaces that have functioned until now for the formation of local attachments and identities. St. Petersburg, thus, is caught between these realities of its historical identity as well as the new Russian imperialism.

It remains to say a few words about the current material reality of St. Petersburg—its built environment and land use policies—that grounds a more detailed discussion of the Baltic Pearl.

The inherited built environment of Leningrad

The overall structure of St. Petersburg has clearly demarcated types of historical development. The central historical core extends from the creek Chernaia Rechka in the north to the Obvodny Canal in the south, and as far east as the southward bend of the Neva River at the Aleksandr-Nevsky Monastery. Surrounding this core, and perforating it in places, is a belt of late-nineteenth-century and twentieth-century industrial parks; the twentieth-century additions adhered to the 1920s Garden City-influenced vision of workers living near their places of labor. Outside the industrial belt (and sometimes mingling with it) stands a thick ring of late Soviet housing, sometimes called "sleeping districts" since in those areas the original vision for including a wide range of services never materialized. Several larger artery streets run through the city, although Soviet planning tended to deemphasize automobile traffic; planners intended for residents to use the fairly comprehensive (but never perfect) network of public transportation in order to get around (French 1995). For a while, Leningrad processed a fair amount of trade (Axenov et al. 2006), but this was shipped around the Soviet Union not by long-distance trucks but by rail; thus, it is only within the past several years that a "ring road" or bypass highway was constructed around the city near its border with the Leningrad Oblast.[5]

The historical core retains a fairly high level of residential use (Bater 2006), although in sections the availability of services has diminished in the face of high-end

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[5] I heard the best summary I know of Petersburg's structure in a talk given by Professor Konstantin Axenov to a group of visiting geographers from the Netherlands on Vasilievsky Island in September 2006; I have amplified his comments about the belt structure with my own observations. The book that Axenov co-wrote with Isolde Brade and Eugene Bondarchuk also informs the summary here, although the description of St. Petersburg there focuses more narrowly on the industrial past and topics in economic geography rather than social geography. See Axenov et al. 2006. Bater's extensive work on St. Petersburg also discusses its form (1976, etc.).

retail and restaurant functions (site observation; *Nevastroyka*); it is visibly gentrifying and becoming less widely accessible in financial terms, although it is still the main place to stroll and enjoy city views for a large number of residents. The diversity of its offerings to a wide range of socio-economic classes is steadily diminishing; the popular Apraksin Yard, with its famously cheap goods, was closed in December 2006 and is slated to become "a pedestrian zone of elevated comfort" (*Nevastroyka*). Residential areas outside the historical core itself vary in their period of construction, but all have struggled with in-fill, or the construction of new buildings in open spaces between existing structures in order to take advantage of existing infrastructure (and to avoid paying the cost of providing it). Russians term this "*uplotnilovka*," short for "densifying construction" (the same verb was applied to the process of imposing additional residents into existing apartments in the 1920s and 1930s). Brand new housing construction varies in style depending on the developer; there are townhouses and freestanding "*osobniaki*" (detached housing), especially on the city edges, and buildings of 10-12 stories. Many new apartment buildings, however, range to 20 stories and in their overall massing outdo the largest of the Soviet-era mass housing estates (see photos).

In the 1930s and 1940s, when 1920s-era planning had a stronger hold on the city and the population size permitted policies that later became luxuries, the city was restructured according to the new ideology of workers and their living spaces. As one interviewee related to me, a resident of Vasilievsky Island didn't really ever have to leave: there were factories there, buses and streetcars could take the worker right to those factories, and there were stores, schools, and parks right in that neighborhood. In spite of

persistent attachment to the historical center, a resident could survive in his own district (especially if it was a central one). Another resident who lived on the east corner asserted that you could travel the length of the city on one bus. However, as the city grew and apartment buildings were thrown up on the outskirts, the infrastructure never caught up. Now, with internationally-significant highways set to cross within meters of Vasilievsky Island, the internal dynamics of St. Petersburg are broken open and vulnerable to new influences.

Existing policies for the built environment

The current City Master Plan (*Generalnyi Plan*, or Genplan for short) was adopted in November 2005 (Solodilov, interview, 10/17/06). It is the twentieth Genplan since the first one by Domenico Trezzini in 1712; the previous plan was proposed in 1986 and adopted in 1987. The "Conception" for the current Genplan was developed in the 1990s by the Leontief Center with consultation from the European Union (Tsenkova 2007); it was adopted in 2004 (Solodilov). The motto of the Genplan is "Open European City," an idea that most likely derives from the involvement of EU consultants at the "Conception" stage.[6] A commentary on this motto in February 2005 noted that "the new Master Plan of Petersburg is oriented to the achievement of a European standard of quality in the urban environment" (*Nevastroyka*, 2/15/05).

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[6] Staff at KGA also told me that the Genplan was also influenced by their experience hearing about the Barcelona Master Plan during a visit to that city in the late 1990s, when Barcelona was the darling of European cities for its successful Olympic bid and well-publicized redevelopment projects (Polishchuk, interview, 2006). In particular my interviewee mentioned the model of inviting multiple stakeholders, a new approach for the formerly centralized Russian process.

As a major point of orientation, the plan acknowledges the designation of the total

area of historical St. Petersburg as an object under the supervision of the UNESCO

World Heritage Council, managed locally by the Committee for Conservation of

Monuments (KGIOP). Originally, the historical district was designated by a line around a

large central area (see Map 2.1); in later developments, this policy was changed to isolate

individual buildings, since the disincentive to developers was found to be too high (Butler

et al. 1999). (A planner with whom I spoke regretted that each building could not have its

own mini-buffer area.)

Next to areas of historical preservation, however, the main focus of the Genplan is

on "territorial solutions [through] the formation of new social-business zones"

(*Nevastroyka*, 2/15/05). It is these zones (in the sense that this term is used in U.S.

planning) which will do the work of creating new revenues and jobs and attractive areas

for investment; they will integrate retail and commercial space into city areas served by

existing infrastructure. Many of these were previously dominated by housing (this fact

caused a great deal of the controversy surrounding the Genplan public hearings and

discussion in the press).

This idea that a certain number of "business centers" will transform the city has so

far led the city to focus on highly visible prestigious projects and less on the nuts and

bolts of city machinery. The problem with this approach is that the broader fabric of the

city is not yet prepared for the kind of incremental, spontaneous market-led change that

could transform its spaces without the dramatic confrontations that have characterized

many projects thus far. Market conditions now prevail to the extent that project cost is

related to location and infrastructure provision, putting upward pressure on land costs nearer to the center. All planners with whom I spoke noted that Russia in general is undergoing a shift from the "extensive" approach that characterized Soviet planning, when land was rarely recycled and the cost of expanding outwards was minimal, to an "intensive" approach where each builder wants to maximize the benefits he can gain from each plot, and wants to place it as centrally as possible. Yet in a preliminary interview in August 2005, a local environmental lawyer suggested that the new Genplan was like the blueprint for a house that had no bathroom and no kitchen, just a parlor; a builder I interviewed in November 2006 agreed. He complained that the focus was on improving the area around Nevsky Avenue, the "Fifth Avenue" of St. Petersburg, and making it look prestigious. Similarly, former Chief Architect Oleg Kharchenko told me that he regretted that during his tenure he had not been able to persuade the city administration of the wisdom of increasing the amount of buildable land by extending systems of infrastructure (interview, 12/6/06). As the city seeks to become an "open European city" with a "European standard of urban environmental quality," an important measure of the success of this attempt is to evaluate how the institutional constraints are shifting and adapting to the conditions induced by new projects and challenges. For this reason, the Genplan has implications for all scales of the Petersburg built environment.

The Genplan contains seven goals for the city, stating that it regards St. Petersburg as:

1. a comfortable environment for habitation;
2. a cultural capital;
3. a major transport node with all the related possibilities;
4. a Russian port;
5. a center of business activity;

6. a center of innovations and leading technologies;
7. a powerful industrial core.

A memorandum published by the Committee on Urban Development and Architecture

(KGA in Russian, henceforth CUDA) comments immediately after this list that "The

balanced combination of these vectors brings us to the formula 'Petersburg—city of

European standards'" (*Generalnyi*, 2006). Of course, as is typical for the rhetoric of such

broad plans, it is not clear at all that there is a connection between the list and the motto.

The seven goals of the Genplan cannot function as articulated aspects of a single policy:

they require different "solutions" with different spatial forms at differing spatial scales,

and thus may in some way conflict with each other. The Baltic Pearl is supposed to

exemplify the kind of project that can meet, for example, the first goal (by providing a

substantial addition to the city's housing stock) as well as prompting development of the

third, fifth, and sixth.

However, the Genplan consists of more than goals; its machinery for execution

actually depends on sets of codes and ordinances. One set of these at the federal level is

known as SNiPs, or *Stroitelnye normy i pravila* (Construction norms and rules); these

norms establish distances and quantities such as road width, minimum territorial

requirements for schools, and so on. A new set of ordinances, not yet passed, are known

as the PZZ or *Pravila zemlepolzovaniia i zastroiki* (Rules for Land Use and

Construction); these specify functional zones at a larger scale and contain the new

regulations on height. The PZZ also will summarize codes and procedures for construction permits.[7]

A geographer-planner's insights

The list of seven goals for St. Petersburg's development that accompanied the Master Plan contains contradictions. An interview on general urban development topics with a transportation specialist in the planning institute NIPIgrad revealed some of these. I include a discussion of his comments in order to demonstrate the complexity of spatial changes currently affecting St. Petersburg.

This planner made firm statements about the vision of St. Petersburg that guided the "Conception of the Master Plan"; land use and landscape development should be governed, he said, by the fact that Petersburg "is not a megapolis, it's an urban agglomeration."

> And Petersburg is only a part of this agglomeration. A significant part is the satellite settlements, in Leningrad oblast. ... Some of them have been there for three hundred years, they should stay. So that Petersburg doesn't melt all over the place, doesn't swallow them up, because this structure that has formed for centuries, it has its pluses... this mustn't be destroyed. (Solodilov, interview, 10/17/06)

This of course is one planner's voice, and the Conception underwent modification after it left the planning circles in NIPIgrad and went to discussions in ZakS and in the City Governor's office. But the planner's comments signal several spatial values that are trying to shape Petersburg. The importance of preserving local historical patterns governs his overall conception of Petersburg space; a range of spatial practices are implied by the

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[7] The PZZ in particular were designed based on workshops and courses held in the U.S., in which members of the KGA participated in the mid- to late-1990s (Polishchuk, interview, 10/13/06; Roshchin, interview, 10/20/06).

choice to maintain Petersburg as a loosely linked series of smaller settlements, including

transportation adjustments and cultural assumptions about the optimal population size of

settlements.[8] Each of the satellite settlements to which Solodilov refers has an individual

cultural history (such as the town of Pushkin, now also called Tsarskoe Selo) and the

agglomeration model presumes that these individual histories are worth maintaining

spatially. (This pattern continues to change; for instance, Pushkin is fast becoming a

location for affluent housing for Petersburgers who commute by car to the center, moving

away from its Soviet-preserved existence as a quiet palace-town where Alexander

Pushkin studied and Anna Akhmatova had a house before the revolution.)

At the same time, Solodilov perceived the contradictions inherent in the city's

plans for development. I asked him what he saw as the greatest challenge in transforming

Petersburg into a "post-Soviet" city.

> It seems to me that [the greatest problem] is ensuring an acceptable balance
> between the formation of a high-quality environment for living-and-acting
> (*zhiznedeiatel'nost'*) – of high European quality, corresponding to European
> standards – and the development of the city as a major industrial and transport
> node.

He stated that the models for spatial practices that would ensure a "high-quality

environment for living-and-acting" came from an idea of micro-scale "Europe."

Quantitative norms set out in the Master Plan (the first draft of which was completed in

2005) were drawn from European cities such as Helsinki, Stockholm, and Tallinn (for

example, the "norm" of 35 square meters of living space per resident).

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[8] Solodilov probably echoes here decades of Bolshevik-influenced urban planning values; French (1995)
notes that the 1920s Soviet administration believed strongly in managing settlement size; Glazychev notes
that the Bolsheviks did not like large cities, and himself suggests that there is a threshold population
beyond which a settlement ceases to be a true city (2005, 129).

Working in the area of transportation projects, Solodilov also knew about major plans to link Petersburg into the road and rail systems of Northern and Central Europe.[9] He saw this as a major change from the Soviet period, putting Petersburg into an entirely new socio-spatial paradigm (and entailing a whole new set of spatial practices as embodied in transportation routes and landscapes):

> So you can see, how [the city] is opening up towards Europe. Towards the world. This didn't happen before. This was a profoundly Soviet city, closed in on itself and the Soviet Union. It was a typical industrial center… Now besides the port, these high-speed rail lines are supposed to go through, first from Moscow through Petersburg to Helsinki. And all these autoroutes, the ring road, the Western Speed Diameter, they are all turned in the direction of Finland and the EEC. As soon as we normalize relations with Estonia, this will all happen.

For "the development of the city as a major industrial and transport node," Solodilov suggested that Petersburg had to be placed into the context of the Baltic Sea region, where its port has already acquired influence. He also placed it into the context of Russian urban hierarchy, seeing Moscow as the main global city which would try to relieve its internal tensions by allotting some governmental and trade functions to Petersburg. "It benefits Moscow if Petersburg develops as a regional metropolis in the Baltic region… So some functions are being transferred from Moscow to here, those that Moscow is shedding as a global city." He developed this thought further, remarking that "of course it is difficult, difficult to combine [the two goals]"—implicitly recognizing the competition between two sorts of socio-spatial paradigms and the spatial needs that each has. For in spite of his statement early in the interview that Petersburg is an

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[9] During a visit to interview a transportation specialist in another institute, a Finnish representative from the EU spoke to my contact's class of students about the inclusion of St. Petersburg in the TEN program. The EU website has numerous documents describing this program, and its maps show EU-linked roads extending deep into Russia. See Map 4.6.

agglomeration and must preserve its historical spatial structure, he also recognizes the economic exigencies facing the city. His insights into these contradictions are reflected in the following passage:

> So now the city is earning financial resources, the city as an original *megapolis* is raising its status, its competitiveness is growing [with] Helsinki, Tallinn, Stockholm, Warsaw, maybe even Hamburg. … But how to combine this with post-industrialization? Which the city also needs. Post-industrialization and this high-quality environment. And all the other problems… Quality of housing, growing automobilization, attractiveness for tourists, attractiveness for business, especially global business. Will anyone want to have headquarters here, I just don't know. Or banks, right? Major, international. Perhaps gradually, to some degree developing as a regional *megapolis* of the first order, well, Piter will begin to acquire these elements of global infrastructure. Because Moscow will be overwhelmed…

Solodilov also expressed full awareness of the type of landscapes that the "high-quality global environment" would entail: "They demand after all, these transnational corporations, they demand skyscrapers." In spite of this recognition, he persisted in insisting that local architectural traditions should govern construction: "it seems to me that it's not worth breaking with that tradition. We have to approach this with care. But on the other hand, how do we attract [transnational corporations]? How can you plant them here without a skyscraper? This is confusing. They have gotten used to skyscrapers." He perceives the spatial practices and the types of sites that global entities seem to require, and implicitly realizes the impact that this could have on the built form of Petersburg.

His comments are rich with observations on the changing economic, political, and spatial conditions affecting St. Petersburg. They suggest the shift in conception of space that now governs St. Petersburg, where integration with the European Union economic

zone and related political requirements (such as reconciling with Estonia) start to affect the kind of landscapes and spatial practices (in the form of outward connections, routes, and movements of people and goods) that will take shape in the city.

The crucial contradiction inherent in the two major vectors of the Genplan goals has been summed up by Harvey: on the one hand, the aim to make Petersburg into a "high-quality environment for living-and-acting"—into, that is, a even texture of sociability based on a principle of "political economy of territory"; and on the other hand, an economic node among other nodes, shaped by the logic of "political economy of place" as Harvey describes it, which (as discussed above) are typically anchored by "premium networked spaces." The Baltic Pearl enters into these interlocking vectors. Will it be shaped and governed by a political economy of territory, or of place? And how will this affect the challenges of sustainable social integration now facing St. Petersburg?

Conclusion

As the information presented in this chapter already demonstrates, an evaluation of the development of Russian space, just as an evaluation of relations between entities as complex as "Russia" and "China," must take place at several scales in order to capture processes that will have a material effect on their further development. The premise is that we must study microscale interactions between the receiving society and new arrivals; this is not to assert the study of microscale in isolation from broader processes, but to strive for greater integration of such studies into interpretations at "privileged" scales.

Just as Gel'bras recognized that "microlevel conditions" must change for interactions to improve, other Russian scholars have called for attention to these microscale interactions. Vendina's influential study of ethnic enclaves in Moscow (2005b) suggests that it is the receiving society that is promoting the formation of enclaves in the post-Soviet era. Her case studies examine the residential distribution of Russians, Ukrainians, Tatars, Jews, Armenians, and Azerbaijanis, and she did not find striking patterns. Drawing on studies by Gel'bras, she makes a brief comment on the possibility of "Chinatowns":

> Probably the comparison of the Russian to the European or American situation is legitimate only in relation to people from South-East Asia, but their numbers in Moscow are not great enough to fear the formation of a China-town, and anyway they live in the capital extremely isolated, striving to reduce to a minimum necessary contact with the local population and representatives of the authorities. (67)

Her concern is that the increasing socio-economic stratification within Russian society itself is a negative factor for promoting acceptance of more migrants. Since the built form of the city (here Moscow) has not adapted to the real needs of the population (e.g. for affordable housing), the middle and upper classes find themselves besieged by their own problems (2005b, 55) and remain conservative with respect to migrants (2005b, 82-83). Vendina's comment about how to study the ongoing interaction between host site and migrants sets an agenda for research to which this study aims to contribute:

> In order to evaluate the potential for full inclusion of migrants into the main current of urban life, it is important to know not only the particularities of behavior of the immigrants themselves, but also the particularities of interaction of the institutional and structural parameters of the receiving society and the new arrivals. (2005b, 56)

The remaining chapters of the dissertation seek to outline the "particularities of interaction of the institutional and structural parameters" in processes at different scales. Chapter IV discusses the negotiations between planners from the St. Petersburg administration and the Chinese firm; Chapter V considers the socio-spatial paradigms operating among "ordinary" citizens; and Chapter VI examines socio-spatial paradigms played out in the daily routes of Russian and Chinese individuals.

CHAPTER III

EXPANDING SPATIAL ANALYSIS WITH 'SOCIO-SPATIAL PARADIGM'

A Story of Shifting Sense of Place

Liudmila Ivanovna knew my American professor of Russian when he visited Leningrad

in the 1960s. When I went to that city in 1990 to study Russian, he passed along his

friendship with her to me, and she showed me around museums, parks, cemeteries, and

favorite streets as she had once done for him. I remember numerous trips on streetcars

with her, especially to one obscure cemetery where the modernist poet Blok was buried,

where Lenin had wanted to be buried with his sisters and mother until he was hijacked

into his Moscow tomb for Stalin's purposes.

Like most Russians whom I met in the early 1990s, Liudmila Ivanovna had no

car. As an unmarried woman and a professor of botany, her means and ambitions did not

lead to that kind of acquisition.

In a phone conversation with her in the winter of 2005, she lamented the removal

of almost all streetcar lines from her district—that is, from almost the entire area of

Vasilievsky Island. The then-mayor had decided to limit public transportation on the

narrow historical streets to buses, since the streetcars produced unpleasant traffic jams for

the increasing flow of automobiles (and because bolder drivers tended to use the streetcar

tracks as turning lanes).

For the traffic engineers, this might have made sense. For the mushrooming number of drivers (often of imported European models and SUVs), it made the trip home more pleasant. For Liudmila Ivanovna, the change produced several unforeseen effects that changed her sense of belonging in the city and her sense of access to spaces she had previously taken for granted.

First of all, it became much harder to get her dog to the train station. On midwinter weekends and during the summer, she spent her time at a *dacha* outside the city along a train line. Without a car, she relied on public transportation to reach the train station; streetcars would allow her black terrier to ride there, but the subway would not. Without the streetcar network that she had always used, she had to make inconvenient requests for a ride from friends with cars. Her sense of independence was affected as well as her sense that the train station was within her spatial reach.

Second, the removal of streetcars drastically reduced her ability to attend cultural performances in the city center. She could get to the symphony hall by subway, but she had to reach the subway station by streetcar, and she felt unable to return alone at night on foot without it. Her beloved opera and ballet performances at the Kirov (now again Mariinsky) Theater were accessible to her only by streetcar. She was forced to attend only matinee performances at the symphony and to give up opera and ballet altogether. Her sense of access to these cultural activities, seen by her generation as part of their heritage and regular life as Leningraders, was strongly curtailed and she felt constrained by age and socioeconomic class as she had not done before. The city as a whole felt less "hers," and she felt isolated on Vasilievsky Island.

The city expected Liudmila Ivanovna to cope by using a combination of the subway (which has become seriously overcrowded since the early 2000s) and the new "fixed-route taxis," minivans that charge a fixed fee for a particular route and do not recognize transportation discounts traditionally issued by the state to students, the elderly, and veterans. As a survivor of the Leningrad Siege and of retirement age, Liudmila Ivanovna falls into this class of people privileged by Soviet tradition and ideology, but can no longer benefit from this position as a resident moving around the city.

In my glimpses into the life of Liudmila Ivanovna, I observed indications of broader changes between Leningrad and St. Petersburg, between walking culture and car culture, between a culture emphasizing collective responsibility and respect for elders and a Western-influenced, individually-structured culture that still manages to articulate quite well with traditional Russian corruption and melodrama. Some of those more popular and sensational aspects of culture will not change; meanwhile, under their glossy surface, significant cultural changes are occurring that can be most clearly traced by observing what is happening to socially produced spaces—to the sense of place of St. Petersburg and to the ways that it has fragmented depending on how a resident moves, lives, and does or does not feel constrained by the material city.

The impulse to observe space in this way both resulted from and prompted a search for flexible theoretical tools to govern the interpretation of gathered data. Two studies that examined the creativity of spatial practices while also recognizing the constraints imposed by space were important points of departure for conceptualizing the intended attention to space.

Work by Kenneth Olwig suggested a symbiotic, rather than deterministic, relationship between material space and the way space becomes invested with meaning by its inhabitants. Olwig places the work of Tuan among his chief inspirations for the writing of *Landscape, Nature, and the Body Politic* (2002). His book analyzes how specific understandings of place based firmly in certain kinds of spaces were dismantled by state power (in Denmark, England, and the U.S.). His two chief terms (compare later Scott's *mētis* and legibility) are "custom" or "customary law" and "nature" or "natural law"; custom grows from a place and shapes itself to that place, while "nature" (understood in a post-Renaissance sense) posits a universal applicability and takes no account of local specificity. According to Olwig, custom has several important features: it "was inscribed in the land through physical practice" (214); it was "an expression of a body of custom developed, through time, on the basis of individual and social practice" and it was "woven into the very fabric and texture of the land, giving it a meaning that spoke to (and with) the body as well as the mind" (215). In his first and most striking case study, Olwig focuses on the historical dismantling of Danish *landschap* as polity: as he intriguingly demonstrates, the word *landschap* originally had no visual content at all— it was a political term for a defined space organized by certain socio-political practices. Olwig does not focus on the way that political or social resistance could be articulated; the Danish landscapes and practices that he describes disappeared and could no longer provide the staging ground for action against the newly-forming Dutch state. However, the important concept to derive from his work for my study is the very symbiosis between space and practice—giving rise to political process as polity itself—that he

observes and discusses. This possibility suggested a direction into analysis of space-based practices that did not have to be reduced to environmental determinism and that could find positive socio-political potential in local customs.

Shaul Cohen provides another stimulating example of the way that practices in space are linked to social and political assumptions in his book *The Politics of Planting* (1993). The chapter that discusses the planting of olive trees by Palestinian Arabs and of pines by Israeli Jews around eastern Jerusalem shows the way that such micro-scale practices can produce space: wherever there stood pines, this was "Jewish space"; wherever there stood olives, this became "Arab space." Operating under the surface of formal methods to resolve land disputes, olives and pines formed lines of demarcation in the struggle to claim space for parks and future development (on the part of the Jerusalem administration) or for agricultural livelihood (on the part of Palestinian villagers). The planting of one tree or the other had cultural signification and was closely tied to the symbolism and identity of each group. Planting created a tangible physical effect; for example, the appearance of pine groves eliminated agricultural space for Palestinians or prevented the circulation of Bedouins (1993, 121). This case study points to the coexistence of and negotiations in space defined by two different sets of socio-cultural symbols, and to a way that developed for each group to shape the landscape: olive enacted "Arab," while pine enacted "Jew." This case study suggested how behavior in space creatively used material objects as signs that designated different identities; it also suggested the inertia of these associations, questioning the potential for a new, synthesized space to arise in the face of these associations.

Socio-Spatial Paradigm: Capturing the Multiplicity of Spatial Experience

These readings stuck in my mind as I planned fieldwork. How does a set of symbols or practices become usable as "vocabulary" in competing arguments as individuals and groups move through space? I wanted to find a set of tools or criteria to look for the kinds of culturally-signifying gestures that Cohen described, or to discern the presence of practices that helped to knit together a polity as Olwig had discussed.

There was no ready theoretical model that incorporated the range of elements that seemed essential to interpret the research data. I had the sense that there was a sort of paradigm operating—as in a set of orientation points or set of assumptions that people would have in thinking about space and moving around the city, but that would also include the actual material space (e.g. that provided the range of objects and spaces about which people could think) and the implicit and explicit regulations (i.e., both spatial etiquette and planning regulations) that would affect movement. The paradigm had to be socio-spatial instead of just spatial, because the social and cultural elements based in concepts and practice—imagination, stories, expectations, rules—clearly had to play a significant role. People (co)inhabit space differently and multiply; it seemed intuitive that by observing the components of their responses to space, you could discern the nature of this difference and multiplicity and thereby gain greater insight into why conflicts arose and (temptingly) what aspects of culture might change in concert with conceptions of place.

Inspired in part by the work of Massey (see discussion below), I wanted a term that could capture "place" as a process involving the intricate functionalities and

mobilities structured around meanings, and the meanings structured around functions and mobility. I saw this process as a symbiosis: as something that arises between and with the material and social, between the performance of social and cultural meaning (often repeating, but always open to improvisation and change) and the sedimentation of this meaning (repeating or solidifying, often the role of the state but not belonging wholly to it) as Homi Bhabha describes the formation, enforcement, and metamorphosis of nationhood (1991). In other words, meaning arises around material places and practices, but that meaning can then transform those places and practices, or can be radically transformed itself if an external actor chooses to alter or prevent the material spaces and practices. I settled provisionally on the term "socio-spatial paradigm," and use it throughout the dissertation.

My use of the term does not derive from one particular scholar. The term itself or elements of it have been employed before, however, and a short discussion of these uses helps to illustrate the urge to find a new concept for this study. Leonie Sandercock, for example, briefly uses the term to designate "an ideological construct that prescribes" behavior—in her case, "a public sphere for men and a private sphere for women" (1998, 143). Designating a socio-spatial paradigm as an ideological construct alone could not, however, capture the need to evaluate how regulations and practices reinforced or undermined the ideology. Soja (1996) discusses a socio-spatial dialectic, which he then complicates with Lefebvrian trialectics; this was not the source of my use of the term. Gottdiener and Budd (2005) summarize the "socio-spatial approach" in urban sociology which assumes that

the form of settlement space is related to the mode of organization of the economy. ... important and key spatial patterns which define the spatial organization of society are associated with specific aspects of the cultural, political, social and economic features of the correlated mode of *societal* organization. (140; emphasis in original)

This "paradigm shift" in urban studies was inspired by the work of Henri Lefebvre, and focused on class, race, and gender as shaping forces in the production of urban space (Feagin 1998, 4-5). It also explicitly recognized "the importance of symbols, meanings, and culture to the shaping of cities [and] ... the global contexts of urban development" (1998, 5). This approach provides a foundation to much new work in critical urban geography.

Influenced by this work, I intended to make a case for attention to the way that spatial structures shape our sense of place—the meanings of attachment and belonging we attach to particular spaces as a locus of identity. Since some literature seemed to assert a reverse determinism—that is, that material spaces should have no influence at all on identity or attitudes—I sought a concept that could address the constraints on urban residents' movements yet also capture their choices within those constraints. There was clearly a relationship between the possible paths to be taken and the available modes of transportation; between what people would see if they went a certain direction, and how what they saw would affect what they thought. But, insofar as it was possible, I wanted to analyze the spatial experience and discourse of all my interview subjects as a pragmatic action—not divorced from power, or assumed to be immune to it, but something that I could say "everyone" possessed. This attempt at crafting an objective tool, indifferent to class, race, or location, would, I hoped, help me to avoid either nostalgia for certain

landscapes and spatial arrangements or the assumption of path dependencies (the overdetermination of current choices by the residue of the past; see Sykora [2008] for a critique of overuse of this approach in post-Soviet studies in the late 1990s). Purcell summarizes this well in terms of Henri Lefebvre's "right to the city":

> ...the right to the city is earned by *living in* the city. Everyday life (Lefebvre's *la vie quotidienne*) is the central pivot of the right to the city: those who go about their daily routines in the city, both living in and creating urban space, are those who possess a legitimate right to the city. (2003, 577; emphasis in original)

My hope for an "objective tool" risks the naivete assigned by critical geographers to the humanistic tradition in urban and cultural geography, in which scholars such as Tuan and Relph apparently posited a universal "everyman" which excluded considerations of race, class, and gender. However, I intended for the term "socio-spatial paradigm" to capture the active relationships (the enacted "practice") between a local politics of space and related spatial assumptions and practices, and I intended for it to capture multiplicity. I did not want to use one group (such as the homeless, see Blomley 2004; Mitchell 2003) as a litmus test for the politics of space, and thus sought to consider all experiences of urban space as equivalent.

While spatial assumptions can also be indicated, to a degree, by "geographical imaginary," the latter term may not encompass essential details for teasing out how conflicts between urban stakeholders operate. My sense of "socio-spatial paradigm" is that it requires that we ask how respondents understand what "sociable" means in space, that is, what is necessary and supportive to a good (urban) life. It requires consideration of the material and legal as well as emotional and conceptual aspects of how people see and feel loyalty to place, to certain kinds of spaces that take on "place-like" meaning.

Addition of these aspects (e.g. material and legal) gives a fuller dimension to analysis of local forces which resist the idea of new construction (such as the Baltic Pearl or the Gazprom skyscraper project), particularly the efforts of so-called "ordinary residents" who have become activists. "Socio-spatial paradigm" as I propose it here also requires that we consider how different groups and individuals locate themselves physically and in authority structures, and how they link themselves to local and global conceptualized spaces as they make their arguments.

Socio-Spatial Paradigm: Using Scale to Calibrate, Not to Govern, Analysis

In terms of scale, I did not see any socio-spatial paradigm as having a particular scale, but as being by definition multiscalar—a kind of nexus of ideas and discourses at multiple scales. What I hoped to do was not to take phenomena in space at one scale and analyze them, but take a particular vision of space and analyze how that vision affects an individual's interaction with phenomena at various scales. The idea is that the individual's actions would be determined more by the attitude to space than by the claimed location at a certain scale; for example, in Chapter IV, an architect's vision for the social value of a residential courtyard affects his attitude to urban development.

For example, one perspective on scale would indicate that we could best understand Sino-Russian relations by looking exclusively at the political relationships between government officials. In that perspective, juxtaposing knowledge of an urban development project such as the Baltic Pearl with the location and self-presentation of Chinese restaurants in central St. Petersburg might seem to contradict the logic of mutually isolated scales. However, building on the insights of critical geography into

interaction across scales, this analysis focuses not on the size of spaces or on the scale at which actors claim to be located, but on the arrangement of these and other factors into the combination of spatial referents and assumptions as deployed in specific arguments (whether rhetorical or actual) about space and how it should be used. I argue below that my term "socio-spatial paradigm," together with a close reading of Henri Lefebvre's triadic model for analyzing space, provides "structuring elements" that do not make scale irrelevant but rather use it as an additional tool in calibrating the complex relationships inherent in any one paradigm.

This point is elaborated by Kaganskii, who notes, as Euro-American geographers have done, that

> the usual supposition of a staircase of scales that arose from the practice of placing smaller objects as wholes inside larger ones is convenient but suspect, because material areas and volumes can be stacked, but concepts and meanings cannot. ... Scale is a particular kind of context: the space of a cultural landscape is polyscalar; a whole spectrum of meanings, significances, functions corresponds to each part and place in it. (2001, 31-32)

Scale is sometimes regarded as a factor limiting the potential juxtapositions that can be perceived; that is, we can only compare objects that seem to be located at the same scale, or we must look to objects at a certain "privileged" scale for an explanation. Yet I would suggest that an individual's actions at the urban scale—for instance his plans for modifying urban landscapes—may stem from a socio-spatial paradigm that draws from a smaller scale, for example a garden or a house. Insistence on a strict scalar correspondence would obscure this important connection. If we understand individual cultural landscapes to be polyscalar, capable of linking out to processes at many different scales, then an individual's socio-spatial paradigm can also be understood as polyscalar.

The point becomes not to fix an individual or group in space and decide at what scale she or they are located, but to examine closely the elements of the socio-spatial paradigm and understand their scaled interrelationships with other phenomena.

Analysis of socio-spatial paradigms separately from and in addition to analysis of policies and material actions can also bring insight to existing political-economic analyses of scalar shifts that are often understood as happening in isolation from each other. For example, we assume that "inquiry framed at local scales yields different results than inquiry at larger scales" (Martin et al. 2003). In part, then, we assume that if we study the local scale we are not learning anything about "larger scales." To take an example: the quoted article adds that glocalization has been described as "a transfer of authority and responsibility from a national-scale state" down to lower scales. The concern of such an analysis is revealing how "local states and governance institutions accept more responsibility and authority" (Martin et al. 2003, 115). The concern of my own analysis would be to discern the socio-spatial paradigms of the officials who take on the responsibility ceded to them by the nation-state "for ensuring that the local area can compete effectively in the wider global economy" (2003, 115). For example, the responsibility to supply services may rest with municipal officials, but their decisions may be informed most strongly by a national vision for the identity of the city (recall the shift of the Constitutional Court to Petersburg, described in Chapter II). It is not only the shift in the scale of responsibility for enabling economic and social reproduction from the state to the already-burdened local administration that we need to know about. A decision-maker at any scale (national or local) may be entrusted with a decision and may

base the decision process on a socio-spatial paradigm that is not commensurate with the demands of the task; the assumptions that guide the decisions may remain shaped by an understanding of space that contradicts the purpose of the decision. My goal is to use a qualitative approach in order to deepen our analysis of how a "policy shift in cities… toward competitiveness" (Martin et al. 2003, 115) plays out in the socio-spatial paradigms of various actors and groups in a city. With what assumptions does it resonate? How is it transformed or refracted by possibly contradictory assumptions or practices?

Geographers have suggested that "conflicts are not so much between various parties, places and neighbors, as they are between scalar levels, at each of which space is structured in a different way" (Kaganskii 2001, 33). I would maintain that it is not only scale which conditions the different "structuring" of space, but also the socio-spatial paradigm which I describe. Studies that employ these more detailed spatial analyses are a further way of exploding the global-local dichotomy, since we can move on to explore the ways that different groups of actors at the "local" scale choose, and interact with, different elements in spatial assumptions that can be labeled as either "global" or "local," and thus delineate how local elites enable or shape the influence of the "global" and thus globalization.

The empirical chapters of this dissertation examine negotiations, ostensibly at different scales, that revolve around an aspect of the Baltic Pearl and the growing Chinese presence in St. Petersburg. In Chapter IV, the negotiations over space involve Russian administrators, architects and planners on one hand and on the other Chinese

investors, planners and involved in the Baltic Pearl project. In Chapter V, negotiations over transforming space reveal the struggles between Russians on the "winning" and "losing" sides of ongoing social transformation, and contrast local residents' imaginations of "Chinese" space with the reality of developing Chinese landscapes. In Chapter VI, individual stories of living in St. Petersburg drawn from interviews with both Russian and Chinese residents display similarities, conflicts, and possible points of commonality. The contributions of Lefebvre and other scholars (discussed below) allow me to uncover how new socio-spatial paradigms take shape around new forms of spatial organization and new patterns of spatial practice.

Methods

Influenced by study of St. Petersburg that focused on the lived experience of "average citizens" (Piirainen 1997; Simpura & Eremitcheva 1997), my research sought to uncover new socio-spatial paradigms in post-Soviet St. Petersburg. Finnish sociologists who have done extensive work in transitional Russia frame qualitative research methods as a tool to examine a phenomenon whose existence is beyond dispute in order to find unnoticed nuance in that phenomenon (Alasuutari 1995); in this way, the resulting data can elicit the new conceptual categories taking shape in radically changed social conditions (Piirainen 1997). Pavlovskaya's combination of interviews with mapped commercial data in Moscow provided inspiration for an innovative spatial study of societal transformation in Russia (2002, 2004). Sassen concurs that "detailed fieldwork is a necessary step in capturing many of the new aspects in the urban condition" and recommends "depth of engagement" and "effort towards detailed mappings" (2005, 355).

Some studies have examined aspects of spatial culture in St. Petersburg (Ruble 2003; Staub 2005; Utekhin 2004), but much remains to be done to create the studies of "pedestrian" life that Hellberg-Hirn (2003) called for in her comprehensive study of the city's changing culture. St. Petersburg has a rich and idiosyncratic past for a post-Soviet city (Bater 1976; Ruble 1990). Many studies that provide context for St. Petersburg's entry into the global economy focus on Central and Eastern Europe (Hamilton et al., 2005) or Moscow (Brade & Rudolph 2004; Kolossov et al. 2002; Golubchikov 2004; Gritsai 2004); they also tend to focus on criteria established in Western scholarship for world city status and economic indicators. Axenov, Brade, and Bondarchuk have demonstrated convincingly that market mechanisms now play a role in structuring Petersburg's retail patterns and consumer behaviors (Axenov 1997; Axenov et al. 2006) and Bater has shown that elite housing has not entirely changed the historically persistent profile of downtown St. Petersburg (2006). However, apart from Boren's study of the spatial transformation of a suburban St. Petersburg neighborhood (2005), no Euro-American geographical studies that I could find have drawn on extensive qualitative research. (This is not true for sociology and anthropology, although these studies have not emphasized the spatial aspects that most interested me. Important studies that have influenced my research include: Ries 1997; Pesmen 2000; Boym 2001; Yurchak 2006; Humphrey 2002.) In building on these studies and also trying to cast a wider conceptual "net," I hope to capture a broader aspect of how space is used and perceived.

One goal of employing interviews with a range of subjects was to expand the types of information that has been gathered about the ongoing transformation. As Boren

notes, most of the work by Euro-American geographers of post-Soviet Russia has focused on politico-economic perspectives (2005, 49). His own work reveals the influence of his informants in interpreting his observations, but does not privilege the voices of his informants, focusing instead on an analysis of space and political behavior. In this project, interviews (conducted entirely in Russian) were supported by analysis of policy documents, published speeches and media texts; by participant observation and visual study of St. Petersburg's spaces; and by analysis of maps that resulted from interview data. However, commentary drawn from interviews remains the shaping element. This approach sets the project apart from much recent work done by geographers of Russia (but see work by Graybill 2007; Round 2005; Shubin 2007).

The Russian cultural geographer Glazychev provides retrospective justification for the choice of this interview approach: in his wide-ranging study of Russia's interior, he describes the task that he set for the students who collected data for him on over 100 minor cities and settlements: "The task sounded simple: try to see 'everything,' ask about everything" (2005, 44). In this project, the scope was much smaller: the focus was on St. Petersburg and the list of questions used in semi-structured interviews with 'ordinary residents' retained several basic points that sought to elicit spatial patterns and assumptions. I asked interviewees to describe their childhood or arrival in the city; to explain their opinions about new construction and development projects, including the Baltic Pearl; to say where they would most like to live; to say what parts of the city they liked most. I also asked interviewees to draw a map of main daily routes on a map that I provided, asking them to elaborate on questions about what they saw along the routes,

where they could get stuck (in traffic, etc.), where the route was pleasant for them. In asking these questions, I was assuming that a certain common fund of spatial conceptions would be discernible and would allow me to interpret the interviewees' responses as part of a larger body of spatial practice in St. Petersburg.

To obtain a general picture of the situation in the city, I completed about 90 interviews with 60 subjects which divided about evenly between interviews with "ordinary residents" of the city and with experts on the city in some capacity—architects, developers, city officials, members of planning institutes, journalists, and activists. "Expert" interviews sometimes included elements of the question series that I posed to "average" residents, but not the mapping series. My interview approach in those cases aimed to elicit a full description of the interviewee's position in and opinion about the process of spatial change.

My participant observation aimed to understand broader policy factors that also formed part of the body of spatial practice. To learn about protest and resident resistance to various projects, I did extended interviews with protest activists from three city districts: Primorskii to the northwest, Vasilievskii in the central west, and Moskovskii to the central south; I also attended some of their public demonstrations. To gain perspective on the official city policies for urban development, I attended three public hearings on the city's proposed Rules for Land Use and Construction, for Primorskii, Moskovskii, and Centralnyi districts, as well as a press conference on the Rules, all held in October. To learn more about the discourse on historical preservation and architecture, I viewed exhibits of architectural design in the city at museums and in the Committee for City

Planning and Architecture (located on Lomonosov Square). I also attended a press roundtable on architectural preservation where commenters included Alexander Kobak, acting director of the Likhachev Foundation, and Vera Dementeva, chair of the City Committee on Historic Preservation. In terms of the Baltic Pearl specifically, I made two visits to the firm's offices on Vasilievsky Island where I interviewed two company representatives; I also made an unofficial visit to the neighborhood of the construction site in December 2006. I also did extensive observation and photography in various districts of the city in August 2005, August-December 2006, and March 2007.

These approaches served a methodology of discerning as many dimensions of the socio-spatial discourse as possible. The diversity of interviews, with both experts and "ordinary" citizens, protesters and city officials, was intended to help me triangulate emotional or mainly conceptual statements with what I could learn from other sources about policy, actions, and the actual use of space. The Baltic Pearl, as a new phenomenon in St. Petersburg, thus appeared against a dense backdrop of other incidents of protest and planning issues, and was clearly imbricated in those events. In an effort to capture the complexity of the factors I saw in operation, I coined the term socio-spatial paradigm. While ultimately I found that the work of Henri Lefebvre provides basic tools that adequately approximate "socio-spatial paradigm" as an analytical concept, several themes in cultural geography also support my analysis.

Important Concepts in Cultural Geography that Influenced Socio-Spatial Paradigm

Place

Theoretical work in geography on "place" and locality studies also provide a formative context for my research. It captures the emotional attachment that first drew my attention in Liudmila Ivanovna's story, but also confronts urgent questions of transformation due to globalization and of new "contact zones" that form as a result of migration and social change.

Doreen Massey's work on 'place' dates from essays that appeared in the early 1990s, including "A global sense of place" (1994), through to her philosophical summary of her thoughts to date, *For space* (2005), and her recent analysis of London, *World City* (2007). Her work describes place as process, as the accumulation of events and happenings and people that at any moment coexist in space. The beautiful language that she uses to elaborate on this idea envisions an ideal future space (mostly urban) of juxtaposition and hybridity; thus, her ideal notion of "throwntogetherness" assumes not just the physical co-location of widely different objects and people in space, but social negotiation and political interaction in place.

Massey's work is particularly useful for this study because she captures the nexus of dispossession and xenophobia that lies at its center. She makes it clear that her motivation to reimagine "place" comes from her observations of others' anxiety about immigration—specifically, about migration into England of formerly colonized peoples. Her leading example in the essay "A global sense of place" (1994) comes from her own "hybrid" neighborhood, full of shops and restaurants owned by non-Anglo-Saxons and

making up a new space of British experience. The chapter on migration in *For space* rejects the selection of a stone in a European harbor as a stable symbol for the local population, since the stone, too, at one point came from elsewhere (in some glacial shift)—thus, she writes, we are all migrants and cannot reasonably exclude as Others anyone who comes into the space that we now inhabit. Her assertion that place is also constituted by relationships as "the focus of a distinct mixture of wider and more local social relations" (1994) is also meant to prevent the creeping growth of assumptions that places can be isolated as 'pure,' coherent wholes—a step in the argument that is meant to convince anti-immigration attitudes that their 'places' are already connected to the places from which migrants came, and are thus not defensible as untouched space. "Place" must be understood to be always open and accepting, and those who would bound and limit their "places" in an attempt to purify them of outsiders—in fear of losing their own place-based culture—must be persuaded to give up their efforts.

While this openness of "place" suggests a way to facilitate new syntheses of spatial practice, two qualifications must be considered before applying this discussion to the case study in St. Petersburg. First, Massey de-emphasizes coherence, since that quality might lead to boundedness and from there to rejection. She does pause briefly on the idea that "coherent" places may be at times benign and that people may need some sense of stability: in "A global sense of place," she writes that "There is a need to face up to—rather than simply deny—people's need for attachment of some sort" (cited in Cresswell 2004, 66). She does not discuss this conceded need any further, leaving unexamined the hidden "attachments" and persisting preoccupations with certain

meaning-structures in space that threaten to crop up and reassert the elements that she would like us to undo—"certain forms of nationalism, sentimentalized recovering of sanitized 'heritages,' and outright antagonism to newcomers and 'outsiders'" (cited in Cresswell 2004, 63). For the purposes of understanding the socio-spatial paradigm into which new arrivals enter, I actively solicited descriptions of coherent patterns in the narratives of my interviewees.

Second, Massey is very cautious about authenticity. Her reconceptualization "underscores the lack of basis for any claims for establishing the *authentic character* of any particular place. … There is, in that sense of a timeless truth of an area, built on somehow internally contained character traits, *no authenticity* of place" (1994, 121; emphasis added). To put this another way, Massey wants residents of an area not to consider their own spatial practices as the privileged, autochthonous, "natural" practices to which all arrivals must assimilate themselves. Spatial practice and the nature of any space or landscape is affected by processes far beyond its immediate vicinity, and these practices and landscapes are always changing. Yet in order to conduct an empirical analysis of how two types of spatial practices meet and transform each other, I conceded a conditional authenticity to the narratives of long-time residents.

It seems that Massey is concerned to prevent individuals or groups from associating themselves with certain features of a place which they will then extrapolate into an identity of priority or "localness," thus justifying power over or exclusion of others. However, in order to recognize fully the diversity of local spatial practices and the possible difficulty of embracing the "throwntogetherness" that Massey endorses, it seems

necessary to acknowledge a preexisting system or set of local possibilities and constraints; these may persist in place even if the actors change, simply in dependence on the physical constraints or dominant customs. They may oppress or they may sustain; they are not inherently threatening.

Dirlik (2005) gives a useful example of this alternative approach in concluding an essay on "colonizing" architectural practices in China. He contrasts not groups, in fact, but conceptions of using space, stating that "off-ground conceptions and goals of spatial utility"—such as those embodied in urban megaprojects designed to achieve world city status—are "premised on the marginalization, if not the erasure, of alternative uses of space that are more consonant with *the needs and prerogatives of everyday existence*" (Dirlik 2005, 49-50; emphasis added). He calls for "spaces that affirm life and livelihood against the abstractions of placeless architecture driven by a fetishism of development" (2005, 55). Dirlik would like to see projects that have "an organic relationship to the environment" (2005, 38; for a related concern about the connections of urban development projects to local needs, see the concluding sections of Olds [2001] or Marshall [2003]). It is the "sociable"—not necessarily the "local"—that needs support.

Expanding on Dirlik's argument, there are certain kinds of constraints that do not have to do inherently with aggressive exclusion: any observer of an ecosystem can name certain shifts in flora that happen in differing locations, such as the shift from fir to pine when you move from west to east over the crest of a coastal mountain range, or the shift from tall grasses to ferns and other low undergrowth when you move out of a meadow into a forest. Many locations in the world have confronted the material limitations on

amounts of water, and any group of plants will compete for a constrained quantity of light and other nutrients. The ferns do not actively exclude the grasses, nor the grasses the ferns—but they are unlikely to be found in the same place, and an attempt to make fern grow on a sunny hillside would require efforts that would greatly alter the usual state of the slope; if ferns and grasses had to develop conditions where they could both survive, they would have to transform themselves as well as the slope.

This body of theory is therefore an important step in interpreting the Baltic Pearl's appearance in St. Petersburg, since that project occurs as an element embodying change in St. Petersburg's landscape with both local and international implications and since it is both a symptom and a catalyst of broader intercultural confrontation between Russians and Chinese. Theoretical literature on place opens up urgent questions about these processes; it does not, however, offer specific tools for analyzing the processes. For those, I turned to literature on spatial analysis.

Examining differentiated practices through spatial models

Geographers such as Cresswell have actively reincorporated the work of 1970s humanist geography into their work, recapturing some of their more 'empirical' insights from the gap left by the cultural turn of the 1980s. The work of Yi-Fu Tuan and Edward Relph, in particular, seemed naïve in light of the increased political and social awareness of Other-ness and patriarchy, a process compelling a differentiated (rather than universal) articulation of such apparently simple concepts as "home" and "dwelling place."

Cresswell and others have maintained that we still have much to learn from these geographers. I follow this lead in arguing that, rather than privileging one set of spatial

practices and insisting on the "authenticity" of place, Tuan's book *Topophilia* (1974) contains some powerful images of how the place-valuation of Western communities had changed over historical time (1974, 104-105). Tuan's first diagram includes a primitive view of home, center, as safe and sacred, while the area outside is dangerous and "profane." As he moves through later centuries, noting the change in views on the city and forested wilderness, his diagrams suggest that what was taken for granted as values associated with certain kinds of place are not stable, but rather change along with other social structures and processes. Arguably, these diagrams get at one aspect of spatial experience that the term "socio-spatial paradigm" aims to capture.

Returning to Tuan's spatial diagrams with an eye to studying overlapping socio-spatial paradigms, we can apply them not in order to suggest an aggregate view of a particular society's dominant spatial conception, but to see them as co-existent in time. If we superimpose one over the other and imagine that the two conceptions of valued places have to be "co-present" as Massey would have it, then we begin to ask how two different spatial conceptions would affect interactions. How would decisions about how to treat places be made if their claims on space conflicted? This begins to integrate such political questions of "geographies of power" directly into the tools of landscape analysis that Tuan provided.

Similarly, early geographers also made use of Kevin Lynch's work on cognitive mapping in cities (1960). Lynch's well-known structural analyses of how the built features of cities interact with residents' knowledge of and conception of city space offered a crucial tool for realizing that residents do not see everything that actually lies on

a city landscape (Lynch also meant these maps, perhaps chiefly, as evaluative tools for the usability and transparency of the city structure). In fact, other scholars took this idea one step further and examined the differences between cognitive maps created from interviews with groups of residents with varying socioeconomic positioning. In a key article, Peter Orleans (1973) presented cognitive maps for five different groups of residents in Los Angeles, following techniques used by Lynch to produce a unified cognitive map of the same city. (The five groups had different ethnic, social, and economic qualities.)

Orleans used Lynch's techniques to show that Los Angeles was differently effective for different groups—thus laying a foundation for study of differing views of place in relationship to differing social and economic experience. As Orleans concluded,

> It is all too easy to reify the concrete manifestation of the city, to assume that its symbolic representation is equivalent for all of its residents. This is especially dangerous if the perceptions of middle-class residents are taken as representative of the population at large. ... [We need to] continually check our own world view with that of others who share the same matrix, even though, or perhaps especially because, our social worlds all too often touch but fail to interpenetrate.
> (1973, 129-130)

Implied in Tuan's work and more explicit in Orleans's is the fact that each diagram or cognitive map depicts not just coexisting flows, but different sets of values and customs that have different material results, requirements, and constraints in the landscape. While they become static on the page, they also imply certain patterns of mobility and "a distinctive environmental imagery" (Orleans 1973, 128)—that is, a subselection of noticed and utilized elements as bearers of place-meaning.[1] In St. Petersburg, such

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[1] Soja probably has these analyses in mind when he writes that 'often the interpretation [of different cognitive maps] abruptly ended with naïve categorical idealizations, such as... the poor have highly

distinctions become visible in the different paths and points of orientation used by pedestrians and automobile users. Long-time residents and senior citizens also tend to know about and make reference to historical sites in a way that younger or more recent residents are unable to do; essentially these different residents may be inhabiting the same city, but different spaces in that city.

Eliciting differing socio-spatial paradigms that operate in the same space can help us to see why certain groups do not interact or why they feel anxious about the presence in space of newcomers (insofar as there is a spatial component to this anxiety). Massey uses a very general approximation of what I intend by "socio-spatial paradigm" when she deploys the term "geographical imagination"; she defines it as "an implicit geography that organizes our social understandings, that supports—though usually without being mentioned explicitly at all—the analyses in documents (as well as practices) of all kinds" (2007, 87).[2] Massey's insightful conceptualizations can benefit from retaining empirical tools to examine specific city typologies and spaces (Lynch 1960; Jacobs 1961; Yeung 1996) or particular types of trajectories (Pred 1990; Urry 2000; Cresswell 2006). Her discussions of place and the way that hybridity can happen in a place is often idealized; she and many other scholars want negotiation to happen, but rarely engage with the question of how that negotiation will take place, and how to establish mechanisms that will permit people who regard each other as "Other" to talk to each other. While wanting

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localized mental maps in contrast to the wealthy' (Soja 1996, 80). His critiques are valid but Orleans himself, for example, qualifies his own results and does not make such idealizing claims. The maps indeed do not say much without the accompanying engagement with 'world views' or types of 'interpenetration' between groups.

[2] The most influential recent use of the concept "geographical imagination" has been by Gregory (1994) and Massey (2005, 2007), although Tuan also has an essay on this topic (1990).

to retain the critical-geographic assertion that space is not fixed and that it is highly conceptualized ("constructed"), I also wanted to engage close observations of urban workings. This turned me to Kevin Lynch and other scholars of urban planning.

Space and power

Kevin Lynch's well-known *The Image of the City* (1960) has resonance around the world, including in recent designs from China for the Baltic Pearl. Lynch provides a concrete set of spatial entities that he describes for use in analyzing the effectiveness of a city's form; these are paths, nodes, edges, districts and landmarks.

Unlike the dark criticisms of planning emanating from social theory, Lynch does not concede to planners as much power as they might think they have. He warns, "Only partial control can be exercised over [the city's] growth and form. There is no final result, only a continuous succession of phases" (1960, 2). In the midst of this assumed chaos and diversity, he would like to find some commonality. It is not necessarily important to him that a building, road, or park function precisely as the planner or designer intends, but it is certainly important that it does function and provide an element for diverse urban texture which enables navigation and attachment. That is, a planner's planned objects may be reappropriated by the individual pedestrian in a manner that contradicts the plan.

Lynch's main goal in writing his book is achieving greater usability of the city for the user. He combined interviews with a wide range of people into an amalgamated map; the work of a city's planners is judged effective if their planned elements (such as landmarks and roads) appear in interviewees' mental maps as meaningful destinations or points of orientation. The reinforcement of certain elements through multiple mentions

reflects his belief that "Structuring and identifying the environment is a vital ability among all mobile animals. ... Let the mishap of disorientation once occur, and the sense of anxiety and even terror that accompanies it reveals to us how closely it is linked to our sense of balance and well-being" (1960, 3-4). These city elements must serve not only for longtime residents, but also for visitors; the potential subjects moving around Lynch's city are not only those who are "natives" (although in his study, these subjects tend to have the clearest, most comprehensive "images" of their city) but also new arrivals to the city, who are faced with the task of moving around in it and orienting themselves to its spatial practices as well as the spaces themselves.

In the appendix to *Image of the City*, Lynch writes:

...in a broader sense [the environmental image] can serve as a general frame of reference within which the individual can act, or to which he can attach his knowledge. In this way it is like a body of belief, or *a set of social customs*: it is an organizer of facts and possibilities. [It may] act as an organizer of activity. ... The landscape... furnishes material for common memories and symbols which bind the group together and allow them to communicate with one another. ... The symbolic organization of the landscape may help to assuage fear, to establish an emotionally safe relationship between men and their total environment. (1960, 126-127)

Certainly, as noted above, Lynch does not intend to build a city for "natives" or for a dominant class; he intends for it to become "usable" for everyone. "Our purpose," writes Lynch, "is simply to consider the need for identity and structure in our perceptual world" (10). The potential that his approach offered for eliciting "identity and structure" made his work foundational for the research methods used in this project: by asking about use of paths, nodes, landmarks, and so on, I hoped I could really be asking interviewees to

comment on their knowledge of "symbols and stories" that are embedded in the physical structure of space.

Space as precursor of action: Scott and mētis

James Scott's influential work *Seeing like a State* (1998) prominently uses the concept of (planners') legibility. Unlike Lynch, for whom urban legibility is a feature that any city user can access, Scott associates the term "legibility" with state action that seeks to order society visually as social space, particularly when the state combines a high-modernist ideology bearing a strong visual aesthetic (the requirement that things *appear* ordered) with authoritarian and utopian tendencies (that is, extensive control and considerable ambitions to "improve" life). The opposing term in his analysis is "mētis," which he defines early on as "a host of informal practices and improvisations that could never be codified" (6). Utopian schemes for 'legibility' fail because they suppress *mētis*.

By tying the definition of *mētis* to practices and not to places, Scott supports the notion that people facing drastic change can indeed adopt and find new ways to live and that their ability to adapt is *not* linked to reactionary attachment to particular delimited spaces (a concern of Massey's); however, he also implies throughout the book that the society-sustaining processes of *mētis* are embedded in spatial arrangements and niches that escape state-sponsored planning, and that these processes can disappear if you disarrange the spatial pattern in which they take root.

In contrast to Certeau's definition of *mētis* (see below), Scott also progressively adds the aspect of "local practice" to "informal practice." It is clear from many of his examples and some of his conclusions that *mētis* has a basis in particular places and

historical customs (cp. Olwig). His example of the description of land in nineteenth-century France measured "in days and equipment needed to work it"—that is, by the practices intertwined with that land—also solidifies this essential connection to place. This understanding could not grow without knowledge of place. For Scott,

> Customs are better understood as a living, negotiated tissue of practices which are continually being adapted to new ecological and social circumstances—including, of course, power relations. (1998, 34)

This definition is strikingly similar to Olwig's, without the explicit reference to land or other spatial frames; yet the planning disasters that drive Scott's book are produced by the loss of these customs by changing the physical organization of space that allow them (the customs) to exist. In a subsequent section on cities, Scott asserts (in what for me is the crucial link between "*mētis*" and "place") that spaces organized by common custom provided "a vital margin of political safety from control by outside elites"—that they combined "insulation" with "patterns of local solidarity" that permitted alternate political visions (1998, 54). In this same section, Scott elaborates on this spatial link when he critiques the geometric "grand plans" of states for four aspects—and three of these are spatial: "absence of dense street life; loss of cozy spatial irregularities; and gathering places that promote neighborhood feeling" (57).

In one of his final chapters Scott elaborates on the definitions of *mētis*: it "resists simplification into deductive principles" (1998, 316); it is "almost always *local*" (317); it arises in "*spatially* and temporally *unique settings*" (318; my emphases). In order for all four elements mentioned here to remain applicable, there must be a base of operation—a physical place, a landscape, a space of reference. Scott aims chiefly to articulate the

social basis for resistant political action, but in most cases this action has a spatial underpinning. When he states that "A reasonably strong *neighborhood* can, in a democratic setting, fight to create and maintain good schools, useful parks, vital urban services, and decent housing" (145; my emphasis), he leaves underanalyzed how the "neighbors" can preserve the physical location that allows them to be neighbors in the first place.

In the context of modern cities and the struggles over space, who counts as the party with *mētis*? The long-term residents of a neighborhood, or the planners who have been studying the city (and probably also living in it) for just as long? While the former seem to qualify on Scott's terms, the swiftness with which we employ the terms "nostalgia" or "NIMBY" for those who oppose changes in the built environment points to the need for a more evenhanded application of terms and methods. Purcell warns about the "local trap" of excessive sympathy for those who support conservation (2006), but in the case of St. Petersburg it is arguable that a way of life with a specific infrastructure is changing; this must be recognized as more than mere sentiment.

Lefebvre

In turning to the work of Henri Lefebvre in order to elaborate on the idea of socio-spatial paradigm, I want to emphasize the pragmatic aspects of his work. Tajbaksh quotes the criticism of Castells that Lefebvre remained too "humanist" in his approach (2001, 50) and neglected the influence of class and other sociological structures. However, Lefebvre provides a useful template for considering several different aspects of the vision of space held by both individuals and groups. It is in this pragmatic sense that I employ

his terms: Lefebvre manages to include conception, action, and expectation in his analysis in a way that produced clear insights into the material I gathered during fieldwork and provided the best ready vocabulary to expand the concept of "geographical imagination" into "socio-spatial paradigm."

In *The Production of Space* (1991, French original 1974), Lefebvre suggests a deductive approach to observing space and people's behavior in it that can reveal and illuminate an overarching conceptual spatial structure. In fact the word "structure" already reduces his idea, which presupposes a complex network of relationships between different aspects of space. The relationships can be glimpsed in various gestures and signs; Lefebvre terms these "codes."

> Codes will be seen as part of a practical relationship, as part of an interaction between 'subjects' and their space and surroundings. I shall attempt to trace the coming-into-being and disappearance of codings/decodings. (1991, 17)

When individuals describe, "read," or act in the space around them, they use many of these codes. Lefebvre warns that recording an individual's reading cannot capture the process of how signs and gestures are chosen and fixed. However, he suggests that "spatial codes have existed, each characterizing a particular spatial/social practice, and… these codifications have been *produced* along with *the space corresponding to them*" (1991, 17; second emphasis added); thus, although we cannot discern the practice itself, we can listen for codes that surface in recountings of the use of space, and we can listen for the "spaces that correspond to them." At another point in the introduction, Lefebvre notes that "a spatial code is not simply a means of reading or interpreting space: rather it

is a means of living in that space, of understanding it, and of producing it" (1991, 47); thus, discerning spatial codes can help to get at "living, understanding, producing."

Lefebvre's belief in the existence of such spatial codes is reinforced in the way that he sees planners and architects as space-producers who are able to manipulate space—its forms and signs—in order to manipulate the resulting meaning; for them "form... is supposed to enunciate or proclaim the function" (1991, 144). This point is crucial, because it is the consequent reduction of the possible meanings of space that underpins the seriousness of the critique; the assumption is that planners want to restrict the meaning to a single, predetermined one that embodies a command to the "reader" (library = read, park = walk, bank = deposit money, skyscraper = respect financial power). Lefebvre goes on:

> According to this principle, which is espoused by most 'designers', the environment can be furnished with or animated by signs in such a way as to appropriate space, in such a way that space becomes readable (i.e. 'plausibly' linked) to society as a whole. (1991, 144)

Indeed, recall that Lynch did say that city planners, since they "aspire to model an environment that will be used by many people," are most interested in "group images, exhibiting consensus among significant numbers" (1960, 7). The idea of consensus alarms Lefebvre; he sees all "notions of 'design', of reading/writing as practice" as directed "towards the dissolving of conflicts into a general transparency" (1991, 145), that is, into a dismissal of difference and conflict for the sake of a state consensus. Yet Lefebvre indicates a recognition of Lynch's concern with orientation and environmental coherence when he states that "all 'subjects' are situated in a space in which they must

either recognize themselves or lose themselves, a space which they may both enjoy and modify" (1991, 35).

Similarly to Scott, Lefebvre sees an explicit relationship between space and a successful practice in that space. When he laments that radical social groups (such as communes) have not been able to outlast their critics and internal divisions, he sees a spatial causality: "the absence of an appropriated space, the inability to invent new forms" (1991, 379) hampered those efforts—that is, the failure to create a new space commensurate with new social structures eventually destroyed the new society. Lefebvre's "trialectics" provides a way to "test" for truly new space.

Lefebvre's trialectics

In the succeeding chapters I use Lefebvre's terminology as a quick method of extracting evidence for socio-spatial paradigms. This requires a reading of Lefebvre's main spatial trichotomy, which Harvey skims over and misrepresents (1989) and to which Soja draws attention but also obscures by overstating its difficulty (1996). Cresswell helpfully summarizes that the trialectics emphasize that "place is constituted through reiterative social practice—place is made and remade on a daily basis" (2004, 39). Through observation of these repeated actions, Lefebvre proposed new understandings of how space is "produced."

Lefebvre uses many triplets in *The Production of Space* that he intends to help him articulate his new science of space. Sometimes the three terms are numbered (1991, 33-34) or clearly linked to additional terms, but sometimes it is more difficult to decide

on clear correlations. In the table below, the top two rows contain Soja's terms (1996); I have italicized the words that need clarification.

Firstspace	Secondspace	*Thirdspace*
physical space	mental space	*social space*
1	2	3
spatial practice	representation of space	space of representation
perceived	conceived	lived

As Soja's interpretation shows, the second term in the triad is the clearest. It is the first and third terms that occasion some trouble. In Soja's interpretation, a "Firstspace perspective" is "focused on the 'real' material world" and a "Secondspace perspective... interprets this reality through 'imagined' representations of spatiality" (1996, 6).[3] "Thirdspace," by contrast, which for Soja is the "space of representation," the "lived" space, has the most radical potential for revising the other two (even though they work together for Lefebvre). Soja sees it as "the creation of another mode of thinking about space that draws upon the material and mental spaces of the traditional dualism but extends well beyond them in scope, substance, and meaning" (1996, 11). This final formulation, in spite of Soja's enthusiasm for Thirdspace, does not tell us very much about how the three terms actually work together or about Lefebvre's approach to examining their manifestation in space.

First, we should remember that while Lefebvre did not recommend studying the layout of physical space or the material world per se, he did encourage a focus on the linked term "spatial practice" and on the codes that practice inscribes in physical space. He implies that it is possible to "perceive" these codes and work backwards to the spatial

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[3] Harvey perhaps gets hung up on the word "imagined," which causes him to describe the triad as 1 experience, 2 perception, 3 imagination, and confuses what Lefebvre means by all three (1989, 220-221).

practice that we can link to specific spaces organized by a particular historical mode of

production (1991, 17). This is not the same thing as the "Firstspace perspective" that Soja

sees as outmoded (and to which he would probably link Lynch, Tuan, and Relph).

Perceiving the codes requires study of physical space.

Second, the "Thirdspace" term is both more complex and simpler than it seems

based on Soja's depiction of the physical-mental duality that it supposedly explodes. A

"space of representation" is not always a liberating space; it concentrates and expresses

social meaning, and is formed by lived practice, but may be just as unintentional as the

"reading" that (as we have seen) Lefebvre deplored. Creating "spaces of representation"

can be a powerful gesture to make, but anyone can make it. (In my quotations from the

1991 translation and throughout the chapters, I follow Soja's practice of using the phrase

"space of representation" for greater clarity.)

Lefebvre often turns to the European Middle Ages in order to show what he

means by his terms. First he offers some commentary on them (the two passages are

contiguous but I separate them to highlight the distinctions):

> Representations of space are certainly abstract, but they also play a part in social
> and political practice; established relations between objects and people in
> represented space are subordinate to a logic which will sooner or later break them
> up because of their lack of consistency. [This implies that they are judged by their
> ability to be consistent.]
>
> Spaces of representation... need obey no rules of consistency or cohesiveness.
> Redolent with imaginary and symbolic elements, they have their source in
> history—in the history of a people as well as in the history of each individual
> belonging to that people. (1991, 41)

These two terms, then, are both collective as well as individual; notably, a "space of

representation" can be fraught with history as well as promise liberation. When Lefebvre

gives some specific examples for each term from medieval society, the terms gain yet

more shape. I separate them again in order to facilitate comparison and clarity:

> 1 *spatial practice* = network of local roads close to peasant communities, monasteries and castles, also the main roads between towns and the great pilgrims' and crusaders' ways.
>
> 2 *representations of space* = the Earth, the underground 'world,' the luminous Cosmos, Heaven of the just and of the angels… a fixed sphere within a finite space…; below this surface, the fires of Hell…
>
> 3 *spaces of representation* = the village church, graveyard, hall and fields, or the square and the belfry.
> (1991, 45)

As these examples show, "spatial practice" entails not just the physical surroundings

themselves but an articulation of relationships in and between spaces that fix hierarchies,

directions, and priorities; many of the examples that Lefebvre gives here are of spaces for

movement rather than for stasis. "Representations of space" clearly refer to a religiously,

ideologically, or philosophically conceptual structuring of the world; they provide a

general structure for what spaces can mean in relation to the conceptual structure (is a

space oriented to heaven or to hell, for example). Finally, "spaces of representation"

concentrate social meaning and priorities in spaces that are created and sustained by

repeated practices that articulate their consistency though the performative movement of

bodies. (As Lefebvre noted just a few pages before, these spaces "need obey no rules of

consistency," but they are recognizable as intended for certain acts because of the activity

that has come before, even if the precise activities may change in the future.)

Based on these examples, it is clear why Lefebvre suspects that he must focus

much of his energy on "spatial practice," the part of the triad that analyzes how people

move in and between spaces. "Representations of space" and "spaces of representation" have a degree of coherence that allows easier observation, while "spatial practice" is elusive; the last, though, may be the key to understanding "the truth of space." As Lefebvre implies in this short passage, it might be the third term that helps to decipher the relationship between the other two: "the question is what intervenes, what occupies the interstices between representations of space and spaces of representation. A culture, perhaps?" (1991, 43). "Spatial practice" is surely not "a culture" in and of itself, but can give clues to it, and perhaps to its change.

Understanding "spatial practice" as the articulation of relationships in and between spaces that fix hierarchies, directions, and priorities presents an intriguing possibility in Lefebvre for studying how globalization gets enacted at the local level. In discussing leisure spaces that have developed to give (deceptive) relief from "the homogeneous matrix of capitalistic space," Lefebvre suggests that these "specially equipped 'spaces'" are "syntagmatic links between activities within social spaces as such" (1991, 227). This provocatively suggests one implied definition of "spatial practice" as the mode of linking 'spaces of representation' together—whether mode of travel, order of visit, or length of stay. In trying to understand precisely where globalization makes its mark in localities, we might (as one option) study the local "spatial practice" as the "syntagmatic links" between existing (and newly developing) "spaces of representation" and as the embodiments of shifts in "representations of space."

While he moves away from this notion of spatial syntax, this passage on the following page helps to extend the hypothesis:

> Inasmuch as global space bears the inscriptions and prescriptions of power, its effectiveness redounds upon the levels we have been discussing—the levels of the architectural (monument/building) and the urban. Where global space contrives to signify, thanks to those who inhabit it, and for them, it does so, even in the 'private' realm, only to the extent that those inhabitants accept, or have imposed upon them, what is 'public.' (1991, 228)

In the earlier historical times that Lefebvre discusses and from which he gives examples, the operative "representation of space" was generated locally or regionally. As has often been stated, the effect of the "global" on the "local" and regional is neither unidirectional nor even, but it is hard to escape the persistent impression that "global" signs and forms become dominant. This passage in Lefebvre suggests that the global and local are not binaric but imbricated and coexistent: but the impression of the global's dominance is overwhelming because it is as though the *space between* (the "syntagmatic links") becomes global whereas before it was more locally produced. This means that taking note of whether the "syntagmatic" spaces are globally produced or locally created forms an important step in studying larger cultural and socio-spatial shifts.

Lefebvre and differentiation

As shown earlier in a discussion of the concept of "place," analysis of space through different cognitive maps has the potential to help us explore the diversity of urban experience as well as the spatial experiences of different groups. Lefebvre provides a vigorous theoretical support for this approach.

> Ethnologists, anthropologists and psychoanalysts are students of… spaces of representation, whether they are aware of it or not, but they nearly always forget to set them alongside those representations of space *which coexist, concord or interfere with them*; they even more frequently ignore social practice. (1991, 41; emphasis added)

Crucially that Lefebvre suggests that representations of space can "coexist, concord, or interfere" with each other. The implied layering immediately recalls Massey's notions of "coeval" presences and "throwntogetherness" (2005, 141). Later in an even more richly suggestive passage, Lefebvre expands on this point:

> A *theory* is therefore called for, one which would transcend spaces of representation on the one hand and representations of space on the other, and which would be able properly to articulate contradictions (and in the first place *the contradiction between these two aspects of representation*). *Socio-political contradictions* are realized spatially. (1991, 365; second emphases added)

Lefebvre indicates that conceptions of space and lived experiences of space may contradict each other. Following this statement, I hypothesize a general common fund of knowledge about space in a single city (a generally operating "representation of space") yet recognize that different groups and actors in the city may invoke different elements in that representation of space when making their arguments about what should happen to a particular landscape (e.g. in the medieval example, some may argue that a landscape should express association with heaven, while others may argue it should be associated with hell). While there will be a certain common fund of "spaces of representation" (museums, landmarks, main streets, churches, markets), different groups and actors will emphasize different "spaces of representation," order them differently in their routes, and place them differently in a spatial hierarchy.

Articulating a Socio-Spatial Paradigm

To restate, Lefebvre saw "codes" as "part of a *practical* relationship, as part of an interaction between 'subjects' and their space and surroundings" (1991, 17; emphasis added). Studying a particular behavior in space that is governed by such codes can—or so

Lefebvre's work implies—lead us to an approximation of codes and how they change over time with changing modes of production. I was attracted to the empirical approaches that I used based on the hypothesis that any individual's choices, loyalties, and movements reflect a degree of pragmatism (Lefebvre's "practical relationship") that no one individual would be able to describe consciously. (For example, Lefebvre cautions that a "reader of space" may become overly obedient to its signs.) I suspected that I would have to capture the evidence for "codes" in several ways—through knowing the history of, and trends in, the base environment; through hearing individuals' narrative of spatial loyalties and trajectories; through observing significant places and spaces; and through studying public discourse about the overall environment and particular spaces. It is this hunch, for example, that suggested the use of "route descriptions" in my interviews with "average residents" (which I discuss more fully in Chapter VI).

Although I feel that Harvey misinterpreted Lefebvre in early summaries (1989), his work clearly reflects Lefebvre's profound influence; I recognize the early stimulus to materializing a spatial analysis in Harvey's comment that "urbanization should... be regarded as a *spatially grounded social process* in which a wide range of different actors with quite different objectives and agendas interact through a particular configuration of *interlocking spatial practices*" (2001, 349).[4] Hoping that a more articulated spatial analysis could cut across assumptions made about the fate of different classes in the post-Soviet transition, I found reinforcement in Sykora's rejection of a determinist path-

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[4] In fact, Harvey presents in this article ("From managerialism to entrepreneurialism") a very Lefebvrian triad (artefacts, institutional arrangements, and environment of experience) which presents a much closer approximation of Lefebvre's model than his interpretation in *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1989). His powerful analysis of urban entrepreneurial projects in that article moves on to other points, however, and does not dwell on this triadic model as a tool for analysis.

dependency analysis as offered by Pickles and Smith (1998) and his statement that "We… have to take into account the effects of *historically formed geographies deeply embedded in cities* and regions on the behavior and decisions of key actors that shape current societal and especially territorial transformations" (Sykora 2008, 290; emphasis added). An effort to recover the lived experience of individuals in studying these processes (such as Pavlovskaya 2002; 2004) also finds support in one of Kaganskii's definitions of "landscape":

> An unbroken polymorphic space on the earth's surface; a polyscalar and polyrhythmic diversity; a living environment of places that are saturated with meaning by *the people who live in them.* (2001, 135)

For example, in St. Petersburg, there is a clear geographical imaginary of Europe (see e.g. Turovskii 2003, 162). However, in the city today, different groups make widely different uses of "Europe" as a representation of space. The elites look to Europe as the source of successful economic models and esthetic prestige. Many activists in the city, whether they are protesting unscrupulous construction or new highways, "look to" Europe in a different sense, for models of legal action and for the authority of the World Court. Some protesters against the Baltic Pearl or the Gazprom skyscraper (see below, Chapter IV) also used Europe very much as their model—but the part of Europe to which they referred varied. For example, intellectual elites who disapproved of the Gazprom skyscraper's placement engaged in debates over which European city offers the best model for Petersburg's development—Rome, Paris, London, or Stockholm. By contrast again, European economic prosperity and high-tech microlandscapes (such as Sir

Norman Foster's buildings) were ways in which Gazprom tower supporters invoked

Europe to support their arguments.

Brief examples

Throughout the dissertation, I discuss and analyze space in St. Petersburg by

using the terms described above. Socio-spatial paradigm refers to the complex of spatial

assumptions, practices, and attitudes that gets deployed, particularly by individuals. I use

Lefebvre's terms "representation of space, space of representation, and spatial practice"

to refer to specific aspects of this complex, particularly when I analyze spaces

themselves—material locations do not so much have "socio-spatial paradigms" of their

own but rather appear as elements in the paradigm of an actor or group, while Lefebvre's

notions can work usefully for both analyses.

To further suggest the relevance of what this study can reveal, I end this chapter

with a sketched analysis of two types of sites in St. Petersburg—parks and fitness clubs—

that suggest how spaces of representation differ between socioeconomic groups. They

thus also hint at larger changes taking place in the social fabric, in the tendency to value

certain types of places within cities, and to value the city as a whole in a certain way.

St. Petersburg contains parks dating back to the 18th-century founding of the city,

when the monarchs and appointed planners applied European models in order to

"civilize" the Russian north (a "representation of space" laid out on the landscape as

"spatial practice" for the upper classes, and a "space of representation" for their claims to

be European). Parks, then, are not by any means an invention of Soviet planning –

although the creation of several city parks and persistent attitudes to them could be said

to derive from the Soviet planning ethos, which in turn derived some of its energy and vision from the Garden City movement in Europe. (Here we see how the park as "space of representation" for urbanity expanded to include the "spatial practice" of all residents, and intriguingly links the "representations of space" of the aristocratic Baroque and Soviet egalitarian planning apparatuses.) As revealed in a survey conducted recently (Karpov 2004), the percentage of Petersburg residents who feel entitled to city-provided green space within walking distance of their residences is high. Current city administrators who have turned yet again to (contemporary) European models of services and urban landscapes definitely value parks as well, even as they try to apply post-Soviet means to fund these projects and as they give out permits for construction in certain green spaces.

This last situation, however, starts to highlight the divergence in conception of parks between those who remain within a Soviet-generated set of attitudes about use of space and those who style themselves "contemporary" (the same "space of representation" starts to function within different "spatial practices" and "representations of space"). A park in the Soviet era might have amenities in it, especially small-scale amusement parks; Gorky Park in Moscow was famous for its giant Ferris wheel. However, many parks would strike Western eyes as looking almost neglected—open green spaces, relatively unmanicured, without amenities. City dwellers saw these spaces as local "nature," especially if they did not have the time or money to leave the city limits for the *dacha* belt and forests; people talked of "getting oxygen" there and did not expect much beyond a small kiosk with ice cream (but certainly numerous benches). Their

"spatial practice" in such parks included passing through on the course of daily errands, suntanning, sitting, drinking, or chatting.

Today, some city officials are trying to increase the number and quality of amenities provided in parks. Around Aviators Park southwest of the city center, local residents have been fighting the installation of a large tennis complex for several years. They deeply resent the idea that public park space would be taken over by a private club, even if that club promises to provide a certain number of free lessons for local children. The park itself, while pleasant and green, does have several large empty patches of asphalt that detractors can point to. However, residents who oppose the tennis complex prefer to keep the park underdeveloped in order for mothers with perambulators to have full access to the space.

At a public hearing for the district on land use laws in October 2006, a dispute arose between the senior city official from the planning department and several activist residents: the official admonished people that they should support the tennis complex; he had played tennis his whole life, he said, and found it very beneficial. The surge of contempt in the audience was audible. It's all very well for him, fine fellow—murmured the listeners—playing tennis! For them, envisioning this sport in their local park was tantamount to having it taken over by invaders. In a conversation that I had later with one of the activists—a woman in her early 60s—it was clear that the individuality of tennis, as well as its cost, was part of the problem. "Sport should be collective, don't you think?" she said. "And the space should be for everyone." The "spatial practice" that tennis

represented seemed alien to these residents, who harbor a "representation of space" that is partly based on hygienic norms established in the 1920s (Karpov, interview, 10/29/06).

Ultimately the residents who protested the tennis complex envision the park used in very different kinds of "activity spaces" as Massey has them: that is, the activity to be performed there lies on a different point in the daily or weekly trajectory, and has widely different destinations as its other points. People who played tennis at the complex would arrive in cars (as evidenced by the space allotted for parking in the proposed design) and would not walk through the park as so many local residents did; they would use the space as a recreational stop-off and not as part of their daily landscape. Numerous paths through the park (and other pedestrians observed during fieldwork) show that the park functions as a pass-through space for many residents, integrated into the way that they envision their neighborhood as their "place."

This example contains certain elements of the contrasts that fitness clubs raise in contemporary Russian society. While younger people and a certain higher class of middle-aged Russian people have started to use the fitness clubs that have sprung up around the city, residents who cannot afford or disapprove of these establishments make comments that emphasize the very different type of activity space that contains a fitness club. Such gyms are discussed as part of a complex of nodes that includes a car, emphasis on self, and a certain kind of job. Using a gym is not just a sign of Westernization or Western trends, but indicates that a person moves differently through the city than other people do, intersecting different nodes and experiencing the same places differently. We cannot set up the conflict between those who are for and against the tennis complex as

merely a struggle between wealthy and poor, or between modern and backward people—in fact, a whole way of envisioning and moving through space is at stake.

It is the purpose of this dissertation to explore the effectiveness of the "socio-spatial paradigm" in analyzing the multiplicity of urban visions and practices, and to find ways to discuss with more insight the spatial conflicts that result in xenophobia and dispossession.

CHAPTER IV

THE BALTIC PEARL AS SPATIAL CATALYST

When there is contact between socio-spatial paradigms which differ strongly—as we might presume with Russian and Chinese models—then there is an opportunity for a hybrid to develop. Hybrid spaces have been much discussed as a new global ideal (e.g. Amin 2004), but the relative difficulty in forming one depends on the degree of conflict that is likely to occur based on misunderstandings. Positing a socio-spatial paradigm implies that hybridization could be more successful if the parties involved could more readily recognize the spatial practices of others and understand the role of their respective primary spaces of representation. This chapter looks at visions of the Baltic Pearl as an urban district and also looks at a small architectural element (the courtyard) within the design in order to reveal differing socio-spatial paradigms. Study of the contradictions can support a conversation about how groups with starkly different socio-spatial paradigms might be expected to live together, i.e., in part, whether the space will increase or mitigate xenophobic tendencies. This type of examination can also reveal whether threats to cherished spatial elements will heighten sensations of dispossession. Again, these questions cannot be answered at higher scales.

The first part of this chapter suggests coincidences and contradictions in visions for the space of the Baltic Pearl proposed by the city administration and by the Baltic Pearl firm through its design presentation books, exploring what meanings and activities

the site might concentrate as a space of representation, what spatial practices it will incorporate or participate in, and what representations of space govern its conception. The second part considers how the "urban morpheme" of courtyards functions within the Baltic Pearl (both materially and symbolically) and how the socio-spatial paradigms in which that spatial form is set intersect with the Baltic Pearl project and work to form new hybrid space.

As Gel'bras suggests (see Chapter II), the contradiction in today's Russia between the actions of national governments and the needs of individual citizens is striking. St. Petersburg indeed hopes that the Baltic Pearl project will meet several local needs (housing, infrastructure, prestige—described below), while the national governments of both China and Russia hope that it will fulfill several geopolitical, national-scale needs. Local residents in St. Petersburg are also concerned and confused about what the Baltic Pearl quarter means for them. There is a yawning gap between making the city a "good place for life and work" and making it conform to the other five (economically-framed) points of the Genplan's goals. The conceptual gap between these two meaning frames has a lot to say about how successful it is to use such a project to help St. Petersburg accomplish the transformation from a city with a thick, meaningful past into a city with a flexible future, open to new meanings and spaces.

Background of the Baltic Pearl

To date the Baltic Pearl exists chiefly on paper; this means that a spatial analysis of its capacity to support Genplan goals must depend so far on design materials and related documents. From these materials it is clear that the genesis and development of

the project happened at the "privileged" scale as a state project. The official agreement was concluded between the municipal government of St. Petersburg and a consortium of firms headed by the Shanghai International Investment Corporation (SIIC). However, these entities have close ties to their respective central states: Petersburg city governor Valentina Matvienko was appointed to her position by then-president Vladimir Putin, which makes it highly unlikely that such a deal could be concluded without his implicit approval; SIIC was capitalized by the Shanghai municipal government (using the island on which the ultra-eco-friendly project Dong Tan will ostensibly be built), and thus also ultimately has ties to the Chinese state. The first part of this chapter discusses how the Baltic Pearl is conceived of as spatial practice and space of representation for these "privileged scale" considerations. That is, as a "spatial practice," to what will the project connect Petersburg? How will it rearrange Petersburg's place among world cities and between Russia and China? As a "space of representation," to what values and activities will it give a place for performance? Will it re-present the urban values of traditional St. Petersburg, or something new?

Site details

As can been seen on Map 4.1, the Baltic Pearl is located far outside the orbit of most other high-profile city projects; it is not near the rail terminals or the historical district (where the highest density of commercial activity is still located), and it is not located right on the already constructed eastern section of the Ring Road. The site is bounded to the south by the heavily used Peterhof Highway, which leads to a popular suburb palace and a satellite town, both also called Peterhof. To its north is the Gulf of
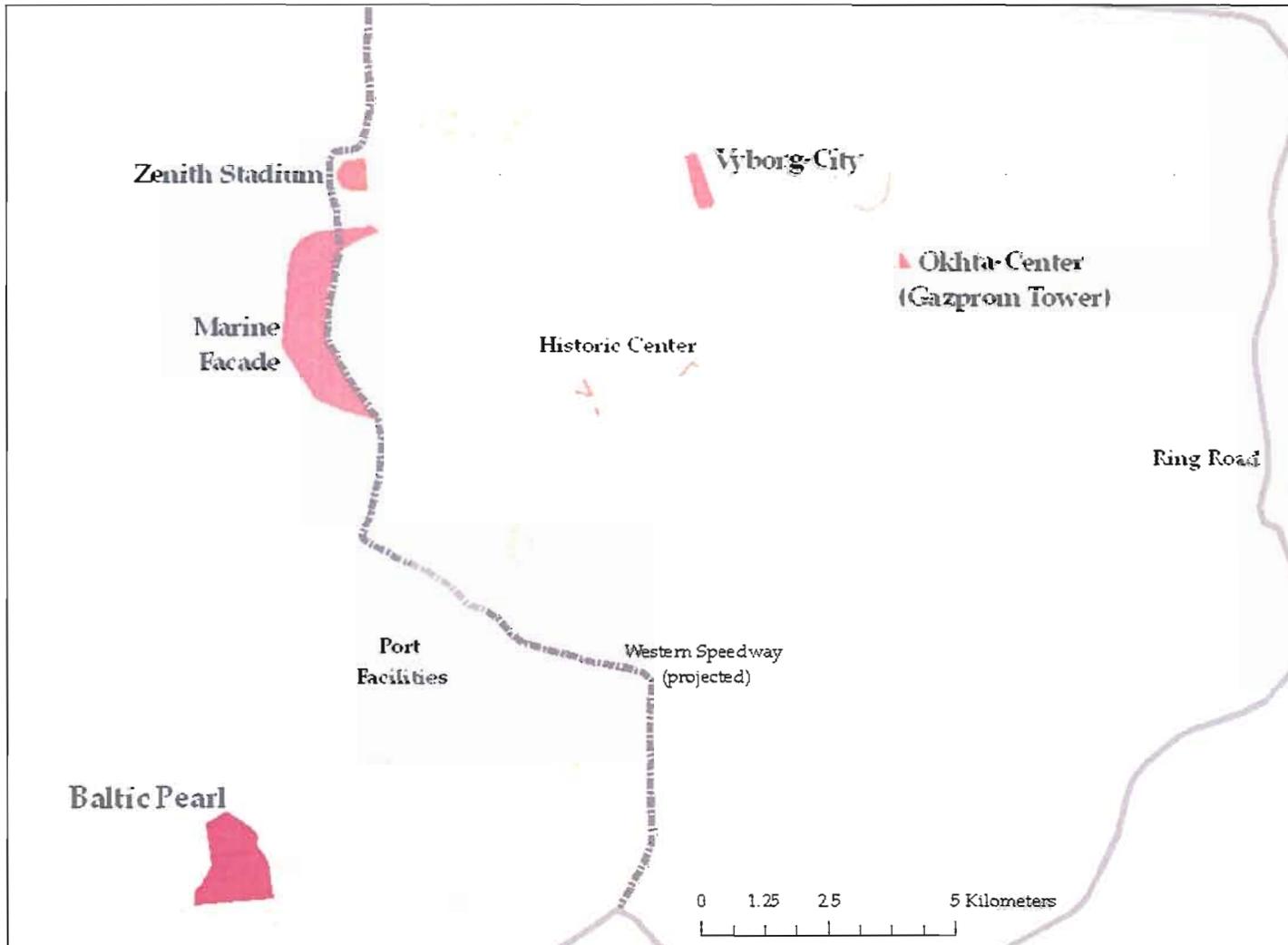
Map 4.1. The Baltic Pearl in relation to other large urban development projects.
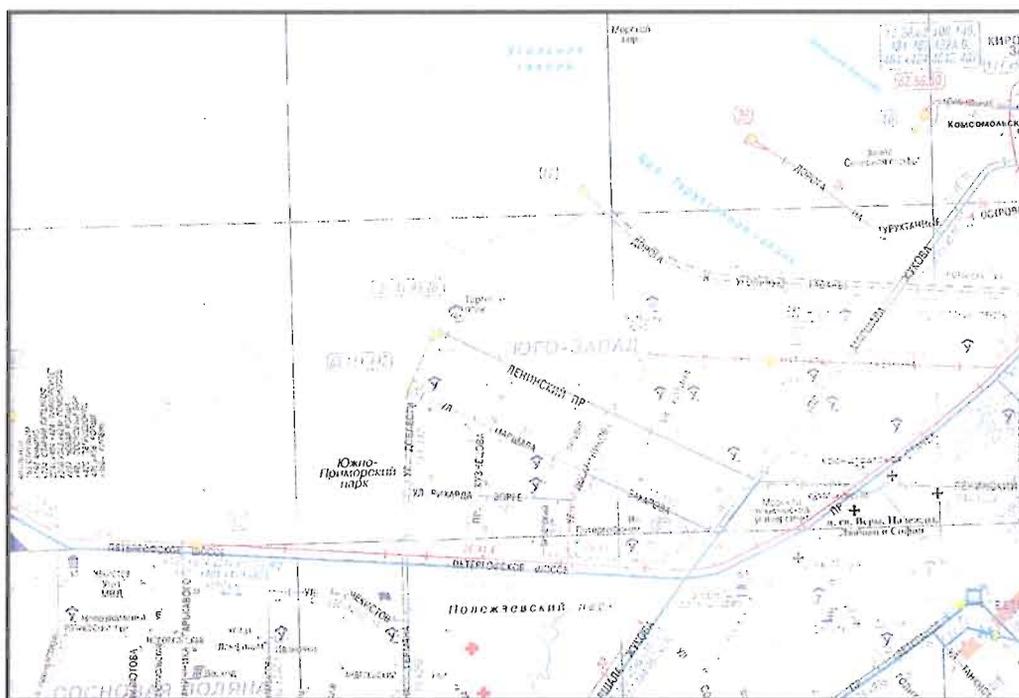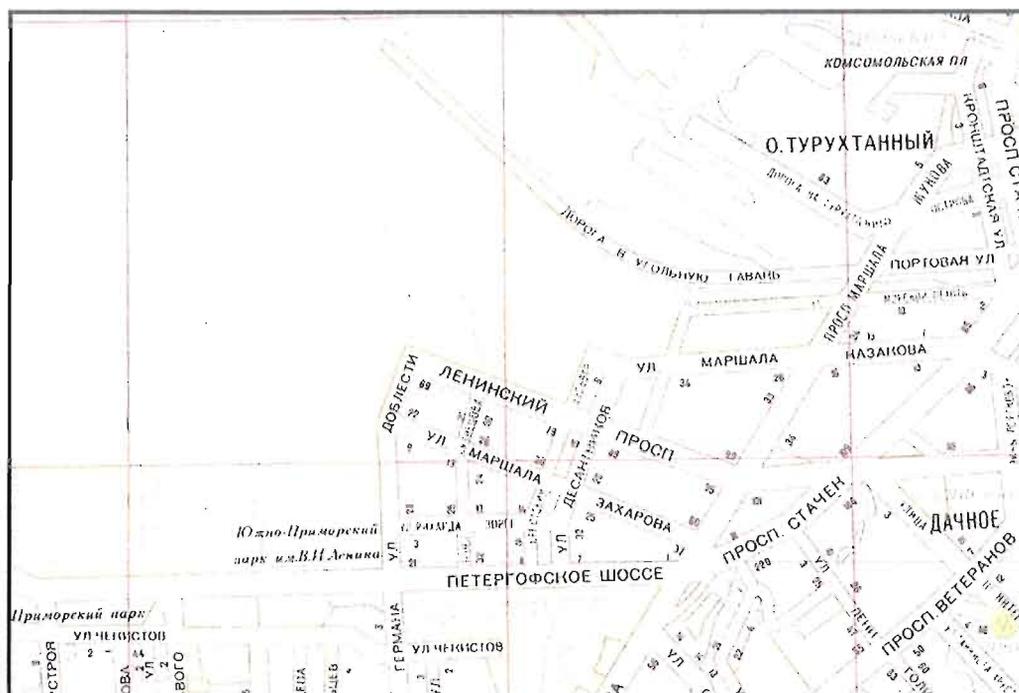
Map 4.2. Matisov Canal area in 1993 (above) and 2005, showing added land.

Marine Facade

Port Facilities

Peterhof Palace
and Gardens

Konstantin Palace
at Strelna
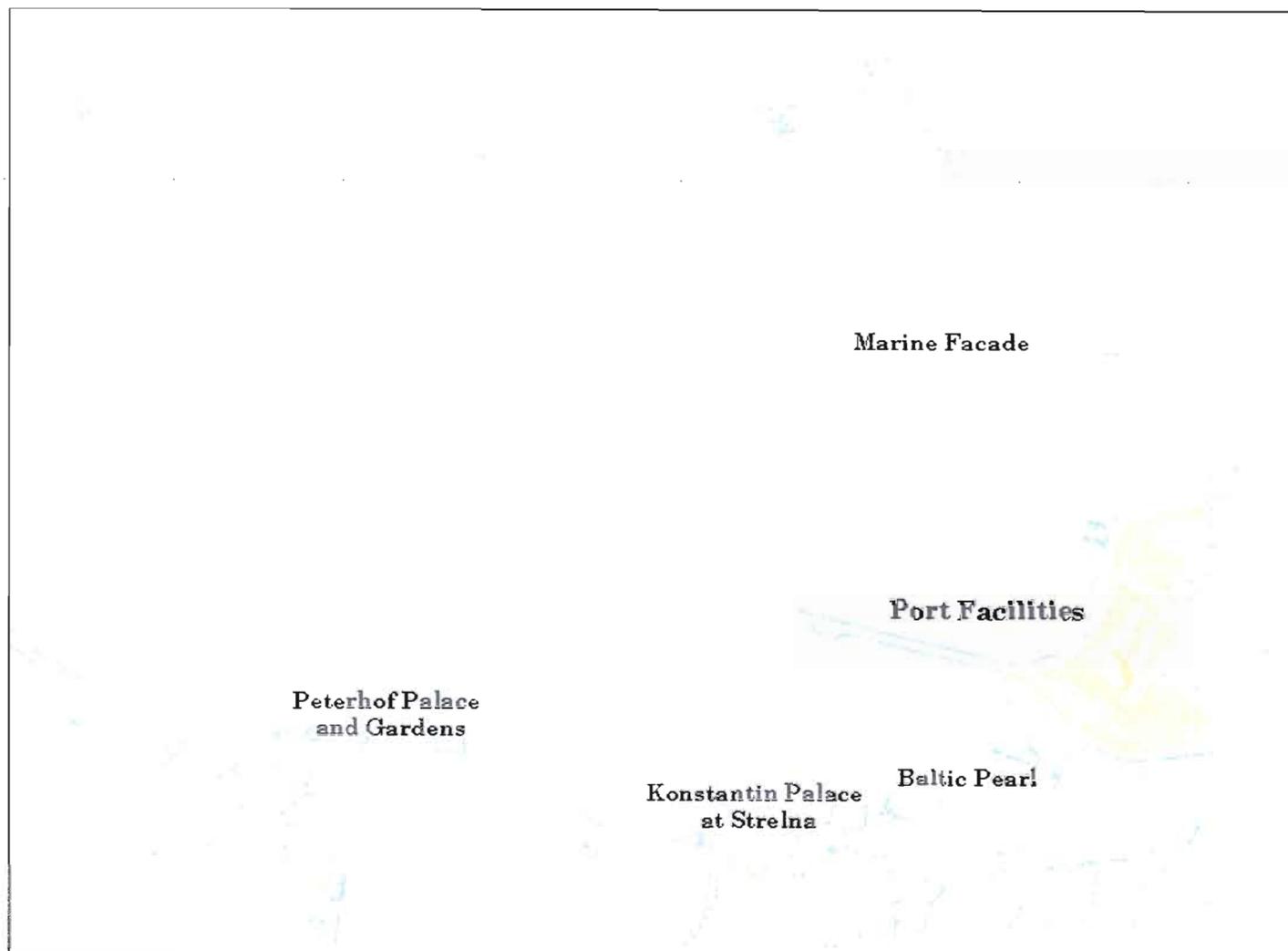
Baltic Pearl

Map 4.3. St. Petersburg's shore along the Gulf of Finland, designated as the "façade of the city."
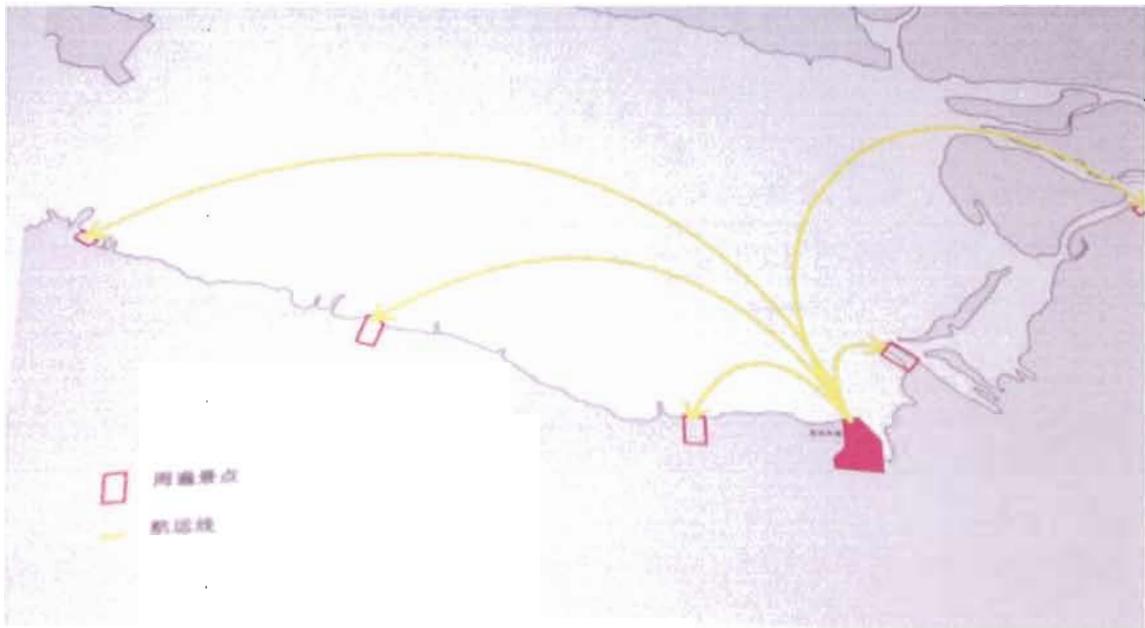
Map 4.4. Image from the 2005 Baltic Pearl design book depicting water transport connections. From right to left: a downtown city dock; the port facilities; the Baltic Pearl; the Constantine Palace at Strelna; Peterhof Palace; and the port at Lomonosov.
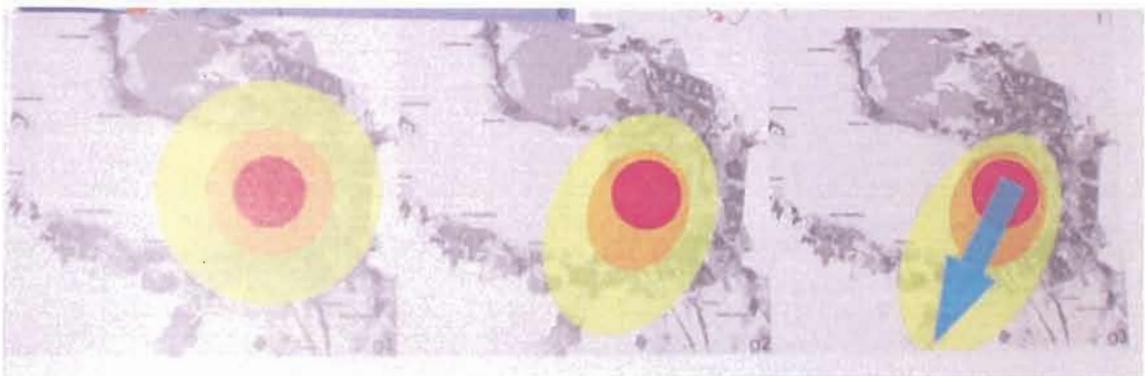
Map 4.5. Image from the 2005 Baltic Pearl design book depicting the city's development towards the south.

Finland; to its southeast is a large Soviet-era park, and to its northeast, also bordering the gulf, is the planned site of another residential district under the direction of the same Russian planner-architect who has worked on the Baltic Pearl with its Chinese team. West of the quarter, beyond a green buffer, stands a tobacco factory.

The parcel of land which has become the Baltic Pearl site did not exist in its entirety as recently as 1990, as can be seen by comparing the spot on a map produced in 1993 and one produced in 2005 (see Map 4.2) Although interviewees in the city administration downplayed this information, the northern part of the site closest to the Gulf was created artificially; the land had to "settle" for at least ten years before construction could commence. Other physical aspects around the site that had to mature before it could become attractive for investors were the construction of a water treatment plant (Lopatkin, *Gorod*, 7/26/04) and an electricity station.

These facts may give the idea that the site is undesirable or marginal, but this is true only if it is evaluated with respect to the historical center alone. In fact, development of the site into a similar residential quarter had been envisioned in the 1986 city Master Plan, long before the city signed agreements with the Chinese investors; the local planner-architect who became the Russian liaison to the Shanghai team had previously worked on designs for the site when his planning institute was still a part of the municipal government (Nikitin, interview; Kharchenko, interview). As the journalist Shuvalov explained,

> There was a project in the mid-90s to move the Baltic Shipyards away from the center, to move the Admiralteiskii drydocks and reclaim the whole area as housing. In order to create a façade, so that there would be a façade, a face for the city. The Marine Façade is part of this. ... And the Baltic Pearl is right about here,

> it's not the very center, but more or less. And these marshy areas that were here, they have to be tidied up into an embankment, a façade for the city.
> (interview, 10/24/06)

The import of such a project is visible on Map 4.3—although it is clear that the port facilities remain as an obstacle to any plan for a uniform façade on the Gulf of Finland. However, the site's history as an important component in the vision to modernize and decentralize the city illustrates that the Chinese consortium was in effect asked to take up a cherished project for which St. Petersburg itself had not found the resources.

Conversation with a Shanghai designer involved in the early phase of the process confirmed that the idea to focus on locations around the shores of the Gulf of Finland came from the St. Petersburg administration. An early schema from a Baltic Pearl design book (see Map 4.4) shows that the designers placed great emphasis on sites that, at the time, seemed minor compared to the existing spatial paradigm in the city; however, in 2008, the sites indicated are clearly part of a broader plan. On the 2004 image, water travel lines link the Baltic Pearl to Peterhof—certainly a major tourist attraction, but without significant commercial functions; to the City Center (given current plans, a link that may turn out to have its terminus at the Marine Façade); and to the Constantine Palace. The latter is a former summer residence of a Nicholas II's younger brother, Prince Constantine; as late as 2001, its grounds were open to the public for picnics. By 2004, when the project began, Putin had transformed the building into a personal residence and hotel for foreign dignitaries, making the grounds off limits to public visitors except for a section to the west. Its presence on Baltic Pearl plans originally seemed idiosyncratic. Now, though, evidence points to long-term plans for the southern gulf shore that explain

the emphasis placed on these other sites: new higher-priced housing is being constructed in Strelna, the nearby former "village," and a competition for the design of a "Palace of Congresses" was run in fall 2007 for a site to the east of the Constantine Palace

Baltic Pearl design documents reflect other aspects of this vision for St. Petersburg. Other early images clearly assert that further city development will occur to the south. (This is supported by a comment made by Solodilov.) As can be seen from Map 4.5, those presenting the project express this very confidently with a large arrow pointing southwards. At the time the project was first proposed in 2004, the Chinese investors must have known about long-term infrastructure plans that have taken visible shape only in the past two years, such as the extension of the Ring Road past Pulkovo Airport and the expansion of the airport's international terminal.

Thus, evidence about broad elements of the project's development point to the influence of state-level actors, such as Putin; the Baltic Pearl seems intended to fill a spot in a state-envisioned spatial structure linked to national and international prestige. Yet the finer details of the project must also be considered: how the planners interact with one another, and what socio-spatial paradigm (of spatial assumptions and assumed useful spaces) influences their choices at the level of the project's implementation.

Other influences are clearly at work in negotiations between the Russians and Chinese involved at different levels, as can be seen from the architectural style of the one building completed on the site as of summer 2008 (Illustration 4.1); this building houses a luxurious business center and the headquarters of the Shanghai consortium's local

Illustration 4.1. The Baltic Pearl business center, with units under construction.

Illustration 4.2. A scale model of the proposed Baltic Pearl design (business center in foreground).

subsidiary, the Baltic Pearl company. A version of the design finally received approval in early March 2007, seen as the scale model that now stands in the business center (Illustration 4.2). In contrast to other major prestige projects, active construction continues at the site; as of September 2008, *Nevastroyka* reported that the first residential blocks (visible in Illustration 4.1 behind the business center) were 40% completed and were already on sale (Project "Baltic Pearl," 9/26/08). By summer 2009, the new owners may take up residence. But the history of the negotiations still say a great deal about how spatial assumptions in St. Petersburg are changing.

Influences on the Form and Purpose of the Baltic Pearl

Several statements describing to the Baltic Pearl indicate that it serves the vision of St. Petersburg as a "space of representation" promising to enact Russian state power and Russia's rapprochement with China.

The design books authored chiefly in China (that is, prior to the 2006 version) emphasize this role. For example, in the version produced in December 2004, several passages emphasize the project's importance for geopolitical ties:

> *A Pearl symbolizing Sino-Russian friendship—*
> China and Russia are two countries with good-neighborly relations. The new century gives us a good opportunity to cooperate with each other. As the first large-scale development project that China invests abroad, this project will transfer friendship sentiments between people of the two countries. We believe this project will be recorded in the history of Sino-Russian friendly communication like a bright pearl. (SIIC 2004b, 33)

> There are good-neighborliness between China and Russia, friendly relationship between St. Petersburg and Shanghai, so the construction of this project is not only of economic but also great strategic significance. It will become a symbol of Sino-Russia friendship. (2004b, 34)

To heighten comparison with later statements that fit into other socio-spatial paradigms, note that these passages mention sites at only the broadest scales; they provide no anchor points in spaces of representation or in any specific spatial practice.

Russian historian Rakhmanin cites an intriguing comment made by Putin to Chinese envoy Chi HaoTian in January 2000, at one of his earliest meetings as acting president of the Russian Federation: "Putin noted that he retained the 'warmest and best memories from his with meeting with the chairman of the PRC in September 1999 in New Zealand at the APEC meeting.' During their conversation Putin reminded Hao that St. Petersburg and Shanghai were sister cities, and in that sense he and Jiang Zemin 'could be considered brothers'" (Rakhmanin 2000, 388). The fact of sister city-hood between St. Petersburg and Shanghai was a frequently-cited reason for the location of the project; it is very possible (as some of my interviewees hypothesized) that the project had its conceptual inception at this very highest level of personal interest between Putin and Jiang Zemin. (One of my Chinese interviewees claimed in Fall 2006 to be designing a Chinese pagoda for Putin's private estate, possibly indicating an unusually high degree of interest in cooperation with China on Putin's part.)

That some in the Chinese government had been considering the initiation of a large project in Russia, possibly since the late 1990s, was confirmed by conversations in January 2008 with a representative of the SIIC firm and with academics in Chinese urban planning (Li, interview, 1/19/08). Partly guided by the example of large Hong Kong developer firms, some Chinese firms with this profile were seeking a location on which to complete a construction project abroad. In the case of Hong Kong, the drastic lack of

land on which to build drove development firms overseas (Ning, interview, 1/22/08); Chinese development firms seeking to grow their potential faced the different problem of a lack of internal demand (Zhuo, interview, 1/22/08), which suggested external investment as another way to generate profits. As noted by the firm's representative, the level of competition in this field seemed too stiff in regions already dominated by Western construction firms; Russia presented an arena with a lower degree of competition in which the companies could test themselves.

Professionals in planning and architecture interviewed in China felt that the main motivation for the project came from the need to establish an economic bulkhead in northeastern Europe. One professor of geography at East Normal University (who had once studied Russian) suggested motives for the project: the sister-city relationship and the relationship of the firms to the government would promote friendship, and the less developed economy in St. Petersburg offered an opportunity to invest and sell more Chinese goods. The professor's colleague suggested that the political relationship between Russia and China was better than the economic exchange indicated, so the project would be part of increasing this turnover.

Specific events that resulted in the project agreements began a few years into Putin's term. Interviewed by Sergei Baluev in the magazine *Gorod*, Viacheslav Zarenkov, the head of a large St. Petersburg construction firm, claimed to have submitted requests to build on the site as early as 2001; these requests were rejected. Zarenkov also claimed to have suggested the site to a Chinese executive who visited Petersburg after the two met at a Shanghai Sino-Russian trade conference in 2003 (Behind the Chinese wall,

8/23/04). A delegation of leaders of the largest construction and trade firms in China

visited Petersburg in July 2003, and saw the site at this time; as the *Moscow News*

reported, the initiative was attributed to Jiang Jiren, chairman of the Shanghai People's

Political Consultative Conference, who visited St. Petersburg in July 2003 (Rabotnova,

10/19/05; Basic characteristics, 2005).

According to Aleksei Oreshkin of *Gorod*, the company that took charge of the

investment consortium, SIIC, had established the Shanghai Trade Center in St. Petersburg

in 2002 (Hope becomes real, 12/27/04); a company representative stated that this made

the investors feel that they knew St. Petersburg (Li, interview, 1/19/08). (Interviewees in

Shanghai stated that this company obtained over half of its capitalization from the

Shanghai Municipal Government.) Further ties developed between the St. Petersburg

administration and SIIC during 2004; in April, during a trade visit to Shanghai,

representatives of the St. Petersburg CISP signed a memorandum of agreement with the

SIIC firm. This meeting authorized the Chinese to begin exploratory studies of the site,

which culminated in the signing of a formal agreement in December 2004.

Immediately, some in the city government feared that the resulting project would

become an embodiment of their worst stereotyped fears about Chinese migrants.

Nevastroyka reported that during the session at which the CISP presented the project

formally to members of the City Legislative Assembly, deputies demanded assurances

that the project would not turn into a "Chinatown," complete with overcrowded housing

and high levels of criminality (3/24/05). The CISP representative assured the deputies

that the percentage of Chinese residents in the quarter would not exceed 1%—a number

that was offered by head of SIIC Cai LaiXing at a press conference (Oreshkin, 12/27/04; Rabotnova, 10/19/05) and repeated by Vice-Governor Vakhmistrov as reported by *Nevastroyka* (3/24/05). This number was apparently offered in order to stem local anxieties.

The project is the largest such endeavor ever attempted outside Asia by Chinese firms according to numerous sources such as *Gorod* magazine (Zagorskii, 7/26/04). When asked whether it might not have been more advisable to start with a smaller project, Mr. Li of the SIIC remarked that there were many discussions about what sort of project to propose, including what size it should be. Those involved decided that a larger project was the best approach; once a large project had been accomplished successfully, smaller projects could proceed more smoothly (interview, 1/19/08). The subtext may well be that once the initial wave of xenophobic commentary had crested and been overcome, other Chinese projects would have a smoother path.

Former Chief Architect of the City Kharchenko, who had presided over the CUDA when the project was initiated, phrased it as "[the Chinese] wanted a really big project, they needed a large territory." A builder active in the city's construction industry commented, "It's not clear who is making the decisions. There are six Chinese government firms involved, and the Communist Party of China has the status of investor in the project. … And somewhere I read that basically they aren't even very interested in Russia, they actually want to move into Europe, you know? But it's really complicated to get into Europe, so they have to sit for a while here in Russia. … I don't believe it's a commercial project." This (admittedly indirect) evidence suggests that members of the

Chinese national and Shanghai municipal governments see the Baltic Pearl as a space of representation for inter-state friendship and also possibly for Chinese ambition.

In a design book for the Baltic Pearl produced exclusively for a Chinese audience in 2005, there appeared an image of Hu Jintao shaking hands with Vladimir Putin, a clear marker of the nation-to-nation cooperation. The company representative with whom I spoke in Shanghai, however, emphasized the categorization of the project as international investment, not as a political action. His statement came in response to a question about the relative positions of Russia and China in the early 2000s as opposed to the 1950s, when Soviet Russia sent thousands of "experts" to help Mao build Communist China. This is a different situation, the representative emphasized: "now it is not political, not like the 1950s, not experts 'sent' to Russia; just investment" (Li, interview, 1/19/08).

Sources for the Baltic Pearl Vision

The three background sections in Chapter II suggest potential roles for the Baltic Pearl at several scales: in the political maneuvering of the nation-state relationship between China and Russia; in consolidating a northwest region around St. Petersburg as a world city; and in the bid to insert Petersburg somehow into European space while still conserving a political force field centered in Moscow. The added capacity to interpret its significance through a Lefebvrian analysis reveals several more possibilities, which I explore in the remainder of this chapter.

If we ask for whom (or for what practices) the Baltic Pearl could function as a "space of representation," several possibilities suggest themselves: in addition to enacting geopolitical rapprochement between Russia and China, the quarter certainly has

functioned abstractly and will function materially as a space for the enactment of contemporary architectural visions; it concentrates the attention and practices of planners and designers; it may become a node of Chinese migration or business activity; it will gather new urban functions and practices and could come to concentrate ideas of 21st-century St. Petersburg. For each of these possibilities, analysis can be expanded by developing what spatial practices and what "representations of space" combine to compose socio-spatial paradigms crisscrossing the space. Whose socio-spatial paradigm will dominate?

This section uses qualitative material from a range of sources. Apart from interviews described in Chapter III, this chapter also draws from five speeches made by city governor Valentina Matvienko; material on the Baltic Pearl's official website; images and text from four iterations of the Baltic Pearl design book; and interviews with key planners and architects in St. Petersburg, Beijing, and Shanghai.

Matvienko's speeches

Valentina Matvienko's election as city governor succeeded the term of Yakovlev, who then entered federal-level government as a minister. His term was widely seen to have reflected a particular venality and caprice, and Matvienko entered as an official who could get things done. A former Communist Party official from Ukraine, she is not a city native but has learned to use the language of being a "Petersburger." Matvienko may even have had some involvement in any negotiations that took place at the federal level, since she was appointed by Putin in March 2003 as the President's Representative for the

Northwest Federal Okrug. She was elected as St. Petersburg's new City Governor in early October 2003, when the Baltic Pearl project was in its most preliminary stages.

As a City Governor, Matvienko has responsibilities that resemble those of city mayors around the country—that is, balancing the need to generate profit and the need to cope with the backlog of social services left behind by the communist system. Matvienko restored the practice of making a yearly speech to the City Legislative Assembly (*Zakonodatelnoe Sobranie*, or ZakS for short) which summarizes the state of the city and lays out the administration's plans for social programs and for attracting investment. Her audience is composed of the sympathetic ears of the city deputies but also includes the city as a whole; therefore, the spatial codes that she invokes in the speeches to engage that audience and justify her plans reveal the complexity of the socio-spatial paradigm in which she sets St. Petersburg.

Baltic Pearl design books

A diverse succession of associations and influences structured the design process as reflected in the presentation books produced for consumption by investors in Shanghai and administrators and planners in St. Petersburg. Of the ones made available to me for review, the first book, written in Chinese and English, was produced by the Vast United Enterprise in association with the main Shanghai investor, SIIC, in August 2004; it seems directed mostly at Chinese investors (judging in part by the two languages used). The second book was created near the end of 2004; representatives of the Baltic Pearl investors came to St. Petersburg on December 20 to present their studies of the site and to sign another agreement about progress on the project, and the book was probably

produced for this December meeting. This time, the Petersburg planning institute NIPIgrad is listed as participant along with Vast United; the diction of the book indicates an injection at this stage of ideas from Petersburg officials and planners. As planning consultants, one of the title pages lists as collaborators the Netherlands planning firm Kuiper Compagnons and the Shanghai institute ECADI. This book, alone of the four, is produced in Chinese, English, and Russian—indicating its audience in both China and Russia. The third book was produced in December 2005 after the conclusion of an International Proposal Collection process involving six major international architectural design firms. NIPIgrad is listed, but the main author of the book was a design evaluation team at Tongji University in Shanghai, one of the most influential design institutes in China. The book is printed in Chinese and Russian, indicating its preparation in China but audience in Russia; it provides evaluation of the projects as well as synthesizing their proposals. The final book, presented in November 2006, was prepared chiefly by the British engineering and design firm ARUP, with some consultation from NIPIgrad; it is printed in English and Russian, indicating that its main audience was in Russia. These varying elements in both language and designers indicate the complex process of negotiation and communication that had to take place before the final design received approval in March 2007.

An interview with a planner at Tongji University in January 2008 clarified that the designers for the August 2004 (wholly Chinese-authored) version based their design on information provided to them by the St. Petersburg administration as well as the Shanghai investment firm. In early 2005, under pressure from the City Administration to

make the Baltic Pearl project truly innovative and high-profile, the firm had the Design Institute at Tongji University in Shanghai organize an International Proposal Collection (IPC) process. The results of this process were announced in October 2005 in St. Petersburg. Seven groups were selected to participate, all prominent European or American architectural design firms. The Russian press (as well as many officials) were perplexed that no winner was announced, but the organizers from Tongji had never intended to declare one winner. The competition thus raised the international profile of the project, and of St. Petersburg, but did not commit the Chinese firm to "buying" any of them. (A contact in Russian planning said that they would have engaged Rem Koolhaas if he had not asked so high a fee.) The several proposals were returned to Tongji University, where the planning specialists wrote up a summary and produced a new design presentation book that sought to incorporate the best elements garnered from the competition (Xu, interview, 1/23/08).

In its final pages, the 2005 book presents a summary of the seven projects. Two of the projects came from Chinese institutes. Four were world-famous or highly significant Western design or planning firms: Office of Metropolitan Architecture working with ARUP; the American-Hong Kong firm HOK; Sweco; and Xaveer de Geyter. The final entry was from the Russian firm Zemtsov Kondiain with Studio 44.

Over the summer of 2006, difficult negotiations with the Gradsovet (Urban Development Council) prompted the Baltic Pearl firm to engage the British architectural engineering firm ARUP to do supplemental design work on the project. ARUP created new elements in the existing design and presented its ideas to the Gradsovet in November

2006. Since several features of this new design were also heavily critiqued by the Gradsovet, the design was returned to the Russian design institute and the lead Russian architect on the project, Sergei Nikitin.

As noted above, a "final" design for the Baltic Pearl site was approved by the Gradsovet in March 2007, and some subsections were assigned to architect-planners and Russian firms for implementation. The "final" design establishes principles for following city code (including specifications for insolation, permitted sharing of functions by one building) and distribution of functions throughout the quarter (paths for automobile and pedestrian movement, placement of major social objects such as schools, location of retail and commercial sites).

The Baltic Pearl as a Spatial Practice

Socio-spatial precedents from Shanghai

Shanghai presumably provided relevant models for spatial practices (modes of linkage) and spaces of representation (performance sites) that might be translated to the St. Petersburg site. Shanghai began to globalize in the late 1980s and early 1990s; hesitant evaluations of its potential for success at this globalization now seem amusing in light of the striking development there (Gu and Tang 2002; Wu 2003; Yusuf and Wu 2002). Many scholars of Chinese urbanization have noted the Lujiazui development on Shanghai's east side, or Pudong (east of the river Pu), and its role in transforming the city into a significant site for finance and other world city functions per Friedmann and others (Marshall 2003; Olds 2001; Friedmann 1991). From being a partly finished plan in the writing of some of these authors, Lujiazui has become a crowded stand of skyscrapers,

backed by the still-growing Pudong district that extends for miles further away from central Shanghai. Lujiazui was also created after an IPC competition, and in the discourse of its creation and development we hear the same language of globalization that I describe below (Olds 2001; Marshall 2003). In spite of misgivings about the choice of final design (e.g. Marshall 2003), the current Lujiazui is prospering (as far as its own goals extend). Marshall and Olds both argue that Lujiazui as space turned into a corporate monoculture with poor provision for public or collective spaces; also, the process of its development and the development of other spaces around Shanghai offer examples of authoritative and non-transparent process and neglect of resident rights (this is a broader problem in China as well as in Russia). However, it is also arguable that public space of various sorts is abundant in other locations in Shanghai. For the sake of my argument here, I want to emphasize the experience of urban designers and planners in Shanghai with a project of this scale, and with astounding success in transforming former agricultural land into a hub of commerce and world finance (buildings now in Lujiazui include major banks and financial centers). We should keep that context in mind when we read the claims made by the Baltic Pearl's designers for the potential of this project to transform St. Petersburg.

Early design books also draw a parallel between the location of both St. Petersburg and Shanghai on water—since Shanghai has reoriented itself in recent years to the Huang Pu River. The parallel has a direct relation to this practice of using a certain kind of district to raise an area's economic potential and transform urban space as a whole, as noted in Chapter II: Shanghai deliberately used the Pudong in order to change

its identity and increase its potential for world city status. That project began a massive

reorientation of Shanghai to the east, changing a low-lying area of marshes and

subsistence farms into the motor of the city's economy, a densely built expanse of roads,

housing, retail, commercial and business spaces. Olds (2001) argues that the Pudong

made Shanghai legible for international investors, even if Marshall (2003) argues that the

Pudong in fact makes the city less legible for residents and public activity. What are the

spatial implications for St. Petersburg?

To a great extent, the Baltic Pearl is governed by the same "representation of

space" that drives St. Petersburg's turn to post-industrialization; it is the same kind of

"space of representation" that Russian planner Solodilov described for transnationality

and the spatial practices of the global elite (Chapter II). In this section I analyze several

spatial phenomena in St. Petersburg that have relevance to the Shanghai project and in

which it participates.

Transportation routes as spatial practice

A crucial part of St. Petersburg's ongoing development has to do with

transportation and trade as well as with oil. First of all, St. Petersburg is well-placed to

connect Northern Europe with Central and Western Europe for overland travel. In fact, as

Solodilov indicated, it plays an important role in the network of roads planned by the

European Union that will eventually render more evenly coherent the entire space of

Western and Central Europe and European Russia (see Map 4.6). Among multiple major

infrastructure projects planned for the city over the next several years, a project for a ring
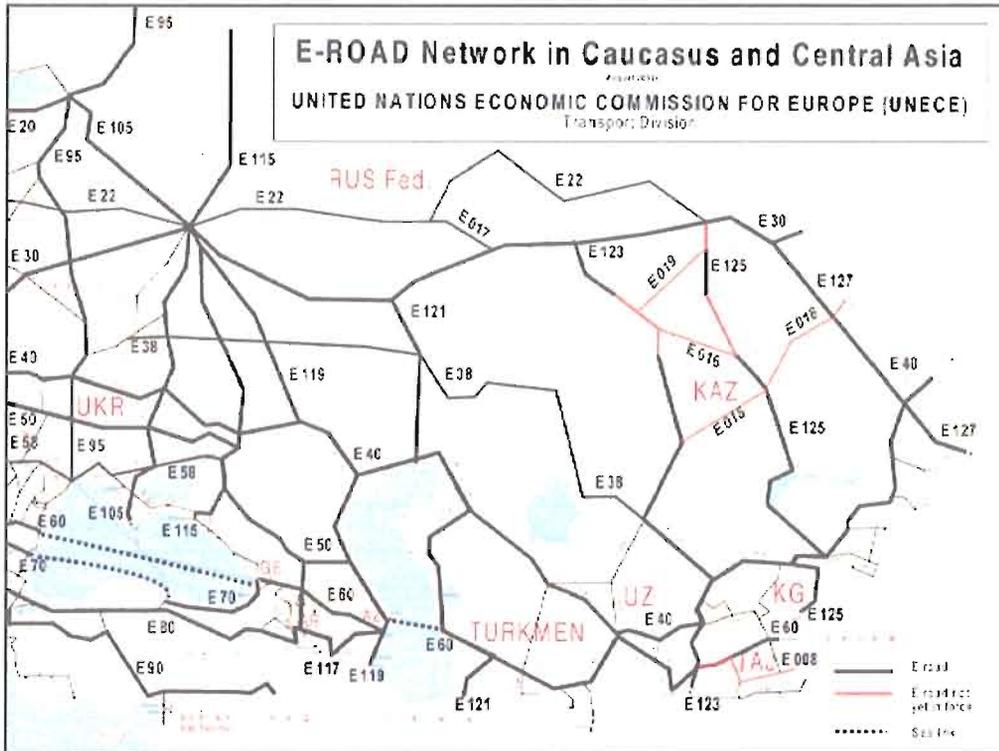
Map 4.6. European Union plans to extend a highway network into Russia.
Source: Joint Study on Developing Euro-Asian Transport Linkages. United Nations, 2008.
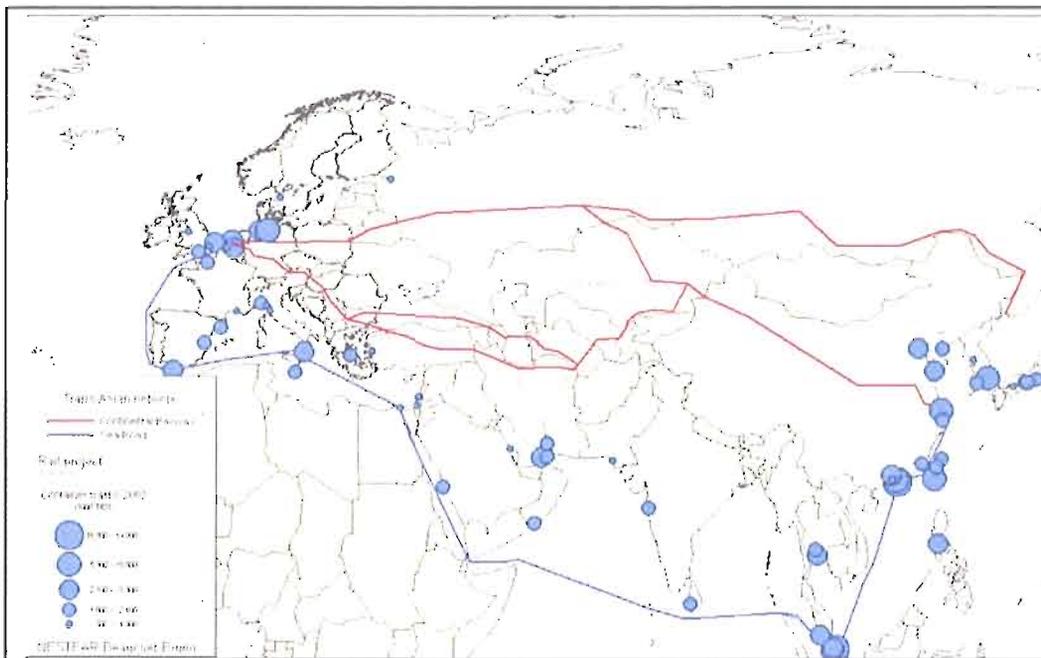
Map 4.7. Map of ports in Eurasia.
Source: Rathery, Alain. 2007. "Policy Actions for Developing Efficient Inland Transport Links between Asia and Europe," International Transport Forum, European Ministers of Transport. p. 5.

road around the city has been partially completed (the KAD, mentioned above). A controversial section of the infrastructural vision is the project for the Western Speed Diameter. This road, slated to run from north to south over the Gulf of Finland along the historical city's western edge, is locally intended to relieve the historical city center of traffic, but at a broader scale (as Solodilov also makes clear, see Chapter II) links St. Petersburg firmly northwards to Helsinki and Finland and southwest to Poland and Western Europe. While local awareness focuses on disruptions to neighborhoods brought by the new roads, the larger picture is one of creating a transportation hub for the European "continent."

The development of St. Petersburg as a port is closely linked to this transportation development. The turnover of goods in the local port complex has increased over the past several years; goods that previously were expected to travel into Russia through the Black Sea have now switched their routes into the Gulf of Finland (Solodilov, interview). Not only St. Petersburg but also Lomonosov and Primorsk contribute to this intensification of sea traffic in the area. St. Petersburg, as the only port Russia has near Europe, thus takes on an increased role for transport of goods to and from Europe (see Map 4.7).

Clearly this "representation of space," prioritizing economic nodes on far-flung trade networks, operates at a far different scale than the efforts to preserve St. Petersburg's cultural-historical agglomeration structure.

Megaprojects as Spatial Practice and Spaces of Representation

The same representation of space is visible in the desire of St. Petersburg administrators and planners to organize urban mega-projects that are intended to raise the profile of the city and increase its competitiveness (again with the presence of an impulse from Moscow/the Kremlin).

The idea of inserting a space of global form, or a space that can connect to the global economy, has begun to play an extremely important role in the spatial economy of St. Petersburg. The belief that such projects will revitalize the city as a whole and transform its economic potential is evident in language used by city governor Matvienko in her State of the City speeches to the St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly. In March 2006, she spoke of "projects appropriate for a *megapolis*," indicating that she associated megaprojects with a rise in the city's status. The following year she was more specific, using the word "locomotive" to explain the concept:

> Petersburg cannot be a regular, average-European city. By its birthright it is an international *megapolis*, a bridge between Russia and Europe. *Only major, locomotive-type development projects can give it this future.*
> (May 2007; emphasis added)

She had expressed the same assumption in her December 2006 comment about the district which is slated to receive the controversial "Gazprom/Okhta-Center" project: "This is the only thing that can save Okhta!" Indeed, the very decision to transfer the Gazprom subsidiaries away from Tomsk to St. Petersburg is clear proof that the decision-makers involved agree with Vendina's suggestion to concentrate resources in the spaces that can accommodate globalization.

Megaprojects as spaces of representation in St. Petersburg

As of early 2008, there are several plans grouped together by the media as "projects of the century" which are intended to change St. Petersburg's role and increase its claims to call itself a world city, even if it remains second to Moscow within Russia. Since the Baltic Pearl was established as a project in late 2004, several other projects have arisen that have almost overshadowed the Baltic Pearl; the influx of oil money and the increasing involvement of the Gazprom corporation has made the Shanghai company just one investor among many. These other projects are depicted on Maps 4.8 and 4.9.

Many of these projects are meant to become new architectural landmarks, such as the Second Stage of the Mariinsky Theater.[1] A cluster of projects to the east includes the Gazprom/Okhta-Center skyscraper. To the west, significant sites are the demolished Kirov Stadium, where the new stadium for the St. Petersburg soccer team, Zenith, will rise—paid for by the Gazprom corporation (the team's controlling owner as of 2005) and designed by Japanese architect Kisho Kurokawa; a renovation of New Holland by Sir Norman Foster; various incursions on the previously public space of Stone and Elagin Islands by elite housing (see Chapter V for the role of such spaces in local protest); and the Marine Façade, a combination of passenger and trade port firmly linked to the project of building the Western Speed Diagonal across the Gulf of Finland.

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[1] While the Mariinsky site was cleared in 2006—including the eviction of several hundred residents and the destruction of an entire block of nineteenth-century courtyard buildings and a cultural center—nothing concrete has been accomplished on this project, and Dominique Perrault was dismissed as the project's designer in 2007 because of disagreements over the height, cost, and other specifications of his proposal.
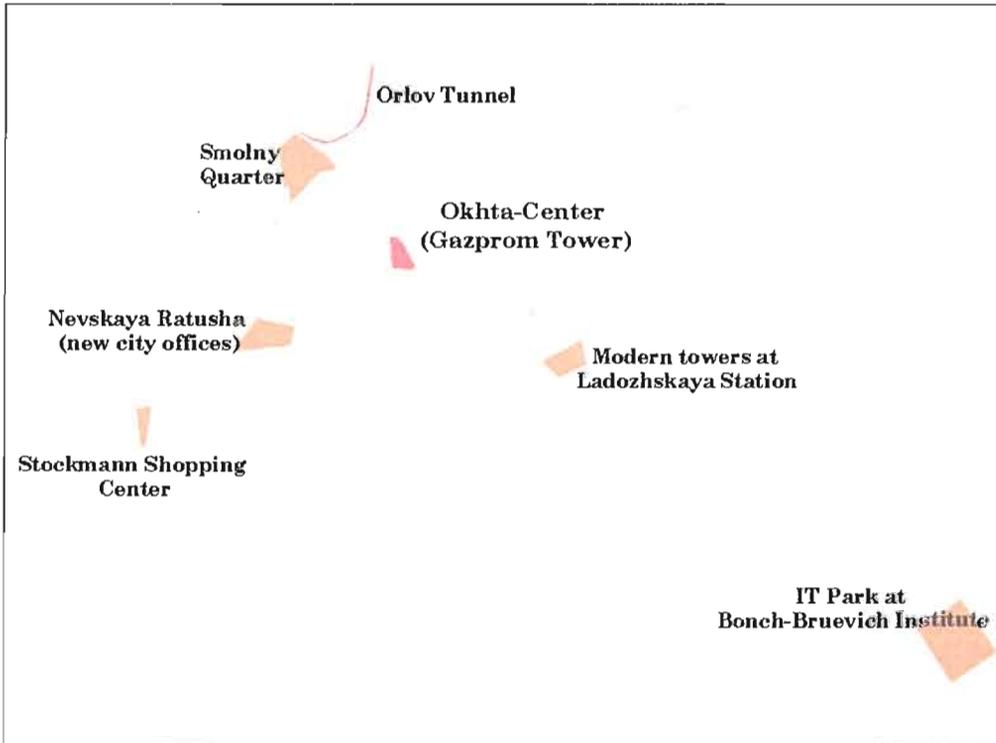
Map 4.8. Map of major city projects on the east side of the city.
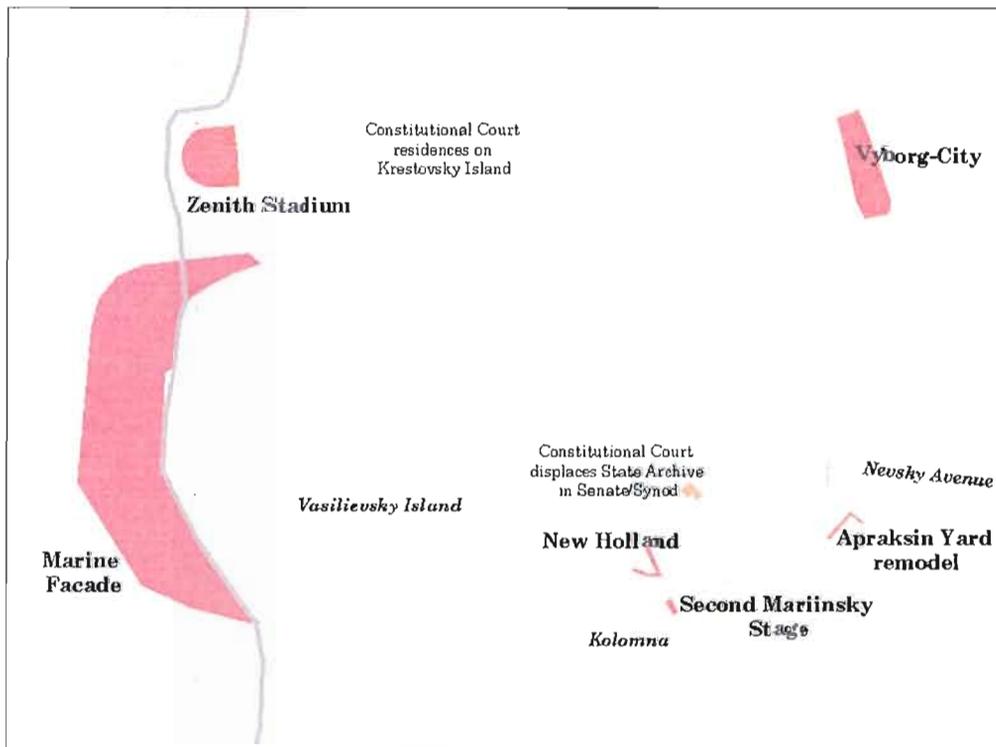
Map 4.9. Map of major city projects on the west side of the city.

These projects provoke two significant kinds of socio-spatial frictions. First, they are occurring near the historical center. There is a superficially logical reason for this— there is not enough free space in the city center to erect such major projects there.However, the city center is also a space of representation for a conception of St. Petersburg that maintains historical assumptions about the city's urban culture, including restrictions on the height of new buildings. Matching the height of construction to the cornice of the Winter Palace is a spatial practice with not only mechanical but also political meaning: it (ostensibly) gives citizens and planners leverage against developers, and endows the material space of the city center with a moral authority. Those megaprojects which have tried to establish their globalized spatial practices in material spaces that physically overlap with "spaces of representation" of traditional Petersburg assumptions (such as New Holland, the Mariinsky Theater, or the Gazprom skyscraper) have raised vigorous discussions at public hearings and sometimes protest on the streets.

Second, the projects typically have engaged famous international architects for their design. In spite of attempts to harmonize the design forms with the local urban planning culture (and the need to obey local codes and ordinances), these projects become spaces of representation for a far different culture, with its basis in Western Europe and North America and its other nodes in places like coastal Chinese cities and Dubai.

The Baltic Pearl self-identified as a locomotive project

Language used in the 2005 version of Baltic Pearl design resounds with an awareness of the world city imperative and the assumptions of globalizing cities around

the world: the main socio-spatial paradigm seen in operation is the world economy. While the books prepared in 2004 emphasized a parallel between the physical setting of both Shanghai and Petersburg on rivers and highlighted the potential of the Baltic Pearl to link Europe and Asia, Russian and China into a closer friendship, the 2005 version emphasizes the chance for development; the need to raise St. Petersburg's status among other cities; and the leading role of the Baltic Pearl in revitalizing St. Petersburg as a whole. The following statement appears in the 2005 design book (and persists in a new form on the current website): "the general orientation of this project is as follows: to build an international complex district with globalization, Europeanization, modernization and clean ecology, with strong competitiveness in tourism and commerce" (Tongji 2005, 17).

In its specific promotional statements (for the audience of investors), the Baltic Pearl connects primarily with "prestige scale" goals, reflecting assumptions about post-industrial economic sectors in world cities: quaternary occupations amplify tertiary ones and replace industry. For example, an extended section analyzing the Baltic Pearl's potential states that it will "become an important node of tourism and commerce in the Baltic area [and] will create a new image of a marine city, will raise urban functions…, and will give a push to the completion of networks for tourist industry" (Tongji 2005, v). Other similar claims assert:

> The exploitation and construction of a new city on the background of market economics usually actively takes its start from the *perfecting of urban functions* and *raising the rank of the city*. This is done by way of providing the city with multiple functions… (2005, 8)

> [We must] form competitive node capabilities…

> Leaning on the status advantages of the city's *location by the sea, the port, and airport*, by way of construction of *first-class facilities for tourism services and a center for commerce and conferences*, we should build a tourist and commerce center with a large influence on the Baltic area and even on the whole world... (2005, 17) (Emphasis added throughout.)

The references to perfecting urban functions, raising the city's rank, multiple functions, and providing facilities for conferences are all hallmarks of would-be world cities, particularly the emphasis on improving infrastructure suitable for international business meetings and for tourism. The designers recognize that they need to provide what Marshall (2003) calls "spaces appropriate for the world elite." The three strategies that they suggest are summarized in these subheadings: "concentrate network resources; multidimensional globalization; encourage various forms of competition."

Company representative Li definitely saw the Baltic Pearl in the context of the numerous other projects in the city. These could not hurt the Baltic Pearl's success but only help it, since city residents would become more used to such landscapes and the Chinese project would benefit from the city's experience in managing other sites.

The role of the Baltic Pearl as a megaproject

The self-presentation of the Baltic Pearl to investors contrasts with City Governor Matvienko's presentation of the project to her city through her annual addresses to the Legislative Assembly. Throughout her speeches, Matvienko makes constant reference to Petersburg as a city or as a *megapolis* with European connections. When she discusses the Baltic Pearl, she mentions Asia only in passing; in June 2004 she called for St. Petersburg to acquire "an ever weightier role on the Eurasian expanse." She does not mention her visits to Shanghai or the visits of Chinese diplomats to Russia and St.

Petersburg. Her arguments reveal spatial codes necessary for communicating with her constituents.

Initially, Matvienko saw the Shanghai investment as a major force in St. Petersburg's development, a component of St. Petersburg's acquisition of the features of a *megapolis*. She mentioned it in her 2004 and 2005 speeches as a source of record foreign investment (US$1.5 billion). In 2005, she first mentions it in the context of other investment agreements with foreign and Russian companies for local infrastructure projects and industrial development, including Tinkoff, Gillette, Pepsi, Siemens, Gazprom, and Severstal.

> We have reached an agreement with the Shanghai Investment Company for the construction of a multifunctional megacomplex called the "Baltic Pearl" with a total investment of as much as 1.5 billion dollars. This is an absolute record for quantity of foreign investment in St. Petersburg. (March 2005)

She discusses it further in the middle of her speech, again—as in 2004—presenting the project as a way to solve local housing deficits. But she extends the discussion on it in view of local protest. I include this entire passage from her speech.

> On an abandoned, swampy, unexploited territory without engineering infrastructure to the South-West in only five years will appear a super-contemporary suburb-city, equal in size to a small European town with housing for 35 000 Petersburgers, with a business center, a green zone, hotels, schools, kindergartens, clinics, and sport facilities. For the first time we will have a district where the quantity and quality of social objects will completely correspond to European standards.
>
> Meanwhile, the most ridiculous rumors are circulating in regard to the Baltic Pearl, intended to sow panic among city residents. Particularly among those who have not yet realized that foreign investments are not the same thing as a foreign invasion. From this tribunal I will again declare that the Government has sufficient political will to develop the largest construction projects in the interests of Petersburgers, against which a narrow group of biased parties oppose their own interests.

> I have no doubt, that such projects will sound the death knell for so-called densifying construction. I have no doubt that the success of such a project will bring a flow of major foreign and Russian investments into our city. I repeat again: The Baltic Pearl will become the steam engine behind which will follow a whole line of wagons. (March 2005)

This classification of the Baltic Pearl as a steam engine (*paravoz*) resembles her language in other speeches about "locomotive" projects.

However, by 2006, she gives it the briefest of mentions in the context of other major projects, such as the Marine Façade, the Mariinsky Second Theater, the Zenit stadium (see Map 4.9); in May 2007, she does not mention it or even refer to it at all, although she does name some of the city's "sixteen strategic projects." In 2008, she stays away from discussion of projects with any controversial social or architectural aspects and mentions only major projects of transportation infrastructure.

Meanwhile her speeches also contain passages that give particular attention to urban micro-spaces such as yards, streets, and sports fields. Even as she classifies the Baltic Pearl as a steam engine, the first section of the passage quoted above focuses on the context (and scale) of daily urban life; she avoids framing it as a space of representation for international capital. She foregrounds the image of "a small European town… with a business center, a green zone, hotels, schools, kindergartens, clinics, and sport facilities." These are spatial practices of social reproduction, the spaces of representation for the daily life of average residents.

> European standards of quality – this means the time you wait for a bus at the stop, the time to arrival of an ambulance. It is a reasonable number of pupils in a classroom, and of patients in a hospital ward. It is the accessibility for the handicapped of museums and city transport. It is an income not less than the living minimum for the most undefended categories of citizens. It is the

possibility to work and earn for everyone who wants to depend not on the government, but on himself. It is simply a worthy life. (June 2004)

These are spatial practices of movement, daily life, and economic organization. Matvienko conflates these logistical arrangements subtly with social values, especially with openness. This could possibly, then, be a space of hybrid spatial practice—made possible by Chinese investment and partially by Chinese design, but radically changing the traditional structures of Soviet-influenced spaces.

For Matvienko—at least as expressed in the rhetorical space of her speeches to the city—the Baltic Pearl functions at once at two scales, within two socio-spatial paradigms: it is a megaproject that thus participates in the development of transportation infrastructure and globalized urban landscapes, and it is also a space of daily life that helps to alleviate pressing social problems such as the housing crisis and decaying city services. She prominently categorizes the Baltic Pearl as a node anchoring globalization in the St. Petersburg expanse. She also claims that it will provide housing stock for beleaguered "Petersburgers," even though statements by the firm suggest that the units will sell mostly to the affluent, not significantly improving the housing chances of those who have struggled the most with the shift to a new system of distribution.[2]

The Baltic Pearl's simultaneous presence in several scales, in several socio-spatial paradigms, corresponds to the multiple goals that the city has for its ongoing development, encompassing improvement of daily life, globalization of the city's

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[2] An article entitled "Intended for the Elite" appeared on *Nevastroyka* on March 17, 2008 (accessed March 27, 2008). An anonymous blog commentary noted that the streetcar lines which have passed the site along Peterhof Highway for years were being removed, a clear sign that "average" citizens taking this lower-class form of public transportation would not be welcome.

landscape, and creation of stronger geopolitical ties. She claimed in June 2004 that "All major cities in the world develop as multifunctional centers, and Petersburg in this sense is not an exception." In the following passage, Matvienko employs the word "scale" (*masshtab*) in the same way, implying that the suite of projects and plans can express a certain unity:

> All of our projects, independent of scale, are fitting for the needs of a *megapolis*. Because for a resident of Petersburg, a huge high speed roadway, and a courtyard with amenities, and a comfortable office, and a remodeled basement—all these are signs of the new quality of life. (March 2006)

Matvienko claims that the images that she invokes—although at different scales— actually come from the same socio-spatial paradigm: the "new quality of life." But although she insists that they can all fit into this paradigm of improved life for an individual resident, there are clearly contradictions inherent in the scales that she implies: the high speed roadway links to Russian Federation space and to a geographically proximate Europe; the well-outfitted courtyard focuses on the city space (for which residents must take more responsibility, see below); and the comfortable office and remodeled basement are in fact globalized spaces that are crafting new occupations of space in the old local paradigms of collectively distributed residential space and (now lost) public toilets. In her descriptions, the Baltic Pearl, too, seems to have the capacity to unite all scales for the city's good.

Arranging successful space at the right scale: the Baltic Pearl as a sub center

When the Shanghai designers link the Baltic Pearl to the same language of success present in arguments about the Lujiazui project in Pudong, they bring certain

assumptions about how this success happens in space; they bring not only their socio-

spatial paradigm of the world economy and its world cities, but also elements of the

paradigm that is currently popular in China. In all three of the books mainly authored by

Chinese designers (in contrast to 2006, authored mainly by British designers at ARUP),

this spatial assumption shines through in the word "sub center."

> The basic import of this term comes out in the first presentation book.

> The analysis of the Existing Conditions of St. Petersburg shows that it is gradually developing into a city with many urban cores.
> Today, St. Petersburg has had developed many residential areas centred around the old downtown, but these residential areas are not developed enough to form sub centres of the city due to imperfection of public facilities. (SIIC 2004a, 9)

A sub-center, or urban cluster, is one hallmark of a successfully managed city in China.

Both Beijing and Shanghai are actively working to develop sub-cities or functional

clusters in order to spread the benefits and costs of urban development over space (e.g.

the functional clusters Zhonguancun for IT and the CBD for finance on opposite sides of

Beijing). Once the initial design team establishes this capacity as a virtue of the Baltic

Pearl development, it gets repeated multiple times. In 2005 in particular, the design

discussion clarifies that this understanding of the Baltic Pearl causes the designers to read

St. Petersburg southward, asserting that

> The history of St. Petersburg's development has shown that the southern shoreline areas are the future of the city. The urban development of St. Petersburg calls for the building of a southern subcenter. This is a shining chance for development of the city. China desires cooperative construction of this southern subcenter together with the Petersburg people [*narod*]! (Tongji 2005, v)

In a separate paragraph (including a repetition of the claims above), the language adds,

"as the largest facility of urban exploitation for Russia, the facility 'Baltic Pearl' bears on

itself the important duty of building a subcenter of St. Petersburg." However, in spite of conflict over new structures in the city center, the Petersburg population has little experience with successful satellite areas; the models they do have are Kupchino, which is a gray residential ghetto. Further, this new idea of subcenters does not necessarily harmonize with the Genplan's aim to preserve the historical agglomerated structure of St. Petersburg, and may even undermine it.

The scale for ameliorating space chosen by the Chinese

Language on the Baltic Pearl promotional website emphasizes connections between sites at the regional scale: "St. Petersburg is Russia's window to Europe, a neighbor of the countries of the European Union, and occupies the position of an important strategic center." The website also emphasizes places to which St. Petersburg links in Europe, not in central Russia. The website's socio-spatial paradigm is very aware of the major European centers and how St. Petersburg relates to them: on the same page as the phrase quoted above, distances are listed between St. Petersburg and Moscow, London, Paris, Berlin, and Helsinki.

By juxtaposing St. Petersburg with Europe and other European cities, the language used does not only make use of the clichéd (although justifiable) linking of St. Petersburg to its heritage; it also elides finer scales of spatial confrontation in order to suggest transformation at a broader scale. Promoters link the project to "the modern concept of European life" and "universal district of European type"; it is not difficult to suppose what a "district of European type" is, but to make it universal renders "European" a generic, widely acceptable tool that does not necessarily have a geographic

anchor. The design implications of applying this tool are apparent in a statement noting that

> The optimal structure of squares (the relationship of residential and commercial construction with recreational facilities) is intended with consideration of world and European levels of consumption, which makes our complex an ideal place for comfortable living. (Baltic Pearl)

In fact, the website several times asserts the "new" quality of the Baltic Pearl, stating that "the project will become an *absolutely new* district of living and tourism in St. Petersburg and Europe" and, in a near-restatement, it will be "a new center of living and tourism, *attractive for residents of St. Petersburg and all of Europe*" (emphasis added). In spite of St. Petersburg's history of association with Europe, the website claims that the Baltic Pearl will establish "a completely new style and way of life for Petersburgers" (Baltic Pearl). This "new style and way" is ultimately global, not the historically familiar "European" style and way, and not the local way.

Evidence from design books created at various stages of the project suggests that this is where a certain Chinese element enters into the plans, pushing towards a new hybrid. But the Chinese firm is also aware of the language of globalizing culture, asserting that "The Baltic Pearl is able to become a new Petersburg brand," something the city can use to market itself in the global economy. They also mean it to be "a new center of gravity." They hope for achieving "a new way of thinking: the concept of development of an international enterprise of the *integrative* type" and for "striving for *harmony*: conception of creating a district in which sky, earth, and man will combine *harmoniously*" (Baltic Pearl; emphasis added). The implication in these words is that of a harmonized, smoothed space of urban living that might have intriguing resonance with

Matvienko's calls for an unproblematic consensus in urban civil society. The Chinese firm is unlikely to have anything to do with the civic dynamics of the area, and they certainly will not be able to control who buys apartments and then inhabits the quarter—but the potential parallel between rhetorical approaches suggests the need to observe further.

As noted at the end of Chapter II, a crucial question about the Baltic Pearl is how it will serve the goals of the Genplan, and whether it will improve St. Petersburg's overall urban texture or will function as an isolated node of globalized space. Information about a resolution to this tension cannot be found in public statements about the quarter's value, but becomes clearer in negotiations over the project's form at the micro-scale. If, as Vendina suggests, we have to understand the local parameters into which a new influence enters, then it is important to gauge whether—in this case—the Baltic Pearl is providing new forms or standard Petersburg forms, and why and how this is happening.

Some early newspaper coverage of the Baltic Pearl suggested that the quarter would be partly designed in "Chinese style." A perception of the "Chineseness" of the project—indeed an imposition of a stereotyped Chineseness, including an assumption about what would make the project "Chinese"—contrasts quite profoundly with the qualities revealed by an examination of the design books produced by successive planning teams associated with the project.

Matvienko's public statements about the Baltic Pearl project all emphasized its contribution to a "territorial" vision for Petersburg: the improvement of its sociable texture for residents who need housing or modern infrastructure. The goals described

above don't fully connect with Matvienko's local vision; all spatial practices cited so far have a broader reach. In order to gauge whether the Baltic Pearl will perform as a successful hybridized space and whether it will erase cherished spaces of representation for local residents, we need a finer-scaled spatial practice to use as an evaluative test.

Courtyards

I use the rest of the chapter to consider commentary centered around one particular micro-scale urban morpheme, or unit of architectural form: the courtyard. In the St. Petersburg context, the "courtyard" is a spatial code in the Lefebvrian sense: it immediately calls up a set of socio-spatial practices; it is a space of representation, a place where residents focus meaning and understand the set of activities that should occur there; it participates in a representation of space where small socially-oriented places are valued.

The term "*dvor*" (courtyard or enclosed yard) in the morphology of St. Petersburg cityscapes has a generally understood meaning, although it takes a range of physical forms which have additional connotations. The basic concept of the courtyard as a space of representation derives from the historical center: buildings were constructed with several stories surrounding an enclosed space that could be entered from the street via a short tunnel under the second story, and this enclosed space—onto which opened several doors, and from which yet another passageway might lead into a yet more interior space in the center of the block—is the "courtyard." An extreme example is the "courtyard-well," which receives little to no light: these are considered antiques from the time of the novelist Dostoevsky and especially characteristic features of the Petersburg cityscape. In

the pre-revolutionary period, this would have been lower-class space; the wealthier residents of a building would have entered and exited from the street entrance, while the yard would have been the province of servants and those who could only afford the less prestigious, less healthy residences to the rear of the yard and further into the structure.

The Soviet understanding of "courtyard" has its roots in the 1920s push to house a wide range of rural-to-urban in-migrants and other workers in the city's available residential spaces. The most famous result of this, still a phenomenon in Petersburg today, is the communal apartment: wealthy families who owned apartments of several rooms were forced to move into a single room and yield the rest to other families at the command of the local soviet government. This policy engendered the almost ubiquitous mixing of social classes which inhered in Soviet housing and persists until the present time. While considerable social friction arose as a result, a Soviet part-myth, part-reality arose around the social potential of the "courtyard." It came to represent an extension of the social planning desired by Bolshevik officials; in the central city, it also had historical and architectural features that elicited the affection of its residents. While many fell into disrepair under the general neglect of city infrastructure, "courtyards" can still be sudden oases of greenery, benches, and quiet, secluded from the street (see Illustration 4.3).

When the government had enough money to begin building more housing in order to accommodate the sharp demand, the "courtyard" tended to persist in Petersburg construction. (I have seen some examples in Moscow as well, but am not competent to discuss these.) In the Stalinist era, the buildings tended to have 3-5 stories and the interior space had trees, other plantings, and sometimes benches and children's play equipment.

Illustration 4.3a. Greenery in a 19th-century courtyard off Moskovskii Prospekt.

Illustration 4.3b. Greenery in a late Soviet courtyard on Vasilievsky Island.

While the space was not as tightly enclosed as in the historical center, the buildings stood closely enough together to form a recognizable space. In the case of Khrushchev-era construction, this is also true; while these buildings are less well made, they tend to have a rectangular space between them, open at either end but still enclosing a recognizable space that grouped residents. In the later era, from the 1970s to 1980s, the high-rise panel construction buildings might still stand grouped as though around a "courtyard," but this space tended to be too large to consider recognizable. There was still substantial greenery, but the sense of enclosure depended on the accident of building size and grouping. In some, play equipment and benches appeared over time; again, sometimes a small grove of trees could create a sense of refuge from the street. The sense of belonging to this yard, or the kind of social infrastructure claimed for other yard sizes, might not arise.

In sum, some residents had good experiences with yards, and some had unpleasant experiences. Some lived in small buildings, got to know their neighbors, and felt able to make small improvements to the yard area; others lived in such smaller spaces and felt oppressed by the behavior of neighbors who had a different attitude to cleanliness or to social behavior. Some lived in buildings with huge spaces between them, and enjoyed these spaces but never felt neighbored or sheltered by them; others found the expanses oppressive. In Petersburg today, the commonality of the concept confuses the distinctions between two kinds of issues. On the one hand, courtyards and their diversity of social class represent a golden Soviet era of democratic interaction. On the other, courtyards (especially in their openness to other urban spaces, and thus to vandalism,

littering, and worse) intersect with concerns over a lack of ownership and a deficit of safety. Residents in many historical buildings have voted to lock their yards to outsiders in order to defend their entranceways from being used as public urinals and to keep graffiti off the yard's walls; the act of installing gates seems a direct blow to the spirit of the yard's golden age.

Even in daily discourse, then, the courtyard is an arena for negotiating the transition from the "Soviet" era to the present, when a range of different forces has come into play. The physical state of the yard, its role as a common unit of social structure, its relationship to ownership and individual initiative for improvement in the yard's appearance—all of these are present when it is discussed. Its mention in the public speeches of the city governor are therefore striking—and all the more so when the courtyard turns out to be a key element of explanation and negotiation for the Baltic Pearl designers and for architects and planners who comment on it.

Matvienko's interpretation of courtyards

The significance of the yard as a spatial code can be seen in the deployment of the term in public discourse, including in the annual addresses of City Governor Matvienko. In her 2004 address, Matvienko links yards to two things simultaneously: to the need for a fine-scaled attention to the urban environment in order to promote "social optimism and resident comfort," and to resident responsibility. She makes this appeal to involvement and responsibility precisely at the scale of socio-spatial community identity (or at least its presumed location; see Humphrey 2005).

Courtyards appear in passages in most of Matvienko's annual addresses, especially when she is trying to assert a connection between her policies and the improvement of everyday life. In March 2005, announcing the inauguration of a program to rehabilitate numerous yards throughout the central city (covered in *Fontanka* and *Nevastroyka* throughout the year), she stated that "We do not separate the cleaning and beautifying of yards and streets from the modernization of the entire city infrastructure." She also explicitly links the destruction of old attitudes as part of the necessary development:

> Breaking the old Soviet stereotypes in economy and psychology must happen in parallel. From their own experience citizens are convinced that this way is the single correct one, that it leads to qualitatively new standards of life.

Matvienko's audience already knows the stereotypes to which she refers just as well as they recognize the concept of "yard"; one of them is that *Homo Sovieticus* never takes responsibility for anything and believes that "someone else" will pay for maintenance of the buildings.[3] In light of Lefebvre's implication that new ways of life require a radical alteration in the built structures that they inhabit, Matvienko's emphasis on existing historically formed spaces is striking: she calls for spatial practice to change inside these cherished spaces of representation. In the March 2006 address, she calls on residents to become true owners of their buildings and yards; organizations akin to homeowners' group should take over responsibility for the yard, a semi-public space. (After years of neglect at all levels of urban infrastructure, yards have often borne the brunt of

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[3] As I will maintain in chapter 4, this link (between stereotypes and failure to achieve higher standards) has an obvious basis in the lack of urban maintenance and other Soviet-era experiences, but the "old Soviet stereotypes" ironically also include assumptions about widely accessible public space, about government transparency, and about civil society action that are actually quite progressive and could be maintained.

resentment at lack of public services.) By re-envisioning the same space, Matvienko

wants to re-envision the dependent Soviet citizen as an individual owner.

In the addresses, yards play as important a role in the modernization of the urban

environment as more prominent projects. Matvienko states that the massive city

megaprojects will modernize the city and "lay the foundation for entirely new

possibilities for urban development and for growth in the quality of life" (March 2006).

But she adds, "Here there are no trivialities, everything is important": clinics, yards,

kindergartens—all of these participate. This idea continues in a short passage in May

2007 when Matvienko repeats her sense that the city needs a new standard of daily life:

> The citizens of Petersburg are waiting—and not simply waiting, but demanding
> from the authorities decisive steps towards the renovation of the city's appearance
> (*oblik*). Contemporary bus stop shelters, public art and fountains, stylish benches
> and tidy urns, flower vases and nighttime illumination of buildings—there are no
> trivialities here.

It continues in April 2008, when she includes another appeal to tend to yards:

> The state of roads and yards, cleanliness, amenities, greenery, lighting, simply
> beauty and the tidiness of streets—all this is in fact our urban environment. We
> have set ourselves the task of making it Europeanly comfortable.

The yards are to be transformed and hygienized, and thus will become new, spaces of

representation for a "Europeanly comfortable" life and, by extension, global life. In some

ways Matvienko's appeals might remind a reader of the 2007-2008 preparations in

Beijing for the Olympic Games, when the coverage of government training of the

population to stand in line, avoid public spitting, and avoid fighting in public frequently

made the news. Indeed, the passage that follows soon after this statement resonates

strongly with such an impression:

> Let's be open about it: our level of everyday culture is very low, unacceptably low for Petersburg. It's enough to look at defaced elevators, poles pasted over with flyers, New Year's trees ruined by vandals. And if we want to live in a clean, well-kept city—and we do—then each of us must do something towards this. Not to any degree removing responsibility from the authorities, I am counting heavily on the inevitable appearance of a powerful social movement for a clean Petersburg among the city-dwellers themselves. With every year we have more and more of people who are not indifferent, who turn their building and their *yard* into an oasis of beauty and comfort. And I promise all support to these citizen initiatives for the renewal of the city's appearance.[4] (April 2008)

According to Matvienko, yards and other familiar sites will thus remain important spaces of representation in the city, still concentrating important Petersburg values—but they will be the site of very different spatial practices. In this passage the governor suggests a clear link between the behavior of individual citizens and Petersburg's ability to, essentially, achieve world city status. Yet for many city residents, this transition is a false one and "courtyard" retains its previous set of spatial practices; Matvienko's exhortations resonate with some residents, but for many others do not persuasively transform the structuration of their daily expanses.

Regardless of their level of success, the references themselves in Matvienko's speeches to courtyards stand out: this is clearly an understandable socio-spatial unit for her to use, and her listeners can quickly read the "stereotypes" as well as "movements" to which she refers. But the "something new" that Matvienko wants to see does not quite articulate with the existing vocabulary of the reigning socio-spatial paradigm. If the built

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[4] The hesitation we should feel in immediately labeling this approach as neoliberal devolution of responsibility lies in the stark contrast with what many people felt was the complete irresponsibility of the Soviet authorities. I interviewed several people who recounted their own or others' efforts to improve the appearance of their immediate urban environment—usually a yard or a space right under the window of the apartment where they lived. Many of these efforts were vandalized by residents or other passersby, and this elicited despairing feelings from my interviewees. Matvienko may have switched to depending on this kind of initiative in order to save the city budget some money, but she is not calling for an activity without precedent.

environment were to change first, then she might structure her appeals differently. But while the yard remains the most legible unit of socio-spatial communication, then its subtext of collectivity and public provision of urban goods remains works against the narrative of ownership that Matvienko wants to promote.

Humanistic urbanism in the courtyards of the Baltic Pearl

Although the conceptualization of the Baltic Pearl as a locomotive node, a transformative "subcenter," runs strongly through the design books and clearly meets a need perceived by the St. Petersburg city administration, a spatial discourse on smaller spaces—including courtyards—also appears in the design books. The very first design book from August 2004 (affected less by Russian planners) addresses the social function of small spatial forms. In fact, the analysis gives evidence of sensitivity to local differences in the representation of social space.

> Current apartment employs north entrance in order to reduce the loss of south-orientation room. However, according to the investigation, *the entrance is not only the access for each unit, but also the place for people assembly. People would not like to stay longer at north entrance for the coldness, while south entrance with sunshine forms a small-scale shined* [sic] *environment, providing the area for communication.* In addition, normally, it is expected that some transition can be available from indoor to outdoor, thus to fit the cold climate outside. South entrance can solve the issue appropriately, increasing the comfort. (SIIC 2004a, 57; emphasis added)

In order to understand the significance of the preceding paragraph, it is important to know that minimizing "loss of south-orientation" has a real basis in Shanghai, where, as an architect told me, everyone wants the advantageous southern exposure in order to get more sun (almost universally in order to hang and dry laundry, based on observation);

thus, entrances are not placed on the south side. The concession to the Russian desire for

"area for communication" represents an adaptation.

This brief mention of Russian spatial practices mostly gives way to other terms

that seem more Chinese-influenced: "neighbourhood centre" and "public space." The

following passages present a good summary:

> In this design, we organize facilities of culture, business and entertainment
> properly. This facilitates people's daily life and a core of space is formed in this
> way.
> The design of neighbourhood centre should meet both physical and spiritual
> requirements in accordance with local conditions and cultural customs. Our
> planning principle is focusing on people. We try to create outdoor spaces with
> cultural atmosphere through proper architectural treatment. (SIIC 2004a, 70)

> Neighbourhood centres serve for daily life of residents. Through proper treatment
> of spatial scale and environment, a public space for different people in spite of
> class, income and … is formed, so communication between residents can be
> facilitated. (2004a, 72)

A "neighbourhood centre" differs markedly from a "yard," indicating that the analysis of

"local conditions and cultural customs" did not fully absorb that spatial code. Based on

observation in Shanghai, the "neighbourhood centre" mentioned might be a separate

building placed somewhere in the neighborhood—not an element in the very structure of

the residential building (as a "courtyard" is, see further discussion below) but a public

place that one has to go out to. (In January 2008 I saw such a center in a housing complex

constructed for Shanghai residents displaced from the central city during the first phases

of redevelopment in the 1990s). This is arguably a more Communist idea of how

neighborhood mixing should happen; the "courtyard" was a space of representation

appropriated by ordinary people during the Soviet period (Humphrey 2005), even as it

was transformed by Soviet builders. Crucially, none of the Russian planners and

architects with whom I spoke suggested such "neighborhood centers" as an attractive

solution for future construction projects. Still, the rhetoric of attention to individual

comfort may in fact be a feature of the kind of globalization that the Chinese want to

bring; they mention "public space for different people in spite of class" and other

categories. What kinds of "human-scale spaces" are envisioned?

The book prepared for December 2004 marks greater influence of Russian

planners, who were assigned to get involved after review of the August 2004 book by the

city administration. The wording in this version articulates the explicit role of the yard as

a space of representation for important social values:

> Multi-story residential buildings arranged in high density can create better feeling
> for people. ... Quiet and peaceful *courtyards* surrounded by residential buildings
> form a contrast with busy streets. Comfortable and tranquil courtyards make great
> contribution to safety of the community and communication between dwellers.
> (SIIC 2004b, 100; emphasis added)

The "courtyard" appears as the potential site of hybridity, that is, of synthesis between

two different sets of spatial assumptions between the Russians and Chinese. The spatial

code that both groups use to indicate their vision is "Europe"; this diverts attention from

any Chinese role in the design process, suggests Petersburg's role as Europe within

Russia, and also indicates the direction of the transformations that are foreseen.

Strikingly, the transformation is linked to the social values embedded in particular spatial

forms, such as in this paragraph titled "Diversity and integration":

> Europe is a highly international region, with residents from all over the world.
> Going back from the European tradition of equality, democracy and tolerance,
> Europeans are known for their thinking over own boundaries. People from
> different cultures and origins live together in cities, towns and villages. Different
> living forms and habits are respected and integrated in the *collective living space*.
> (2004b, 27; emphasis added)

The phrase about "thinking over boundaries" might suggest the heightened possibility for hybrid spaces in the resulting project. Another paragraph titled "Collectiveness and individualism" lists numerous (presumably transferable) spatial forms that support social life:

> Since the Ancient Greece and the Roman Empire, collective living spaces, such as *square, street and courtyard* play important roll [sic] for the European life. At the same time, different individual living forms are given space in the traditional urban unit – the Building Block, built up by attached individual buildings. It defines *collective urban space of street and courtyard* by its continuous street facades. (2004b, 28; emphasis added)

Finally, a section on "Tradition and innovation" suggests the transformation of those forms:

> The Europeans have high respect for their history, traditions and cultural heritage. A lot of efforts have been done in the *transformation of the traditional urban elements to suit modern living habits and characters*, for example the flexible use, the diverse living forms, the suitable mix of several functions etc. (2004b, 30; emphasis added)

According to this text, "equality, democracy, tolerance" and "democratic and individualistic culture" are firmly linked to the traditional forms of "collective living space" such as "squares, streets and courtyards." Yet the phrase about "transformation of the traditional urban elements to suit modern living habits and characters" suggests that the Baltic Pearl will do just this: transform the familiar spaces into new spaces of representation for a globalized world, with new spatial practices.

The rhetoric is promising, but it is not clear that the Baltic Pearl will take seriously Matvienko's vision of the Baltic Pearl as a "territorial" space. In discussions of the quarter itself (as opposed to architectural history), the 2005 version emphasizes the

animating potential of the project's commercial areas. In the first cited passage here, "communal space" is linked to housing; in the second, "communal" can also mean space that shades into service and commercial functions.

> District communal space—housing and the communal-construction district form relatively strong and weak communal space. Housing stresses the 'green' and the humanitarian restraint [sic; probably 'scale' is meant]; the communal-construction district stresses openness. (Tongji 2005, 57)

> Districts of communal constructions: the sphere of service is oriented in the districts radiating [to] the Baltic Sea, the nucleus is the infrastructures of tourism, commerce, recreation and meetings [conferences?], these districts are characteristic [characterized] by apartment-hotels—a new model of construction that includes the functions of commerce and residence, such a model corresponds to the requirements of contemporary commercial tourism. (65)

References to "commercial tourism" and "apartment-hotels" derive clearly from the current intense development in China itself, where "apartment-hotels" are a popular way for expats and the newly wealthy to live.[5] While there is some mention of "communal space" here, the engagement with the concept is not serious or sustained; the primary pressure is "the requirements of contemporary commercial tourism."

The design books yielded only one example of the notion that a yard could be a combination of European and Chinese sensibilities. In the 2005 appendix with evaluations of the different IPC projects, the project from Sweco Partners expressed the best understanding of the local climate and culture (as a representative of the consulting committee told me). Of the courtyard-based design that Sweco produced, the presentation book text says that

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[5] For example, the project for Qianmen District by SOHO China, which company employees showed to me in January 2008, contains a specific section for luxury apartment-hotels, indicating their popularity.

> The project successfully combines the cold regions of northern Europe and creates *a sunny courtyard* and *Chinese block-based urban life.* ... It forms a clustered residence and a construction of public space, combining the experience of eastern Asia and northern Europe. (Tongji 2005, 104; emphasis added)

In fact, the humanistic concept behind this idea can be seen running through the interview comments of both Russians and Chinese on similar and related spaces, but is not explicitly acknowledged as a point of commonality. When British architects (from the firm ARUP) participated in the 2006 design book, they began with an extended analysis of historical urban morphology in Petersburg. The discussion considered different types of courtyards created in the 18th and 19th centuries as well as during Soviet periods, such as the Stalin and Khrushchev periods, and also looked at the resulting creation of public spaces in and around those buildings. The emphasis in this analysis was on the decline of urban public space as it grew larger—"open windswept plazas... human scale lost"—and the concrete need to create sheltered public spaces. The discussion notes the "interior space of the courtyard" as playing an important role and notes "positive aspects of the Russian micro-complex principle." There is no link made to China, however—the version suggests "a combination of European urban planning and the urban morphotypes that have historically formed in St. Petersburg," making the result into a more localized critical regionalism in architecture and not necessarily a global phenomenon.

On-site research in Beijing and Shanghai revealed that the courtyard is an essential element of urban morphology there as well, and that the Russian courtyard—while having a different size and different cultural attributes—is not an unfamiliar amenity to Chinese. "Block-based Chinese urban life," as described in the evaluation of the Swedish project, has its basis in both Shanghainese *shikumen* and estate housing

(derived partially from British and French construction influences) and Beijing *hutong* housing, where each traditional building has an interior courtyard.

The absence of this element in explicit commentary from Russian and Chinese observers is striking; while a hybridized space might be needed, there was little discussion of how current Chinese landscapes could bring something valuable to St. Petersburg. When asked what Chinese elements the Baltic Pearl project might contribute to the Russian location, the Tongji University researcher told me essentially that this is the wrong question; the Chinese designers and investors are not seeking to bring "Chineseness" to St. Petersburg. They want to create global spaces that will be used and enjoyed by Russians. This explicit intention to be global might be a response to the strange persistence of Russians in fearing a Peking Opera or Buddhist temple, as noted above; in order not to raise anxiety, Chinese designers might avoid mentioning a commonality that they in fact do see. But the Tongji researcher's comments and the persistent presence of courtyards in the discussion prompt a deeper investigation into what a humanistic global space is, and how such a space can mediate between local Russian sensibilities and the global Chinese ambition.

Invocation of courtyards by architects and planners

Any emphasis on the discussion of the yard as an urban morpheme may have resulted from the influence of language used by the city administration and particularly the Russian planning institute, NIPIGrad. In important cases, as noted with the emphasis placed on the yard by Sweco's design for the IPC in 2005 and with the overview of "courtyard" history incorporated by ARUP in 2006, it was a European-based architectural

firm that discussed the yard's importance. The Chinese discussed this as a concession to "local norms," but their main concern in designing urban space seems to lie elsewhere.

Yet—also as indicated by the use of "yards" as a principal morpheme in two sets of European designs—many Russian planning professionals regard the yard as having a particular value in the Petersburg context. I consider first what this value is, in the interview comments of two planner/architects, and then explore how references to the "yard" reveal Russian discourses of negotiation regarding the Baltic Pearl project. The "yard" is seen as the bearer of valuable meaning and purpose into the present time, even though it is an urban morpheme derived from the past. Its importance for some Russian planners is discernible in the comments of Sergei Nikitin, the planner-architect responsible for coordinating Russian cooperation with the Baltic Pearl project, and Oleg Kharchenko, a former Chief Architect of St. Petersburg.[6]

Note that in the quoted sections of interviews that follow, the referential examples of "courtyards" mentioned are of varying sizes and eras, which partly demonstrates further the flexibility of the concept. Thus the reader must follow mentions of the different yards as described in the introduction to this section. (N.B.: the valuable features of yards did not necessarily inhere in all their incarnations.)

Russian interpretations of yard as spatial practice and space of representation

The first quality of yards that was frequently mentioned is their adaptability to the severe St. Petersburg climate, and this capacity depends on the yard not exceeding certain

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[6] In the interviews conducted with these two men, Nikitin introduced the concept of the *dvor* himself, and Kharchenko discussed it in response to my question (which I derived in turn from Nikitin's emphasis on it).

dimensions. As Nikitin commented, "we have to make the courtyards an enclosed space, where there won't be wind" (interview, 10/17/06); his colleague, evaluating the Baltic Pearl's 2006 design, noted approvingly, "with this climate, with this snow, they dealt with all that [by creating yards]" (Kharchenko, interview, 12/6/06).

Second, the most prominent reason for praising yards in professional and popular discourse is its social function. Again a quotation from Nikitin gives the flavor of this quality:

> A certain social commonality arises in the courtyard. In fact, the Russian people have always liked this interaction, traditionally. We're always in the courtyard. ... It's very funny, that's how it is. They know everything about everyone. It's good. It's like *your own* yard.

He noted shortly thereafter that as a child "My apartment, in my mind, included my yard," emphasizing this classic part of the vision of the ideal "courtyard": your sense of belonging and unofficial ownership extended to this semi-public space which you shared with your neighbors. Kharchenko extended this thought:

> The idea of a yard is very productive. It gives birth to a kind of collectivism, to the sensation that people live together, a sensation of being defended, of being able to encompass a certain space/expanse. For example, people are selfish, but a person will contribute some money all the same if he is paying some money for upkeep [of the yard]. This still goes to a group of people, but to him also.

In Kharchenko's reading of the social value of a yard, the "collectivism" that it inspires can act as an economic motivator, a mitigating factor against the "natural" egoism of the individual in a market economy. In this sense, a yard is a tempering influence in a time of transition, and in a time when—as part of the overall transformation—some in society are trying to preserve certain social tools for working together, these comments show how

retention of this particular urban form is a code for collectivity (as distinguished from

Matvienko's vision of vastly expanded self-reliance).

Third, the "courtyard" at its best is also seen as a bearer of human scale; its proper

scale enables the climatic and social functions praised above. In a spatial hierarchy of

nested scale, the yard structures a person's relationship with other neighbors and with the

surrounding city, creating a scalar step in that relationship and in his perception of space.

As Nikitin told me:

> When I was little, I lived in the central city… [urban structure] was very distinct
> there. My apartment, in my mind, included my yard. The street is there—I wasn't
> allowed there. There were cars there. And so on. And there were several of this
> sort of levels. There's my street. To go there was dangerous. And before that,
> there's the district park, Tauride or Summer Garden. The post office. There's the
> American consulate. They took me for walks in the Tauride Gardens or the
> Summer Garden, it was about the same distance. But in general when this certain
> hierarchy operates, the hierarchy of social units in an urbanized environment, it's
> very good. When it isn't all the same. My apartment, my yard. Then my district.

Here Nikitin is discernibly speaking of a historical yard in the northeast section of the

Central District, but the "hierarchy of social units" that he describes could apply to yards

of other eras as well. The way that spaces (and by extension, people) articulate with each

other is nested and hierarchical in this narrative; preservation of the yard would preserve

that system of interaction.

The yard as a building block for new spaces of representation

But how successfully can the yard become the "something new" that Matvienko

mentioned and that the Chinese investors promised? As the Russian planners understood

the situation, the "something new" that the Chinese had an opportunity to contribute

involved a revision of the construction codes (the "norms") that conditioned the monotony of the late Soviet built environment.

The shifting forms and sizes of yards throughout the twentieth century, refracted through changing regulations, have already reflected the connection between aspirations for the social good and conceptions of space. At first, as noted above, "courtyards" were the lower-class realm of a building, often damp, dark, and dirty. The 1920s reaction to intensive urban development under capitalism (Le Corbusier, etc.) penetrated Soviet urban planning, and the changes undertaken during the twentieth century were inspired by the desire to improve urban living standards. Based on this, in the Soviet Union, "draconian codes" were drawn up based on "disurbanizing ideas," as Nikitin explained:

> [The previous] yards were dark, bad, damp. This is all the defects of capitalism. And then the architects came, avant garde guys, inspired by communist ideas, and began to propose things. Let's raze all this, and we'll put in buildings standing among greenery!

Nikitin added, "Our building codes were calculated for this disurbanism"—that is, for the notion of buildings with adequate air circulation, light (insolation), and accompanying greenery. The idea that every person should live in these ideal conditions became a part of the struggle over how to further construct urban space.

By the end of the Soviet period, the courtyard was an ineffective space for representing these elements. Kharchenko commented that "the Soviet yard was not humanistic" because of its huge scale; Nikitin added, "under Brezhnev they lost this human scale [achieved in earlier periods]." Additionally, as Kharchenko commented, under Khrushchev the urgency of providing comparable housing for all city residents kept the government in a cycle of building the same thing over and over again. The

rigidity of the codes caused the sameness so familiar in late Soviet construction: "our

building codes are so rigid that we get everywhere almost the same solutions [of planning

tasks]. Many solutions are basically identical." Nikitin mentioned specific numbers that

became encoded into assumptions of a healthy but still cheap urban structure:

> There's an inhuman scale. It's a scale for cars everywhere. So what happens: by
> the codes you get a huge street, 100 meters wide. The width of the streets… and
> the buildings have to stand further back. So you get 119 meters. This is a fantastic
> width. … and the pedestrian currents have to walk in this inhuman environment.

In the view of many, this loss of humanly-scaled space created social problems; Nikitin

asserted that Petersburg "needs compact spaces" and saw yards in the context of restoring

certain social values. He felt that the project had correctly grasped this principle:

> … in this sense we have complete agreement with the British and with the
> Chinese. Complete agreement. And that's very good. … This is the analysis of
> existing city blocks (*kvartaly*), for different epochs. And this was all analyzed and
> they chose a certain optimal—in the opinion of contemporary professionals—
> optimal variant. In this sense it's good.

Kharchenko, too, felt that the arrangement of residential buildings in the Baltic Pearl had

hit upon a usable scale in the arrangement of space.

> It's different from our *kvartals*, it's not so bleak, it has a different scale, it
> becomes more European. It has a more human face, [there's] more warmth, more
> humanism in this environment.

The "courtyard" in the Baltic Pearl thus becomes an opportunity for both transmitting

important local cultural values as well as creating something new: as Kharchenko

commented just above, "it's different from our *kvartals*." Nikitin added that the yards had

been well done: "This is all marvelous. Excellent in that sense." (See Illustration 3.3.)

And in fact, the combined efforts of the Chinese, the British ARUP, and other

invited consultants had produced a model housing unit that had the potential to offer a

Illustration 4.4. Courtyards as depicted in the scale model of the Baltic Pearl.

change and to provide a precedent that would motivate the revision of the Soviet codes.

Nikitin himself recognized that although the yard was a good thing, "a microclimate,

social control. … now we have to do it on a new technological level, on a new national

level, in terms of storing automobiles. That didn't exist then." The presence of cars would

have to change how these valuable urban forms could be constructed. He pointed out an

aspect of the 2006 (ARUP) design that he liked very much: a structure that would have

parking on its first floor with living space above, including a central sheltered yard

between the wings of apartments (a familiar approach in many Western cities) that would

be accessed by a staircase at the end or from within the structure. He liked the way that

the yard was created, and saw it as reproducing some of the values he and Kharchenko

both mentioned during interviews:

> It's very good when the yard is raised… You get a border for the social landscape.
> … Social control is facilitated. If someone appears here, it's like he came through
> the fence. As though there was a fence, private, owned space. Almost the same
> thing, but there's no fence. There's just a planter. (Nikitin, interview)

Unfortunately, Soviet-influenced codes strictly forbid several aspects of these structures.

According to these codes, living space may not be above first-floor parking; such a

garage may contain no more than 50 cars (and here there would be 130) without a gap of

2.5 meters between each group; entrances to such garages must be built at least 15 meters

from the windows of a living space (which would mean a distant underground entrance to

the parking garage).

Nikitin asserted that he and others would ultimately like to see the codes changed,

saying, "We need to bring [our construction codes] into normal correspondence with

[Petersburg's new existence as a] contemporary major city. So that they don't retard its

growth. So that they allow us to create a truly comfortable environment for living." He

felt that the situation in the city would eventually come to this—but that the Baltic Pearl

fell short of forcing such change, thus falling short of creating the transformation that it

promised.[7]

Nikitin and other Russians had lobbied effectively for inclusion of courtyard-like

spaces in the project, but the scale of other aspects of the project seriously displeased the

city's Advisory Council on Architecture and Planning, or Gradsovet. Nikitin explained

several aspects of this to me which chiefly had to do with the arrangement of various

functional buildings and codes. Kharchenko, who sits on the Gradsovet as a former Chief

Architect and working architect himself, summed it up in a critique of the retail and

commercial sections of the design.

> It's completely clear that here two scales, two cultural environments cohabitate.
> Here it's distinctly and completely visible that this part and this part were drawn
> by different people, and this part with this flower [a tower at the entrance to the
> site], with this exit to the sea, these are drawn by different people. And if this
> [eastern residential] part is drawn for people, and it's understandable why there
> are such gaps and distances, then this [commercial area] continues to be drawn for
> Soviet man. … It's again the ideas of a certain composition, you understand, in
> which a person becomes a part of some kind of spatial game, it's Stalinism again,
> China, Mao ZeDong.

As shown earlier, language in the design books indicates that the Chinese planners saw

the greatest potential for transforming space in the "communal"-commercial spaces; the

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[7] The developer whom I interviewed made a similar comment with an added emphasis on a needed
transformation in attitudes to enforcement of codes: "Probably we need to get rid of all that, in order to…
Of course, in order to get rid of it, we need to have a fairly strong culture of exploitation and service. Well,
for example, when you park in front of a fire hydrant in the States and block it, things will be bad for you.
So. Therefore if we're going to observe them, which would be correct, then I think… but you know what
we need." The obscurity of his comment seemed in context to stem from his perplexity at transforming
social norms along with the construction codes.

Russian planners had focused the greatest part of their energy on the residential spaces. Other contradictions are apparent in Kharchenko's summary of the Gradsovet's critiques during protracted negotiations until the project's formal acceptance in March 2007. First, Kharchenko noted, the original designs did not show an adequate articulation with the surrounding city. "You understand, such a beautiful spot, which is not plugged in, not connected to the city." Yet recall that the books themselves give evidence that the Chinese were indeed thinking about this in their own way, reading out a cluster-based relationship to other important nodes in the city. He described further concerns with the way that pedestrian spaces related to automotive spaces, how prominent park spaces failed to meet existing codes and did not accomplish their goal of routing pedestrians, and with the arrangement in particular of the vast retail spaces. The Chinese persisted in their assertions of bringing a new "European" way of life, understood more through apartment layout and provision of infrastructural services at global standards.

Kharchenko's descriptions ultimately revealed that he was evaluating the success of the Chinese project from within a highly articulated local understanding of space, and that he had a firm idea of how "spaces of representation" for collective activities should be shaped. He explained his disappointment:

> … this was essentially the first case when, after a decade-long interruption, we in the city had the chance to see in the shape of this big territory, how it [*kvartal*-scale planning] would develop… and naturally, knowing what is going on in the world, knowing, and hearing these promises from the Chinese, that the project should be interesting, contemporary, taking account of world trends, in the area of housing, in urban planning, [we figured] that this project should be interesting. But the result was a bleak pragmatic uninteresting project, no better than Soviet ones.

In response to repeated questioning, he continued to imply that the main disappointment of the project was this failure to resuscitate *kvartal*-scale planning in the hoped-for way. Because the Baltic Pearl designs did not (in the view of the Russian planners, including others on the Gradsovet) grapple with the need to discover a radically new way of structuring urban space, they did not succeed in becoming the catalyst for spatial change that everyone was waiting for.

Based on my discussion of Valentina Matvienko's annual speeches, Baltic Pearl design documentation, commentary by Chinese observers involved in the project, and Russian planners involved on their side, each of the actors shares the following ideas: first, that St. Petersburg should change; second, that something new should enter the city in order for it to change. However, each actor or group has a clear representation of space that is not always formed at the same scales; thus, they have different ideas about what spaces of representation will best embody the change, and often understand essential urban spatial practices differently. These contradictions condition the search for a mode of construction to accommodate contemporary life while still conserving productive features of the past.

Conclusion

That the urban form of St. Petersburg is "in play," and that it is indeed a key fulcrum of negotiation in the city over the nature of society and its development, also emerges in comments that do not take the "yard" as a unit of value. When I spoke to the Deputy Chief Architect of the city, I asked about the way that construction codes were affecting the planning process for the Baltic Pearl; he expressed frustration for the way

that local codes were hampering the implementation of something "Chinese" that might

work just as well, and the historical, social, and physical value of "yards" did not arise.

When he was told about the problems that the Chinese were having with meeting Russian

code,

> I said, Oh great, let's definitely in a Chinese restaurant make sure there's a bowl of our borsch. No! If it's a Chinese restaurant, let it be a Chinese restaurant. Let the Chinese do something according to their... I don't think that it would be a worse district for living than some other one. Because it turns out that the situation is spoiled. These microdistricts, the typical microdistricts get put together, which always turn out, no matter what we do... I can't really say it, but we have a joke: whatever party you build, you get the KPSS! [CPSU, or Communist Party of the Soviet Union]. (Polishchuk, interview, 10/13/06)

I was able to speak to one developer during the course of my interviews, and he did not

share the careful view of urban morphology expressed by the planner-architects, either.

When I asked whether he saw anything valuable in the built forms of the past, he was

categorical: "I don't see anything good in what was. ... Right, courtyards, some kind of

housing that got built, the streets of the city were always clean... The streetcars always

ran on time." This developer lived in the new housing districts to the city's north, so he

did not have any experience of the "effective" courtyards of the center or the Stalinist

areas, but he might have rejected their value in any case. He hoped for a shift in mentality

somewhat like what Matvienko described, and thought about building in terms of cost

effectiveness.

The Deputy Chief Architect showed me photos of the kind of built form that he

wished some developers would adopt for new housing: they were two-to-three story

apartment buildings in Holland. They were familiar to me as the kind of inexpensive

housing that goes up around many American cities—somewhat like motels, but often

with some greenery between the buildings and at least not 22 stories high. Polishchuk said, "These are barracks in our language." When I said that they were everywhere in the States, he explained that this kind of affordable housing comes into conflict with the architectural predispositions of those in the city administration and current planning apparatus:

> In Russia now, economically there is a mass of people without housing and so forth. [I ask,] Could you build this sort of thing? Why not? 'What are you on about, is that even architecture?' This is what they… I say, we need to build this—we have to build a city of these! 'What do you mean, no, you can't possibly! That's not serious.' … This is our mentality.

Thus there is a way in which the firm entanglement of form with social meaning complicates even further the halting struggle to house people and make them feel good about the transformations in society. Polishchuk has a very specific, microscale sense of needing to provide affordability even if the resulting form is disengaged from the dense network of social assumptions about housing. The Baltic Pearl tends to focus on a different level of transformation, seeing the new district as a "locomotive" node or subcenter.

CHAPTER V

SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF XENOPHOBIC DISCOURSES

At the scale at which the city is "produced" as a common space for large segments of the population, the project of the Chinese firm Baltic Pearl constitutes a disruption in familiar "spatial practices," together with a restructuring of "representation of space" of the city historically and materially, together with a rearrangement of "spaces of representation" in terms of values, location, and activities. On one hand, when the project is seen as "Chinese" with connections to geopolitics and to demographic issues, the reaction to this disruption is often xenophobia. On the other hand, when the project is seen as "global," with all the architectural, economic, and cultural implications that attend ideas about globalization, the reaction is a protest over dispossession. As this chapter shows, the types of spatial anxieties which provoke both reactions are closely linked.

While responses to such complex disruptions cannot be reduced only to an analysis of spatial practice, we can gain insights into questions of both xenophobia and dispossession through a spatial analysis. For example, xenophobia can be isolated. It might seem that a respondent would be supportive of the Baltic Pearl if she apparently has the ability to adapt to or accept a new socio-spatial paradigm caused by general disruptions. I did not find this to be the case; in some cases, respondents who support new architecture or investment in general were not supportive of the Baltic Pearl project.

Of course, the Baltic Pearl has the potential not only to disrupt but to create new practices, representations, and spaces. For some, as is already implied, this is threatening; for others, it is the opening of a new field for action that they welcome. As discussed in this chapter, an analysis of the components of socio-spatial paradigms through examination of the discourse deployed in research materials can be helpfully described as a competition between—or at least an overlapping of—stories as Certeau describes them in his chapter on "Spatial Stories." A story, he writes, "has distributive power and performative force. … [and] it founds spaces" (1991, 123). Conversely, "where stories are disappearing… there is a loss of space" (1991, 123). In this passage Certeau then moves to discuss *fās*, which is a phenomenon different from a story, but which seems to approximate the story's function: *fās* is a ritual in Roman territorial practice which "create[s] the field necessary for political or military activities… [and] 'provides space' for the actions that will be undertaken" (1991, 124). Certeau qualifies his comparison by noting that unlike *fās*, "socioeconomic technocratization confines" the story "to the level of the family unit or the individual" (1991, 125). However, I would argue that while we are most used to thinking of the stories of individuals as these weaker, less significant tales (recall Certeau's discussion of tactics and strategies), the structure of argumentation at the scale of the city or even governments partakes of several elements of narrative that strongly resemble what individuals do discursively in order to establish a "field of action" around themselves. As seen in Chapter IV, a "story" structured by appeals to the spatial form of the yard works powerfully to make certain things happen in visions of the Baltic Pearl project. Even so, as becomes clear in this chapter, "stories" that appeal to other

spatial references or set certain locations and events in a certain relationship to each other in space and time try to define the "field of action" for the city, other residents, and potential Chinese migrants.

Methodological Notes

This chapter is based on material collected in several ways from 2004 to 2008, including, first, hundreds of newspaper articles produced locally in St. Petersburg. Observation of urban phenomena began with research in locally-based online newspapers *Fontanka* (May 2004) and affiliate *Nevastroyka* (January 2005); since *Fontanka* focuses on Petersburg issues and *Nevastroyka* specifically addresses issues related to construction, they constituted the main source of published information used here. However, articles from business daily *Delovoi Peterburg* and the English-language *St. Petersburg Times* (which both also have print editions) provided confirmation or additional facts. Second, semi-structured interviews with both "ordinary citizens" and "experts" were the focus of fieldwork. Of the fifty interviews completed with Russian subjects (mixed between these two categories) and the ten interviews completed with Chinese subjects, I refer here to sixteen Russian "ordinary" interviews that included discussion of the Baltic Pearl project. Third, the material includes results from a survey co-designed with colleagues from the Center for Independent Sociological Research and administered by Russian sociology students in Krasnoselskii district, where the Baltic Pearl site is located, and in the adjacent Kirovskii district. The 350 respondents in this survey were asked several questions similar to those asked during semi-structured interviews with 'ordinary' residents. Finally, participant observation in several street

demonstrations and daily travel around the city contributed to a perspective on the salience of various issues for the city as a whole.

The aim of this set of methods was to explore, qualitatively, the types of concerns that residents and experts would raise. I sought, though a general set of questions, to create conversations that would elicit stories about movement through space, which would in turn reveal the components of socio-spatial paradigms—common spatial practices such as modes of travel and beliefs about behavior, assumptions about spatial hierarchy and valued spaces ("representations of space"), and locations that hosted consistent types of activity or were regarded as performing a particular social function ("spaces of representation"). As noted above, Certeau provides a way of understanding the discursive deployment of these components as a performance in space, the definition of a field of action. While it is important to note that the subject groups for the survey of city residents, the entries on the news forum, and semi-structured interviews were all different, my aim was the collection of discourse on themes relevant to the research. I sought to hear sets of common terms in these definitions, with the goal of discovering developing phenomena that will require further study (Kaganskii 2004; Piirainen 1997).

Context for Protest against the Baltic Pearl

Media presentation of the Baltic Pearl

As noted in Chapter IV, the original statement of the substance of the Baltic Pearl project occurred in March 2005. On 23 March, the Committee on Investments and Strategic Projects presented a document to the St. Petersburg Legislative Assembly detailing the results of its negotiations with the Baltic Pearl consortium. The first half of

the document, presented as a list, demonstrates the emphasis placed on social infrastructure: schools, libraries, health clinics, drugstores, and sports facilities are among the services that the city plans to require from the developers. Some interviewees expressed a concern that the Baltic Pearl firm was trying to reduce the number of objects provided for social infrastructure (e.g. Nadia), e.g. by removing a hospital, but in a July 2008 interview, City Vice-Governor Vakhmistrov used the same numbers provided in the March 2005 document. The firm did not in fact agree to build a hospital, but rather to include two health clinics, one pediatric and one general.

The misunderstanding of the project's details is evident in other aspects. Importantly, the March 2005 memorandum makes no mention of architectural style or requirements. Yet early newspaper coverage of the Baltic Pearl suggested that there would be a visible "Chineseness" to the project. The *Nevastroyka* news site still records a huge amount of information about this and other projects (as of September 2008) and archives the chatrooms which comment on them; *Nevastroyka* inserted information in its first descriptions claiming that "one part of the quarter would be built in contemporary style, the other in traditional Chinese style" (Chinese Quarter, 11/2004). Along with the *Moscow News* (Rabotnova, 10/19/2005), the site also claimed (and still claims) that the district would include a branch of the Peking Opera and a Buddhist temple.

These two supposed architectural objects gave justification to many complaints about the "Chineseness" of the quarter. However, there is no evidence for this whatsoever in other recorded sources, either in the March 2005 memorandum or in any of the design books from 2004 to 2006; in January 2008 an interviewee in Shanghai rejected the notion

that such elements were ever part of the design. In fact, the Baltic Pearl firm seemed very

careful about presenting the project as neutrally as possible, insisting on its connection to

local Russian tradition and modeling its form on European standards. Indeed, a reporter

at *Gorod* complained that the project as presented in December 2004 "completely lacked

Chinese identity," including any relationship to the notably cosmopolitan Shanghai, and

that its low-lying buildings most recalled Versailles (Oreshkin, 12/27/04).

The statement that the site will contain a Buddhist temple—naturalized as official

information by its steady presence on a website and in other publications—reveals the

local confusion over how this negotiation took place. It also suggests a slippage between

discourses of xenophobia and frustration with the opacity of the city administration. The

inclusion of this mysterious information by *Nevastroyka* allowed some nervous observers

to label the site as a threatening Other. Yet a *Fontanka/Nevastroyka* reporter dismissed all

protest as a combination of irrational nationalism and a misunderstanding of investment

projects (Zaitseva, interview, 8/26/05). Again, while conceding that these two elements

definitely seem to inhere in the protest discourses used, further exploration can reveal the

complex struggles over socio-spatial paradigm that are buried in these standard discursive

taboos (for to be nationalist or anti-investment seems a retrograde attitude). For, while

pro-investment and anti-chauvinist arguments also advanced reasonable points in support

of the Baltic Pearl project, such positions tended to use the faults of their opponents as an

easy means to dismiss their objections, which in fact often had their roots in a broader

spatial anxiety connected with some shift in a socio-spatial paradigm that affected

residents' lives.

For example, early discussions of the project focused on the displacement of a boating club that had been located on the site for several years. I suggest that if the discourse deployed by the club's supporters was nationalist or anti-investment, this was so because this terminology was readily available to the speakers while a terminology for describing a more profound dispossession had no purchase in the context of the discussion. The club, "Baltiiets," claimed that they had been summarily evicted from the area; that promises of compensation were never realized; and that they were entitled to more compensation even than they were promised, since they had extended the historic Matisov Canal and created the shorter canals running east to west and then south off Matisov that became important design features of the new project. The magazine *Gorod* mentioned this situation in sympathetic tones.

At the public hearing on 8 February 2005, held at the Voskhod cinema in Krasnoselskii district, at least 600 people gathered to protest the project (*Nevastroyka*, 2/9/05), led by the "captain" of the boating club. A briefly mentioned element that the journalist did not emphasize was the residents' complaint that "automobile traffic" had been allowed "under hundred-year-old oaks" on the site, thus ruining it and allowing the authorities to call it "a dump" (*Nevastroyka*, 2/9/05). While the effective designation of the site as a place of public significance and much-vaunted access to nature seems weak, it is an important signal of the type of socio-spatial paradigm held in mind by the speakers. The three main concerns listed by the journalist in the article were these: "[1] That the Chinese will possess the territory under lease for 49 years, and afterwards have the option to purchase it permanently; [2] that specific engineering plans are not in place;

and [3] that Russian developers received no such carte-blanche, no such direct grant from the City Governor's 'gift fund'" (*Nevastroyka*, 2/9/05).

These concerns, couched in a language calculated to be relevant in the context of a public hearing where the residents have limited standing, hint at deeper concerns that the speakers cannot articulate. First, many of those in the "protest group" (including voices on the *Nevastroyka* forum and among my interviewees) are anxious about new concepts of property and property transfer. Second, they mistrust the ability of the authorities to manage the engineering logistics of large projects and to maintain city infrastructure, including the surroundings of their residential buildings. Third, in spite of their misgivings about property, they perceive a shift in the manner of developing space—a kind of return to its exploitation in large blocks with government sanction. In this last case, the Baltic Pearl emerges as a contradictory phenomenon, marking both a new mode of spatial operation in terms of property distribution and a continuation of the command planning approach of the late Soviet period.

Notably, the response of the city government to resident xenophobia was to propose a policy which was simultaneously recognized as impossible and which was complicit in xenophobic assumptions: several members of the administration and at least one representative of the firm mentioned that the quantity of real estate sold to Chinese buyers would amount to no more than 1% (cite other sources, dates) "for internationalist reasons" (*Nevastroyka*, 3/28/05). That is, instead of mounting a campaign of more substantial information about the project and thus minimizing misperceptions that could

inflame opposition, the administration apparently planned to quiet protest by claiming to control the size of the misperceived object.

In some cases the construction of measuring instruments for the public sentiment displayed the same disposition to thinking in these oversimplified categories. A survey of 500 respondents administered in March 2005 by the polling firm Agency for Sociological Information suggested that 44 per cent of city residents were against Chinese investment *qua* Chinese, while 28 per cent favored it and 18 per cent had formed no opinion (http://www.asinfo.ru/?id=323). The survey also reported that "nearly half of city residents had never been outside Russia, had never eaten in restaurants with non-Russian food, had never visited exhibitions of foreign artists, and had no foreign friends or acquaintances." The survey also asked respondents to list countries most hostile to Russia and to supply an ending to the phrase, "I think that a typical Chinese is…" (*Nevastroyka*, 3/28/05). While the survey has some similarities to the one administered for this research in November 2006, it provides no questions that would indicate the relationship between a respondent's spatial positioning in the city and his responses, thus framing the responses as "naturalized" and essential. While the interpretation of the survey's results as indicating that "we are dealing with nothing less than genuine racism and we live in a racist society" (*Nevastroyka*, 3/28/05) is not incorrect *per se*, such an interpretation relieves the city administration of responsibility and refuses to implicate the other factors that are at work. (Similarly, in an otherwise excellent survey, Gel'bras posited a deep reluctance to engage socially between Russians and Chinese because they would not

consider marrying each other; it seems essential to consider more intermediate stages in mutual socialization.)

Problematizing the framing of questions on the Nevastroyka blog

In order to elucidate other factors at work, I analyzed spatial aspects of discourse in a sustained public discussion about the project. The material that I chose to approximate public discussion (perceived as impossible in the press or on the street) was a "forum" or extended set of blog posts archived on the *Nevastroyka* site along with a page detailing the history of the Baltic Pearl project (for treatment of this material as "public discussion," see below). In the thematic sections below that explore the complexities of the arguments, I use "quotations" from these entries, and amplify those results with interview quotations.

I was able to calibrate the framing of the blog posts through juxtaposition with other sources as well as interviews. A survey conducted for this project in the last week of November 2006 on the streets of the Krasnoselskii and Kirovskii districts provides a general picture. This survey collected 350 responses from respondents who were virtually all longtime residents of Petersburg; about 40% had a tertiary education, and about 35% had a technical education. They were divided about equally between men and women, and divided fairly evenly across ages from 18 to over 60. Only about 19% were pensioners, while about 60% were employed in professions ranging from management to the military. (Thus, the respondents were not dominated by the "protest group.") The results of the poll's question about a respondent's support for the Baltic Pearl project in general are opposite to the one cited from ASI in March 2005; about 44% stated their

support, while 30% opposed it (about 25% didn't care or hadn't formed an opinion). When asked for whom they thought the Baltic Pearl was being built, results also indicated that the majority of respondents did not see the area as a threat. About 58% believed the area was meant for Petersburg residents, while only 26.5% thought it would be chiefly for Chinese (and about 15.5% had no opinion). However, while I say "only," it might still seem striking that almost a third of the respondents were against the project and more than a quarter believed it might become an ethnic enclave. It is for this reason that I consider negative reactions more closely in the subsequent section, focusing on entries from the news forum.

My survey indicated that most residents had little idea about the project, and so about 65% could not say how the construction of the Baltic Pearl would affect their district. However, four possibilities were seen as having the same probability by those who had a clearer opinion: an increase in traffic jams and transportation difficulties; an increase in housing costs and rent; an increase in the district's prestige; and an influx of Chinese migrants (all named by about 8% of the respondents). Again, reasons for believing this last point lead into interesting tangles of socio-spatial assumptions, as discussed below.

Another way of gauging common assumptions about the spatial effects of the Baltic Pearl came in publications from the investing company. To counter local resistance, the Baltic Pearl firm produced a magazine, the first issue of which appeared in summer 2008. A common set of criticisms was actually set out as "ten myths," and then addressed, in a separate article.

1 Only Chinese are designing and building the Baltic Pearl.
2 The real estate will be only elite.
3 The builders are not considering Russian codes.
4 There is still no clear plan for construction of the complex.
5 The Baltic Pearl will turn into a China Town.
6 Transport connections to the complex are difficult, it's difficult to get to the metro.
7 The Gulf of Finland will become inaccessible to residents.
8 Nothing contained in the project has been built yet.
9 The Baltic Pearl will become an endless construction site.
10 The company leadership does not intend to improve the transportation situation in the area.

(*Baltiiskaia Zhemchuzhina* 2008, 28-29)

The firm's public relations manager provided rebuttals to each of these objections. In Chapter IV, it was shown that points 3 and 4 are of course "myths," but signal a much more complicated story. New transportation plans do in fact exist; the firm's most recent promotional brochure (produced in January 2008 and made available in Petersburg in summer 2008) contains a map with the proposed line for a monorail and in July 2008 a firm representative confirmed that the last corrections to the quarter's design had been made to allow for this route (see Map 5.1). Further, all design sketches show a widened Peterhof highway minus the current public streetcar line.

However, this list of ten "myths" leaves out some of the most vigorous objections and glosses over others. First, the rebuttal of the first "myth" asserts that Russians have already participated actively in design of the quarter. This is true, as Chapter IV shows; in fact, in spring 2008 the firm announced the hiring of a Russian construction company to build a group of small skyscrapers in the retail area of the site towards the Gulf of Finland (*Nevastroyka*, 3/28/08). However, during a site visit in July 2008, even firm representatives admit that all construction laborers on the project are Chinese,

Monorail Route
Ring Road
Western Speedway

Baltic Pearl

Konstantine
Palace

Kilometers
0   1   2   4
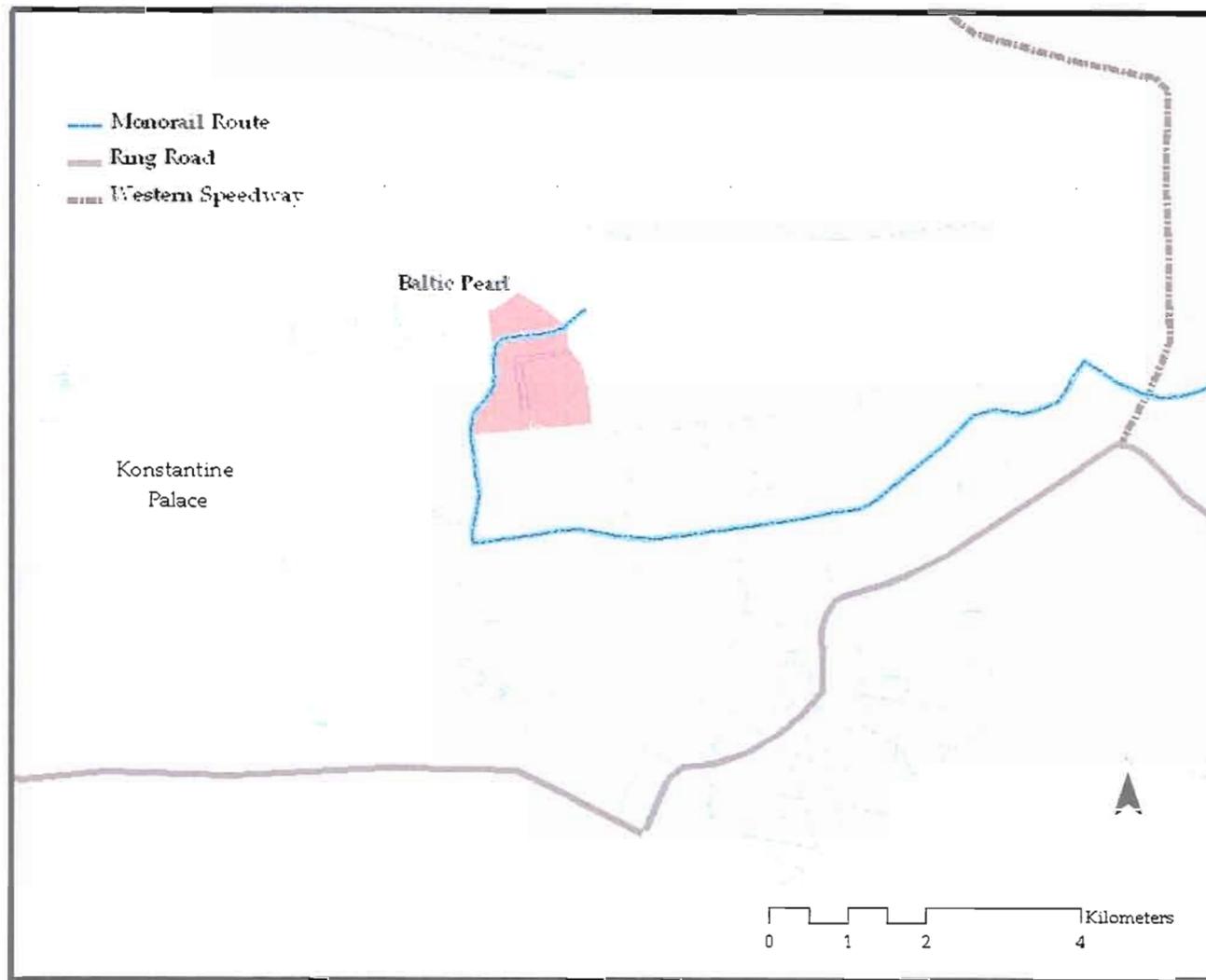
Map 5.1. The Baltic Pearl with the monorail route linking it to the metro system.

brought in specially for the purpose, and they expect more to arrive. This contradicts arguments made by several pro-project "voices" on the news forum, who maintained that local Russian workers would be employed. Two factors work against this: in general, construction laborers in Moscow as well as Petersburg are non-Russian, either Tadjik or Moldovan (Boris, interview, 10/14/06), and additionally, local experts conceded that Petersburg could never supply the needed amount of manpower for such a construction site (Nadia, interview, 11/3/06).[1] Thus, the fact of Chinese laborers does not surprise anyone who knows the situation, but it contradicts arguments made by supporters. The issue of high Chinese in-migration and its impacts on the project are taken up below.

Second, the claim that housing in the quarter will be for the middle classes as well as for the elite might be misleading. While there is reportedly still a crisis in provision of housing in the city, a large portion of this crisis relates to city residents who are poorly housed in either communal apartments or Khrushchev-era buildings that were meant to be temporary. The pent-up demand does not lie with residents having excess capital to invest in housing, but rather with a backlog of those who were waiting on a "list" for government-sponsored improvements to their situation. While the housing in the Baltic Pearl will not be among the most elite in terms of price (this is reserved for detached housing at the city limits and the most central apartment locations), it may still not be affordable for those residents who form the bulk of those seeking new housing. This may promote another common problem in Petersburg, speculative real estate purchase. As a

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[1] In this chapter and in Chapters V and VI, I quote "ordinary" interviewees using pseudonyms and the date of the interview. "Ordinary" interviews are not listed in the bibliography. All interviews cited were conducted by the author in Russian. Repetition of names and dates occurs in the text when it is necessary to maintain clarity of reference.

blogger wrote on the news forum, purchases in some new apartment buildings are chiefly investments, and lights come on only in the few units owned as primary residences. If the Baltic Pearl cannot manage to sell affordably to the city's real "middle class," then it may not achieve the dynamic urban neighborhood feel that it seeks.

Finally, the "myth" that the quarter will become a "China Town" such as those known in cities around the world (notably New York and San Francisco, and many others mentioned on the blog posts) indeed seems absurd, and it was thoroughly refuted on the blogs as well as in the magazine. In contrast to the 1300 local inquiries reported in early September 2008, the firm's representative wrote for the July magazine, "no discounts for purchase by Chinese citizens are planned, and as of now not a single inquiry about apartment purchase has come from that direction" (*Baltiiskaya Zhemchuzhina*, 29). However, as is addressed below, the conflation of anxiety over migration with general ignorance about the Baltic Pearl produced quite a range of objections to the way that the Baltic Pearl would "produce" space. These objections capture the elements of current struggle over the production of space in contemporary St. Petersburg.

The sample interview quotations below demonstrate the range of perceptions and the lack of knowledge that local residents had about the quarter in fall 2006, about two years into the project's development and at the time of the first building's construction.

One of my older interviewees (60 years old) lives not far from the construction site, and regularly visits the park just east of it; she also mentioned that she enjoyed the "natural," undeveloped areas north of the park (in the same state as the Baltic Pearl site was during the 1990s). Ignorant that this area has been slated for massive development

since the 1986 City Master Plan, her recommendation for the area was to develop it as a

recreational area so that local residents could get more fresh air. She knew little about the

Baltic Pearl when I asked her, but said only that "people are afraid right now. … That this

will become a criminal area, and that you won't be able just to walk here [in the

undeveloped area]. It's sad. … No one is telling us anything" (Vera, 12/9/06). Her

impression that crime would increase along with an imagined increase in Chinese

migrants was typical of the blog posts as well.

       Two younger interviewees knew just as little, but reflected different ideas of what

might happen. A young man (22 years old) said

> I heard that here to the southwest they're planning to build a Chinese quarter. I
> haven't heard much about it, just that much. I wonder whether it will be a student
> campus, or in fact a sort of residential area. It seems a little awkward from the
> point of view of location. It's really far from everything. (Mikhail, 10/12/06)

This comment illustrates that he associates Chinese with the number of students studying

in the city, and that his reaction to it as a residential district has pragmatic elements to it.

Not having traveled outside Russia, he still has access to new (for Russia) ideas about

economics through his work and friendships, and notably does not outwardly assume that

a construction project means high immigration.

       A young woman also in her 20s, who has traveled widely in Europe and works

with English-language tourists, rejected outright the idea that the area would become a

"Chinatown":

> It seems to me that both sides need it. I think that it's probably also needed…
> Perhaps connected with investment. And then I don't think that it will be some
> kind of China-town, I don't imagine it this way. Most likely it will look different.
> Not any kind of immigrant neighborhood, that's a completely different thing.
> (Nina, 12/13/06)

Intriguingly, all three of these respondents knew essentially nothing about the project beyond the fact that it was underway.

Concealing details behind generalities: for and against the quarter

As of September 2008, 1555 posted entries remain on the *Nevastroyka* news forum dedicated to the Baltic Pearl, covering a period from November 2004 to April 2008 (Projects of the Century: Chinese Quarter).[2] While the entries often became dominated by 3-4 "voices" on each side of the issue, in sum the range of arguments offered for and against the quarter encompass every such argument I ever read or heard from other sources during the course of research. The entries were also a source of "tips" about aspects of the project that were not covered widely in the press; especially valuable entries were not those of the chief "voices" which appeared as proponents and opponents of the project, but longer posts by infrequent visitors to the forum.

The main arguments for the quarter, summarized by informal bloggers and also mentioned in the official press, include the following points (Chinese Quarter):

> It will add several hundred thousand square meters of housing to the city stock;
> It will offer competition to the small number of local construction firms;
> It will bring investment into the city;
> It will add jobs;
> It will give Petersburg a beautiful modern quarter with facilities for all residents to use;
> It will catalyze new transportation options, such as a monorail;
> It will catalyze more construction in the area, increasing investment in Krasnoselskii.

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[2] Hereafter cited as "Chinese Quarter." In sections below, individual entries from this blog forum will be cited by date.

Except for the first two arguments, which are rather specific to Petersburg, the same

arguments could be made for any urban megaproject (and have been, see Massey 2007).

These are generalized goods that any such project supposedly brings, and these

arguments seem undeniable (Harvey 2001). As noted above, the positive effects may be

certain, and the quarter will probably develop successfully in the manner of other

projects. However, scholars still need to seek ways to discuss more forcefully and more

precisely the nature of objections. I consider further below the kind of racist anxieties

raised by the Baltic Pearl project, but first I want to consider procedural objections to it

that suggest other transformations in the socio-spatial paradigm because it is precisely

this for which we have yet to find an effective language.

The following points constitute what I regard as the most reasonable of the objections

advanced by posts on the blog (Chinese Quarter). All are unrelated to fears about Chinese

migration:

- The grant of the site to the Chinese consortium for construction of the quarter has unfairly displaced the boating club;
- The land was granted to the Chinese company without the proper tendering process;
    - One blogger quoted a federal regulation that "the delivery of land parcels for construction out of land which is in government or municipal ownership may be accomplished only through sale (competition, auction)";
- After 49 years, the company will have the option of purchasing the land at nine times the tax rate, which is minimal in this part of the city;
- The promised investment is virtual—all money will in fact return to China as payment for Chinese-produced construction materials and salaries for Chinese workers;
- The city budget will receive only lease fees, taxes on the land (minimal in this district) and taxes on any real estate (low until something is built);
- The city will have to pay more than it expects for site preparation (electric, plumbing, roads, embankment granite) [estimated by one blogger as $550 million,

with already $728 million spent to create the additional land in the Gulf of
Finland in the 1980s];
- Since this is a government project, graft will be a problem—and the requisite
  bribes in such projects are usually 60% of the estimate;
- The costs per square meter to build and the corresponding price charged can't add
  up; the Chinese won't be able to make the housing affordable—or if they can, it
  won't be a profitable project;
- The consortium is financed directly by the Chinese government, so it isn't a
  private project.

The objections fall into three general categories, all related to space. The first is the

allotment of space for economic or other activity in the city, including the displacement

of the yacht club and the lack of a bidding process for the land; the second is the

trajectory and ultimate location of so-called investment monies; and the third relates to

social and political access in terms of ability to purchase housing in the quarter and

control of it by another government. The combination of the first and second categories is

striking: the first set of criticisms reproaches the process for not following new market-

style procedures for allotting land, while the second critiques the investment process for

not being what it claims.

The first issue touches directly on the position of the Baltic Pearl in the

transformation of urban space in Russia. As noted in Chapter IV, Shuvalov, a journalist

familiar with the history of land use in the city, noted that the earlier Master Plans

intended to transform the entire shore of the Gulf of Finland (see Map 4.3) into the

"façade of the city," an intention reflected in the Baltic Pearl design books. This location

of the site in a broader administrative planning vision obstructs its inscription into the

new market sphere of open bidding. The "granting" of the site to the Chinese consortium

more resembles the Soviet mode of assigning large blocks of land for development to

state corporations and institutes. Certainly it stands outside any attempt at normalizing

market processes: Zarenkov, a local developer, gave several interviews claiming to have

made bids on the site that the city administration rejected (e.g. *Gorod* 8/23/04), and

several officials went on record in early 2005 stating that the project had the political

aspect of being a kind of good-will gesture between the Beijing and Moscow government

structures (*Nevastroyka*, 3/24/05; Basic Characteristics 2005).

The second issue seems to remain nebulous in any such project; who can do the

accounting over the extent of an entire project, or count the benefit to a city budget or to a

single firm? However, in a context where a major part of the argument to citizens is the

financial benefit received from a project, the objections listed above point to the distance

still to cover in the minds of many Russians if the authorities are to connect a tangible

sense of benefits to general investment or construction activity. Residents who made

some of these objections clearly are not familiar with the common practice of cities

providing public infrastructure for private construction projects as an investment in

general development and not as a calculated return. In the case of the Baltic Pearl, current

indications are that the project will indeed have the projected economic impact on the

nearby district: several other large residential projects are planned nearby (Site Visit, July

2008) and the city administration makes regular statements about a new monorail. If the

plans are realized, they could function as a concrete lesson in such investment processes.

The third issue is expressed in terms of the flow and destination of money, but

reflects further anxiety about the clientele for whom the site is being transformed.

"Money decides everything" is a new and negative comment made by many

Petersburgers when discussing new phenomena in the city, and it often has to do with how space is redivided under the new economic conditions. The fact that the price of housing in the Baltic Pearl might be out of reach of most residents even as the quarter is presented as a major contribution to realizing the federal program of "Accessible Housing for All" seems like a betrayal of Russian space. The fact that part of the consortium is directly financed by the Shanghai Municipal Government, as confirmed by interviews in Shanghai in January 2008, strikes some observers as hypocritical when the project is promoted as a major "investment" project. Finally, the certain presence of graft in the process seems another betrayal, a diversion of public and/or the investors' money into private hands that constitutes yet one more depublicizing of a space that had been at least partially conceived as common.

This tangle of objections and worries unleashed numerous simplistic charges against "the Chinese" and "the authorities" on the blog site. Interviewees tended to offer more moderate criticism, although their remarks sometimes echoed blog comments.

Resident Activism and the Spaces of its Representation

Before addressing the spatial anxieties of many bloggers and some interviewees, I want to dwell on the self-conception of public space demonstrated in the entries as a crucial context for the struggle between concepts of space. Both xenophobia and dispossession have found expression in this way. Xenophobic statements are officially deplored, while statements of dispossession generally are dismissed. Yet in spite of increasing the official discouragement increasingly facing dissenters, public protest retains a firm position in the socio-spatial paradigm.

City governor Matvienko on the proper placement of resident activism

In her annual addresses to the Legislative Assembly, considered at some length in

Chapter IV, one of the other things for which Matvienko claims Petersburg needs

"European standards" is civil society and local governance. Indeed, one of the

requirements for accession to the European Union is the principle of local governance

(which Petersburg in important ways clearly violates, since Matvienko is appointed). She

asserts:

> Independence and responsibility of local governance is one of the foundational
> European standards. … European standards of quality of life mean simultaneously
> European standards of civil society. (June 2004)

In March 2005, Matvienko develops the formula of Petersburg as "a city with European

standards of quality of life, a European level of economy and development of civil

society" and she repeats this phrase in both March 2006 and May 2007 (in 2007 she

actually calls it a "formula" herself). She does not articulate the content of this iteration

of "Europe" as she does that of the material, service-oriented "Europe." In fact, when she

actually discusses civil society and its organizations in her speeches, she again clearly

operates based on her paradigm of unitary space that operates at the city and state scales,

emphasizing harmony and the reduction of disagreements. In June 2004, the requisite

independent local governance consists of "constant information about activities"

circulated between city officials, leading to "cooperation with Federal structures and

oblast organs." In March 2006, in an extended commentary obviously directed at

numerous public complaints and resistance to her plans, Matvienko again emphasizes her

city-scale paradigm of uniform cooperation.

> I have said many times before and repeat now: civic activism [*grajdanskaia aktivnost*] is not only requests, complaints, and criticism. First of all it is the self-organization of citizens. It is the energy of activists who create homeowners' associations. It is the supportive councils of educational institutions. It is the organization of active youth who are seeking their place in society. It is philanthropic organizations, without shouts or self-promotion helping other people. It is unions of entrepreneurs. It is national-cultural unions that reinforce tolerance and agreement. It is the growing civil society of our city. We are open to this society. We are open for dialogue. We have no reason to hold discussions only with extremists.

As is clear from the organizations Matvienko lists positively, "extremists" are those who disagree with the positions of the authorities. In May 2007 she made the following statement that resonates with the previous one but adds a specific circumscription of the political geography of civil society:

> I have said and will repeat: we will not be led around by the directors of marginal protest demonstrations who are earning political and not only political bonuses. But we will rigorously demand that informal, honest public hearings be conducted for the residents of the specific microdistrict where construction is proposed. People have the right to know how their area of habitation will change. They have to right to state their opinion about this and influence the decisions taken. To supply such informal hearings is the direct obligation of the district heads and the deputies of municipal entities.

The insistence on limiting protest to the residents of certain districts arose because, in fall 2006, protest groups began to unite across districts in order to help each other understand legislation and formulate complaints that would enter the official record at public hearings, as well as demonstrate moral support; activists and lawyers appeared at the hearings held in the districts of their colleagues. By requiring residents to unite around one vision of the city but then simultaneously limiting any protest discourse with the criterion of spatial location in a particular district, Matvienko contradicts herself; she asserts that residents must work for the good of the whole but then must conceive of

impacts on themselves as circumscribed by district or block boundaries. Yet, as demonstrated by the growing collaboration between activists from different neighborhoods, activist residents are capable of conceiving that their concern is not just one local area but the broader texture of sociability that surrounds them.

Forum views on civil society

Given the context of public debate in Russia since the accession of Putin in 2001, such online spaces as those provided by *Nevastroyka* and other news outlets actually constitute a public space for discussions that cannot be fully accommodated in newspapers or on the street. In particular, protest discourse must obtain permission for a demonstration that takes place in the usual urban "public spaces": a gathering of more than five persons must have a permit. Since dissenting views are seen as "extreme," as Matvienko's comments about a unified "civil society" imply, a range of opinions and complaints marginalized by the authorities must seek "locations" for expression such as these news forums since they are discouraged from appearing in city squares.

One criterion for a true online public space might be the facilitation of collective action, as has been noted in China (Zheng and Wu, 2005). In this case, while in the early stages of the *Nevastroyka*'s Baltic Pearl forum some contributors attempted to garner support for a city-wide referendum on the project, the "dialogue" devolved often into empty antagonism from both "sides" (of 1554 entries, fully 386 fell into the category of "you're stupid"); there is a high probability (as mentioned on the forum itself) that the discourse was contaminated at various points by contributors who deliberately sought to disrupt the exchange of information. Yet there was indeed an attempt to generate support

for a referendum; during the first four months of the forum (November 2004-March 2005) there were nine entries calling for this. Over the course of the three years of the forum, what stands out (in paradoxical relationship to the unpleasantness of many of the stereotyped comments about Chinese) is the self-conception of "Russians" as civically active and ready for political participation as a way to assert their claims on territory.

In the midst of their own ignorance about China, individual Chinese, and traditional or contemporary Chinese culture, some contributors to the forum saw the official condemnation of their positions as anti-populist. Their perception that most other city residents shared their concern combined with a rumor about Chinese civic practices:

> Recently I saw Aunt Valia [Matvienko] on TV, she was promising to grind into powder anyone who protests against the Chinese, so that means basically all city residents. Then the golden time will come for the authorities, they can settle the entire city with Chinese, who won't organize demonstrations or demand social welfare and free transport fares [for senior citizens and students] and so on, or insist on compensation for being evicted. (Chinese Quarter, 3/16/05)

The activities that this entry mentions—demonstrations, demands for social welfare and subsidized passage on public transportation, and demands for fair compensation in the event of eviction from buildings slated for redevelopment—were common topics in that part of the press that covered resident problems, and all fall into Matvienko's categories of "extremists" and "marginal protest." Through the implication that the Chinese won't make trouble, the contributor criticizes the unresponsive city administration.

Thus, although the following blog comment starts to shade into a misunderstanding of what an investment project is, the connection that it makes to the possibility of public protest is crucial:

This is a political project, not at all advantageous for the city. Who answers for these kinds of policies? We don't have freedom of the press [literally, "freedom of the word"] but there's a law on extremism, therefore I can't say any more; think! (Chinese Quarter, 3/17/05)

This comment rejects the arguments about investment and benefits to the city budget, linking promotion of the Baltic Pearl project to suppression of resident opinion and action. In this way, as discussed below, it points to the fact that the struggle is between the city administration and the residents who do not agree with the spatial transformation taking place—not between the residents and Chinese, of whom most city residents (including the bloggers) have almost no experience. Another contributor cited the federal and municipal laws on the right of citizens to have a referendum conducted (2/17/06). A consistent strain of the forum comments (as noted above in the list of legalistic objections to the project) supports the introduction of clear legal guidelines in urban construction, and sees the local Petersburg (and maybe general "Russian") response as involving meetings, petitions, referendums and participation in public hearings—all activities of vigorous political civil society.

However, as Massey and other geographers have noted, the comments and arguments also reveal that space is structured very much through understandings of belonging, historical meaning, and national or ethnic identity (2005, 2007; depending on how the writer uses terms). This reveals a very vigorously Russian local "representation of space" that precludes Chinese from taking part in the "spatial practices" that would be performed in the traditional Petersburg "spaces of representation." In these spaces, there is no place for either the Chinese investors or large numbers of Chinese migrants.

Anti-Chinese Prejudice

Especially in the context of current-day Russia, local residents feel that they cannot affect decisions made by their elites; in Sassen's terms, they have no power to affect the "colonization" of the city by the "new city users" (1998). Yet a more crucial problem is that they do not have any effective language to do more than complain about the pressing problem of dispossession. By contrast, while residents have a similar lack of political or social power to affect the supposed "colonization" of the city by migrants and other people still in the minority, they have a ready language to express the non-belonging of these people: xenophobia is easy. Thus, one of my aims was to seek spatial codes for dispossession in arguments made in xenophobic terms.

Spatial references in the forum entries

Hostile repartee constituted a great many posts on the news forum, but many still indicated significant elements of discourse. Negative responses under the heading of "cultural interaction" formed 5% of relevant entries, mostly in the category of exclamations such as "This is our land, stay out." Many subscribed to the idea of rigid spatial assignments for different nationalities:

> What about earlier, for example, when the Yakuts lived in Yakutia, Russians in Russia, the French in France, African-Americans in America, just residents of Africa in Africa, Chinese in China and so on. So why is everybody rushing about like this? Of course a certain percent of foreign citizens must and should live in other states: marriage, a scholar or specialist, lots of reasons. But like this, the whole tribe at once, the whole nation—off to the neighbors—God save us! We need to get our own house in order. (5/14/05)

Yet alongside such misreadings of history (neglecting to mention colonialism, or the Russian imposition of "Siberia" on native peoples), some of the entries contained

references to the local housing situation, such as this one: "We can't even house our own citizens [*grajdane*], pensioners live in ruins, and they want to build a mini-city for the Chinese. Build in the taiga somewhere, but why in Piter?" (4/19/05). It is this subtle connection to local housing problems and other socio-spatial dislocations that drew my attention, and made me want to explore even the most xenophobic sections of the news forum more closely.

A fairly constant notion on the news forum posts was that the Chinese would live in ethnically exclusive enclaves. Out of 1168 relevant posts, anxiety about enclave formation was mentioned 31 times; fear of Chinese-only spaces was mentioned 10 times. As already hinted above, dominant stereotypes of Chinese include the idea that a large number of Chinese migrants would not take part in public life as the local residents know it, thereby further disadvantaging them in the struggle to adapt to the new economic circumstances. In fact, as described below, residents ignorant of project details expressed a great deal of anxiety that issues of national sovereignty would be at stake if the (government-owned) Chinese consortium were able to purchase the Baltic Pearl site. It might perhaps seem too lofty to make the point I intend, but I suggest that local anxiety is increased by this sense that large numbers of Chinese will form spatial interruptions in the local texture of sociability, shutting off part of the socio-political circulation that oppositionally disposed residents already see as under threat from their own government. In order to make this point more clearly and persuasively, I now examine the spatial references—to practices, spaces of representation, and representations of space—that occurred in the news forum posts.

For the "protest group" orientation, a fixed set of sites, often historical, anchor the notion of a common set of "spaces of representation." These threatened sites, linked variously to the Soviet or pre-revolutionary past—but invariably to a notion of public good—emerge in a variety of news forums on the *Fontanka* and *Nevastroyka* sites. They include several cherished parks where local developers have attempted or partly succeeded in building elite detached housing or townhouses. One blog entry captures a few of them along with other spatial commentary:

> We can't even cope with [Russian] migrants from the former CIS, you can barely walk without stepping on them, and now you want to organize a Chinese expansion here too! Valentina Matvienko isn't from Piter, she doesn't care as long as her son gets enough for his candies, but there are true Petersburgers, natives ["rooted"], who don't want skyscrapers in the center, townhouses on Krestovsky Island or villas in the Central Park of Culture and Rest [on Elagin Island]. (Chinese Quarter, 6/10/05)

Many participants in the forum who favor preservation of these "spaces of representation" suggest that the Chinese will harm the built environment that enables the spaces. (Clearly many of the xenophobic Russians are unaware of the usual attitude of Chinese to Petersburg's historical area, as described in Chapter V.) The focus of irritation is actually the city administration or the general shift in building practices, but the Chinese project creates an easy outlet for frustration. The perception is that the Baltic Pearl will participate in this dispossession of residents, changing local spatial practices and marginalizing the dispossessed still further.

Several types of comments on the Chinese Quarter blog illustrate the envisioned disruption of existing spatial practices. (The link between this kind of anxiety and the Soviet/post-Soviet transformation is addressed in the final section of this chapter.)

- One contributor warns that the Baltic Pearl will have "Chinese tenements just like all over the world, with their own rules" (12/19/04).
- Someone else, supposedly based on the experience of a friend in Paris, imagines that "on one side your neighbor will be a Chinese drug addict and on the other a Chinese drug dealer, above you a Chinese prostitute who invites clients home and below you Chinese Mafiosi, filthy entrances and yards, shot-up doors, you can only go outside during the day" (3/17/05).
- Another, speaking of enclaves and a feared residential concentration of Chinese migrants, warns of "an alien body, a sore that will separate itself from the citizens and the city itself" (3/29/05).
- Someone else adds that it will be "a state within a state with its own laws and customs" (12/20/05).
- The spirit of the Russian proverb cited by one contributor runs through many such entries: "You don't take your own charter to another monastery" (5/12/05).

The chief fear is that Chinese newcomers will not obey the local spatial practices, that is, that their refusal to behave according to local norms threatens the continuity of local space. I would argue, although not strenuously, that there is a global aspect to this fear in that the Chinese are seen as new arrivals who have sufficient power to reject the local socio-spatial paradigm and create their own. This fear has some links to a historical fear of Chinese invasion that is far from unique to Russia. However, the sense of the power to disrupt of Moldovan labor migrants is vastly less than perceptions of such power on the part of Chinese labor migrants; they are perceived not only as hardworking but as bearers of geopolitical rivalry. By extension, neither Moldovans nor Chinese are given the power to participate in shaping space, or any explicit dispensation to redefine the socio-spatial paradigm.

Strikingly in this connection, the spatial practices of the Other are all imagined as hostile to existing residents. While such xenophobia is common in many parts of the world, we might pause to wonder why the imagination of arriving Others does not tend on the whole to include positive visions: many existing residents anticipate that the new

arrivals will disrupt a system that they understand—social, cultural, economic, or (in my analysis) socio-spatial—and either replace it or change it beyond recognition. That is, the elements that they introduce will have no *productive* potential.

The one contributor to the forum who consistently expresses interest in living in the development reinforces this point in a description of why he would like to live there. Among other reasons, he suggests that he could take his children to the water park and walk with them along the covered embankment. That is, he envisions himself enacting simple spatial practices on the site that seem to him "completely normal" and that support his idea of family activities; he does not perceive the resulting development as an expanse of competing spatial practices, with different cultural and social representations demanding their own spaces.

Evaluation of these antagonistic comments on the forum demonstrates that the imagination of a persistently threatening set of spatial practices on the part of any Chinese migrants conditions a great many of the negative reactions. On the news forum, as in interviews, it turned out that very few contributors or respondents had direct experience with Chinese people; information was usually derived secondhand. Thus, the forum contained multiple references to problems with a high number of Chinese migrants in the Far East and also indicated slippage onto experiences with other non-Russian people in St. Petersburg and Moscow. One contributor to the blog forum recognized this epistemological problem:

> We already have quite a lot of migrants arriving in the city now, and not all of them legally. It's precisely on this background that people connect the Chinese quarter with some kind of Chinese aggression. Of course, there is no logic in this.

But it's also not surprising, if you read the vast majority of comments entered here. (6/13/05)

An extended anecdote offered by one contributor demonstrates how many opponents of the project tended both to elide the differences between different groups of non-Russian migrants (here bringing an example involving migrants from the Caucasus to a discussion about reacting to Chinese) and to associate hostile spatial practices with any migrants.

> Take people from the Caucasus. No, I'm not a nationalist, but I don't like it when one family moves into a building stairway, occupies a two-bedroom place, then you find out that about 20 people somehow fit in there, then they begin to earn money and buy up the remaining apartments in the entryway. And meanwhile in the morning they yell to each other from below up to the windows in their guttural language, and someone yells back from the apartment, and meanwhile they warm the engines of their creaky minivans, that they use to take goods to market, endlessly slamming the van doors. My mother-in-law lives in a building with just such a stairway, I'm not making this up. I'm not against these people, but after all they have no plans to blend into our culture, to accept our customs and habits, but they—and I won't agree with anyone who says the contrary—MUST do this, because THEY came to US, and not the reverse. (2/8/05)

Before we rush to deplore the intolerance of the contributor, it is important to notice the implied assumptions about spatial practice and use of space: silence in the yard during the morning, a certain number of square meters per person—certainly not 10 people per room! After years of waiting patiently for an apartment with multiple rooms, many Petersburgers find the idea of acquiring multiple apartments beyond their comprehension; after years of struggling to increase the official allotment of square meters per person in living space, the idea of accepting less (even in the name of frugality) must strike many as degrading. In fact, the phenomenon of one family buying up several apartments also struck some of my interview respondents and some mentioned it in informal conversation. An acquaintance of mine in her early 60s told me a story similar to the one

quoted above (involving members of the same ethnic group) with a hint of disapproval, as though it were profligate behavior. And certainly a shift in the majority of residents in a yard or around a stairway can dramatically change the assumed spatial practices.

Some entries tried to make this case, such as the following:

> It isn't a question of racial features but of the upbringing, lifestyle, and moral code of one or another ethnic group. A human is a social being, and it's typical for people from the Caucasus and China to keep their own traditions, alien to ours, and this is the danger of the appearance of a large number of representatives of these nationalities in Petersburg. They don't care a whit for Petersburg and its residents. [literally, "they could spit on"] (Chinese Quarter, 7/7/05)

The repeated link made between immigrants from China and from the Caucasus is very significant, even though it would hardly stand up to extended anthropological analysis. The argumentative gesture itself of comparing the social (and, I suggest, spatial) behavior of unknown Chinese migrants to "known" migrants from the Caucasus does several things. First, it reveals an assumption common in Russian discourse that separate "ethnes" exist and behave uniformly, heavily influenced by the anthropo-philosophical works of Lev Gumilev; second, it reveals that many Petersburgers are using the local experience that they have with other migrants as a way to process their feelings about as-yet unknown migrants as well as an urban development project, in a kind of spatial mismatch; and third, it again reveals an insistence on the supposed salience of practices ("upbringing, lifestyle, and moral code") over essentialist prejudices.

In Chapter IV, it was shown that different assumptions about spatial and architectural form did occur in negotiations between a small group of Russian and Chinese architects and planners; they are not reducible to "anti-Russian" or "anti-Chinese" prejudice, but can be traced to existing historical and contemporary practices in

different cities in the two countries, particularly in Petersburg and Shanghai. At the scale of large groups of much more diverse individuals from different countries who come into contact with each other, is it legitimate, as some of the forum contributors do, to point to spatial and other practices as reasons for mistrust and even conflict?

Interview comments on other urban prejudices

Semi-structured interviews allowed a deeper exploration of this question. Just as in the news forum, many of my respondents knew little about the Baltic Pearl or about individual Chinese people; they, too, tended to shift their explanations and reasoning to instances out of their experience, which tended to involve migrants from the Caucasus. In the end, though, while few of them could say much about the Chinese in particular, they had a fair amount to say in general about intercultural relations in the city. These comments revealed additional aspects of the spatial anxiety that is visible in the news forum.

The Russian respondents whose comments I use below have had a range of experiences with Chinese. (See Table 4.1.) Three had made extended visits to China, two of them for language study; these latter two continue to work with Chinese in Petersburg, one as a representative of a shipping firm and one as a guide for Chinese tourists. Two others were highly educated teachers; one teaches culturology in a local institute where there are large numbers of Chinese students. Two others are also highly educated, both linguists, who have traveled widely but don't know any Chinese students or city residents. One is a seventy-year-old woman who lived through the Siege of Leningrad as a child and has never left the country; finally, one is a 25-year-old young man who had

Table 5.1. Summary of Russian interviewees' position on the Baltic Pearl. (Organized by increasing income.)

Name/age	Car?	Income	Suspicious	For	Ethnic conflict	Investment	Crime
Vera, 62		low	●				●
Liudmila, 70		low	●		●		
Mikhail, 23		low	●				
Ivan, 25		low	●				
Masha, 36		low	●		●		
Anna, 36		low	●		●		
Boris, 25	●	medium		●		●	
Rita, 38	●	medium	●			●	
Nina, 26		medium		●		●	
Dmitri, 45	●	medium		●		●	
*Nastia, 24		medium		●		●	
*Varya, 46		medium		●	●	●	
*Nadia, 27	●	high	●			●	
Sergei, 42	●	high	●			●	
Pavel, 40	●	high		●		●	
Svetlana, 38		high	●		●	●	
**Polishchuk, 52	●	high		●		●	
**Nikitin, 68	●	high	●	●		●	

* indicates that the respondent has visited China and continues to have frequent contact with Chinese acquaintances.
** indicates an "expert" interview with a city employee.

never left Petersburg until a trip to Moscow in fall 2006. They are not activists, although by definition (including age and income) some of them fall into the "protest group"; although many were disgusted with the local administration (reflecting the general mood of the news forum), none of them had participated in any political action or street demonstrations. They had positive to lukewarm views on the need for investment in the city, and in general were either supportive or neutral about the idea of the Baltic Pearl project; none expressed vigorous opposition. The point of reporting their views is the probable moderateness of their positions—in other words, these are not people who are calling loudly for Chinese to be expelled from the city; they want to see themselves as educated and worldly. Thus, their views are indicative of serious problems, and their hesitations tap into the more persistent elements of a socio-spatial paradigm that does not accommodate difference.

The following quite long quotations from interviews in this section are essential in order not to take statements out of context or to truncate interviewees' thoughts for the sake of proving a narrow point. I include them here to demonstrate the complexity of the socio-spatial terrain into which the Baltic Pearl enters.

Liudmila, a thoughtful professor of botany and lover of poetry in her early 70s, had little to say when asked directly about Chinese: "I only see students. If there are other Chinese in the city, I don't see them. I don't frequent the Far East, so I don't know how things are going there." (Note her unprovoked association of the Chinese with the Far East, which occurred frequently in the news forum.) However, as our conversation probed local attitudes to newcomers, she attempted an explanation for xenophobia and

attacks on migrants. While she thinks of herself as an educated person, she recognizes

that she feels a distinct discomfort in dealing with certain migrants; also, she

simultaneously rejects abstract Russian nationalism as well as the assumption that

Russians have somehow been duped into xenophobic attitudes. In sum, she sees real

problems in the behavior of non-Russians, and in an interview ascribed the crude

responses of Russians to a lack of education and poor economic conditions.

> First of all, not everyone is living well right now... And nowadays, they just toss you something [at market stalls] and you can't say anything in response. So of course I—although I consider myself a fairly educated person, more or less cultured—I don't allow myself to say nationalistic things... but when I go to the market, I try to buy from Russian vendors. ... And then, whereas before I always went to the market, that was the tradition, I bought everything there, but now I don't want to. I don't want to talk to those people. Maybe it raises anger and resentment in some people, but not with me. But I don't know, I think it's wrong to talk about how someone is brainwashing us. Nobody is brainwashing me. ... But then some people yell "Russia for the Russians!" – this is completely stupid. Why for Russians? After all, Finns lived here before us. So am I supposed to pack my bags and leave, or something? And before the Finns there was someone else. You can't be saying all the time, Russians lived here. ... The lower the level of culture, the more strongly this is expressed. And the fact that we live poorly. If people lived better, they wouldn't pay any attention to such things. (10/30/06)

Aside from her appraisal of public xenophobia, it is clear from her description here that a

common place for interaction between different groups of people in general has been

food markets where vendors sell vegetables and other fresh foodstuffs by weight. For

many years, most of the vendors of fruits and vegetables have come from the Caucasus,

since this region is the main source for these foodstuffs (vendors of dairy are usually

Russian; vendors of meat products vary). Chinese have reportedly appeared at Troitsky

Market. The more affluent and the poor also used to mix here, since the market had the

highest quality of fresh food. As grocery stores and "hypermarkets" (English

"supermarket") take over more of the sector, the markets become more the domain of the poorer consumer. As Liudmila mentions, it was the "tradition" to go to the market; now, economic forces beyond her awareness are changing the structure of the retail food system in Petersburg, and changing social dynamics mean that tension between ethnic groups has increased as well. Specific behaviors result in part from these larger dynamics, and Liudmila indicates that contact between differing groups may have decreased as a result of the tension.

Varya, 50 years old, who had made two trips to China for cultural programs and who spoke ecstatically of her interactions with individual Chinese, deplored the empty xenophobia of her countrymen that she felt resulted chiefly from laziness, but she also emphasized the underpinning of spatial practices that she felt conditioned the response of local residents:

> They are truly active people. Why do local residents, people from Petersburg, feel threatened by this? It seems to them that these people, they've come here, they're making their own career, they're taking our jobs, and so on. On the one hand, who is preventing you? Work actively yourself! … These are very active people who are trying to make their way, to position themselves, establish themselves in this life and so on. And sometimes, this sort of thing often happens, this *striving to conquer space*, it seems very aggressive. Their behavior is such that it doesn't accept certain settled, foundational customs. After all, Petersburg is a city with three hundred years of history. There is a defined mentality here, *an idiosyncratic cultural environment, a certain norm of behavior even.* How are Moscow and Petersburg different? Here you walk and walk, a visiting person says, How should I get here? And [a Petersburger] will take you practically to the door. There's nothing like that in Moscow. In the best case people say, Go that way or buy a transport card, and beyond that no one wants to know who you are. Here it's a bit different. So people, *native Petersburgers, they want to make sure that the good, those good foundational customs, rules, that these things are preserved.* And so they hold certain expectations for the behavior of new arrivals. For example, why are they suspicious of people from the Caucasus? It's because they have a different attitude to women. As though they were second-class citizens. If you don't regard a woman as an equal, people will reproach you. If you insult a

woman, people will reproach you. And if you don't understand, then you're free to go back home and set up your own rules there. That is, when you arrive in an existing environment, you have to deal with those rules.
(3/25/07; emphasis added)

When I spoke with Varya for the first time in October 2006, she had just returned from a trip to China and was full of enthusiasm. She described the way that she had gone from a negative to a positive view of the Baltic Pearl project, based on an abstract enthusiasm for the mingling of different people in one place.

> A lot of people are coming here now. In principle this is good, when people come together. I don't think it will be just Chinese there. … So, I don't know what will happen with the Baltic Pearl. It will need colossal resources. And if China begins to invest in Petersburg, that will be good. Both for Petersburg and for China. Without a doubt. In general I feel very positive about this idea. (10/28/06)

In our second conversation, the same woman emphasized a different aspect of her reaction, expressing particular concern that Chinese not form an ethnic residential enclave at the site:

> Right now the Chinese are building the Baltic Pearl. And they say that people from China will live there. I feel somehow very negatively about this concentrated residence of one nation. It seems to me that this will be a ghetto. This must not happen. There must be assimilation with other nationalities. Because entrance for all others would become forbidden. …When the same kind of people concentrate in one place, terrible things happen. (3/25/07)

Of course she means "when the same kind of people concentrate in one place" inside a space that other people regard as their own, where there is some kind of generally recognized set of spatial practices—an "existing environment" as she called it in the first quotation I included by her above. As Massey (2005) implies, the blindness of the "native" population to its own concentration in space does not prevent the imagination of disastrous conflicts with non-native populations, although establishing who has clear

claims to "native-ness" is becoming increasingly problematic. However, it is fair to posit a fairly stable set of spatial practices, a kind of accepted socio-spatial paradigm, when a large number of people seem to share it. Whether or not it is valid, its existence must be acknowledged as a factor in attempts to achieve the kind of urban society that so many scholars, and some residents, would like to see realized.

A conversation that I had with two highly educated professors, Pavel and Liza, illustrated the same principle. In this dialogue, notice the references to a set of practices related to place of origin, and to the anxiety created in the second speaker when resident practices in the domestic spaces of courtyard and bus stop are unfamiliar to her.

> P: They aren't adapted to live in a city. They don't understand how to live. More than that, they *don't understand the foundations of urban life*. Of course I think this creates the potential for serious tensions. Because when a critical... when there are districts in the city here, in Petersburg, where the non-native, even more, with different skin color, this is very noticeable. It isn't dominant, but it's very noticeable. I think that the high number of skinheads in Petersburg is a reaction, say, of the less-educated part of the native population, mostly that uncultured lumpenproletariat, let's say, to those people, new migrants, who *live there the same way that they live at home. By the law of the mountains*, so to speak.

> L: I can't even say that I reject them, that I can't accept people from a different culture. I can. But you know, when you are walking home at night, and there's a group of people sitting there, and you listen... for example I know all the Finno-Ugric languages, but it's not that group. I know the Turkic languages, and it's not Caucasus languages. It's not Azeri, Georgian, or Armenian. It's not any central Russian language. It's some tribe or something.

> P: Probably Tadjiks.

> L: No, I understand the Tadjik language. It wasn't Tadjiks. ... I hear them and can tell that I don't understand.

> P: And there are very few languages she doesn't understand. She can at least say what family it's in.

L: And you look at their expressions… and you don't know what they're thinking. I walk along, and I'm already afraid. Or say, I go out to the bus stop, and they're sitting there sometimes. I don't remember how many. They sit on their heels, and spit all around them. Am I supposed to like that? I know that our building janitor is not going to clean up the bus stop. (11/5/06; emphasis added)

Pavel went on to say that he thought it was the responsibility of the authorities to create some kind of firm framework in order to regulate the inflow of migrants who might know little about either urban or local culture. While both wanted to be seen as accepting and enlightened members of society, they also felt the disruptions to their normal experience of space; they did not see a smooth connection between wanting to accept Others and managing their own spatial experience of Others' presence. A thoughtful 25-year-old respondent captured all of these elements in an extended conversation about ethnic prejudice in Petersburg. Discussing the Baltic Pearl, he said,

I would of course not be against it if something developed in Russia, like, well… When such chaotic things happen, it seems to me that it's not bad conceptually, that is, it's not bad that the color of people's skin is different. It's bad that the process is chaotic, it shows that there is some kind of disbalance in society; everything was quiet, and then suddenly there's this huge shift. Why did it start? Everybody is surprised, they couldn't prevent it, you know, regulate it. The authorities, who can't do anything… It means that they, you know, are incompetent to decide these questions. If there is going to be a China-town, well, who cares, it sounds great, Chinese, they have lanterns, little restaurants, everything's fabulous. If it helps the economy, who would be against it. People are against other things, I think. (Ivan, 10/29/06)

The "other things," as I have suggested, are the chaotic disruptions to the dominant socio-spatial paradigm. Thus, when scholars write that new urban public spaces require "engagement across differences, a mutual respect for those who are different from oneself, and space for them to be so" (Watson 2006, 171), there is a piece of the puzzle missing: engaging with the socio-spatial paradigm in the "existing environment" and

finding ways for it to intersect with the socio-spatial paradigm that most strongly inheres with the arrivals. In connection with this, I now turn to a final section in this chapter that addresses another set of mistrustful Russian responses to the Baltic Pearl. These reveal a broader anxiety about the shift from a Soviet socio-spatial paradigm to a hoped-for "post-Soviet" one.

The Struggle between "Soviet" and "Post-Soviet"

Post-Soviet Russia is not a monolith. Many internal struggles remain between those who adopted, and adapted to, the sweeping economic and social change and those who did not make it into that successful class. The socio-spatial paradigms of many residents retain "Soviet" points of orientation, ranging from specific spaces of representation for Soviet national pride (such as Damansky Island, just below) to representations of space that include more collective-oriented use of land, such as for parks. For this aspect of post-Soviet life, though, an effective language is still missing.

Invocations of history in the forum

Forum posts also revealed a scale of oppositional discourse that went beyond perception of urban ethnic friction, raising the agreement to build the Baltic Pearl—signed by representatives from the two national-level governments—to the level of state symbolism. (This scalar move, of course, is consistent in some ways with statements made by various officials from both states about the political significance of the project.)

The breadth of such scaled appeals is striking: in making their points, for example, several entries referred to significant territorial conflicts between the Soviet

Union and the People's Republic of China. Entries that asserted China as a potential enemy for Russia recalled conflicts such as the Sino-Soviet border conflict of 1969, fought over Damansky Island (returned to China in 1991). Some entries mentioned Mongolia as a rallying cry against the project, invoking the Soviet claim to have liberated the Mongolians from Han Chinese domination when they made Outer Mongolia into a Soviet republic. Both of these references sought to portray China as a territorial aggressor, and to place the Baltic Pearl into the context of these prior conflicts over control of space.

This Soviet-influenced stance often synthesized new information about Chinese migration to other parts of Russia. Several entries in the news forum immediately made an association between Chinese migration and the Russian Far East. Several anecdotes were posted about parts of Vladivostok or Khabarovsk where Chinese had posted signs forbidding entry by Russians or had come to dominate residential or commercial space. Scholarly studies of Chinese migration to several Far East cities and to Moscow provide partial corroboration for such anecdotes, although recent scholarship also indicates that many residents of the Far East welcome the Chinese migrant presence as a needed boost to the local economy. In the context of the Soviet vision of the Far East, however, that region is a prize not only in terms of natural resources such as oil, gas, and timber, but as a frontier that Russian discourse expressed pride in conquering (Bassin 1999; Stephan 1994). Many geographical and economic realities may inevitably force Russia to yield de facto control of the region to China; the Russian government may not have either the financial or population resources to sustain its Far East settlements, while prosperous

China can more easily support its burgeoning population in northeast provinces right on Russia's border. However, allowing the Chinese gradually to overwhelm the area struck some forum participants as unpatriotic.

Expectations for the Baltic Pearl: between central planning and market development

Uneven attempts to find a language for what is really at stake (in many cases) show through in comments about planning, architecture, and spatial practice in Petersburg. Expectations for the Baltic Pearl intersect with two aspects of a socio-spatial paradigm: the spatial practice of distributing land for development, and the spaces of representation (assumptions about how to arrange space) associated with the Soviet period. The latter surfaced frequently in entries opposing or criticizing the quarter.

In Chapter IV, I discussed the vision for the Baltic Pearl project espoused by the city administration and by the Baltic Pearl firm itself. In terms of distribution of land for development, my concern specifically is to evaluate impressions of the project from the point of view of the transition from a "Soviet" model of structuring urban space to a new approach, perhaps post-Soviet, certainly transformational (Axenov et al. 2006; Sykora 2008).

Contradictions in the goals of the St. Petersburg Master Plan are visible here as elsewhere. Interview and forum commentaries pointed out some of these contradictions, exhibiting frustration with the (ironically) Soviet-style opacity of decisions and centralized planning control over the total vision of the city. Some criticized the choice to develop the Baltic Pearl site as residential/retail; many news forum posts complained that the city should have used the Baltic Pearl site for expansion of the industrial port, which

is located between the historical center and Krasnoselskii district (see Map 4.3). In this

context, journalist Shuvalov told me in an interview, the stated intention to have the city

become a more significant port conflicts spatially with the desire to craft an esthetic post-

industrial façade for the city along the shores of the Gulf of Finland (described above).

He added, discussing ambitions for more significant port activity:

> If we are a break-of-bulk center, a base on the route from Europe to Korea, then
> of course we need to develop the port, and then everything else has to be
> curtailed. We can't do both, we'd have to widen the port. And really develop it—
> if you want to bring 300-meter tankers here, well, we have only three such berths
> now. (10/24/06)

Solodilov, an employee with a major planning contractor for the city, mentioned that the

city had considered removing all port activity further away from the center, but had

rejected the idea as too expensive. This means that the "beautified shoreline" will have to

coexist with the port, possibly forcing more industrial port functions to Vasilievsky

Island, which has been promoted as chiefly a cruiseline/passenger port.

Expectations for the Baltic Pearl: service to the collective vs. promotion of creativity

Juxtaposed with the desires of architects, the forum also reveals contradictions in

the kind of "spaces of representation" residents envision for the "representation of space"

imagined as an endeavor for the collective good. First, as noted in Chapter IV, local

planners and architects see the Baltic Pearl as a second chance for the massive

construction projects that could be never accomplished according to planners' intentions

during the Soviet period. Former Chief Architect Kharchenko stated, "after a decade-long

interruption, we in the city had the chance to see in the shape of this big territory, how it

[*kvartal*-scale planning] would develop" (12/6/06). He and other planners in support of

this idea saw careful *kvartal*-scale planning as a good idea thwarted by bureaucrats and contractors who cut corners during the building process. The 205-hectare Baltic Pearl project is far smaller than some "new town" style developments done by Chinese firms in other countries (e.g. 2800 hectares in Indonesia, Leisch 2002). As an element of a city-level vision for a "Gulf of Finland façade" for the city, such a project entails control exercised broadly over a large space in order to control the outcome; not surprisingly, not all residents share the planners' enthusiasm for massive block-style construction. Just as the method of granting land to the Chinese firm struck many as Soviet and antithetical to market practices, the very architectural mode struck some as Soviet, too. On the news forum a blog contributor signing himself "architect" wrote:

> The quarter-scale construction proposed by the Chinese is not typical for Petersburg. Our city was from the beginning built project by individual project, and this gives it a particular unrepeatability. Construction by blocks happened in the Soviet period and reached its peak in the 1960s-80s. We see the result of this in Kupchino and the southwest. (2/27/05)

Even supporters of the project on the blog forum repeated several times that they didn't want to see Soviet-style blocks turning up in the Chinese project. One wrote, "the only thing I'm afraid of is that they'll build a typical faceless quarter in the style of Soviet builders!" (3/12/06). As scholars have noted of East European countries affected by Soviet-era mass construction practices, the current tendency is to avoid this large scale and seek low-rise housing (Czepczynski 2007), although the visible Chinese tendency is to create massive housing blocks.

Architect Nikitin is a strong supporter of *kvartal*-scale development and proud of the designs he produced over decades in Soviet planning. Crucially, he (and Kharchenko)

understood something different behind the concept of "blocks"; he did not want Soviet-style monotony either.

> These boxes, what is this? The same old Brezhnev construction, Khrushchevian rhythms. Everything is resolved with these primitive compositional techniques. Very dull and not inspired. Music can have a clever melody with complex, diverse rhythms. But in primitive music, it's just bum bum bum bum bum. (Nikitin, interview, 10/17/06)

As Chapter IV showed, the particular block form in the Baltic Pearl resulted at least partly from consistent Russian pressure to build courtyards. Nikitin and Kharchenko knew the Baltic Pearl had to cover a large space, but still wanted it to embody creative design. Observers in the city saw the block as deadening, a form to be surpassed by something contemporary; the Chinese and British designers embraced the efficient geometry of the large housing block as though it were futurist art. It remains to be seen whether this form can accommodate the change that Petersburg desires. (According to Nikitin, the most skilled design for the whole quarter came from Rem Koolhaas at OMA, but his fees were too expensive.)

Second, some felt that it was disingenuous to promote investment as the key principle in a new "representation of space." Although comments cited above show that the process of transferring the land to the Baltic Pearl firm did not take place under conditions of market tender, supporters overall still regard the project as based on this very post-Soviet financial vision, with the potential for modeling a new era of foreign direct investment in Petersburg (the city administration has sought and gained foreign investment in, for example, concessions for the projected north-south highway, the so-

called Western High-Speed Diagonal). Nadia, a professional in the Russian-Chinese

business community, emphasized that

> It's an investment project that's very important for the city, because in general it's the first Chinese project of this size done in Russia… Therefore it must work out, it has to show that the Chinese can pass the test, and that maybe we should change the city policies about investment here. (interview, 12/1/06)

While the land transfer process was not transparent, the release of such a plot of land at a

time when major Russian energy companies have been seeking renationalization may

signal a certain willingness on the part of authorities to experiment; after all, as a blog

contributor to the news forum wrote, "In other regional centers, all construction is still

under the firm paws of the local authorities" (3/20/06). The project appears to be a back-

room deal to some observers, but the administration may be taking a healthy risk in

allowing a foreign company to complete such a visible project. The Baltic Pearl may

provide a bracing model of success for the construction community if it can keep to its

schedule and produce attractive and affordable housing. It could indeed become a place

where a new kind of life in Petersburg is forged, with a new set of spaces of

representation and a transformed vision of yards and residential blocks.

Third, modes of transportation emerged as a key point of struggle. Spaces of

representation and spatial practices in the form of transportation infrastructure associated

with Petersburg's Soviet period, or Leningrad, were prominent in many comments—

chiefly in sarcastic comments made by supporters of the project who see the Baltic Pearl

as a way to refashion the central spatial assumptions of Soviet-era urban life. A major

space of representation for the collective experience of life under which the government

issued apartments to waiting families is the "khrushchevka" or "khrushchoba," the mass-

produced building constructed under Nikita Khrushchev to alleviate a critical housing

crisis. Meant to be temporary, they still house a large portion of the city residents here

and across the former Soviet Union. The following blog forum entry builds on this and

other common spaces of Soviet and immediate post-Soviet life as a reproach to

opponents of the Baltic Pearl:

> Why don't our marvelous friends build us the typical five-story buildings we've known from childhood—the Tadjik builders and the Moldovan tile-layers, under the protection of our own dear Chechens. We'd rather have a sea of kiosks, with Azerbaidjani merchants, than let those cursed Chinese build their awful oceanariums, mirrored skyscrapers and silly aquaparks! And even better—let's leave it as an empty lot, because otherwise there's nowhere to walk our dogs and drink port. Good job Leka—a real Russian patriot, standing alertly on guard for the interests of his native city! (12/30/05)

The "five-story buildings" are the "khrushchevki"; kiosks are a sign of the transitional

stage of 1990s retail (Axenov et al. 2006); and the empty lot is quasi-common a space, in

practice neglected by the Soviet building system and often appropriated by nearby

residents. Each of these forms is its own "spatial practice," with its own context and role

in a reigning socio-spatial paradigm. Related blog entries give additional illustration of

the mood:

> Dearer to the heart of our people are the *khrushchevki*. It's warmer in those when they turn off the heat. And your neighbors don't envy you. (1/23/06)

> Our people are used to their *khrushchevki*. Let the Chinese build in other countries! We don't want anything except *khrushchoby*, streetcars, and fixed-route taxis. And maybe heat during the winter, and a bit of humanitarian aid now and then. (2/15/06)

These two entries suggest a passivity and mediocrity in collective life, in which people

weren't active enough (or didn't have the power) to improve unreliable systems of urban

heating, didn't have the nerve to exceed the low standards set by lazy neighbors, and in

which Russia had to accept humanitarian aid to feed its people. Thus, this kind of

opposition to the old socio-spatial paradigm—which translates here into support for the

Baltic Pearl—sees nothing but negative qualities in the pre-1990 urban life. When one

contributor expressed suspicion that a dairy outlet in the Baltic Pearl would somehow be

connected to a high birthrate there for Chinese migrants, a blog contributor in this anti-

Soviet pro-progress position wrote:

> People travel the devil knows where around the city and suffocate in lines in order
> to get milk for children. This kind of situation can only be normal for a Stalinist
> who has lived his whole life in deprivation and dreams that his children will suffer
> even more. (3/16/06)

Such entries reject the arrangement of space prevalent under the Soviet regime, and hope

that the new district will sweep away that arrangement. Pavel commented,

> In general I have this feeling of hopelessness. Nothing is getting better in our
> urban development. I completely understand those who are building the Baltic
> Pearl. That they decided to start with a clean slate. Take some district where there
> was nothing before and try to create a different world. (interview, 11/5/06)

Whether the slow pace of development stems chiefly from the resistance of certain

groups or the policies and behavior of the city administration, there are certainly residents

who are reluctant to let the old spatial arrangements go. The streetcar is a focus of this

sort of conflict, since many of its lines were removed to make way for more car traffic.

But it symbolizes a certain Soviet orientation, and constituted a distinct "spatial practice."

It aroused several tussles in the news forum, and like references to other "spatial

practices" of Soviet times it was deployed as a reproach against opponents of the Baltic

Pearl. One opponent of the project signed himself as "minus sign," and a fellow blog

contributor exclaimed, "Minus sign! Demand streetcars instead of housing!!!"

(3/16/06)—that is, the contributor reproached "Minus sign" for promoting the mere rhetoric of Soviet spatial practice instead of demanding essential services. Missing the point of using the streetcar to refer to an outmoded socio-spatial paradigm, a "bystander" blog contributor linked it as spatial practice to the identity of Leningrad/Petersburg; he wrote, "Why is there such hatred for streetcars? After all, it's one of the symbols of our city. I've heard that there aren't any streetcars in China" (3/16/06). Finally, another blog contributor recognized that all of these spatial practices could be seen as game pieces in the shifts in city policy, where various sites and practices familiar to residents could be changed depending on the current needs: "soon after they remove all the [streetcar] tracks, they will announce the program for the 'Renaissance of the Petersburg Streetcar.' But that will be under a different City Governor..." (6/28/06).

The sense from this sort of exchange is that many supporters of the project see it as a catalyst for sweeping away a socio-spatial paradigm that stifles the city's development; they are thus willing to forgive some of the impreciseness and questionable legal nature of the transaction between the city administration and the Shanghai firm because it will lead to a new set of spaces of representation—aquaparks, pedestrian zones, and modern housing.

The most elaborated argument against this wave of change specifically mentioned the social policies of the Soviet period. (Note that my translation reflects the "free-verse" formatting of the original entry.)

> if you mention the Union then you should compare not the assortment of cheap
> goods in the stores but the percentage of
> child-orphans
> drug users

> homeless
> unemployed
> and the other poor
> and also remember the free medical care and the pensions that allowed our old
> people, after all, not to die of hunger
> also remember the young people who worked in the student brigades and in the
> Komsomol building factories hydroelectric stations and other state projects
> believing in something!
> and now our young people suck down beer in the entryways and beg for money
> for their next hit (3/26/06)

The following blog response from a supporter of the Baltic Pearl rejects the substance of

this collective vision and reveals the frustration of those who want a change:

> No one believed in anything at the end. No one had any illusions left. And
> besides, your Soviet envy tells you that it's better when everyone lives equally
> badly than when there are a few rich people and no one has to go to have a little
> talk with the KGB when they want to take a trip to Finland. This is not to mention
> the bread trains, that the whole country except for Moscow and Petersburg lived
> on ration cards, that the peasants were starving, that they didn't have passports
> until the 1960s (just like in serfdom), that people stood in line for hours for break
> and milk, and that they fought like animals over vodka. (3/26/06)

In fact, these two "voices" invoke different aspects of the Soviet socio-spatial

paradigm—on the one hand, clinics, student brigades, factories and hydroelectric plants;

on the other, lines for basic goods, the KGB's office, and strict border control. Caught in

the middle somewhere is the effort to preserve and resurrect Petersburg's historical

texture, although it tends to be invoked mostly by opponents of the Baltic Pearl:

> Living in the most beautiful city in the world, it seems strange to drag your kids to
> stroll in the Chinese quarter, it's even dangerous! Show them the historical center
> of Petersburg, the marvelous parks at Peterhof, Pushkin, Pavlovsk! (blog, 1/20/06)

At the least, the vigor of these competing socio-spatial paradigms signals a continuing

struggle.

Conclusion

Reconsidering xenophobia

While the amount and degree of local resistance to the Baltic Pearl project has many of the unpleasant features of xenophobia, it cannot be reduced to this alone. Tension over the transformation of existing socio-spatial paradigms underlies much of the negativity.

In a study of company towns built by Chinese corporations for their employees outside Jakarta, Indonesia, Leisch writes that the Chinese desire to live separately is respected by the surrounding residents. However, he adds,

> such spatial exclusion implies the concentration of power and wealth in a developing country. Hence, jealousy among the poor people living around such protected 'islands of wealth' cannot be avoided. It is only a question of time before jealousy turns into crime, clashes and violence. (2002, 107)

Leisch's comment suggests that we should not rush to dismiss all Russian protest as reactionary; in this context, due to precedents for Russian chauvinism, the "white" Russians fall into the category of the racial aggressor, and automatic sympathies go to the Chinese. In the case of Jakarta, the successful and dominant Chinese seem to be to blame. A careful consideration of the Petersburg situation suggests that the local officials also have a role to play (not unique to this context) as a complicit elite, neglecting certain legitimate complaints from their citizens in a bid to profit from a large-scale project. Leisch's study also supports the comment of Vilia Gel'bras that Chinese plans to construct Chinese-focused spaces in Russia might not succeed. Discussing plans for Huamin Park, a Chinese business center in a northeast neighborhood of Moscow near the Botanical Garden, Gel'bras remarked that "this group would do better not to concentrate

itself" (interview, 3/19/07). Gel′bras's sober comment recognizes the economic and social realities of contemporary Russia, where, as some fear, "it is only a question of time before jealousy turns into clashes and violence."

Leisch also notes that the Chinese population in a Jakarta company town is aware of the tension around them; "therefore, the company that is in charge of [the new town] Lippo Karawaci, as well as the one that runs Bumi Serpong Damai, donates gifts (such as free chicken) to the villagers" (2002, 105). In his conclusion, Leisch links this tension to the capacity of such projects to improve genuinely the spatial conditions and infrastructure around itself: "*As long as the population in general cannot profit from economic growth*, the Chinese enclaves in Jakarta will have to be protected by high walls and peace offerings—in kind, money or through the temporary use of land—to the impoverished neighboring villagers" (2002, 107; emphasis added). The notion that the "new town" projects create problems for themselves because they do not have enough impact on the spatial experience of surrounding areas recalls Harvey's call to reconsider "territorial" benefits in urban development, that is, "designed primarily to improve conditions of living or working within a particular jurisdiction" (2001, 353). His general critique of urban megaprojects was that they became "Place-specific projects … [which] have the habit of becoming such a focus of public and political attention that they divert concern and even resources from the broader problems that may beset the region or territory as a whole" (2001, 353).

My findings as discussed in this chapter reveal several entangled problems. First, Petersburg as a representative Russian city will face challenges in integrating new

arrivals into its existing socio-spatial paradigm. Second, the "existing" socio-spatial paradigm is currently under stress and is still undergoing radical transformation. Third, the lack of attention to broader spatial problems, and the dearth of projects with a "territorial" approach, solidifies the problems of social isolation both between classes of local residents (Russian and non-Russian) and newcomers such as Chinese.

The question that remains for this study is how to grasp more clearly what it is about the current socio-spatial paradigm that many residents value, and what urban projects might look like when based on a "political economy of territory" (Harvey 2001). The simultaneous question relating to Russian-Chinese relations is whether the two groups would really have such a contrasting experience of space as some negative complaints make it seem, and/or whether there is a basis in spatial practices and shared spaces of representation for expanding Petersburg's acceptance of urban change and making it a more productive experience for all its citizens.

Two final quotations set the stage for Chapter VI. Sergei, a builder in his early 40s, rejected the value of Soviet spatial practices and the then-reigning socio-spatial paradigm:

> First of all, what we had in Soviet Union… in fact people say that things were pretty good, right? I don't see anything good in what there was then.
>
> *MD: As in courtyards…*
>
> Yeah, courtyards, some housing that was always being built, the city streets were always clean. Nothing of the sort. That's all fairy tales. Fairy tales, because people were younger then… like in the jokes where the grass is always greener, the vodka was better, the sun shone more brightly…
>
> *MD: And the streetcars always came on time.*

Yeah, the streetcars were always running. Nonsense.

This interviewee's experience of public transportation and state-supplied housing had few

rosy moments. But in an echo of the promises of those times, a contributor to the news

forum wrote:

> There are a host of plans! All this is necessary. But all the same it would be great
> if the pipes didn't burst in our apartments, if there weren't constant breakdowns in
> the electrical grid, if the lights didn't go out in the evenings, if the garbage was
> removed regularly, the price of gas didn't go up constantly, and so on, and so on.
> It's not so great to wait half an hour for a bus, and it's scary to ride in fixed-route
> taxis. Maybe I'm wrong about this, but I would really like to drink clean water,
> for which I pay taxes in full measure. (10/25/05)

This contributor reposted his entry twice more, in November and December. While his

comments could be seen to reflect a post-Soviet passivity, I propose reading it also for its

emphasis on a failing city infrastructure and the need for "territoriality" in the sense that

Harvey suggests.

Chapter V has also suggested that the Baltic Pearl project takes a stand for a

modern set of "spaces of representation," while at the same time aiming to address

certain infrastructural problems, such as the provision of public transportation to the

southwest area of the city and widening the roads that serve Strelna and Peterhof beyond.

Given the struggle between Soviet and post-Soviet visions of the "good" in St.

Petersburg, how will individual Chinese fit in? The next chapter addresses how

individual Russians and Chinese see the functions of a city, and explores ways that they

might find more in common than they anticipate. Do Chinese imagine a set of separate

spaces for themselves? What influences their behavior? And what do Russians actually

value most about the city as it exists already?

An interesting and productive agenda for future research will be site observation and interviews conducted in an occupied section of the Baltic Pearl quarter; residents who live there will have self-selected as subjects unaffected or undeterred by their fellow-residents' anxieties over Chinese crime or immigration. Such research would be able to trace a truly new phenomenon in contemporary St. Petersburg culture, and would have the potential of problematizing assumptions about widespread Russian xenophobia.

Methodological qualifications

Although I attempted to gather material as widely as possible, I recognize an important limitation in my methods concerning subjects who were inaccessible to me as a function of my own cultural and socio-economic placement as a researcher in St. Petersburg society. While I spoke to a wide range of respondents, both in terms of age and profession, the overwhelming tenor of my results is mistrust of the Chinese project. Yet it seems most likely that the Baltic Pearl will develop successfully, and that local residents or real estate speculators who have no qualms about Chinese migration will purchase and occupy the promised housing. In fact, for 1100 apartments in the first series of buildings planned for completion by the end of 2009, the company has already received 1300 inquiries (*Nevastroyka*, 8/27/08). If, as projected, as many as 35 000 people eventually occupy the residential buildings in the quarter, this is still a small fraction of the city's population; if we suppose that apartments are usually occupied by two people, only 17 000 people out of Petersburg's population of 4 million need to overcome any anti-Chinese prejudices for the quarter to become fully occupied.

Resistance and mistrust may remain widespread without affecting the success of the project.

Xenophobia is very visible, however, in my findings and in material used for discussion in this chapter, regardless of the collection method. This raises a question about studying this aspect of the Baltic Pearl's development: why try to understand anti-Chinese statements in a more nuanced way? Is there any nuance?

The selection of data has strongly affected the aspect of the transformation that I am able to discuss here. None of the sixteen interviewees whose comments about the Baltic Pearl appear below expressed any interest in actually living in the quarter, even if they expressed support for the project. This is partly a reflection of the current difficulty described to me by colleagues in Petersburg: more affluent residents who have views more favorable to entrepreneurial urban projects have become far less accessible to researchers, and thus it is difficult to represent their views accurately. Although several of my interviewees are well educated and also well-traveled, none is wealthy, and most do not own a car. The survey of 350 residents of the Krasnoselskii district and the adjacent Kirovskii district was conducted on the street with willing passersby; thus, it could not incorporate the views of residents who travel by car and appear rarely on the street—a sociological division of growing importance in the city. Finally, the blog referred to in this chapter requires active participation; while there were several names contributing entries in support of the project and of investment in general, there is no evidence in their posts to suggest wealth or (except in one case) intention to live in the quarter. Thus, while my research encompassed a range of voices, they tended to be in what might be called a

"protest group." Yet the nature of their protest, I would argue, is not as simple as it is often portrayed. According to a local polling agency, this term refers chiefly to senior citizens (pensioners) who generally refuse to support new ideas or projects. Data from my research suggest that suspicion of the Chinese project in particular is not merely related to rejection of everything new, but is strongly related with anxiety about new urban development plans in general. Further, while xenophobia is a discernible and disturbing trend, its spatial components and implications described by residents who are not merely "knee-jerk racists" reveal important challenges in developing a truly multi-ethnic city, and also suggest the need for researchers to pay more attention to overlapping concepts of space and spatial practices in areas where conflicts arise.

Overall, allowing for the larger sociological limitation of my data (that is, not capturing what maybe a small but "enlightened" subpopulation), I am still confident in the combination of methods I used to extract themes and suggest conclusions. Persistent themes emerged among the 350 survey respondents, 16 interviewees, and blog posts. This allows me to propose a set of 'representations of space' and 'spatial practices,' including a set of spatial references, that are important in the ongoing transformation.

The methodological assumption that study of responses to the Chinese quarter should be set in a context of wider concerns about urban development in general came from the breadth of topics considered during preliminary research in spring 2004. Newspaper articles discussed a wide range of controversial urban issues, including definition of the city's historical zone and predatory construction practices. Material gathered on a preliminary research trip in August 2005 revealed clearly that, while the

Baltic Pearl was still an important phenomenon, it was quickly being supplanted as the most controversial item on a list of resident grievances. Research done during the primary fieldwork trip, from August to December 2006, confirmed this impression; in fact, the most notorious public event of late 2006 was the announcement on December 1 of a design project for a new skyscraper near the city center. The Baltic Pearl remains an extremely important element in St. Petersburg's transformation, but the very fact that the main focus of resident ire has shifted reveals that not it alone has provoked the degree of protest demonstrated in the city over the past three years. Major street demonstrations throughout 2007 focused around the "Gazprom tower," and the Baltic Pearl was not even mentioned during a six-hour "marathon" TV program on June 25, 2008, that addressed problems with urban development. Additionally, I observed demonstrations and conducted interviews with activists in three different districts around the city where residents are attempting to protest aspects of large urban infrastructure projects. While a full discussion of these activists' work is beyond the scope of this dissertation, a certain commonality of socio-spatial paradigm observed between their formulations and those of residents concerned with the Baltic Pearl gives me additional confidence in my hypothesis that protest against the Baltic Pearl does not rest on xenophobia alone. While the reasons for protest may remain unsubstantial in the minds of outside observers (and certainly in the minds of some city officials and residents), consideration of them helps to reveal a complex texture of socio-spatial orientation in the city.

In some ways, the ignorance about China and Chinese investment practices which unleashed xenophobic responses also heightened the degree of response in general; the

high responses also tended to contain evidence of other types of anxiety, which residents would perhaps have had trouble voicing. And even as residents and protesters have moved away from discussing it, I believe that discussion of the Baltic Pearl can still teach us a great deal about why protest is happening and the genuine problems or challenges that remain before the city authorities. These include not only management of increasing migration, but also the process of administering land use, the assumed structure of urban space, and the promotion of new "spaces of representation" alongside existing ones that focus the "spatial practices" of a large number of residents.

CHAPTER VI

ADOPTING THE SPATIAL NARRATIVES OF ST. PETERSBURG

In this chapter I want to ask first how and whether Chinese arrivals in St. Petersburg adopt elements of the local socio-spatial paradigm—partly because local residents have tended to identify certain social values with aspects of the built environment, but also because some city residents have found the invocation of particular paradigms to be a powerful political resource. In that sense, one question in this chapter is whether, by joining in successful aspects of that local paradigm, arriving Chinese can overcome Russians' xenophobia against them and simultaneously support the political struggle against dispossession by coming to share the assumptions that permit that struggle.

In prior chapters, the two questions about dispossession and xenophobia that have been driving my analysis of research data had to do chiefly with the local socio-spatial paradigm. That is, I have asked how local residents are being dispossessed and how local spatial conditions might generate xenophobic prejudices. Chinese interviewees enter in the role of additional commentators on the transformation of the city.

Observers of urban ethnic encounters have suggested that study of how migrants modify their host landscape/society must accompany study of them as passive objects of local conditions, usually as victims of local attitudes to them (Ruble 2005; Colombijn and Erdentug 2002). This rightly recognizes the transformative presence of migrants' spatial

practices and their conceptions of space, which ultimate in a new landscape for all residents. The first steps in this process occur as migrants begin to use the host city's spaces according to their usual practices and experience the effect of the host city's arrangement on these practices, as Colombijn and Erdentug suggest when they state that

> space has an impact on how people from different ethnic groups (besides being of a certain class, age and gender) lead their lives. Conversely, since the members of the ethnic groups have, by definition, a different cultural background and develop dissimilar economic activities, they tend to utilize the urban environment in diverse ways, having a different impact on the transformation of urban space. (2002, 3)

That is, in this case, Chinese migrants to the city will bring spatial practices from their home locations in China, and will have to react to the impact on them of St. Petersburg's space. Thus, when politicians talk of Sino-Russian state-to-state economic and policy cooperation and local nationalists proclaim that Chinese and Russians cannot live together, an important site to search for evidence of long-term cooperation is at the level of the street, where Chinese explore Russian space and decide whether it "works" for them.

After describing the methods used to solicit information from interviewees, I briefly discuss the current state of Chinese migration to Petersburg and general public perception of them. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to an exploration of the ways in which a spatial approach to analyzing the collected data introduces new categories for future analysis of interaction between existing residents and newcomers.

Methods

In seeking research methods that would give me material to use in answering questions about changes in Russian socio-cultural structures, I wanted to find empirical

approaches that also would allow for observation of "spatial practice" in varying ways, with the assumption that narratives of movement through space would provide the basic structuring question for "ordinary" interviews. ("Expert" interviews also aimed to elicit commentary about the physical environment, which was assumed to provide important spatial constraints on movement and meaning-creation.) The methods practiced by the authors I discuss below inspired and/or shaped my methods.

The basis of Lynch's interview design (1960) was the goal of eliciting interviewees' overall conception of cities. Lynch and his research team asked a series of questions about the physical layout of Los Angeles and Boston, asking respondents to describe aloud how they would move around the cities. After constructing amalgamated "cognitive maps" of each city, Lynch used the five urban elements (path, node, edge, landmark, district) to analyze the city's effectiveness. This specific approach suggested that a city could be understood to have a common 'vocabulary' of the five elements—that is, that all city residents could be expected to recognize the major thoroughfares and landmarks. Lynch (as stated above) was aiming to produce a composite picture, so he did not record deviations from this composite or analyze individual trajectories, as did Pred. The later work of Orleans (1973), building on Lynch, created composites of "mental maps" based on the responses from several neighborhoods in Los Angeles.

I did not attempt to create any composites, since I was most interested in individual narratives against the backdrop of a physical environment assumed as common. In fact, I was interested precisely in how different narratives used the same spaces: would interviewees' spatial practices converge around the same spaces of

representation? While the paths of some might never cross, I hypothesized that, on the whole, spaces and paths might not be as spatially exclusive as they were conceptually exclusive.

To a certain extent, I also assumed that I already possessed a large amount of information about the common "vocabulary" of Petersburg; I allowed additional basic information to emerge from interviews (especially comments about the city's historical development and past understandings of spatial divisions in the city), but I considered that I would usually be able to discern departures from the standard vocabulary as significant points in my data. I always had in mind the "dominant" forms of sociospatial paradigm that I felt I perceived among Russians, partly because many of the Russians among my interviewees explicitly saw this paradigm as the thing that they most want to have communicated to newcomers.

Methodologically, however, I posited an equivalence between the claims made on city expanses by Chinese interviewees and Russian interviewees. That is, while I accepted the existence of a recognized socio-spatial paradigm, I did not assume that this invalidated any comments that fell outside that paradigm. These in fact formed important critiques of the standard paradigm, and I consider some of them in the conclusion to this chapter. However, I did assume that a certain fund of spatial vocabulary underpins most communication about space in St. Petersburg.

Contention over the Spatial Components of the City

Hannerz (1993) suggested that a truly "world" city should have the capacity to incorporate newcomers into its expanses, thereby increasing its social and cultural

capital; Ruble (2005) similarly has suggested that "diversity capital" is created by accepting new arrivals. As noted in Chapter II, Soviet-era Leningrad was seen as a "good" city in its capacity to promote attachment to itself as a special place; migration "waves" throughout the twentieth century were absorbed into the population and learned the local lore. Yet new economic and political conditions have changed the types of migration streams and the policy environment, and new contention over the nature of St. Petersburg as a city has resulted. As illustrated in previous chapters, analysis of negotiations over the Baltic Pearl brings into relief arguments about the nature of the city—about the spaces and qualities that a city must have in order to accommodate its residents. Interviewee Varya (quoted extensively in Chapter V) had thought carefully about why Russia was not reacting well to migrants, and how Petersburg had the capacity to aid in their adaptation because of its singular ability to engender loyalty:

> The impression is being created that, you see, we have this very special Russian culture, that stands alone. You understand, in a certain sense, everything happening now [i.e. attacks on foreigners] derives from this sense that we are special...
> [but] in principle these new arrivals who enter the Petersburg *megapolis*, they should certainly accept the city's culture, the spirit of the city, there should be certain agencies, organizations, that would help a person more easily and quickly, not so painfully, blend into this general culture. (10/28/06)

What would it mean for new arrivals to "accept the city's culture, the spirit of the city"? This is the topic of the first section of this chapter. In order to understand how the city "digests" newcomers, it is important first to understand how existing residents see the city as put together (or as falling apart). The analytical lens of this project revealed the spaces that underpin this understanding.

Some interviewees suggested that each person has a different idea of what form a city should take, based on his or her own desires and lifestyle needs; this supports the argument that residents have absolutely disparate attitudes that cannot be agglomerated into a consensus, and thus cannot be efficiently considered in deciding on city development. This is the evident position of Shuvalov, a journalist who responded to the question, "What is a city for its residents?"

> For a person who came here to make money, the city is the factory which gets built, and he has a place to work. For an old woman in the Petrograd district, the city is her pocket park. (10/24/06)

His comment suggests that the city is a set of prioritized nodes instead of a fabric of sociability, with multiple nodes and multiple paths that link them together, all mattering to the user. Shuvalov emphasized the fundamental self-centeredness of individuals, suggesting (not without reason) that taking into account the needs of residents framed this way was too great a challenge for city authorities.

On the other hand, "ordinary" interviewee Anna stated her belief that the quality of individuals' lives *should* command the authorities' attention, because in fact it is of that quality that the overall quality of city life is constituted: "Everything is always about the common man, each concrete person, how he lives. … in general everything is always made up of individual people" (3/23/07). Other comments reinforced the idea that the city should be a benevolent environment in which to live one's life, satisfying the first stated goal of the Genplan; they demonstrate that many residents share the conviction that the city should have spaces designed to facilitate the daily social and physical needs of its

residents—that is, spaces that "represent" the valuation of all individuals regardless of

socioeconomic standing.

Parks were one very common space mentioned. Vera suggested that the best use

of some undeveloped land in her neighborhood would be a park for the use of local

residents. (Unbeknownst to her, the land abuts the Baltic Pearl and the city has plans to

develop its own subdistrict on the site.)

> Our Lenin Avenue ends at the back side of this park. And there are several
> undeveloped hectares there… we went walking there, and it turns out to be so
> wonderful. Just a wild overgrown treed area… They could make it into a beautiful
> park [like in Finland]. …It would be a wonderful place for recreation, with boats
> for children. Something like that. (12/9/06)

Vera's instinct that the expanse should be used for recreational space, particularly for

children, reflects other interviewees' sense that their social and emotional lives should be

facilitated by urban planning. This directly connects to transportation, a second common

type of space mentioned. Comparing the relative value of large projects to those that

supported the ability of ordinary citizens to move freely around the city, Liudmila

asserted,

> I agree, let them build an amusement park, but there need to be transportation
> routes for residents of the city. So that we can go to the city center, go to the
> museum, visit friends, socialize with each other, talk on the telephone… Make
> telephones available! In fact [these things] are all of first-order importance. And
> transportation above all. (12/5/06)

The apparent neglect of the lives of ordinary citizens came up in a conversation about the

possibility of increasing financial polarization in the city with Ivan, a 25-year-old graphic

designer. His extended comment summarizes the sense that the city should have a

sociable quality for all its residents.

In fact it has begun to irritate me that food costs so much in the city. That is, a person who earns, say, 10 000 rubles, he simply can't afford to spend 300 rubles for one meal in the city. To spend, I don't know, 250 rubles a day, that kind of daily thing. It's needs, right? It's the same as if they charged not 10 rubles for using a public toilet, but 120. That is, you don't have anywhere to go, you know, and you have to do this, but [it's as if they say] Figure it out, do what you want. … This is all rather confusing. It's annoying of course, because people want to eat. And this is a city where people live, and they have needs, and they are doing all that they can so that they can live well. But then it turns out that you are in a city which is not adapted to your needs at all. A kind of aggressive environment which more or less, well, pushes you out. And it's like you have to work very very hard, and it's not a city where people live, but a huge factory in which either you're a worker or you'd better get out. (9/17/06)

In effect Ivan feels dispossessed by the transformation of space; his comments suggest—without quite having the terms to explain—that he believes a city should maintain certain types of public spaces for its residents. His sense of there being no place for him, of being pushed out of a certain expanse, happens precisely because of the shift in the types of spaces that represent his views, permit his spatial practices, and "accept" him.

Another interviewee specified the lack of "territorial" syntax in the proposed projects, confirming Harvey's insights at an everyday scale; Rita recognized that a disproportionate focus on the prestigious site of New Holland might affect her own ability to move around the city.

From the point of view of an inhabitant… I'm not against the city developing. I just know how it will develop. That they will build New Holland. But no one will consider that they need new access roads. There will be constant traffic jams. Constant. That's what I'm against. (10/21/06)

The tendency of many residents to describe problems with the city's transformation in terms of dislocations in the infrastructure and built environment prompted closer attention to the anxiety felt by residents about these changes. Given the degree of struggle over the transformation as embodied in changing spaces, new arrivals—in this case

quickly? As the main part of the chapter shows, certain kinds of skilled adaptation already take place, and may have implications for a more deliberate program.

Evidence for meetings in space between Russians and Chinese

To date, migration of Chinese to Petersburg has not been sizable. The majority of Chinese in the city have been students (5-6000 out of an estimated 8000). The sites where Russians might meet Chinese are tightly related to presence of students as well as to the activity of traders and sellers.

Universities and institutes constitute, of course, an unusual case in overlap between Russian and Chinese. Interviewees involved in tertiary education all stated that they had seen many Chinese (participant observation also confirmed this). It might be thought that this would be an important arena for the fostering of greater understanding and possible knowledge of local customs. However, a focus group with a group of journalism grad students and an interview with a young Chinese student at a different institute suggested difficulties (Dixon, Under Review): the tendency of Chinese students to remain together due to cultural preference and language barriers prevented the mixing one might anticipate in student life. This seems partly due to the increased numbers of Chinese students arriving, since they can rely on each other for support (Yifang, interview, 10/22/06); it differs from the experience of older Chinese who arrived as students at the end of the Soviet period, in the late 1980s or early 1990s (Wang, interview, 10/10/06; Chunping, interview, 10/28/06). It also might be due to a changed ethos in the dormitories, where the Soviet ideology of friendship among nations, even

with notable difficulties, once made contact between "peoples" more popular (Gelbras, interview, 3/19/07; participant observation, 1990, 1991-1992).

A survey of 350 people conducted in December 2006 included a question designed to gauge the degree of contact between Russians and Chinese in four types of spaces that were assumed to be common: on the streets and in public transportation, in Chinese restaurants, at goods or flea markets, and on construction sites. (Three of these sites, as it turns out, assume low-wage labor to a certain degree.) As can be seen in Table 6.1, the highest percentages for claims to see Chinese "sometimes" or "constantly" occurred for "on the streets and in public transportation" and "at flea markets," with 60% of the respondents claiming to see Chinese moving around the city and 45% claiming to see them involved in trade. The numbers for Chinese restaurants and construction sites are notable because the common assumption that Chinese are present there contradicts the low numbers. In the case of restaurants, the higher percentage claiming never to have seen Chinese in Chinese restaurants (about 71%) could reflect two things: the low number of local Russians attending restaurants of any kind (e.g. Liudmila, by her own assertion) and the tendency of Chinese restaurants to have Russian waitstaff.

Table 6.1
In what circumstances do you meet with Chinese people?

	constantly	sometimes	a few times	never	can't remember	no/ no answer
on the streets/in buses	**22.9**	37.4	11.5	19.7	7.6	0.9
in Chinese restaurants	8.0	10.3	10.3	53.1	17.7	0.6
at flea markets	**27.1**	18.2	6.8	39.1	8.2	0.6
on construction sites	5.0	2.4	4.4	69.7	17.9	0.6

Source: Survey, December 2006.

Additional information came from write-in responses to this survey question. Twenty-three respondents reported seeing Chinese at the cinema (1), at work (17), or at school (5). These entries demonstrate the weakness of survey assumptions but also a possible increase in white-collar migration, as has been suggested by Gelbras (2004); i.e. Chinese will not necessarily come to fill the low-wage jobs that the Russian economy cannot staff, but will compete with white-collar Russians.

Of those claiming to see Chinese at work, the reported jobs were as follows.

Table 6.2
Jobs reporting contact with Chinese in St. Petersburg.
Employment category Frequency

Retired	3
Worker (including trade)	2
Specialist (teacher/doctor/secretary)	4
Engineer/constructor	3
Manager	1
Technical worker	1
Boat captain	2

Source: Survey, December 2006.

On the whole, the professions of trader, construction laborer, or restaurant waitstaff might all account for the Chinese seen by these Russians "at work." It is unclear from the nature of the survey question whether the respondents met with Chinese at work in the role of colleagues or of clients and subordinates; still, the list of employment categories could suggest that Chinese are present in more spheres of urban life than goods trading or restaurants.

Evidence for spatial concentrations of Chinese

While there is no reported enclave of Chinese in St. Petersburg that resembles anything like a Chinatown (cp. Anderson 1991), there are rumors of emerging concentrations. A news forum entry suggests looking for Chinese at Apraksin Yard and the Trinity Church Market (*Troitsky Rynok*) (Entry); these are well-known sites for trade in cheap goods.

Information about Chinese restaurants in St. Petersburg, drawn from an online Yellow Pages site, also reveals some clustering (see Map 6.1). The Admiralteiskii District in particular seems to have a high number of Chinese restaurants; this was confirmed by interviewees living in that area (Pavel, interview, 11/5/06; Svetlana, interview, 3/24/07). However, while this particular clustering may reflect a correlative concentration of Chinese residences (one interviewee-restaurateur indeed lived in this district within several blocks of two of his restaurants), other factors may condition the high number of establishments. The area of this district immediately north and south of Sadovaia Street (where the restaurants cluster) is still less expensive than comparable space around Nevsky Avenue; it hosts a high number of "next-door shops" and small inexpensive retail stores. City-driven development in the area of Apraksin Yard has already prompted signs of gentrification, however, and the effect on Chinese restaurants must be monitored (Dixon, Under Review).

Interviewee Summary

Display of basic data on residential location and patterns of mobility around the city do not reveal any stark differences between Russian and Chinese respondents.
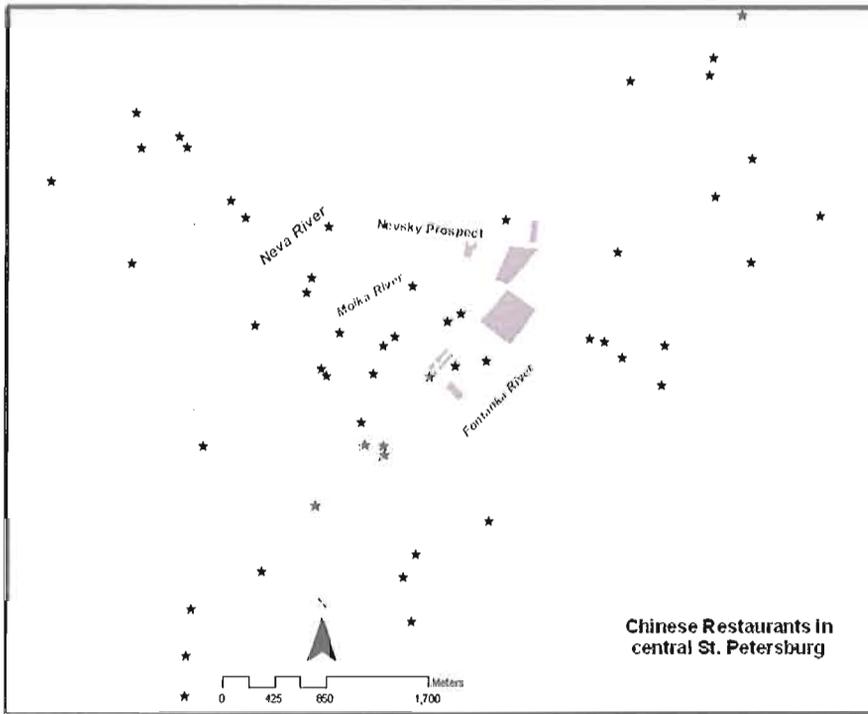
Map 6.1a. Chinese restaurants in central St. Petersburg, depicted by stars.
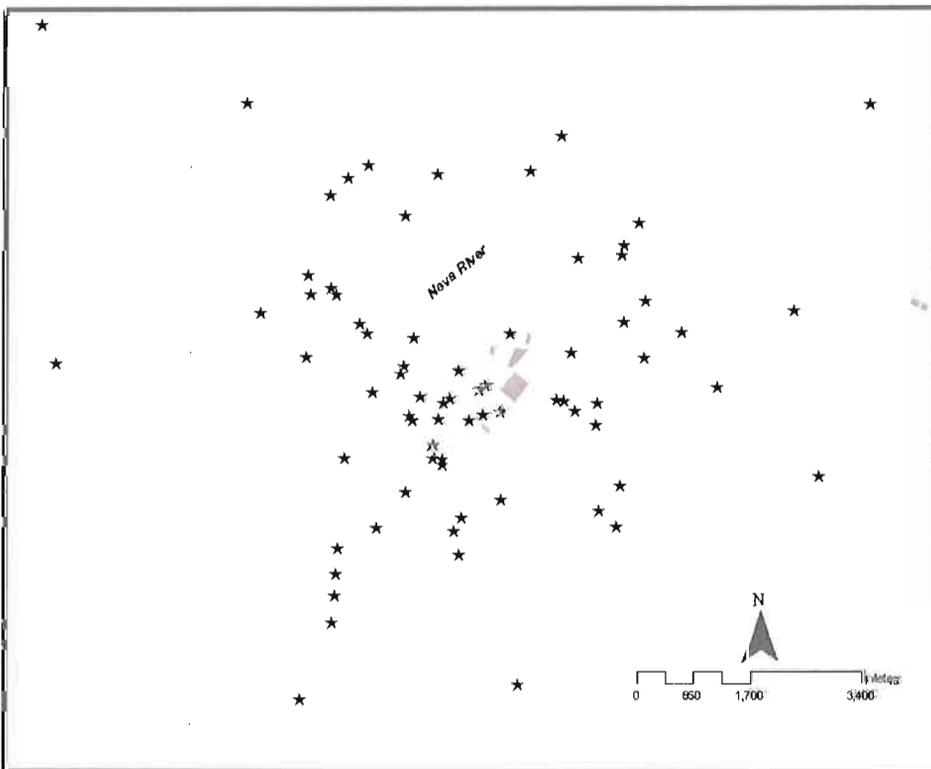
Map 6.1b. Clustering of restaurants at south center in Admiralteiskii District.

Location of Chinese in St. Petersburg

*	Chinese Interviewees

Chinese Students

Population

∘	1
○	2
○	3 - 4
○	5
○	6 - 11
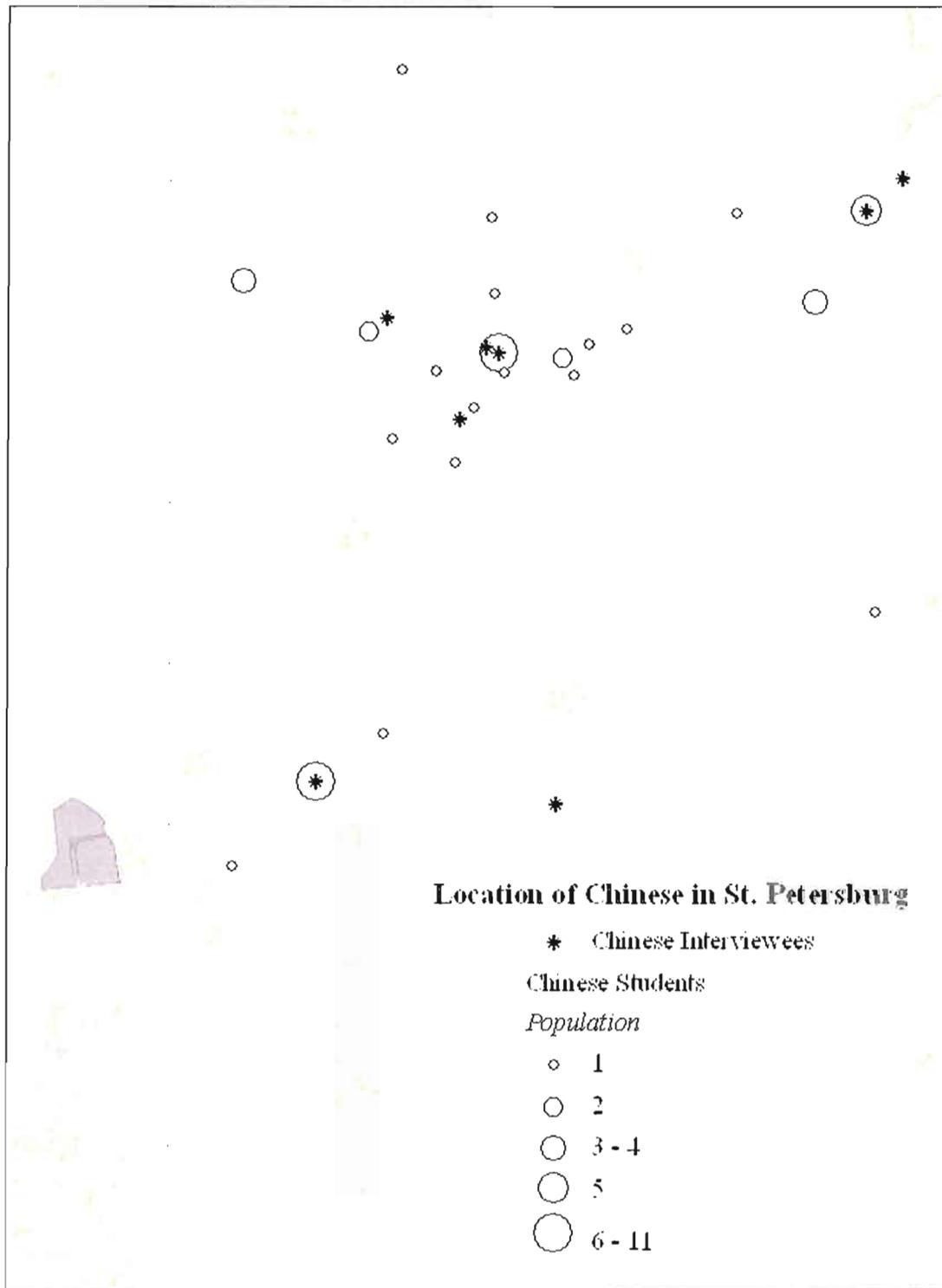
Map 6.2. Concentration of Chinese focus group students in St. Petersburg.
Compared with location of individual Chinese interviewees.
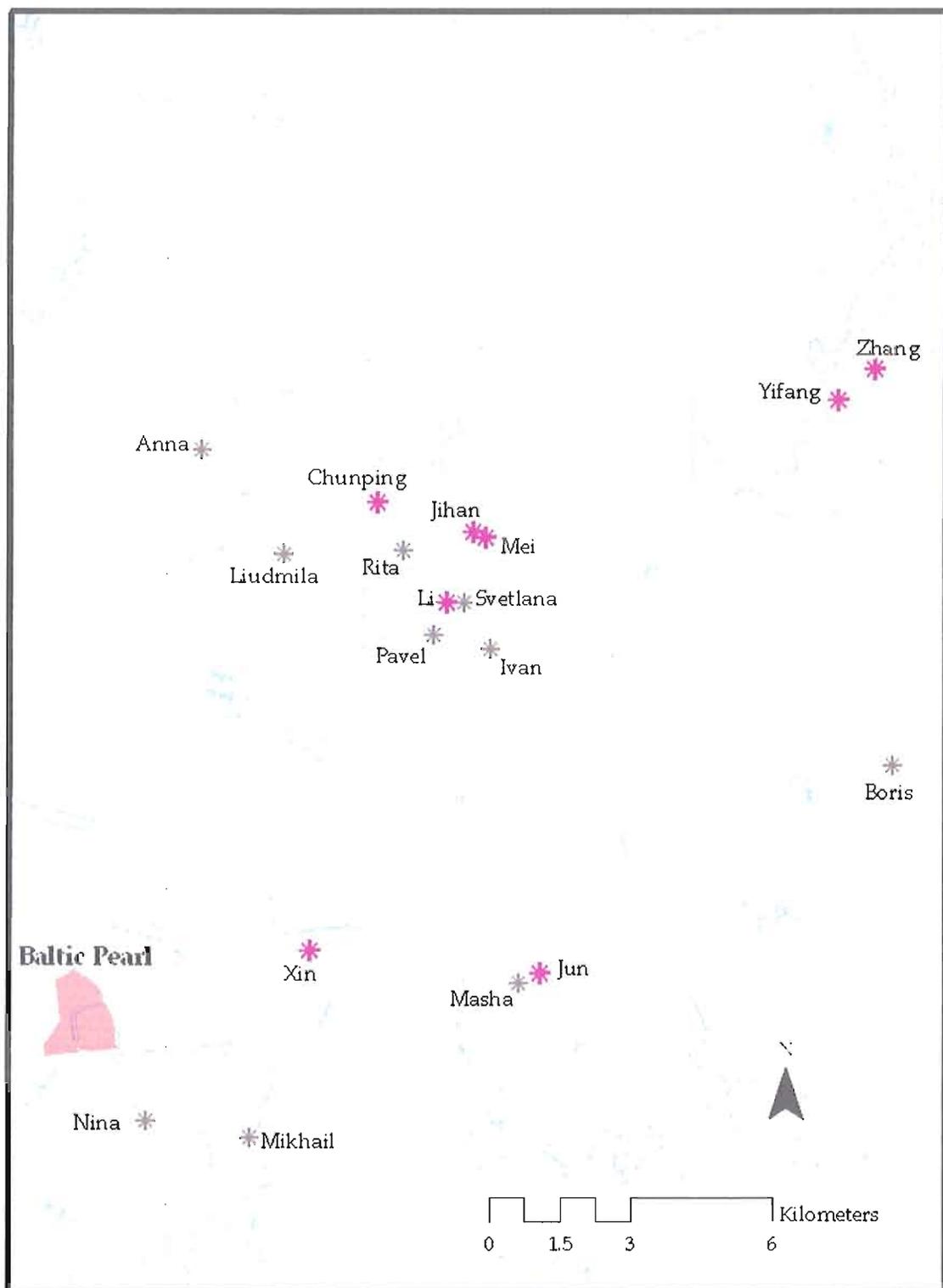
Map 6.3. Location of Chinese and Russian interviewee residences.

Routes

Mobility Mode

- foot
- foot + metro
- public transport
- public transport + metro
- car
- marshrutka
- bicycle

Chunping

Jihan

Mei

Li

Zhang

Yifang

Baltic Pearl

Xin

Jun

Anna

Liudmila

Rita

Svetlana

Pavel

Ivan

Boris

Baltic Pearl

Masha

Nina

Mikhail

Kilometers
0 1.25 2.5 5

Kilometers
0 1.25 2.5 5
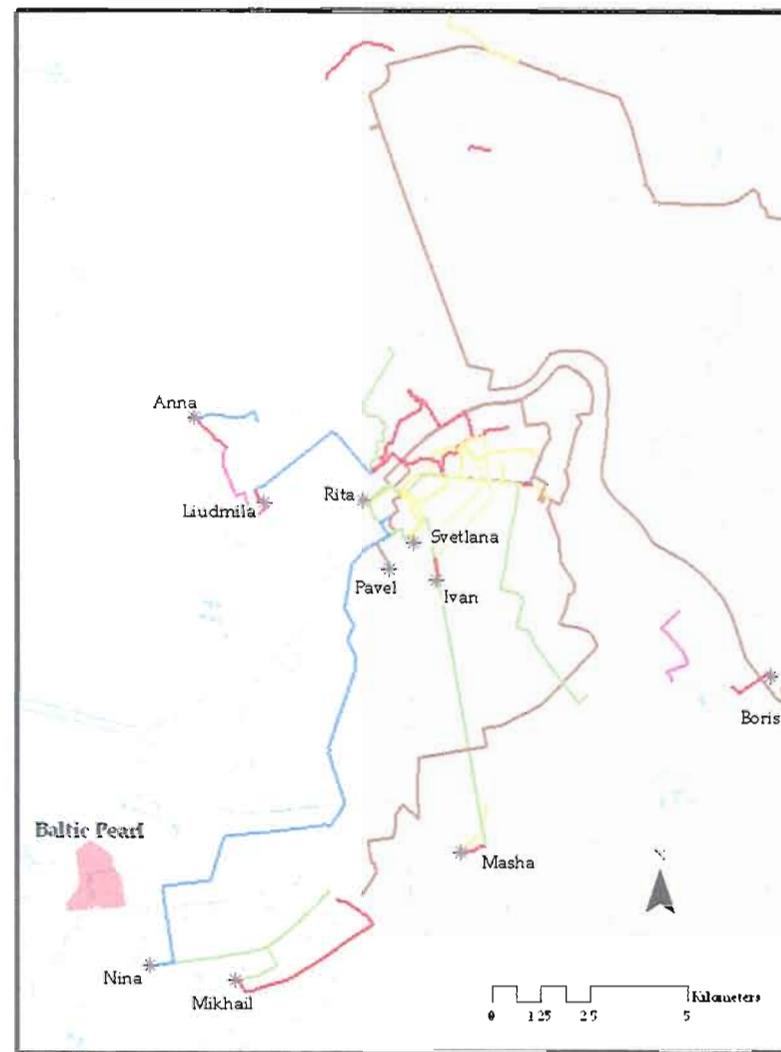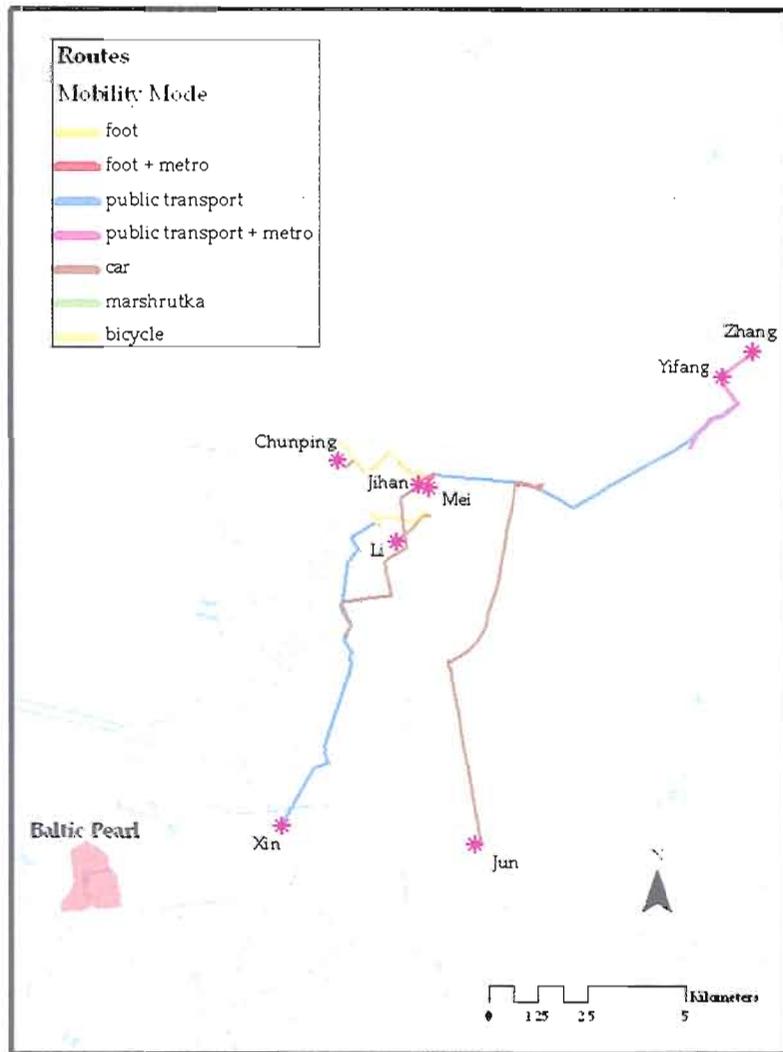
Map 6.4. Chinese routes categorized by mode of mobility. **Map 6.5. Russian routes cateogorized by mode of mobility.**

Given that the majority of the current Chinese population in St. Petersburg is made up of students, it is not surprising to find that there are large numbers of them at locations where large institutional dormitories are located. Interview data suggested the probability of large numbers of young Chinese living in a dorm on Korablestroitelei Street allotted for students of the History, Journalism and Philological Departments and also near Yusupov Park on Sadovaia Street. Of 52 students surveyed at the GUAP, about one-fifth lived in a dorm on Marshal Zhukov prospect, southwest of the city center (see Map 6.2); another dormitory is located to the northwest on Peredovikov Street. Kazanskaia Street (corresponding to the large circle in the central city) seems to have a high number of apartments willing to rent to Chinese students; this was confirmed by evidence from an interviewee. The high number of students in the GUAP survey reporting disparate places of residence (as well as interview data) tends to confirm the generally accepted claim that Chinese residents in Petersburg have not concentrated into one area of the city, and also that it is possible for Chinese to rent in many city locations.

A map of residences for Chinese interviewees for this study shows some overlap with the two dormitories and Kazanskaia Street; three interviewed students live in precisely those places (Map 6.2 and Map 6.3). The eight Chinese interviewees with clearly mappable routes divided into 4 residents of the city center (including one student); the remaining four lived at some distance from the center (including three students). The residences of adult professionals were not clustered. A comment from a Baltic Pearl official interviewed during research indicated that highly-placed white-collar Chinese workers at the company also lived in various locations, although other evidence suggests

Table 6.3. Summary of Chinese interviewees' opinion about Baltic Pearl.

Name	Age	Car?	Ignorant	Poor promotion by city	Just investment	Too distant
Mei	20		•			
Chaolin	20		•			
Yifang	22		•			
Xin	23					•
Jue	22		•			
Zhang	24			•		
Chunping	41	•		•	•	
Jihan	45	•			•	•
Jun	38			•	•	•
Wang	50	•		•	•	

Table 6.4. Summary of Russian interviewees' opinion about Baltic Pearl.

Name	Age	Car?	Income	Suspicious	For
Liudmila	70		low	•	
Mikhail	23		low	•	
Ivan	25		low	•	
Masha	36		low	•	
Anna	36		low	•	
Boris	25	•	medium		•
Rita	38	•	medium	•	
Nina	26		medium		•
Liza	39	•	medium	•	
Pavel	40	•	high		•
Svetlana	38		high	•	

Source: Interviews, 2006-2007.

that construction laborers and lower clerical staff have been concentrated in worker dormitories.

The ten Russian interviewees whose routes were used for this analysis also lived in a scattered distribution; four lived at some distance to the south of the city center, four

lived in the central districts, and two lived in Soviet-era buildings on the west side of

Vasilievsky Island (Map 6.3). Notably, none of the Chinese professionals lived as far

from the center as some of the Russian interviewees, even if they had cars; they seem to

uniformly prefer the historical areas of the city. Just as Russian students do, however,

Chinese students often have long journeys to their institutes via public transportation; the

trajectories of Chinese professionals from home to work also sometimes cover long

distances, just as with their Russian counterparts. Further, as shown on Map 6.4 and Map

6.5, there is a fairly even spread of transportation use between the two groups, with use of

walking, cars, metro, and public transportation all represented. (For car ownership, see

Tables 6.3 and 6.4.)

Analysis of Adaptation through Spaces of Representation and Spatial Practices

Bourdieu and Lefebvre advance an analysis of power relations, but the terms they

employed, such as "habitus" and "spatial practice" also suggest criteria for evaluating

successful 'public' space: that is, an expanse with a set of understood practices which all

participants follow more or less, and which newcomers can observe and follow with more

or less accuracy. Such practices may allow initial acceptance of a stranger, and thus

promote low-density interaction which later can lead to more dense connections. A good

example of this sort of practice is trade: thus, markets have traditionally been places

where interaction between starkly different people can take place (see e.g. Ruble 2005

about the trade-based diversity in New Amsterdam/New York). A place where people

can buy or sell offers a certain kind of universal acceptance. Another rough example is

the space of transportation routes such as busstops, metro stations, and so on. Patterns of

forming lines, passing money to the conductor or driver, and requesting exit tend to be fairly well established and can be understood from relatively brief observation.

Resentment can grow in situations where a newcomer ignores the established practices (often understood as common courtesy) or behaves in a way that contradicts what is expected. Some have pointed out that a public-private divide can be seen operating here; if "newcomers" or even "locals" perform behaviors in a "public" space that are understood by others as 'private' acts, they may be understood as transgressors at some level (Watson 2006). We can see this same analytical structure in Tim Cresswell's template "in place/out of place" (1996). Hypothetically, the more that a "stranger" can adopt the local practices in a common expanse of this type, the more that that stranger can pass as a local.

Beyond the basic acts of trade and travel, do new residents learn to take on the set of historical meanings and fields of significance that have been established in a place? That is, to put it in words used by Relph, does the "field of their concern" extend in any meaningful sense to their new location? This question might be posed to any migrant to a new place; in the case of St. Petersburg, Russian migrants, including politicians, may or may not be seen as adopting this "field of concern." Speaking of Valentina Matvienko, Rita explained the significance of the fact that the City Governor came originally from a village in Ukraine and not from Petersburg.

> Well, people who grew up here, who know it and love it... I can't say that [Matvienko] just doesn't love this city. But she doesn't know it. She gets driven around. ...It's one thing when a person was born in Petersburg, he appreciates this. Or for example, many people who came and settled here, the city appeals to them, they appreciate it and love it. They absorb this, they too want to preserve it. And they know what does and doesn't need to be preserved. For example they

> went and demolished the Palace of Culture Named for the Fifth Five-Year Plan. They destroyed this Palace of Culture on the site where they plan to build the second stage for the Mariinsky [Theater]. But a Leningrader would never have demolished this center, because it represents the memory of many people... who lived through the Blockade [of Leningrad, 1939-1944]. (10/21/06)

Clearly, according to Rita, even Russians who are not locals do not always "get it." Two important ways of considering Petersburg as space emerge from her comments. Rita mentions the Palace of Culture, which "represents the memory of many people"—that is, represents a certain part of the "spirit of Petersburg." A first question for newcomers is whether they are able to appreciate the city's meaningful spaces and "know what needs to be preserved." Rita also mentions that Matvienko "gets driven around"—effectively implying that she has no way to develop immediacy in her contact with the city; driving will not accomplish an intimate acquaintance with it. A second question, then, is how newcomers make contact with a city as they move through it—how their mode and scope of travel affects their acquaintance with it.

Analysis of spatial practices and spaces of representation in this sense force closer attention to the commensurability of cultural assumptions. Many residents assumed that the city could only sustain itself culturally in the long term if it could succeed in conveying its most significant spatial assumptions to new arrivals. In the context of discussing immigrants—both students from other parts of the former Soviet Union as well as workers from China—two teacher interviewees asserted the power of Petersburg to shape attitudes, as long as there was a sufficient degree of exposure to the local culture.

> There is something that I observe at the level of my students. People who live here a sufficient length of time are truly not hung up on material interests. The city changes them completely. It seems to me that representatives of various [native] peoples don't change the city, that is it's not they who change the city

with their colorful enclaves, but the city that changes them, at least for now. (Masha, 11/6/06)

Of course to learn the social and cultural particularities [of the city]—even with a pragmatic goal, all the same, for successful business, you have to learn these things. And then people catch the infection of the city. [But] people who go no further than their workrooms and kitchens, only work, earn money and send it back to China, then work, earn money and send it to China… that sort of thing [isn't good]. (Anna, 11/6/06)

Interviews indicated two ways that Chinese caught this "infection" and demonstrated similarities to Russians in their experience of the city. First, they came to share a certain vocabulary of spaces of representation: they developed emotional attachments to certain places in the city and could articulate goals for historical preservation. Second, they shared use of common transportation routes with Russian residents and expressed similar opinions about them.

Spaces of representation for the Petersburg spirit

The idea that the Petersburg spirit can win over new arrivals in the city is closely linked to ideas about effective urban space. Areas dominated by late-Soviet construction do not have this power. Varya expressed the conviction that the St. Petersburg built environment has the potential to help people develop morally.

In Russia we have this concept of an icon that has absorbed the prayers of many people (*namolennaia ikona*). A prayed-over icon. That is, an icon which is ancient, but not only ancient—maybe from the twelfth century. [The idea is that] millions of eyes have looked at it. From the twelfth century, people have entrusted their most sacred prayers to this icon, it is truly prayed-over, it has an internal light, it already nurtures you in return. You see, it's the same thing in an old city. An old city nurtures you. So people can come here, they can stroll, think, rest their souls and so on. (10/28/06)

Varya suggested at once that Chinese could appreciate the spirit of the city and that Russians' attitude to newcomers could improve were they all to live in spaces that nourished them.

Feeling mystical attachment: susceptibility to Petersburg space

Masha, not a native Petersburger, recounted that she was struck by the dilapidated appearance of the city when she first arrived in the mid-1990s; she was disappointed with the contrast between the Petersburg she saw in glossy photo books and the place where she how lived. However, with time, her impression changed.

> When a more profound acquaintance with the city came about, with its culture, its people, certain monuments, museums, that [dilapidated] picture faded into the background. I understood that life would never be as interesting anywhere else as it was here. Here there were huge intellectual and spiritual opportunities, and the outward neglect faded. (10/23/06)

Certainly this growing sense of intellectual and spiritual opportunities was strongly connected to the historical center of the city; while Masha lives far south of the city center in a *khrushchevka* (which she likes), her frequent trips to her institute's small campus on the Moika Canal made her feel connected to the city's cultural history.

> I had classes sometimes on the Moika... and the windows faced the Yusupov Palace, and when I was bored—when the students hadn't prepared, or something was happening in the classroom—I looked out the window and imagined completely different things... When I travel from home to the center, I sense that I really live in St. Petersburg.

The sense of connection results partly from the fact that this fantastic landscape steeped in history is also (at least sometimes) the landscape of the everyday, allowing Masha to inhabit the space for work and then to feel that "the everydayness is replaced by a fairy tale, by an expanse of escape and esthetic enjoyment."

Some Chinese interviewees had in fact adopted similar attachments and described these in response to a question about their favorite places in the city. Zhang, 25 years old, is an artist whose choice of St. Petersburg was inspired by studies in China of European art. He attends classes and works as a tour guide. Particular places that he liked to visit were St. Isaac's Square, between the cathedral and the city legislature building, and the Griboedov Canal:

> There's lots of interesting history there. Inside [the cathedral], it's really interesting. And the widest bridge [in the city] is there. On the right is the Red Bridge, on the left the Green Bridge. The [wide] bridge is called Blue Bridge. There are a lot of feelings here. … I also love to walk along Griboedov [Canal]. There are small buildings there, like in Venice. First left, and then right. I don't like walking straight—I like it when it bends. (3/28/07)

Russians also mentioned the embankment of the Griboedov Canal as a favorite place to walk, for similar reasons. Jihan, 45 years old and a businesswoman, told me that she liked the cemetery at the Aleksandr Nevsky Monastery.

> Besides museums, I like most of all to see the monument at the Aleksandr Monastery. To see who is there. Not just musicians, but also Dostoevsky. I read a book at home in Chinese, and then looked at all the monuments. I stood and thought for a long time. (12/2/06)

In these comments it is striking that the Chinese, too, mention the way that they feel intimate emotions in St. Petersburg through connection with particular places. Yifang noted the spot on her route to university where she could glimpse the Moika Canal, and also indicated that there were places in St. Petersburg that could even comfort her, such as the catwalk under the cupola of St. Isaac's Cathedral and the Hermitage museum.

> I like to go to Isaakii, the tallest of all, to see the whole city. And I like to go to the Hermitage. If I know that I don't have a very good mood on some day… I need to walk through the Hermitage, to look at the paintings. (10/22/06)

A Chinese woman who had lived in the city for about 20 years resisted specifying

particular places, saying that these tended to change over time; however, she stated a

strong attachment to the city as a whole: "When I have been in China for two weeks [to

visit my mother], I want to come back. It's a special city." Wang, a Chinese businessman

who had originally come to the city as a student, had attachments to places associated

with that period:

> I got a stipend from the Chinese government, and from the Russian government,
> and stood in line for "potatoes." Once a month, and the little window is still there.
> Last year I was driving by with a delegation, and I looked out and saw—My
> beloved little window! Yes, I stood there a lot and then right away went to buy
> beer. (10/10/06)

Certain types of space also tended to engender attachment. For Chinese respondents, the

motivating factor was a contrast to their home cities or towns in China: they tended to

mention public parks and green spaces. (Russians also value their green space highly, as

indicated in survey results; Karpov 2004.) As several Chinese interviewees made clear,

they felt that similar spaces were sorely lacking in their home country. Mei said, "It's a

very green city. I really like that" (10/20/06). Asked to mention a specific park that they

liked, 21 out of 52 Chinese students in focus groups were able to name one. Of these, 11

listed "Victory Park." There are two parks in the city with this name; Zhang clarified that

the students meant the large park on Krestovskii Island: "No, culture center park! It's

very quiet there. And when it's autumn, the sun is so beautiful!"

Overall, all of the Chinese with whom I spoke expressed specific appreciation for

St. Petersburg's natural surroundings. In a general question about "things they liked"

posed to the 52 focus group respondents, 29 listed "nature" or "surroundings"; nine of

them mentioned "fresh air." Yifang expressed it this way:

> In China, the nature is already bad, because people just want money. Then forests, rivers, there isn't much now. Then if there's a free space, they can make a store, apartments. There aren't many parks. So here Chinese like that there is sea, forest, and the weather is really good in the summer. (10/22/06)

Chinese interviewees also frequently mentioned the suburb parks of Pushkin and

Pavlovsk as "favorite places." This preference is evidence that the Chinese were glad to

recognize a feature of the Russian landscape that contrasted with their own experience of

space. Their appreciation for these parks, so similar to the Russian appreciation of them,

could form a basis for cooperation between the two groups.

While some Russians also mentioned parks, their appreciation of smaller spatial

forms affected their choice of particular places; their knowledge of these forms allowed

them to feel close to the city. Three separate Russian interviewees mentioned the

Kolomna area of the city (see Map 4.9), noting both the fine details of its construction

and its relationship to the city's history. Ivan recognized Kolomna as supremely

characteristic of historical Petersburg:

> This district for me is the embodiment of those Petersburg courtyards, those old sidestreets, those two- and three-story buildings. Those carriageways. And Dostoevsky's heroes lived there. There are lots of untouched buildings. And it's such a quiet district, maybe because there aren't any big roads, it has these crooked sidestreets, and there aren't big stores there; it's that kind of district. Beyond it, towards the Neva River, the Gulf starts, with the Neva on the other side. It's that kind of place. A good place. (9/17/06)

Long-time Chinese residents of the city could also recognize certain districts as the most

valued or the most characteristic, even if they didn't use similarly detailed language to

explain their choice; Jihan, for example, noting the preference of many for the historical

center, mentioned "Vasilievskii, Petrogradskii, Primorskii, Vyborgskii" districts. (She here leaves out the "Centralnyi" district, but clearly intends to show her knowledge of the city with her comment.)

This recognition of the value of certain areas, and the current structure of the city which grows out of the valuation, affected how Chinese respondents evaluated the Baltic Pearl as a place to live. Their reaction to a question about possibly living there provided further evidence that they made judgments about where to live based on local parameters, and were not swayed by the idea that the area would be "Chinese." When asked whether he would move there, Jun answered "it's kind of far for me" (3/25/07); student Xin said, "No, it's very far from the center. And to buy there would be hard." Jihan recognized the possible impact it would have on her daily travel; further, her Russianized daughter wouldn't like it.

> No, it would be inconvenient [to live there]. It would be inconvenient for my daughter. She studies in the city; even worse. My daughter always wants to be in the center; some people just love Vasilievsky, Petrogradskii, Primorskii. Or Vyborgskii district. We won't move there [to the Baltic Pearl], it wouldn't make sense. (12/2/06)

Recognizing important spaces of representation: Chinese support for historical preservation

While Chinese residents could not articulate attachment to the city using the spatial vocabulary of courtyards and archways, many of them mentioned the good state of preservation of the historical center; many responded firmly to an additional question about the style of the proposed Gazprom Corporation headquarters, Okhta Center, which was being widely covered in the press at the time of these interviews. The winning

design, announced near the end of 2006, was a glass-and-steel skyscraper more than 300 meters high. Vigorous public debate and protest broke out among Russians over building something that would so overwhelm the height of buildings in the historical center, especially the baroque cathedral on the opposite bank of the Neva River. The debate raged over the true nature of Petersburg, and whether overly tall buildings would ruin the city's essential spirit.

Wang, the businessman who had lived in the city for many years, expressed the usual overall Chinese reaction to St. Petersburg:

> I like the whole city! It's a good city. Of course mostly the old district, the central district. Typical European architecture is good, especially for us, Easterners, this is very interesting. (10/10/06)

An employee of the Baltic Pearl firm mentioned that he appreciated that St. Petersburg was "a very whole historical city," with little change in its center. In Beijing, he said, "a lot of things were changed, old areas destroyed." Although many Beijingers wanted to build the newer modern buildings outside the old center, "finally they were defeated. A lot of [central] districts were destroyed. It is very regrettable." Of St. Petersburg he added, "you cannot build another one in the world" (11/23/06).

Although this employee's words might be put down to the need for good public relations with city residents, he was not the only Chinese person I talked with who expressed exactly the same opinion. Interviewees who addressed this topic all made comparisons with the loss of historical districts in Chinese cities. Asked about the Gazprom skyscraper, Jihan said,

> I don't know whether it's bad or good. If it's for the economy, that's good, but *it doesn't fit in with Piter* at all. … This isn't New York. I know they already did

this in Shanghai. There was an old city, and they built over everything. ... Here it's very good, the parts that are historic—they did the repair well, it's beautiful, they didn't destroy it. It's too bad in Beijing, they've already destroyed a lot of historical buildings. It's too bad. (12/2/06; emphasis added)

Xin, who didn't know about the details of the Gazprom skyscraper, still had absorbed enough of the local politics to agree with me about the efforts towards historical preservation.

I also heard that people wanted not-modern. They want pleasant, lots of old monuments. Lots of old buildings. Very comfortable. In Moscow, there are lots of high things. But here in Petersburg, [it's] like Paris. In Paris there are places where you can't build high things. A good thing, I think. (10/26/06)

Xin was even able to specify height as a principal criterion for evaluating whether something matched the Petersburg milieu and a crucial focus of contention.

Jun, a businessman resident in St. Petersburg for several years, was able to articulate thoroughly the need to preserve the historical center.

I think that Petersburg is beautiful because it has its own styles, European styles, in the center of the city where most of the buildings are like this. ... They need to put new sorts of districts further from the center, around the edges, and in the city, especially in the center, they should preserve these styles. The historical style. The new construction should be there, and where Peter built, yes, they shouldn't let things be higher than the spire of Peter and Paul Fortress. There should be rules to conserve the city's style. Building modern buildings in the center—there are some, it happens, but *they don't fit in at all*. (3/25/07; emphasis added)

Thus, many of my Chinese subjects had lived in the city long enough to know certain of its historical places and to appreciate its historical character, and had become confident critics of a possible tendency in the city administration to follow the Chinese model of reconstructing historical sections of cities. Their use of phrases such as "fit in" demonstrates that they recognized a paradigm that determines what *does* fit. They could perceive a local tendency to preserve the architectural aspect of the culture and could

align themselves with this local attitude, in effect accepting a "representation" of Petersburg as a particular urban value that requires protection. They did indeed seem to have caught the Petersburg spirit.

The syntax of travel as spatial practice

Soliciting daily routes was part of all my "ordinary" interviews. Lefebvre suggests that no new social structures can arise "so long, in short, as the only *connection between work spaces, leisure spaces and living spaces is supplied by the agencies of political power and by their mechanisms of control*" (1991, 59; emphasis added). In the case of St. Petersburg we might ask how people appropriate the connections that they draw between spaces—perhaps contrary to the intentions of "the agencies of political power," or in resonance with or in opposition to a predominant socio-spatial paradigm.

Torgen Hagerstrand's classic work on space-time trajectories in geography provides an initial model for analyzing movement through space as "syntagmatic links" between spaces and life-phases. As Harvey summarizes, these time-space trajectories included "daily routines of movement" as well as "migratory movements over phases of a life-span"; Hagerstrand analyzed temporal and physical constraints on movement, nodes or "stations" along individuals' paths, and "domains" where certain types of interactions are presumed to occur (Harvey 1989, 211).

My immediate inspiration for using the time-space approach to analyze changing socio-cultural structures in the context of a new mode of production is the work of Allan Pred. Pred discusses Sweden and the U.S., with detailed examples from Stockholm and Boston (1990). His work transcends Harvey's critique of the schematic nature of

Hagerstrand's space-time trajectories, adding detailed consideration of linguistic and social dimensions to the "massive empirical data on time-space biographies" (Harvey 1989, 212). Pred produced more than simply a mass of schemata because he considered the impact that changing modes of production—and thus types and location of employment—had on family life and on the "projects" that family members could complete together. As Pred explains, trajectories "are the result of institutionally embedded power relations, the result of relations that determine which individuals, gender members, groups, or classes may or may not gain access to activities" (1990, 12). In resonance with Lefebvre, he adds that the "duration [of the persistent material life] depended upon an uninterrupted dialectic between practice itself and the social reproduction of rules and power relations, and upon the parallel emergence of socially produced 'spatial structures'" (1990, 45). Social reproduction reinforces or modifies "spaces of representation" and "spatial practices" that hold life together.

Daily routes participate in "the social reproduction of rules and power relations." The mode of transportation used, in Petersburg, becomes a reflection of a person's socioeconomic status or a person's willingness to be on the streets of the city. The routes chosen show a person's field of concern or notions of security and danger. In addition to functioning as rational actors who need to arrive at a destination, some respondents deliberately take specific routes in order to increase their own sensory enjoyment of the city. Ultimately, we can ask more about how people work with or against the dominant "syntax" of space. Here I consider how walking and driving in the city function as

different spatial practices in St. Petersburg that bring users into contact with space in different ways.[1]

Since the residential distribution of Chinese had basically the same features as that of Russians and their travel also spanned use of metro, car, and public transportation as well as walking, their comments on these points are eminently comparable. The comments reveal a commonality in judgments about the viability of transportation networks in the city, and also start to reveal the weak points in the potential of a shared perception of the city (whether as "urban" or as daily landscape) to underlie greater understanding between disparate groups.

Walking in the historical center of St. Petersburg evokes elements of the traditional European *flâneur* narrative, but it is also the way that many residents reach their destinations every day; traveling by metro also entails a great deal of walking (during line transfers). Several Russians noted informally that transportation types have become a rough way to categorize the city's residents: students and retirees take public transportation; the lower middle class takes the *marshrutki*, or fixed-route minibuses; upper middle class and the very wealthy drive their own cars. The local journalist and film critic Tatiana Moskvina has maintained that there are two worlds developing in Petersburg: the world of pedestrians and the world of drivers. She maintains that drivers do not directly make contact with the city and, as Rita suggested about Matvienko, cannot therefore make adequately informed decisions about urban development policy (Moskvina, interview, 10/2/06). Her comments establish distinct socio-spatial paradigms

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[1] This approach has already been used (with archived historical data, producing schematic trajectories) to good effect by Bater (1976), who used records of daily routes to discern realities behind St. Petersburg's claims to urban development and social stratification in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

for cars and for pedestrians. Thus, there is already an internal struggle; how do

newcomers fit in?

Walking as spatial practice

Many residents that I talked to walked long distances through the city on a regular

basis. Anna, a migrant to the city for study and later for work as a teacher, described the

value of daily movement around and through Petersburg's material environment of space

and architectural form:

> The expanses of Petersburg are somehow without holes. That is, especially in the
> center, the old center, there's this unbroken united expanse which, it seems to me,
> sort of supports you. It doesn't matter, if you need to cross let's say this bridge,
> these chain-links are present, it doesn't matter to you how long you have to
> walk—you see the street, you see various points of orientation, right? And you
> walk… and besides, in Petersburg you walk and enjoy what you see. If you have
> this tendency to look around you, you don't simply walk, as if through unpleasant
> districts, you walk and all this nourishes you. (3/23/07)

This assertion that simply moving around Petersburg could provide a spiritual benefit was

illustrated in the "route narratives" of other Russian interviewees. Svetlana, another

migrant who had married a city native, noticed details in the built environment that made

her additionally happy about walking in the city:

> Oh, here I forgot to tell you: every time I walk my son to school, I love it, here
> there's such a building… Dostoevsky lived here, everyone knows that. It's a
> unique building, I simply dream of living there, it seems to me that there's an
> amazing energy there. It's my favorite building in Petersburg. Truly. And then
> here's Kokushkin Bridge… (3/24/07)

Her capacity to embed fairly detailed historical knowledge in her appreciation of her

daily route—such as knowing where Dostoevsky had lived—heightened her sense of

individual connection to the city. She did the same thing in describing the route to her

son's school.

> Here we turn onto Sadovaya, and here we pass our famous Yusupov Garden, from the 18th century. It's a unique architectural site, this was the estate of the Yusupovs, this was considered the suburbs then; here's the pond, and the park and the palace. And they kept the original appearance, with this beautiful wrought-iron fence. … Sadovaya has that name because it used to look like one big garden (*sad*), there was one estate after another here.

Another native of the city, young graphic designer Ivan, talked about choosing his route

to go home based partly on the way he could enjoy the walk to a metro station on Nevsky

Avenue:

> I usually go to Gostinka [metro stop] on the way home, because you leave work, the sun is shining, it's just great. I don't have to hurry, … someone is playing music. Also I leave when the sun isn't very high, it makes really-really long shadows, and everything looks so warm in reddish colors and there's a strong contrast; I love that time. And then there's all that, palaces, parks, happy people walking around. (9/17/07)

By contrast, Ivan said, the area south of his family's apartment was "gray," and he didn't

know whether he could feel happy going to work in that district. In all, about 25 Russians

were interviewed about their daily movements through the city, and nearly all had

something to say about their enjoyment of the environment they moved through. One

interviewee lived far to the southwest in the areas of Soviet-era construction, but

mentioned that when she had to cross the entire city for work, she often made a point of

coming up onto the street at a downtown metro station in order to walk for a short while

in the historical center. While pro-Baltic Pearl entries on the *Nevastroyka* forum often

blamed fellow Russian residents for knowing little to nothing about the city and for

caring even less about its upkeep, residents in my sample tended to express complex attachments to its spaces.

Many Russian interviewees described walking long distances without noticing it, and implied that this activity is a key way to get acquainted with the city. When asked about their daily routes, Rita and Liza could quickly add recreational walking routes to the usual home-to-work lines (see Map 6.6); similarly to their narratives of routes taken to work, these routes were linked to favorite places in the city or favorite things to look at, such as statues of sphinxes, former residences of pre-revolutionary aristocrats, or a view of the river. When asked where she most liked to walk, Anna answered "If I could just ramble, I would go on the sidestreets, then back to Nevsky. And along the canals; a stroll along the canals is really something. This part from Nikola towards the Griboedov Canal is completely rapturous" (3/23/07). The desire and ability to ramble—to have adequate knowledge of the city for such wandering—is a mark of many residents as well as some visitors to Petersburg.

As noted already, interviewee Zhang also mentioned walking along Griboedov Canal as a favorite activity. Describing her route to the closer of her two work destinations, Jihan said that she usually preferred to walk, "because it's beautiful to look at everything"; her route took her across Palace Bridge and gave her a view up and down the Neva River. Less emotionally, Chaolin noted pragmatically that he didn't like to wait for the public transportation, so if he knew that he could walk somewhere in less than 30 minutes, he made that choice.
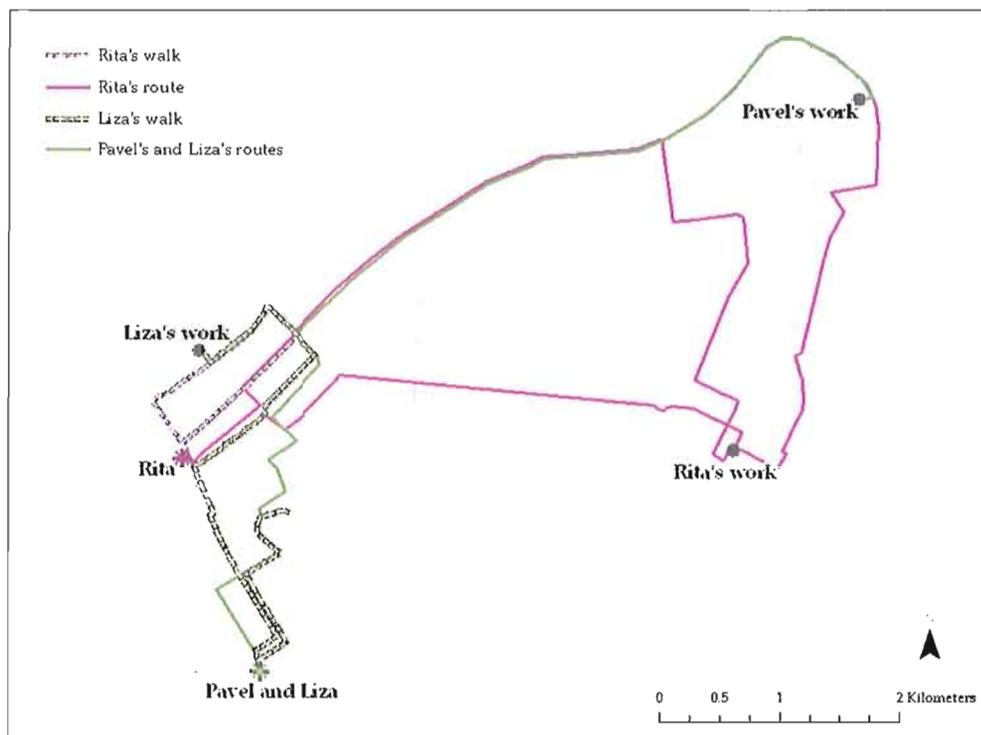
Map 6.6. Recreational walking routes of Rita and Liza.
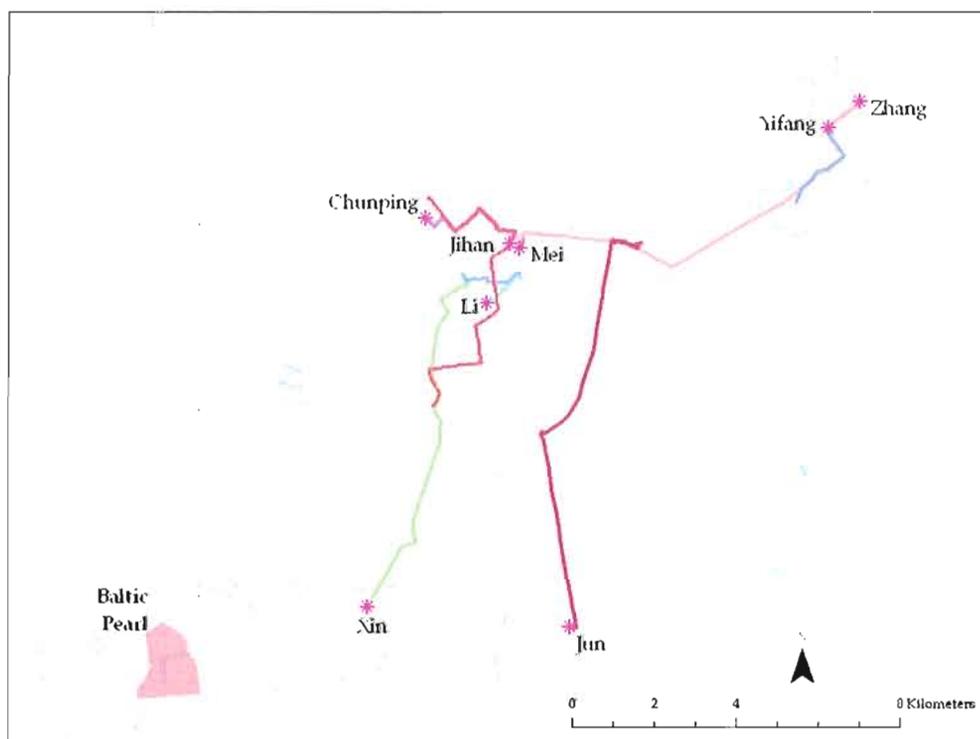
Map 6.7. Routes of Chinese interviewees color-coded by interviewee.

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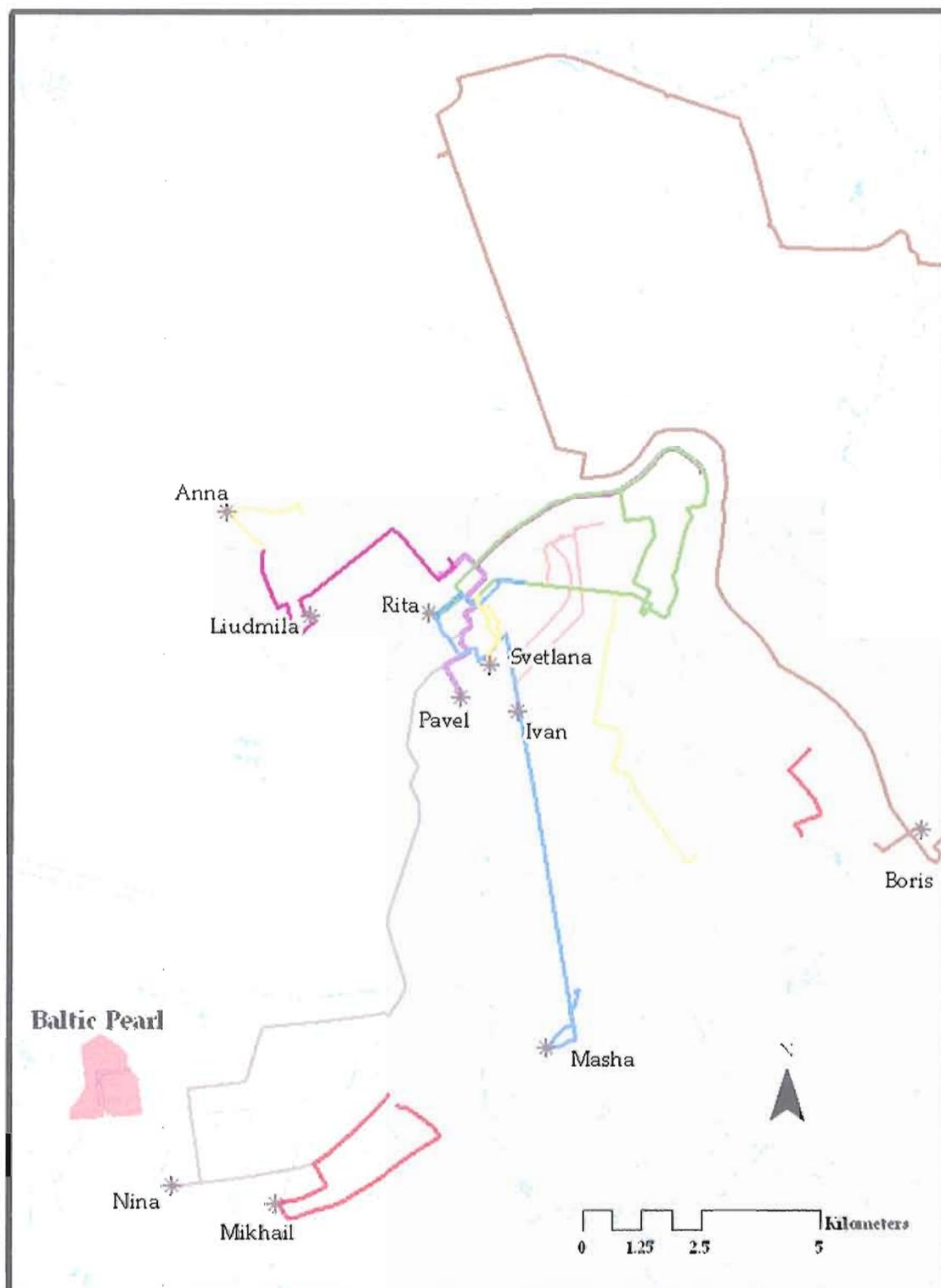
Map 6.8. Routes of Russian interviewees color-coded by interviewee.

However, Chinese interviewees spoke less about place-attachment through walking, and several frank comments about the current phenomenon of xenophobia in the city illustrated why. Interviewee Chunping said that she had walked all over the city when she first arrived as a student in the late 1980s, and felt very safe. Her sense of security had changed dramatically, however; now, she said, "I go for walks [around the city] in the summer, when everyone has left town…. I don't take the metro, I go by car to avoid [the streets]" (10/28/06). Chinese university students were even more direct about their concerns. Asked if he went to any parks, Xin answered:

> Very rarely. It's a very interesting thing. When I came here, the second day, Chinese told me that there are hooligans [in the park near my dorm]. In winter I didn't want to go anywhere. There was a park when I lived near metro Pionerskaya, Chernaia rechka. But they said these are centers for hooligans. So I don't want to go. (10/26/06)

Like Mei, a young Chinese student who visited Mikhailovskii Garden for the first time in my company, Xin had no idea that this small popular park was just two blocks away from Nevsky. He had been to Mars Field, but didn't understand its connectivity to other areas he was familiar with. His comments imply that he hesitated to explore the urban texture beyond his usual routes due to a sense of danger.

Yifang mentioned specifically that she walked at home in China with her family, but that the conditions were unpleasant in her heavily polluted city; while she saw Petersburg as a better place to walk in the abstract, she almost never did it:

> No, no walking. Because it's winter already. When we finish classes, it's already dark. You probably know that here lots of men drink beer, and then they are hooligans. It's dangerous. I'm a girl, it's not very good for me. … I have to be safe, finish my work, go home, sit at home. (10/22/06)

These comments pinpoint the specific obstruction of walking-attachment to the city that Russians articulate; while some arriving Chinese clearly show an inclination to share this kind of attachment, xenophobic actions that are not stopped by police prevent it from developing into a spatial practice that they could then share, and perpetuate, along with the existing residents. While they can share the appreciation for historic preservation, they cannot all develop the kind of knowledge of fine details of space that characterizes long-term residents such as Ivan, or Svetlana's educated attention to the auras surrounding historic sites.

Walking can bring pedestrians into contact with the details of Petersburg's architecture and with the city's space as constructed for the use of many different kinds of people; walking and the metro, for example, are part of the egalitarian paradigm of the city's Soviet past. Cars seem to be part of a new paradigm that avoids the overall texture of the city in a trajectory focused on the nodes where the car stops.

Driving as spatial practice

On the question of vehicle transportation, though, the Russian and Chinese interviewees were in virtually complete agreement on the state of the city's infrastructure. Wang and Jihan hailed the bad state of the road system as a looming catastrophe, and had the same awareness of the temporal cycle of major traffic jams displayed by Rita and Liza. Yifang and Jun traveled frequently by metro, and had the same praise for its reliability and the same complaints about the crowded cars as Svetlana, Nina, and Ivan. Everyone agreed that Nevsky Avenue was "the place to be." Differences also emerged in the density and intimacy of city knowledge shown by Russians; as with pedestrians,

similar knowledge did not emerge from Chinese interviews. For example, Ivan and his friend Fyodor not only described the metro as an expanse of travel, but noted its nodes of social meaning: they named the major transfer stations where young people tended to hang out underground in order to meet friends, whereas for Chinese the metro remained a mode of transport. (However, supplemental fieldwork showed that similar behavior in the subway seemed to occur in Shanghai.)

Rita, a native Petersburger who had lived in the same building most of her life described the drive to her workplace: she could go by Nevsky but "all the same I prefer to drive on the embankment road… So this is a pretty part of my route, the most grand embankment, so of course I have that kind of thoughts" (10/21/06). Sometimes she traveled to work via microbus, and expressed a similar interest in her surroundings.

> I love to look around me… I like the facades on the buildings, all the more so on Nevsky. … I like the Eliseev store, its façade. You look at it, and it's beautiful. And then right afterward is the Beloselsky-Belozersky palace.

Even those who had arrived in the city for school or work could adopt the city and have similarly favorite places and notice fine details in the built environment. Liza, who came from Chelyabinsk to study and later work, immediately recounted such detail as part of her route narrative:

> First I pass the Egypt Bridge. Why, because the sphinxes are beautiful. … Here I go along this canal embankment, it's quiet, there aren't any traffic jams. Here's the Lion Bridge… It has beautiful ironwork. … further along Greater Marine Street, the museum of Nabokov is here, a beautiful building. Then past St. Isaac's, also beautiful, along the Admiralty Embankment… I avoid traffic and try to drive past beautiful places. (11/5/06)

Overall, Russians interviewed for this project tended to describe more possible routes than were mentioned by Chinese; this is visible on a map of total routes by individual

color (Maps 6.7 and 6.8). The six Chinese students interviewed in total all described a route to and from their student housing, with the exception of a graduate student who felt confident about his Russian; Zhang seemed to go to more places as an occasional tour guide, and seemed to use equally public transportation and metro to get to the city center. The four adult professionals interviewed had a greater variation. Jihan had routes to two places of business; she could walk to one of them, but complained about the traffic jams when she drove to the other. Once, she said, she had to sit for four hours on the embankment road. Jun kept to a fairly simple route to and from work but, he claimed, because of driving around the city in a hired car to see clients, "I usually know the city better than the average Petersburger; I drive around a lot" (3/25/07). By contrast, Wang, while he claimed to have walked everywhere during his students days, takes his car to work over a distance that any ordinary Petersburger would find eminently walkable; he is an important businessman, and it might not be seemly (or safe) for him to walk.

Russians, though, tended to have one route to work and a different route back, sometimes depending on traffic but often depending on esthetic choices. For example, Rita often drove to work or took a microbus, but in the summer she might walk all the way home in order to enjoy the evening on Nevsky Avenue (see Map 6.9). Boris drove to work along the Neva embankment because he enjoyed the view of the river, but always came home along the eastern portion of the Ring Road in order to avoid traffic; he might also take the metro after a short walk across the bridge connecting his neighborhood to the left bank of the Neva (Map 6.10). Ivan, as implied by some of the quotations above, might take his bicycle, or get out at one metro station on the way to work and come back
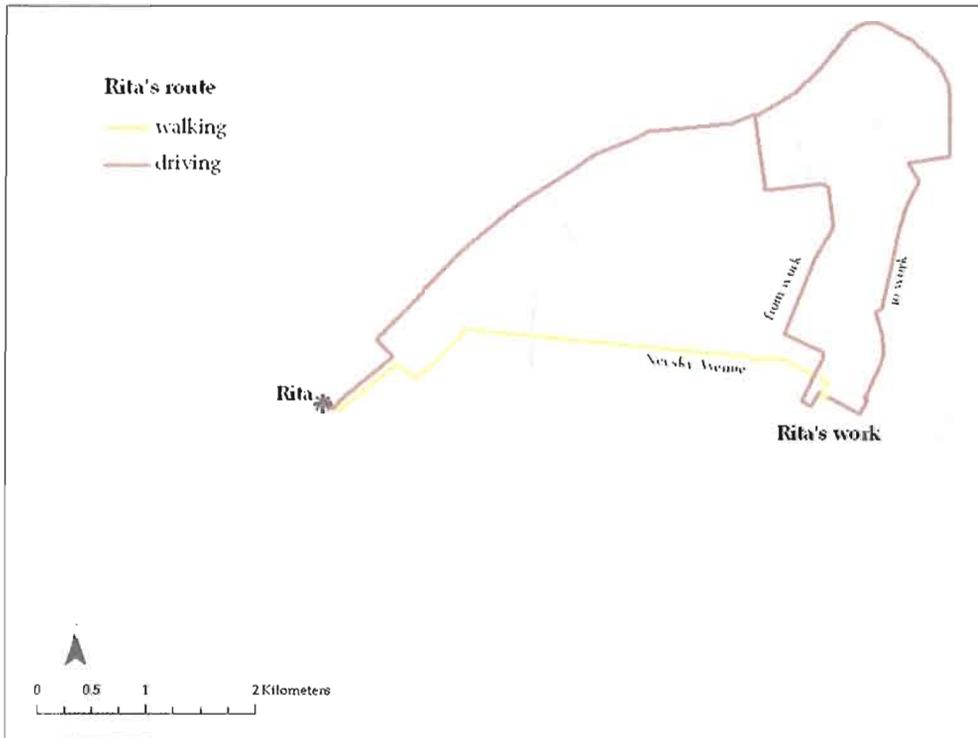
Map 6.9. Rita's routes to and from work.
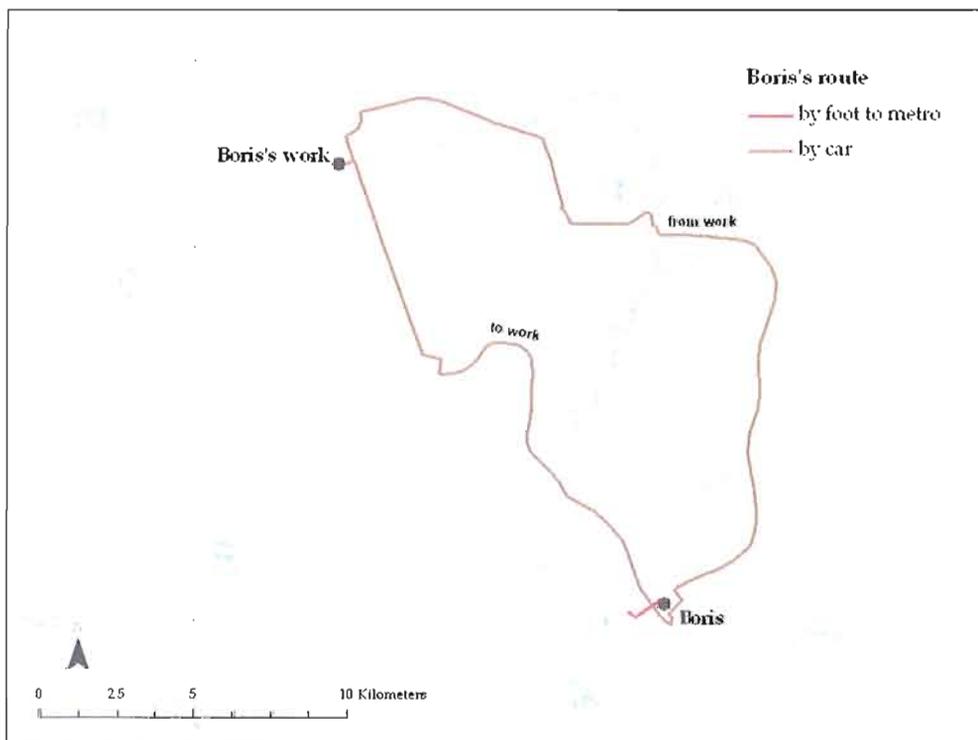
Map 6.10. Boris's routes to and from work.
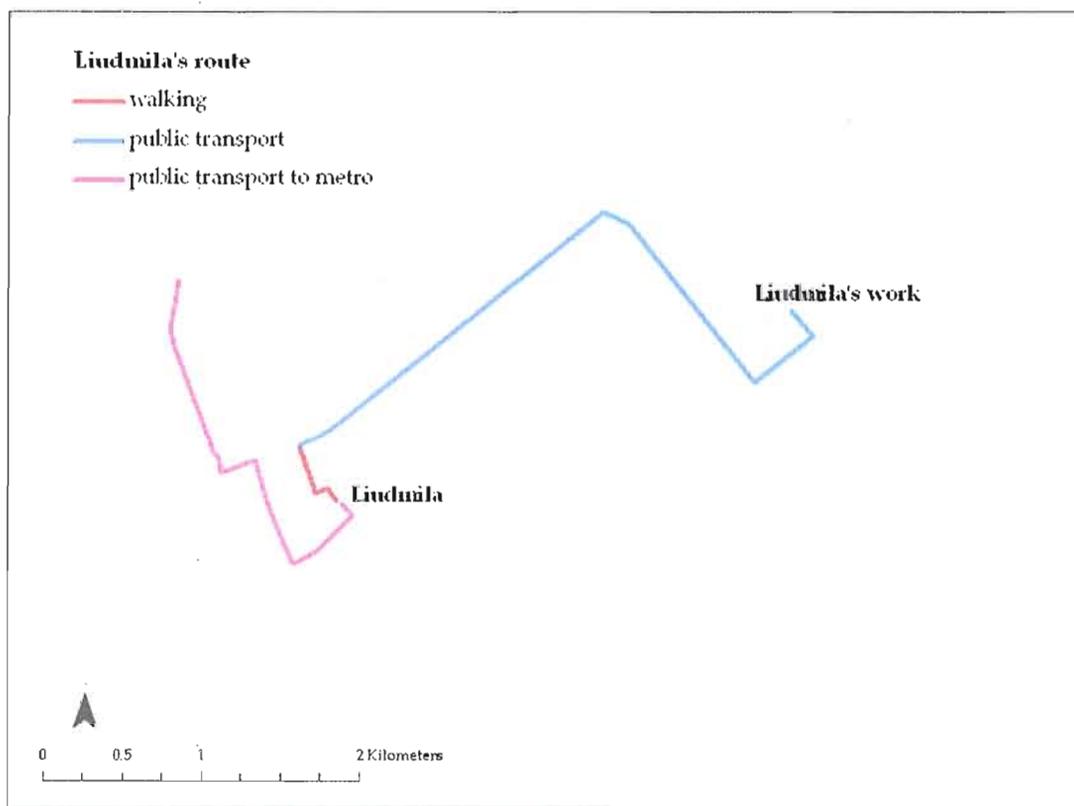
Map 6.11. Liudmila's route to and from work, with her metro route to downtown.

via another. To get to the city center, Liudmila might take a streetcar down Srednii

Avenue going east, or another one going west to a different metro station, depending on

what showed up; she might also walk a bit north of her apartment to take a bus to the

university (see Map 6.11). The possibility of multiplicity in the routes seemed to be a

cherished feature that many residents took for granted; the spaces of representation of this

city life were the streets, the crowded metro station platforms, and the stops for public

transportation, including a high number of public travel spaces. Chinese did not speak

fondly of this experience, and neither did Russians—but they shared similar frustrations.

No Chinese interviewee mentioned streetcars, which is perhaps significant. As

noted in Chapter V, the "streetcar" refers not only to that form of transportation, with a

history dating back to the end of the Leningrad Siege, but also to a system of

transportation that was widely perceived as easily enabling the kind of visiting between

friends mentioned by "ordinary" interviewees. Thus, it is not only the object focus of a

fetishistic nostalgia (as Boym would have it, 2001) but a "term" for an entire socio-

spatial paradigm that assumes a particular philosophical orientation to enabling the lives

of ordinary people, supported by a subsidized system of transportation. As Liudmila

expressed it:

> I like streetcars, but it doesn't follow from that that we must have streetcars here.
> It's my opinion that there should be something. But that we must have municipal
> transportation. And not just private automobiles! So that each person, no matter
> what his material situation, could get around, especially the elderly. (10/30/06)

Whether or not newcomers notice the presence of such a system, or its lack, or mention

this need as something that the city should fulfill, can give us important information

about the long-term interaction between residents and migrants. If the comments of the

Chinese interviewees for this project are any indication, then the streetcar may not survive the spatial transformations facing St. Petersburg, but with luck the push for historical preservation will only receive a greater impetus.

Conclusion

One challenge with resolving potential conflicts between users of the city is that even residents who share the same ethnic profile do not all agree about the relative value of various services and urban spaces. The needs and expectations for space introduced by migrants confront an already complex, contentious set of competing needs and expectations among city residents. Migrants' ability to grasp a location's spatial language, or set of codes as Lefebvre would have it, must depend also on the stability of that spatial language.

This was illustrated well by comments from Aleksandr Karpov. As a legal activist, Karpov is highly aware of the struggle between elites and ordinary Russians over city spaces. He sees the problem as one of mutually incomprehensible languages used by different "tribes" of city inhabitants. I cite his comments at length, in order to draw out both the philosophical and spatial elements.

> If we look at the public hearings from the point of view of an ethnographer, then we can say that there are two tribes, right? Builders and residents. They speak different languages. And the terms that they share—points of overlap—are very limited. It can be summed up, you can simply list those conceptual categories that are part of that common terminology. Those are: height, insolation, parking, green spaces. That's about it. And they're supposed to be friends. A very poor set of terms to use in negotiating a decent transaction [over space].
>
> *So, language as a fund of concepts?*

> Yes, language as a fund of concepts. And meanwhile, if we look at one side, say that of residents. Residents have a completely normal fund of concepts about how they want to live. Not even "what I want to see happen," right? But how I plan my life, having a family, a personal universe. This includes socializing with friends, raising children, family... But builder-developers have a different [fund]. They have density, economic development, transportation streams, energy supply, clusters, all that sort of stuff. And these things don't overlap... You can look at it as a problem of creating *interfacing*. That kind of thing. So in that sense, it begs the question, properly speaking, about all this urban planning, right? It's colonization. Because there is no trade, transactions can't take place, but one tribe stands nearer to the authorities (*vlasti* or powers)... In light of this framework, protests against in-fill construction are just an uprising of the enslaved tribe.
> (10/29/06; 'interfacing' in English in original)

In contrast to the residents quoted above, who saw chiefly their own needs in relation to the city, Karpov recognizes that there are other "tribes" who have a different kind of stake in the city and whose expectations—and language for describing them—differ markedly from those of residents. These different languages, I would concede, are not the same thing as different socio-spatial paradigms; however, it is still plausible to assert a connection between a socio-spatial paradigm operating in a certain arena (that is, of designing public urban policy within the city administration) and the language employed to describe desirable goods in that realm. On the surface, as implied above by journalist Shuvalov's comments, this implies that residents develop their socio-spatial paradigm based on very limited expanses: the expanse that they traverse in order to visit their friends, in which they raise their children, and the physical dimensions of their apartment building and the surrounding yard. But also contained in Karpov's comments— particularly in the assertion about colonization—is an equality between the claims made on city expanses by the different "tribes"; that is, regardless of the difference in scope between the two (or more) groups, in spite of the different scales of the expanses from

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which they construct an argument about social or economic good, that difference in scale does not constitute a hierarchy of their entitlement to have their claims met. Of course, this sort of statement has powerful implications for the incorporation of new residents into an existing infrastructure and socio-spatial paradigm. Presumably, communication will be more effective if the paradigm can be conveyed to newcomers; this can ease any contradictions between the newcomers' paradigms and the local ones. In this case, as shown by quotations from interviews with Chinese, newcomers show themselves capable of adapting some of the language so important to locals.

Yet more work could be done on the practices and expectations that arise for individuals and for various groups as a result of holding certain socio-spatial paradigms. Individual Chinese will at some point encounter individual Russians, and it would benefit the host society, too, if it could become conversant with its own paradigm and strive to engage that of the Other. A particular value can be seen in these one-on-one syntheses of exchanging spatial experience; then, whether or not a certain space is seen as forwarding the goals of globalizing the economy, spaces that conserve the social fabric of the city and its ability to absorb newcomers might better be preserved.

Philosophically speaking, for Anna, the result of attention to the material quality of an individual person's life is energy unleashed for the growth of the socio-economic system as a whole.

> And a person, when he works, he should understand that he is working, he is living out his life, he's doing it for a reason. That his labor is valued, and it's understood how much of himself he is giving. A part of his life, and [there needs] to be compensation for his efforts. He should have this sensation, whether in a bakery or in factory for the production of buttons… Then we would see something completely different. People would be more free, less bitter, more

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creative. People would want to change something in themselves, they would want to do something good not only for their colleagues at work, but just in general for the city. (3/23/07)

Previewing her assessment of the situation with Russian society's internalization of migrants, Varya offered a similar suggestion.

When you talk with a person, when that person feels that his opinion is wanted, that he is significant for the authorities, that he's not a nut or bolt in the general machine, but an identity. The reaction of any person on life's changes will be completely different. And there should be institutes that don't fear to do this. (10/28/06)

The task before someone trying to enable the "transactions" that would in part enable this liberation of commitment is to discern the different "languages" used by competing tribes. In the terminology of this research, this implies discernment of the socio-spatial paradigms that condition, and exist in symbiosis with, material experiences and the material urban environment, especially when different "terms" are used in reference to the same expanses.

Struggling over conceptions of "the city": new vs. old

On the horizon, as hinted, is a degree of change that will bring new spaces for everyone. Some Chinese arrivals bring an orientation towards a new more globally oriented socio-spatial paradigm that some Russians share as well. Comments from different interviews have illustrated that the struggle over conceptions of the "urban" that has arisen in Petersburg occurs in China as well. A contact in Beijing suggested that Chinese practice had once aimed at near-total preservation of historical areas, as many propose in St. Petersburg. However, the trend there has been towards a less expensive practice of razing the old in order to put up newer structures (T. Zhang, interview,

1/6/08). Jihan (as quoted above about Beijing) knew this about her country, and was

worried that it might affect Petersburg.

> They want everything to be new, modern. But how will they show their children
> the history? After some years the children won't know anything. … Petersburg is
> an architectural city, a museum. It's different, interesting. When I came here in
> 1994, I didn't know Russian very well, but then six months later I had been
> everywhere on the metro and seen every station! (12/2/06)

Zhang felt the same anxiety:

> If a lot of Chinese come here, maybe for 10 years it will be fine, it will still be
> beautiful. But if more, maybe 15 years, they will want to change things. It's bad, I
> don't know how to explain it. In Chinese it's called *lang fei*. It means, 'While I
> have it, I don't want it.' (3/28/07)

Of his native city in China, Xin noted that the struggle for preservation arose after an

overly zealous drive to erase the old.

> We have lots of old houses. Before, 40 years ago, when we built a new city, we
> destroyed a lot. We razed many old buildings. But then everyone said we need
> modern. It seemed normal. But now there are very few such buildings, so we have
> to preserve. (10/26/06)

Longtime Petersburg resident Chunping made a strong statement about the need to

preserve the historic downtown: "Not touch anything in the center, only on the outskirts"

(10/28/06). Such quotations would seem to indicate that Chinese interviewees agreed

wholeheartedly with the local orientation towards preservation and maintenance of a

socio-spatial paradigm that valued the built environment of the historical center.

However, Xin also remarked that he didn't really pay attention to architecture: "If

I see a really good building, then I look. If I don't like it, I won't think about it." Unlike

Rita, who noticed all the facades on Nevsky, Xin could not evaluate the architectural feel

of certain neighborhoods; he replied, "I haven't thought about it. I just looked at the

stores, what they have. Nevskii is a good place. Good stores, good things." Like him, Jue,

a young woman who had arrived two months earlier for a graduate program with St.

Petersburg State University, spoke very little of the influence of the built environment.

Asked where she liked to walk in the city, she replied, "I walk in shops. I think all girls

love to shop. If not to buy, I also walk in stores. Also my friends love stores, and we go

together often" (11/3/06). Her responses to questions about architecture were thoroughly

pragmatic:

> Old or new? Usually a person loves a new apartment. Not only apartment, but
> usually love new things. First time things are good, but old things aren't good.
> Because like a car, it doesn't work. I think it's good [to build new]. In China they
> build lots of new apartments.

Although Chunping had lived for almost 20 years in the city and expressed a decided

opinion about not building in the city center, she expressed uncertainty about the popular

view that everything historical should be preserved:

> Does it make sense to race ahead? Well, there are natural rules, and we need to
> remember traditions. [But] here everything is against the new... Elderly people
> above all... (10/28/06)

Here Chunping echoes the hesitation of many Chinese involved directly in the Baltic

Pearl, concerned that local attitudes militate against a clear perception of what the

project, once built, will have to offer in the way of new spaces for urban living.

Svetlana about Pik; Ivan about symbolic spaces

Earlier in this chapter I also suggested an equivalency in the claims on and

perceptions of the city by arriving Chinese (and by extension other migrants). At this end

of the chapter, I mean by this that even as the Chinese arrive and possibly integrate into

the operative socio-spatial paradigm of walking, public transportation, and value placed on the texture of the historical center, the Baltic Pearl and its ongoing construction are simultaneously changing the total range of spatial possibilities that Petersburg offers, possibly making more space for the kind of internationalized, modernized spaces that urban Chinese know at home. Currently, Chinese in the city are a minority and find themselves most often in situations where they are scrambling to master a different paradigm. Yet even as some Chinese find a way to connect with local values through their appreciation for the historical preservation in Petersburg— loving the greenery, the relatively clean air, and the presence of old buildings—their compatriots at another scale are bringing a change in investment and typical construction practices that may ultimately accelerate the shift in the sociospatial paradigm.

This chapter begins to reveal one way of analyzing this kind of change through careful elucidation of sociospatial paradigms. I noted earlier that the terms underpinning what Karpov saw as different languages "may not be as spatially exclusive as they are conceptually exclusive." In the context of a fuller analysis of the elements not only of spatial languages but of whole paradigms (Lefebvrian triads), conflict can be considered through identifying the non-coincidence between spaces of representation of different groups as well as contradictions between one paradigm's "space of representation" and "representation of space." Some subgroups may begin to generate different spatial practices as well, even as a large part of the population harbors the same "representation of space."

For example, Svetlana, who could go into ecstasies over the building on Griboedov Canal where Dostoevsky had once lived, shared Jue's concern for good shopping. Adopting this "spatial practice" of shopping in a certain way (probably not at the open-air bulk produce markets) can be connected to Svetlana's evaluation of the shopping center Pik, a glass-sheathed construction on Sennaia Square. To many of my interviewees, this building constituted a violation of Sennaia as a "space of representation" of cultural history (including a scene from *Crime and Punishment* by Dostoevsky) which made many of my interviewees shudder. But Svetlana maintained:

> It's tidy, you know, it's fine. We use it. … The sort of thing that makes life pleasant, right? Those things win you over all the same, and you stop thinking about architecture. A city should be modern and comfortable to live in. (3/24/07)

In further evaluating this center, she recognized a spatial feature of its construction that made her prefer yet another shopping center half a block away.

> I don't really like the shopping [at Pik], I like it at Sennaia Center, the one opposite. Because Pik was built by a Russian architect and it doesn't have this American principle of malls, you know? A central space where you can see the levels and the names of the stores…

This small adoption of a newly designed space also marks the incremental change that may ultimately shift Petersburg's "representations of space." Similarly, musing on what the meaning of a city should be, Ivan suggested his willingness to accept large prestige projects on the principle of Petersburg's significance as a urban center. "Piter is a wealthy city," he said, "and it needs many more such interesting, precisely many more of those symbols, bright promotional objects" (9/17/06). Further research will have to show whether St. Petersburg can acquire these bright symbols and simultaneously accommodate more new arrivals even as the socio-spatial paradigms which have

provided orientation shift under the feet (and wheels) of all the residents moving around the city.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION: HYBRID SPACES AND DIVERSITY

This study opened with the assertion that a fuller understanding about the contemporary

Russian phenomena of spatial dispossession and spatial exclusivity (xenophobia) could

be understood better by examining evidence at several scales. While events and figures at

the "privileged scale" of the nation-state often seem to be the most salient, processes at

the so-called microscale reveal the struggles elided by outward political rapprochement.

This conclusion returns to that issue. The first part of the chapter examines what study of

the Baltic Pearl can contribute to our knowledge of "Russia" and "China" at several

scales; the second part evaluates what the microscale evaluation of relations between

individual Chinese and Russians can tell us about the broader relationship between the

states.

Reading the Baltic Pearl Across Scale

In a general way, at the scales that I designated as "privileged" in the introduction,

the story of the Baltic Pearl seems to be a simple one: first of all, inter-city competition

has forced St. Petersburg to increase its economic and symbolic capacities to function in

Northern Europe as both companion in regional development and competitor for trade

routes and financial flows. The Baltic Pearl brings investment to the city, possibly

becoming a catalyst for infrastructural development, and places a node of modernization

on the cityscape. Second, global circumstances dispose Russia to create closer ties with China, and China reciprocates this desire and would also like to gain more favorable terms for access to Russian oil and natural gas. "China" appears to be doing "Russia" the favor of building this quarter in exchange for these closer relations and possibly for resources.

I put the country names in quotation marks above because the scale of the desired cooperation seems obvious—state to state. However, a closer examination of the situation, amplified by various elements of research on the Baltic Pearl, reveals that the situation is not so simple. First, while the central Russian government would certainly like to cooperate with China in presenting a unified face to the West, particularly the United States, tensions between the two states remain. A first element indicating Russia's position less as a receiver of favors and more as a supplicant for aid is mentioned by several scholars of Sino-Russian relations: the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, frequently mentioned as a sign that China and Russia are cooperating more closely over military and economic issues in Central Asia, is nevertheless not a military alliance. While some joint military exercises have occurred, the treaty contains no conditions that would oblige China to come to Russia's aid in the event of an attack. (Recall that China did not support Russia's recent actions in Georgia.) Thus while Russia may claim a Sino-Russian axis that will stand against the hegemonic West, it still stands alone more than it would like. The intelligence and resourcefulness of many Russian people make it a not insignificant country and one that should not be neglected by diplomacy—but the

material reality behind its ambitions is uneven. Russia may have to rely on China for labor as well as infrastructural investment—if it can get and keep both.

A second contradiction to the image of a unified front emerges in the blog complaints about the Baltic Pearl: the anxiety about Chinese encroachment on "Russian" space; the concrete experience of Chinese migration to the Russian Far East gets mapped onto the Baltic Pearl and the same resentments simmer. Russians have expressed concern that their country would become a resource base for other countries, including for oil and timber. In terms of relations with China, this concern makes the Far East a complex case. Most of the prized Russian natural resources are located there or in Siberia to the west. Rumors abound that China may actually want to take over the territory of the Russian Far East and parts of eastern Siberia—not as an outright annexation, but as a de facto one, pushed by economic cooperation and migration from northeast China into Russia. However, while there is evidence that Chinese are entering the Far East in fairly large numbers—and are having better success in production of everything from consumer goods to vegetables—the current regulations for migration and entrepreneurship are not such as to permit large-scale businesses. Chinese activity is concentrated in trade and small-scale agriculture. Many local Russians would like closer cooperation with the Chinese, similarly to the desire of closer cooperation with Japan evident on Sakhalin, since the Russian power base (with its chief resources) is in Moscow, far to the west. While the Russian Far East has a feisty loyal population, it has also been losing population steadily. Chinese migrants seem to know how to thrive there, while many Russians crave the lifestyle in the western part of their country. Russian scholars realize

that the Russian state may face a challenge in retaining the Far East simply in terms of political influence and demographic sustainability. In light of this anxiety, the construction of the Baltic Pearl may be a gesture of good will, to reassure the Russian central government of China's desire for benevolent cooperation; however, it also lends itself to the discourse of Chinese incursion that appeared on the *Nevastroyka* blog.

The results of my research indicate that Russia is economically more dependent than it would like to admit. It would like to have China as an ally against the West, but China has refused to become the kind of ally Russia envisions. It would like for the connection with China to bring new energy to its economy, but so far there are two problems: Russia's reluctance to reform key features of the business environment prevents Chinese as well as its own people from making progress and increasing productivity, and individual Chinese report unpleasant enough experiences that a steady and long-term migration stream might be unlikely. Further, Chinese perceive Russians as petty traders; while Russian officials would like for China to invite Russian specialists in engineering and other technical fields to help them build Chinese sites, this demand has not been high, so the economic flow is likely to remain inward for cheap consumer goods and outward for raw resources. Goods rarely come to Russia for processing; expertise rarely goes into China to bring income back into Russia.

Close examination of negotiations over the Baltic Pearl brings additional evidence that the project is a favor that the Russians are doing the Chinese, rather than vice versa—that is, rather than the Chinese offering a prize in exchange for oil, the Russians seem to be wooing the Chinese with the gift of a large land parcel on which to build a

symbolically innovative quarter. The Chinese are making a demonstration of their vitality in engineering, architecture, and organization—and this is in contrast to the Russian desire to have their own engineers and architects employed in China as experts, to complement the outflow of natural resources. The placement of the Baltic Pearl could be read as a gesture of raising the profile of St. Petersburg in order to please Vladimir Putin, who reportedly sees it as the mission of his late- and post-presidential years to revitalize his native city. Putting the quarter in St. Petersburg and not Moscow could be a part of that plan. Moscow, however, is probably still too tightly controlled by its Mayor Luzhkov to allow such a large project to happen. Further, the Chief Architect of St. Petersburg at the time that the Baltic Pearl project was initiated recounted the series of events in such a way as to indicate that a delegation of Chinese came to Russia seeking a place to build. This information points to Chinese initiative in the project.

An interesting indicator of this is the Lotus Tower in the Baltic Pearl plan, visible at low center left in Figure 3.2. The Russian planners with whom I spoke saw this tower as a contradiction to the desired spatial organization of the district. While they had managed to negotiate for the wider green courtyards visible in later designs, no one on the Russian side had been able to affect the question of the tower. The decision was made in a black box in Shanghai without consultation with any of the Russians assigned to mediate the project. An informant in Shanghai told me that a separate competition had been organized for the design of this tower. The Russians perceived it as an interruption in the newly negotiated space of hybridity, a Soviet-Maoist aberration of propagandistic form and inhumanly scaled open space. The Russian impression was that someone in

either the Shanghai municipal government (which provided most of the capitalization for

SIIC) or in the firm itself particularly wanted this element, and planners and officials in

St. Petersburg had no power to affect its execution.

Thus, Russia with respect to China has less power than might at first appear.

However, the Baltic Pearl shows that central state influence remains powerful in the

shaping of St. Petersburg's meaning—in the "representation of space" that will dominate

its development. A recent United Nations report asserts that "Territorial regulation has

replaced national regulation because of the limited ability of the state to solve problems

and address issues at lower levels" (Habitat 2001, 62). This may be true in the case of

infrastructure or generation of revenue; after all, St. Petersburg (in the persons of

Matvienko and the Legislative Assembly) is in charge of remunerating its own housing

crisis—which the Baltic Pearl will ostensibly help to alleviate. However, St. Petersburg is

clearly not entirely in charge of its own symbols. Residents and local specialists,

including some legislative deputies, continue to lobby for the maintenance of a certain

tenor to infrastructure; the new financial meltdown will likely slow the pace of

development in any case, but the central state (and its local representatives) continues to

push for a globalized vision that harmonizes with its top-down politics. Those involved in

local politics still want to retain a localized vision based in the "spaces of representation"

that anchor a certain loyalty to Petersburg, such as the historical sites and favorite parks.

Thus, examination of the Baltic Pearl reveals the political conflict between the center and

political and social elements in other parts of the country.

The Baltic Pearl is intriguingly caught between these struggles. It represents the vision of the centralized state through its existence, as illustrated by several comments from interviewees that the project would be pushed through "from above" regardless of local reactions; however, it also has been adapted to local needs through its stated provision of housing (i.e., it is not solely a prestige site, or a "premium networked space") and through the implementation of courtyards. Even in its provision of housing, though, it supports globalized space by planning to focus on affluent buyers—and even in its attempt to represent a globalized hybrid, it bears evidence of an old-fashioned need to assert spatial dominance in the monumental space of the Lotus Tower.

I have been concerned here not only with the "functional response to globalization" (Habitat 2001, 62) made by the local authorities but also with the local spatial culture into which globalization enters, so to speak, in the form of the Baltic Pearl. The fact that the Baltic Pearl does not impinge spatially on the historical center is not the main issue: the point is that it affects local governance and the overall existing spatial culture—it modifies the socio-spatial paradigm employed by city planners and new arrivals in the city, interrupting the adoption of the paradigm based in collective needs (sometimes in historical preservation, sometimes in favored public spaces). It is possible that the district could in fact provide a "new product" for some consumers, but it also threatens the maintenance of streetcar lines, affordable property values, and local political viability; it introduces new socio-spatial paradigms focused on a global consumer class in which very few current residents of Petersburg can participate. Further, the specific evidence of protest against the quarter are not significant in and of themselves—that is, it

does not matter that the street demonstrations and blog postings eventually faded and seem quantitatively negligible; it matters that the type of discourse traceable in the blogs and other commentary has significant commonalities with the overall discourse of protest against urban development projects and resonates strongly with overall mistrust of urban governance as chiefly enacted by the City Governor's office. Just as Matvienko listed it in 2006 along with other high-profile prestige projects, local residents classify the Baltic Pearl as one more object in this takeover, even though the presence of housing in the project actually contrasts starkly with the other projects (which tend to embody cultural prestige, recreation, sport, or commerce alone).

The Socio-Spatial Paradigm and Othering

A governing question at the scales examined in this study is whether the dominant "St. Petersburg" sociospatial paradigm can accept Others, or is even open to appropriation by arriving migrants—of all types, including investment funds as well as laboring bodies. The same set of local socio-spatial paradigms that underpins resident efforts to combat dispossession also anchors much of the language of xenophobia. In order to achieve long-term social sustainability and to design effective compromises that serve a majority of city residents, St. Petersburg will have to find ways to confront this contradiction. To do so, it must first address such questions as:

- Can migrants participate in the most-used spaces of representation?
- Will they be allowed to join the currents and patterns of spatial practice, such as urban mobility?
- And most interestingly, will they ultimately participate in a restructuring of the representation of space?

Vendina expresses concern about the capacity of Russian cities to accept Others. She

suggests that the built environment of Moscow (and by implication, other cities with

similar structures) facilitates integration, since "the multistory residential construction

and the special attachment of Muscovites to their individual apartments retard the

formation of compact ethnic aureoles" (2005b, 71). However, near the end of her

landmark 2005 study of enclaves in Moscow, she notes that the growing tendency to

favor separated, even fenced-off (55) spaces, corresponds to a social reluctance to allow

Others to enter.

> The "middle class" is characterized by a surprising conservatism and striving for
> social isolation. Evidence of social egoism and lack of openness to alternative
> forms of life—if they are not refined by contact with culture, the elegant
> 'underground' and esthetic dismissal of material prosperity—turn the 'middle
> class' into a social layer that closes off the channels of social mobility for
> economic migrants, complicates their access to social goods, education, and so
> forth. The result of the social strategy of the 'middle class' becomes the
> territorialization of social inequality, the spatial consolidation of poverty, and the
> stigmatization of city districts that have a poor reputation. The attempt to wall
> oneself off from social problems, to avoid "others,' to increase the physical
> distance between oneself and those who are perceived as a threat to personal
> prosperity—above all, of course, the representatives of ethnic minorities from the
> numbers of economic migrants—in the final result leads to segregation in all its
> forms. (83)

This conservatism and concern with what is perceived as personal security and prosperity

resonates with Horowitz's warning that multiplicity cannot always be reconciled and

integrated:

> If all groups merely wanted inclusion, distrust and anxiety would still make ethnic
> conflict serious, but more tractable than it is. What makes it intractable is that
> claims to political inclusion and exclusion have an area of mutual incompatibility.
> … What is sought is not necessarily some absolute value but a value determined
> by the extent to which it reduces another group's share. Demands are often cast in
> relative terms, and conflict-reducing proposals that involve expanding the pool of
> goods available to all groups typically have little appeal. (1985, 196)

As quotations from Gel'bras and Vendina suggested in the introduction, the long-term

health of interactions between Russia and China must also be evaluated at the microscale

in order to test evolving trends; here, I have attempted this in a probing of the

compatibility of socio-spatial paradigms.

Challenges to a new socio-spatial paradigm

At the beginning of Chapter VI, I raised the question of the "urban" and its definition for

residents of St. Petersburg. As I pointed out, many long-time residents of the city reject

what might be termed a "rational" understanding of a city as a bundle of goods and

spaces; Ivan, who also rejected the concept of the city as a factory, explained that he

didn't see residents as having to earn their right to live there:

> I just don't know anyone who would leave Petersburg because things are bad.
> That is, it's just not the normal practice, to abandon Petersburg because you can't
> live in it. In general Petersburg seems to be a city in which some way or other, but
> you can live—as a homeless person, a drunk, an idler, a poet… (9/17/06)

Ivan's words suggest first that native residents of Petersburg should be able to find a

place there regardless of the changes that occur; any other possibility would mean that

something crucial about the city had changed. Second, his words imply that Petersburg is

a place that can ultimately accommodate all comers. Yet his explanation also shows that

he does not quite have the language to describe what he means—which is that Petersburg

is not an abstract space, interchangeable with others, but an absolute space with its

natives and its own immutable identity (Lefebvre 1991). He likely shares with the

journalist Moskvina the idea that Petersburg is a homeland, or *rodina*, and that the current

changes make residents feel as though "you are losing your homeland without departing

your homeland" (*Pulse*, June 2006). Without having words to specify his "representation of space," he does not have words for the accompanying "spaces of representation" and "spatial practices" that would support his "representation" or urban conception. Does he truly mean "Petersburg for those who live in it," or is the implied subtext of his comment "Petersburg for Petersburgers"? The latter answer would not necessarily mean that he and other residents are incorrigibly xenophobic, but simply that the language that he has for expressing himself disposes him to that formulation. Without being able to articulate what "Petersburgers" know and do as "practices" and "spaces of representation," he has little other option.

Another "representation of space" that emerged in interviews was the idea of St. Petersburg as a natural expanse for the mixing of nationalities. For example, Varya suggested that Petersburg had previously never experienced pogroms or other mass protests against foreigners, but had always been understood as a multinational city:

> All the same, absolutely, you see, Petersburg was founded as a multinational city from the very beginning. Everyone was here. Foreigners, people who came from all the provinces. They lived in peace, there were never any big pogroms in Petersburg. That means that something here was absolutely healthy... (10/27/06)

A forum of sociologists and other specialists held in Petersburg in fall 2006, not long after a notorious riot in Kondopoga between Russians and Chechens, also concluded that Petersburg was unlikely to be the scene of such mass conflicts. Still, Petersburg's image of itself as multinational is *historical*, involving Italian architects, German merchants, Dutch shipbuilders, later Central Asians and many other people from all over the Soviet Union. There is a muddled quality to this historical dimension: people don't remember the mechanisms that allowed it, and one gets the sense that people believe that absorbing

Chinese migrants in new economic and geopolitical conditions should somehow occur in a way that repeats this poorly-remembered "multinationality." In the same conversation, Varya added,

> For the first time the city is going to have a program promoting tolerance, but they have allotted too little money—55 million rubles. This is only for one year. Otherwise if now… it's already kind of late, but better now, so that the sickness that is somehow in the society, so that they can cut it off, and reanimate *what we had before*. (10/27/06; emphasis added)

I emphasize this "what we had before" because I heard often about the multiple nationalities that had called St. Petersburg home, but along with the somewhat mystical sense that Petersburg "digests" people, the sense of this ethnic multiplicity has a remoteness to it. Liudmila (70 years) also held to the idea that Petersburg had always been multinational: "Of course [Petersburg] was multinational. I don't know whether there were conflicts; *I didn't live in that time*" (10/30/06; emphasis added). Given her age, this statement implies that the "multinational" period was pre-revolutionary and perhaps extended a decade or so past the revolution, but not past 1940. A contemporary imagination of "multinationality" might need more effort.

The question arises about what specific forms and places will create the "spaces of representation" for mixing—for a new synthesized culture—whether public, neighborly, or private. Interviewee Varya suggested the small forms of residential spaces: landings, stairways, buildings, cultural centers. Ivan himself illustrated the ability to connect with the city (at least its historical center) through other recognizable forms— "those Petersburg courtyards, those old sidestreets, those two- and three-story buildings"

(9/17/06). Such comments suggest that a facility in this spatial language is essential for true integration into Petersburg life.

However, advancing this hypothesis about facility in the St. Petersburg spatial language immediately requires several caveats. First, as asserted at the end of Chapter VI, while Chinese interviewees shared some perceptions and experiences of transport, they didn't employ the same spatial forms to articulate attachment to the city. Ongoing xenophobia prevents them from enjoying the pedestrian mode of attachment, effectively shutting them out from the spatial practice of the Petersburg *flâneur*.

Second, as cited in Chapter V, Oleg and his wife noted that the neighborly spaces of courtyard and stairway had not yet had the power to create a sense of community between Russians and migrants from the Caucasus and other similar regions. One conclusion that can be drawn from the types of situations that they described is that passive expectations for community will not materialize without some kind of educational intervention.

In fact, while the "tolerance program" mentioned above was announced by the St. Petersburg administration in 2006, it was slated to affect only education in elementary schools. What may be more needed is a quite different, much more assertive program that would include more than schoolchildren. Professor Veronika Liang of Herzen Institute discussed this possibility in an interview. Echoing Anna's comment (see Chapter V) that cities had used a policy of ignoring their ethnic minorities, she said:

> The teachers think that since students have come here to study, then they should consider *our* culture, *our* realities, nothing of their own. ... I say that if a person has come here to study, naturally he will have to adapt to this situation. But if we receive this person, then we must help him to adapt. This must be a mutual

adaptation. Don't close your doors and say, If he wants to, he can come, if not, then go away—I don't need you.

Also emphasizing that Chinese students must learn Russian in order to function on the streets, she added,

> Each country has its specifics. I remember when I came here in 1986: I couldn't understand how to find stores. Because here, a store is very small. It's located in an apartment building. There on some corner there's a small store, and that's where the bread is. I was afraid to go in—how could that be a store? In China a store would be much bigger. You can see from a long way away that it's a store. A daily-life orientation point, let's say. (10/27/06)

Her comments imply that if a program of the dominant socio-spatial paradigm could be prepared for new arrivals, they might find it easier to adapt and to share urban space with the residents already there. The St. Petersburg school system has in a way attempted something like this with a new generation of primary and secondary school students, including the city's history in school curriculum. Liang's remarks suggest a similar program for foreign students who do not study Russian and local culture as a part of their degrees.

There is a third problem, though. Of course any Russians in the city would have this elementary competence in recognizing stores and other basic types of public social space. But Ivan's friend Mikhail suggested that even Russians in many parts of the city had no fluency in the spatial language that many of my interviewees used so extensively when referencing "spaces of representation" for St. Petersburg's culture—and no desire to learn that language, either. Speaking of his neighborhood (located just southeast of the Baltic Pearl site), Mikhail said:

> It seems to me that the most important negative factor is the people who live [in Krasnoselskii district], because they have given up on everything and won't do

anything. And it seems to me that the people (*narod*) are to blame that there is filth and disorder. They have the opportunity to change things, but they don't act. It seems to me that in principle the transformation of the city is possible, but probably not for long. (10/12/06)

One of the reasons, according to many, that the attitudes of people in the outlying districts (such as Krasnoselskii) are negative is the built environment. Varya suggested that aggression against non-Russian foreigners stems from an aggression against human qualities in the Soviet-built districts; although some residents feel a fondness for aspects of these neighborhoods, the dominant opinion is that they are debilitating to the soul.

But in the new districts, everything is the same, it's all right-angled, everything is gray, white, made of glass, right? This mediocritizes people. This psychologically orients people to a certain aggressiveness. (10/28/06)

Of course, while the environment may indeed have such an effect, it may be a red herring in part to confront only the architectural aspect of xenophobia. But the two comments show that while there is a sizable part of the population that wants to sustain certain "spaces of representation" that enact values in St. Petersburg social and cultural history, there is also a significant part of the population that may not engage these spaces even if they could be proven effective in ameliorating social attitudes. There remain challenges for even a detailed program of spatial education to help create a more flexible environment for Ruble's "diversity capital" or Hannerz's "heterogeneity."

This study cannot provide any significant proof that increased knowledge of sociospatial paradigms would in fact reduce "essentialist" hostilities or the sense of invasion expressed by some Russians where Chinese are concerned. But the situation will continue to change. As mentioned at the end of Chapter V, once the Baltic Pearl is built and has residents, future research into the sociospatial paradigms of St. Petersburg could

consider the perception of the city that arises here. (Similar research could explore developing conceptions and practices of the city in the growing suburbs, where small detached houses or "cottages" are a trend among the more affluent.) The elements of sociospatial paradigms may not change in concert. While the resistance to change within the Russian state may persist, the "representation of space" that partly underpins its power may be changed out from under it by shifting "spaces of representation" and "spatial practices" induced by ongoing migration and the investment project in whose initiation the state was instrumental.

The Chinese attempt to create hybrid space

While Russian planners succeeded in affecting the design for the Baltic Pearl, the possibility of the district's participation in St. Petersburg's spatial politics remains unclear. Its very newness makes it inaccessible to a local politics that relies on the moral authority of the built landscape to mount protests again government policies. Its contemporary landscapes may draw a new Russian class that could develop more political consciousness, but it may also facilitate an amenities-based type of globalized space that coincides well with authoritarian government behavior (as in true in Moscow, shown by Argenbright). A brief consideration of the kind of spaces, and attitudes to space, displayed by Chinese in other locations provides a few hints.

Shanghai's Xintiandi as new spatial practice

Further research in China revealed a model of urban form that many interviewees mentioned as a powerful and successful combination of pleasing form and positive social

results: the mixed-use development in Shanghai called Xintiandi. The project provides an excellent piece of context for the Baltic Pearl, since it is famous throughout China as a globalized space that is still humanistic in scale and function, unlike Lujiazui on the Pudong. When I asked a representative of the Baltic Pearl firm for an example in China of the "new element" that the Baltic Pearl would bring to Petersburg, he answered that I should see Xintiandi (Li, interview, 1/19/08).

Could this form accomplish the kind of change, the "something new," that people await in St. Petersburg? There is some basis to think that it has this potential, although whether the vision accompanying Xintiandi can have a real impact on the spatial articulation of the city at microscale, making it legible as well as usable, remains a question precisely because of the socio-spatial paradigm that anchors it.

Xintiandi (which means New-Heaven-Earth) occupies several contiguous blocks in Puxi, the older part of Shanghai west of the Huangpu River. It lies just a few blocks south of Huaihai Road, a major shopping avenue in Shanghai that is lined by glassy skyscrapers housing offices and malls. West and south of the Xintiandi blocks are areas of European-built villas in the French Concession. The heart of the project consists of two full city blocks which were formerly filled with lower-class housing (described by Julie Iovine in the *New York Times* as an "old rabbit warren of courtyard houses, built by the French in the 1860's on interlaced narrow lanes," 8/13/06). This type of housing in Shanghai took its name (*shikumen*) from the stone-framed gates that concealed the spaces of daily life in the alleyways (Agus, interview, 1/21/08). About 4500 residents were evicted (with compensation) in order to create an area of cafés, boutiques, upscale retail

and dining, a large artificial lake over a parking garage and bomb shelter, and a cluster of high-rise residential buildings. A historic centerpiece (and the reason that city officials were persuaded by the project's premise) is the school where the first meeting of the Chinese Communist Party took place. Now, several traditional-style two-story buildings of gray stone surround interior courtyards; several small alleys lead out to side streets and wide entrance-interfaces with perpendicular streets allow pedestrians in at north and south. A Starbucks coffee shop occupies the prominent northwest corner entrance and high-end boutiques and restaurants are scattered throughout the complex. The south block of the development conserves little of the historic fabric, becoming a typical blank exterior wall for the mall inside.

Catalyzed by the American architect Ben Wood (the author of Boston's Faneuil Hall/Quincy Market festival marketplace), Xintiandi has several features that are important to an evaluation of its potential influence on further St. Petersburg development. First, while the actual historic preservation is minimal, including extensive reorganization of the historic elements and synthesis with new elements, observers note that the development represents a step forward for a Chinese attitude that moved away from strict historical preservation in the 1980s (Zhang, interview, 1/6/08) to a practice of razing everything old down to the ground in order to build new. In this evaluation, any historic preservation at all is seen as laudable. Second, the chief functions of this area are (as noted above) high-end retail and entertainment, not a reworking of the previous dense residential function of the blocks; the development thus participates in the upscaling of the center, creating what Paul Goldberger called "the same finely wrought balance of

theme park and shopping mall that increasingly passes for upscale urban life in the United States" (*The New Yorker*, cited by Iovine). That is, Xintiandi does not necessarily represent a broad rethinking of the urban residential landscape, but rather a pastiche of comfortable shopping and eating spaces that serve the affluent. (Ubiquitous cameras on two rainy-day visits testify that the site has become a popular tourist destination.) Thus, using Xintiandi as a model in Russia suggests that a few elements of historic architectural form might be employed to suggest (rather than truly to embody) the social content and function they originally carried, and that it would be intended to create a space for affluence rather than a 'new word' in urban residential architecture.

However, Xintiandi offers an additional way of reading into the "something new" that Chinese investors promise for the Baltic Pearl, the thing that they see as missing in St. Petersburg (see Chapter IV). Wood has said that "The real point is not the architecture of the place, but the new life a place attracts" (cited in Iovine). In the small museum on the site, the statement of Xintiandi's goal reads that "foreigners feel they are in a Chinese space and Chinese feel they are in a foreign space." The very urban activity of strolling and observing (the new *flâneur*) seems what Xintiandi is designed for. An architect whom I interviewed said that Xintiandi was the place to be in Shanghai: "If a girl buys a new dress, she wants to go to Xintiandi to show it off, to parade it." He regarded Xintiandi as a successful model for public space, saying "You need a crowd. You need to create a space of mixing" (Agus, interview, 1/21/08).

Tongji University researcher Xu participated in the Baltic Pearl's International Proposal Collection in fall 2005. Pressed to provide more detail about the concept of

"European lifestyle" driving the project, to which he referred twice during our conversation, he tried to expand (interview, 1/23/08). It means, he said, that the firm wants to "combine the local culture with the international lifestyle"—to make it a global community, not just a Russian community. And how is this achieved? I asked. He recommended Xintiandi as a good example of his answer:

> The most important thing is to provide accessible space. The space will tell the people that this is a global society. … There are a lot of elements. Pedestrian way, shops, colors, outdoor space, elevation of buildings, how the service people smile.

This is the kind of comfortable, always-legible, predictable urban space that Starbucks represents, often and unfortunately linked with a financial dimension of inaccessibility that may explain why, for example, Massey feels herself discomfited by her own enjoyment of the new London Docklands development (2007). The spaces have a familiar and appealing esthetic. And in spite of ethnic conflict, social stratification, and administrative non-transparency, these spaces do seem to become popular wherever they are located in the world—suggesting the "most popular, successful European style of life" along with prosperity and social power. Xu said, with clearly positive connotations, "The architecture was Shanghainese, but when you come into the space it's totally global. … Local culture and urban lifestyle." Presumably, then, Xintiandi is a successful combination of local culture and urban lifestyle, although little of the genuine "local culture" remains in the opinion of some (He and Wu, 2005). Yet a professor of urban planning at Fudan University in Shanghai explained why this might be so:

> The general trend is for social contact to take place not in the living area but in walking areas. Social relationships become less intensive. But this is good! In the old courtyard style, it can be good but it can be bad, too. … Young people want

shopping malls: 'we are together, we see each other, we don't know each other, we don't talk to each other.' (Zhuo, 1/22/08)

In a crucial contrast, visible at this microscale of intimate urban forms and social-spatial assumptions, this series of Chinese interviewees place emphasis not on the social control, sense of defendedness, and communality created by the Russian "yard," but on "mixing" of strangers, "crowds," "seeing but not talking," and open, "accessible" urban space. For both groups, the relative prosperity of Europe as a goal indicated a certain number of square meters per resident and "Euro-renovation"—the upgrading of amenities, such as insulated windows—in individual apartments. At a more symbolic level, though, for the Chinese planners with whom I spoke, "Europe" was the new lifestyle and comfortable urban space that promoted openness and accessibility, while for the Russians with whom I spoke, "Europe" represented the intimate human scale of yards and the communal belonging that yards supposedly induce, the "mixing" of at-first-strangers into neighbors and friends. At this scale, a certain non-communication means that overlapping socio-spatial paradigms in confrontation do not have the language fully to articulate their goals, or to read the local spatial problems and offer a solution.

Chinese creation of new global spaces of representation

Many of the Chinese with whom I spoke, including three representatives from the Baltic Pearl, acknowledged the appeal of St. Petersburg's Europeanness, which for them can be presumed to mean human-scaled architecture. Indeed, an architect interviewed in China in early 2008 commented precisely that Petersburg is a city of "human scale."

Whether or not this scale will be replicated and developed in the Baltic Pearl remains to be seen.

As noted above, planners in St. Petersburg did not understand the social or spatial function of the Lotus Tower, especially in view of its size. An interviewee in Shanghai offered a hypothesis:

> This is urban sculpture. For example, where there is an unknown soldier, there are many towers. This is a form to make something permanent. In Chinese culture understanding, this is the way of making something special. If we want to make someplace important, something grand, we make a tower.
> (Zhuo, interview, 1/22/08)

If this professor of planning is correct, then the Chinese investors want to mark this space as important, as a "space of representation"—but representation of what? What sort of spatial practice will be concentrated here? It is possible that the production of this particular space is not focused on daily human movement, but on the migration of Chinese presence and influence to Russia and further around the world. After all, a high-end development created by SIIC in Shanghai (about which I learned from the Fudan University professor) had no such imposing spaces; it, too, had a Starbucks, whimsical small-scale public art, and human-scale spaces. The lotus-tower square in the current design of the Baltic Pearl functions in a different socio-spatial paradigm, taking us back to the context-scale of the nation-state.

Based on Chapter IV, which showed the architectural and "universal" aspirations of Chinese designers, we can say that many Chinese designers want to break out of the stereotyped fears that confine their actions, just as they would like to break out of the spatial circumscribing that is often associated with "Chinatowns" (note that Kay

Anderson particularly reveals the way that Vancouver city fathers selected and managed the space of Chinatown; 1991). While the lotus-tower may hearken back to the oversized communist-(re)conceived spaces of Tiananmen and Red Squares, it may serve to represent a new Chinese ability to shape global space—which, in spite of Russian stereotypes and fears, may have many positive elements to bring.

Pal Nyiri discusses the issue of concern among existing populations (in his case, in Europe) at various locations of Chinese in-migration that the Chinese migrants will still think of themselves not merely as transnationals but as active members of the Chinese polity. As with Gelbras and Vendina, he ultimately explores the way that new arrivals appropriate space in their adopted cities. Discussing the potentially threatening transnationality of an investment project in Budapest, Nyiri includes the following passage about its Chinese developer:

> When asked how his project was different from old Chinatowns, Song Wuqiang, a migrant from Northeast China to Budapest who is in charge of Asia Center, a complex he promises to be Europe's largest shopping center, answered characteristically:
>> The old generation of migrants was, in some ways, passive... The Asian Center's site has been selected after having studied the investment and market environment of various countries... [It is] based on large-scale modern trade... The Asia Center is an active initiative, not a bigger or smaller market that serves the livelihood of strangers in a foreign land. [*Zhonghua Shibao (Budapest), 'Yazhou Zhongxin Asia Center' (advertorial), 20-26 July 2000: I*]
> On another occasion, the Asia Center's own newspaper called *Shije*... claimed no less than that 'the Asia Center will increase the reputation of Hungarian enterprises and the country; at the same time, it will help Hungary's Olympic bid'!
>   In sum, both official and lowbrow publications present a view of 'new migrants' as people who remain part of the Chinese economy and polity, strengthen the ties of overseas Chinese to China, and, as highly skilled professionals and successful businesspeople, who improve the standing of Chinese in their host societies. (Nyiri 2002, 330)

Nyiri focuses on the project's sustained connection with China. What I see in this quotation is the assertion that Chinese now choose the place where they want to build – they don't just accept the corners that host societies dole out to them (cp. Anderson's description of Chinese pushed here and there in Vancouver). They also make this decision based on the very "best and latest" in international thinking, and they create spaces that are "European-modeled" but that have attained the status of generalized, globalized. They don't just serve their own kind with the historically stereotypical blend of laundries and restaurants, they serve a general population and add generalized symbolic value to places. In particular, the newspaper quotation that the new Chinese-financed center in Budapest will "help Hungary's Olympic bid" should catch our attention: not only did China succeed in winning the chance to hold the Olympic games in its own capital city, but it can now contribute spaces that will enhance the ability of other cities to compete for that highest of world-city honors. This would be a statement of new creative power, a sign that the Chinese have joined the (Euro-American) leaders in the global production of space, and that they could win their own game for them. Whether or not Russian residents of St. Petersburg understand this or can conceive of it, the Baltic Pearl project gives ample evidence of such an ambition.

New spatial understanding of "Russia"

As quoted near the end of Chapter V, Harvey described two approaches to city management in his seminal article on urban managerialism compared with urban entrepreneurialism (2001). The latter tends to "focus on the political economy of place

rather than of territory" (2001, 352) where a territorial approach is "designed primarily to improve conditions of living or working within a particular jurisdiction" (2001, 353). Of urban megaprojects such as the Baltic Pearl and other large-scale prestige projects, Harvey writes, "Place-specific projects of this sort also have the habit of becoming such a focus of public and political attention that they divert concern and even resources from the broader problems that may beset the region or territory as a whole" (353). This dichotomy is a powerful way to critique the dominant focus of urban planning regimes, especially when those regimes emphasize megaprojects as "motors" of urban development. (Newman and Thornley 1996).

As Harvey notes, "economies of place" also tend to privilege certain kinds of spaces that come to represent the "world economy" (cite Harvey 2001; Marshall 2003), such as stadiums, etc. (Saito 2003). These "places" become anchor points for a set of global assumptions about the spaces that a good city should contain; they are "spaces of representation" for the global good life, functioning for individuals with a global reach and financial power. At a finer scale, a Lefebvrian analysis also requires study of lower-scaled spaces that support an "economy of territory," and calibrates the connections made possible by the "spatial practices" that connect them.

The supplementation of approaches pioneered by Harvey, Massey, and other critical geographers with Lefebvre's triad for spatial analysis allows a finer focus on a whole range of spaces in the city and their relationship to activities and connections at different scales. Harvey's broad argument suggests how certain approaches to urban planning are displaced by a focus on "motor" projects, but the analysis must go further to

demonstrate on a wider range of spaces how holders of certain socio-spatial paradigms

find themselves dispossessed not only of their paradigm's societal legitimacy but of

material spaces themselves. We can deepen an analysis of xenophobia as not only fear of

"Others" but distrust of "their" spaces; we can include the question of whether attempts

to provide a less xenophobic city will include more "territorial" or "placey" spaces, and

how we will know the difference.

In the case of St. Petersburg and possibly Russian cities in general, this diversion

of concern masks serious problems with infrastructure and the changing fabric of

sociability in many city districts. This is illustrated by arguments in the *Nevastroyka* news

forum reviewed in Chapter V, which sparred over whether any investment project was

good or whether St. Petersburg should focus its resources on the broader amelioration of

social problems. As Graham and Marvin note, city development is often conditioned

quite powerfully by its existing infrastructure (2001); as Sykora reminds observers of the

post-socialist transformation, new developments often become "path dependencies" for

future choices (2008). Whether the city spends its resources to construct a new skyscraper

or to subsidize the replacement of substandard housing and roads has constraining

influences on how the rhythms of urban life will develop.

This study of the Baltic Pearl suggests an agenda for further research in multiple

sites that will take account of individual voices and socio-spatial paradigms as well as the

"representation of space" promoted by the centralized national government. Kaganskii

suggests that the way forward for such study might be slow, since the government is not

interested in acquiring such knowledge (2004, 2007); however, it promises rich and

fascinating results because—as Kaganskii suggested about the growth in kitchen gardening outside Moscow—these are "real processes" that will have perhaps incremental but still definite effect on the ultimate results in Russia's transformation.

Kaganskii himself pointed to the persisting need for a more elaborated analysis of Russian space in his 2007 talk, when he listed questions that could have been inspired by Lefebvre. Discussing the frustration he felt upon reading an analysis of the long-standing debate between "Westernizers" and "*Pochvenniki*,"[1] he suggested that scholars should ask:

> How do *Pochvenniki* and Westernizers conduct themselves in the landscape?
> Do they exhibit particular or different landscape practices?
> How are they distributed in space?
> Where are the two groups located on the territory of Russia, either by conviction or for pragmatic reasons?

Staying inside the categories that have been developed so far will cause us to see only what these categories predict, including the assumption that the Russian state is the only source of change. The seeming dominance of the state's vision derives from the ease of describing it, and the tempting simplicity of the subsequent critique. Discussing the contrast in Latin American cities between the *favelas* and the ordered districts created by planners, Lefebvre notes that

> The result—on the ground—is an extraordinary *spatial duality*. And the duality in space itself creates the strong impression that there exists a duality of political power: an equilibrium so threatened that an explosion is inevitable—and in short

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[1] Debate over Russia's political course was extended in the nineteenth century between groups called the *zapadniki* (Westernizers) and *pochvenniki*, those who advocated a "return to the soil" or *pochva* in Russian. Andrzej Walicki, a prominent historian of this debate, does not attempt to find an English translation in one word. Walicki, 1975, *The Slavophile Controversy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press), see p. 531.

order. This impression is nonetheless *mistaken—a measure, precisely, of the repressive and assimilative capacity* of the dominant space.
(1991, 374; second emphasis added)

Even as he himself focuses chiefly on state-initiated monumentality above all other types of space (see e.g. 1991, 220-227), Lefebvre here suggests that the apparent duality of political power in space is not necessarily real, but is a function of how the state reads. In contrast to the hope cherished by Massey, the state with its mode of abstract space is catastrophically unable to let things coexist. It sees impending conflict and even rebellion where there is none; its focus on homogeneity tricks it.

Even though there are problems with the process surrounding the Baltic Pearl, particularly as described in Chapter V, the project may ultimately be able to initiate an intervention into the conceptions of space in St. Petersburg that could at certain points reinforce citizen activism for historic preservation and provide alternative spaces for self-conception, including a new multinationality. While Kaganskii and other Russian scholars (see Rivkin-Fish and Trubina, forthcoming) have recently turned their attention to the resurgence of unitary conceptions of space in Russia and to the concept of the "power vertical," a truly globalized Baltic Pearl may quietly introduce a "horizontal," polycentric element that will change the city's fate.

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