

Title: The Soviet Cyber-City of the 60s: the Rusanivka Project as a Mind Prosthesis
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Abstract:

The postmodern world has banned big projects, argues Reinhold Martin in his “The Ghost of Utopia.” Socialist housing, as he proceeds, became an outcast to scare from dreaming about the accessible and fence-less city. In my project, I go the roots of this dreams, the Soviet housing program of 1959 (4 million square meters of residential housing in 5 years) to show that although it declared equality, it divided space and segregated people. However, as an antithesis to that, it divided people to increase their efficiency. The new Soviet city of the 60s, as I’m showing, implemented a grid of power in every city it transformed – and by the 80s, it transformed each one in the USSR. One of the prototypes of the new Soviet city, a microrayon Rusanivka in Kyiv, appeared in a milieu of just established All-Soviet Institute of Cybernetics, and, as I argue, Rusanivka’s concept mirrors the other of a computer. Its purpose, as I’m going to show, was to increase the productivity of intelligentsia to accumulate and then transmit their mind work through networks of power. For my project, I study works of Glushkov, the head of the Institute, Lebedev, the first computer specialist who built his computer in 1950, and Amosov, one of the most prominent ideologist of the movement in the early 60s.