Main Trends in Urban Planning in Russia in the Late 18th Early 19th Century

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Abstract. The article deals with the process of state policy and the results of its implementation on compiling architectural plans for the cities of the Russian Empire when moving to a regular planning basis in the late 18th – first third of the 19th centuries. It examines the peculiarities of each stage and the number of approved architectural plans as well as the principles of their organization, the names of the architects who managed the process and were directly involved at the local level.

1. Introduction
In the urban planning history of the Russian Empire, there is still the question how the redevelopment process of general layouts of historically developed cities was taken. Who was the author of the development schemes? After all, until 1762 the cities layout was spontaneous, with the exception of St. Petersburg and the cities-fortresses of the first half of the 18th century. The mass preparation of new general layouts also required a large number of specially trained professional personnel. The article is devoted to the attempt to understand how those issues were resolved on the scale of the huge Russian Empire.

2. Materials and methods
The main method of this research is the analysis of archive materials and scientific literature. At the same time it should be noted that archive research of the 18th – 19th centuries is complicated by the decree redistribution of funds after the Revolution of 1917, and the materials initially interrelated now can be located in different archives (Russian State Historical Archive (RSHA) – St. Petersburg, Russian State Military Historical Archive (RSMHA) – Moscow).

On the other hand, in the 20th century the domestic architectural science: Bunin A.V. [1], Gulyanitskiy N.F. [2], Kameneva, T.E. [3], Lavrov V.A. [4], Savarenskaya T.F. [1], Shkvarikov V.A. [5] developed a certain opinion on the centralized organization and project staffing of this process, so the revision of these positions requires a more thorough selection of objectively justified materials.

3. Results
The centralized process of compiling regular architectural plans of the Russian Empire cities took place from the late 18th century until the mid-19th century. This process was definitely begun as an integral part of the general concept of internal politics of Catherine II, the “Blessed Monarchy”. The general principles and implementation stages of this concept were implemented systematically and consistently.
Almost immediately after her accession to the throne in 1762, she issued the Decree on the formation of “Commission for St. Petersburg and Moscow Stone Construction” under the Senate that was originally responsible for compiling “regular” plans of the capitals, i.e. Moscow and St. Petersburg, and more precisely “for the arrangement” of the capitals – the restrictions “from the extensiveness” of St. Petersburg and getting “into a proper order” of Moscow [6]. However, after the fire in Tver in 1763, the Decree followed “On combing special plans for each governorate, special to all cities, their structure and streets”. The Decree obliged the provincial government to compile fixed plans for the existing situation of all Russian cities. Later, the architect of the “Commission …” A. Kvasov was instructed to compile the architectural plan for the “regular” development of Tver. Thus, new and new responsibilities were gradually added to the architects of this Commission: compiling architectural plans for the development of governorate and provincial cities of the Russian Empire; “exemplary design” projects of residential building facades for their introduction into classical development; the organization of the architectural planning process by provincial architects at the local level; redrawing of the development schemes sent from the province to be signed by the Empress; articles preparation to new legislation. The Decree of 1767 “Commission Order on Drafting a New Regulation” clearly stated the construction in the city should be carried out according to the general layout. Under the Decree of 1775 “The Institution of Provinces Management”, not only the administrative reform of the whole territory of the Russian Empire was carried out but a new typology of Russian cities appeared: the capitals (2); provincial cities (50), county towns (493) and unimportant towns (186), but the document is also interesting because the position of provincial architect was first introduced into the staff of provincial government. Finally, under the Decree of 1785 “Charter of Rights and Privileges Granted to the Cities of the Russian Empire” a clear procedure was established by law: “The city is to be built according to the approved plan behind the signing of the hand of the Imperial Majesty” [7].

In Russian scientific historiography there was an idea that the projects of redevelopment of Russian cities in the second half of the 18th century were made in the capital by outstanding architects of the “Commission for St. Petersburg and Moscow Stone Construction”. Thus, for example, T.E. Kameneva is writing: “In 1762... Commission was created that soon began to develop general layout projects and provincial cities” and further: “The tasks set before the Commission... differed in exclusive width.” [8]. In fact, the architects of the Commission drafted regular plans only at the initial stage (Tver, Ostashkov...) or by the personal order of the Empress (Bogoroditsk, Sofia...). It is also strongly indicated by the statistics of the confirmation (affirmation) of the architectural plans: A. Kasov (1762-1772) – 11, I. Starov (1772-1774) – 6 and I. Leim (1774-1796) – 287 [10]. Unlike the first two, the last period clearly shows that within 22 years of work Ivan Leim – the architect of the “Commission...” – could not, even if desired, compile alone such a number of architectural plans.

Meanwhile, as it was correctly said by T.P. Efimenko in 1914, “the matter of compiling projects of the urban structure... was generally entrusted to local authorities” [11]. The same point of view is proved by the publication of R.M. Garyaev. He refers to the examination of the Commission documents and its correspondence with the governors and writes that the vast majority of projects were not compiled “in St. Petersburg, by the Commission and outstanding architects of the time”, but at the local level and “...were sent to the Commission only for approval and subsequent transmission through the Senate for approval by the Empress”. [12] The same procedure for compiling project documentation was discovered by us during the study of regular urban planning in Siberia in the second half of the 18th century [13].

Another erroneous view is the notion that all redevelopment projects of Russian cities in the second half of the 18th century were exclusively compiled by architects. A documentary analysis of the architectural plans of the Siberian cities showed that their authors were the surveyors in overwhelming majority. Analyzing the town plans of Tobol vicegerency compiled at the end of the 18th century, only the architectural plan of Tobolsk in 1784 [14] was compiled by the provincial architect A.F. Guchev, who held this position from 1782 to 1788. The plans of other towns of this vicegerency – Tomsk, Turinsk, Yeniseysk, Narym, Berezov, Surgut, Turukhansk, Yalutorovsk, Ishim, Kainsk, Achinsk,
Kurgan and Omsk – submitted for approval to the Commission in 1786 were signed by the provincial surveyors V. Ponomarev. The architectural plans of two cities – Irkutsk and Selenginsk – were made by the provincial architect of Irkutsk vicegerency A.Ya. Alekseyev during his tenure from 1779 to 1790. Project proposals for the settlement of such city plans as Verkhneudinsk, Nizhneudinsk, Kirensk, Yakutsk, Olekminsk were compiled between 1795 and 1798, after the departure of the architect Alekseyev, and submitted to the Commission in 1798, i.e. after its dissolution by Paul I in 1796. There was no certified architect in Kolyvan vicegerency (1782-1796), though this position was mandatory in the vicegerency managing board according to the Decree of 1775, and these duties were performed by the surveyor I.N. Nikolayev.

Due to the lack of professional personnel, provincial administrations were forced to appoint bound settlers or surveyors to architectural positions. These positions were very often held by former assistants or apprentices of the architect. In Siberia provincial architects were delivered from the surveyors: the successor of A.F. Guchev was Fedor Utkin, who continued the work of Tobolsk reconstruction after the fire of 1786, and the successor of A.Ya. Alekseev was Anton Lossev who built many residential and public buildings not only in Irkutsk but also in other cities, for example, Verkheudinsk [15].

The work organized in such a way by the end of the activity of “Commission for St. Petersburg and Moscow Stone Construction” (1762 - 1796) had the following results: 304 plans got the supreme confirmation out of 731 cities of the Russian Empire (according to the administrative reform of 1775 “On the Establishment and Management of Provinces” and according to the annex to the Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire – “Book of Drafts and Drawings. The Plans of the Cities”, published in 1839 in the second half of the 18th century, i.e. approximately 40% cities received general layout approved by the Empress. Meanwhile, the near absence of stone development, frequent fires and an absolute power of the local administration accelerated the introduction of a regular planning structure into the cities of the Russian Empire even if there were no approved architectural plans.

The continuity of new development schemes towards existing development was in many cases decided in favor of the new one. The authors, almost in all cases, proposed a radical redevelopment of the cities. The topography of the city location, stone constructions and cult structures were only taken into account. In some cases the most important feature of continuity could be the use of an old landmark system, i.e. large buildings and complexes such as Kremlins, fortresses, monasteries, cathedrals or bell towers. Thus, the new planning structure was oriented in many cities towards the historical center (Tver, Kazan, Nizhny Novgorod, Tula).

What principles did the authors apply in the late 18th century when they created projects of regular planning and development of the cities of Russia? The city was considered as a single whole, and it was covered by all laws of architecture: benefit, durability, beauty. At the design stage it was assumed that the plans were necessarily regular: the settlement should be compact and limited to the correct geometric shape, have wide and straight streets, large areas; the streets were to be built along the “red line” on both sides till the intersection with the other street; the public buildings should be located in convenient and front places in the city centre; the central districts were to be built with stone houses; the construction of residential buildings was supposed to be carried out according to exemplary projects.

As it was earlier said Pavel I dissolved the “Commission for St. Petersburg and Moscow Stone Construction” created by Catherine II under the Senate in 1796. It was most likely out of the sense of opposition to everything his mother did and nobody dealt with the issues of development regulations in a centralized way till the reign of Alexander I. Under Alexander I with the beginning of the administrative reform, the Ministry of Internal Affairs established a Construction Committee which produced a series of “exemplary” facades, fences and gates from 1808 to 1810. According to the Decree of June 25, 1811 “General establishment of Ministries” [16], the Construction Committee with the architectural and construction sector was left in the Department of Public Economy and Public Buildings of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the issues of planning, improvement and control over
private developments of the cities were transferred to the Executive Department of the Ministry of Police. Since then the preparation of the design and urban planning documentation was personally entrusted to the member of the Construction Committee and the city architect of Tsarskoye Selo, Vasily Ivanovich Heste /William Hastie/ [17,18,19], who was entrusted with the work to “review and remodel urban plans throughout the Nation state” [20].

V.I. Heste started his activity with making drawings of 26 plans of “exemplary” districts and squares in 1811 those were combined into an album called “Division of city districts into the places belonging to the local inhabitants” [21]. The name decree of February 8, 1812 instructed all heads of provinces “henceforth, in the event if the city districts are appointed to the places belonging to the local inhabitants to be guided by these drawings, taking as a model those of them which are convenient for the residents and the local position and are most decent” [22].

On December 5, 1811 V.I. Heste presented to the Minister of Police “Memorandum” [23] where he stated his opinion how to organize the planning business and bring into a “proper form” the plans of all cities of Russia.

Its content can be briefly reflected in the following provisions:

1. Keep copies of all existing confirmed plans in the capital and keep the plans in the provincial boards;
2. Get the fixing plans of all cities with the indication of convenient and inconvenient places for development; show the structures that need to be preserved, the location around the city on half a wall and profiles of the area in these plans;
3. Having completed mentioned above documents and having classified them, determine the list of cities that need new plans to be drawn up;
4. Develop new projects at the local level and send them to St. Petersburg for consideration and further approval.

Heste reserved control and making up the final design consideration on the basis of fixed drawings sent from the provinces, the draft and the explanatory note to them.

The proposed procedure formed the basis of the circular of the Ministry of Police of March 19, 1812 [24] that was sent to the heads of provinces for execution.

The order and sequence of compiling and approval of projects were gradually built up. The architectural plans of the cities with all documents and annexes received for approval from the governors were carried out at the local level by provincial architects, their assistants or surveyors. The materials were sent to the Executive Department of the Ministry of Police for submission to the Emperor. But they were first handed over to architect V.I. Heste “by the highest command”, who had to either approve the sent architectural plan or present the newly executed one. Being aware and responsible of the taken decisions, Heste studied proposals from the local level very carefully and he tried only to correct mistakes or improve the planning composition of the future plan of the city.

If he drew up a new development schemes, it was sent back to the governors for approval with the following explanations: “The highest command is to transfer the changed plan to the governor so that the sovereign will have it approved, but it is possible to know in advance whether any obstacle will occur to its execution”. [25] Having been checked at the local level the plans were returned to the capital and if they received an approval – they were sent to the “Supreme confirmation” and acquired the force of the law. In the case of any objections or non-compliance with the location of the city, the plan was returned to Heste for adjustment or revision and then passed the same check-out again.

Since 1811 a wide-range programme of architectural plans compiling for the cities of the Russian Empire was begun, it lasted until the death of its author (June 4, 1832). The position of V. I. Heste was extremely responsible, being the only authority in the field of urban planning; he had to make the final decision of planning development of many cities of Russia. Therefore, in particularly responsible cases, he travelled to the site to familiarize himself with the situation. At the same time, I would like to note that the main work on the preparation of project documentation was carried out by the provincial
architects and surveyors. They also offered a development scheme for further city development. Thus the architectural plan of the city of Turin [26] was submitted from Siberia to the Ministry of Police in 1814 compiled by Tobol provincial architect M.S. Malyshev, the architectural plans of the cities of Nizhneudinsk [27], Verkhneudinsk [28] were submitted in 1816 and the architectural plans of the cities of Yakutsk and Kirenk [29] of Irkutsk vicegerency were submitted in 1818 compiled by architect Ya.A. Kruglikov. In 1824 the Ministry of Internal Affairs received local architectural plans of the provincial cities of Krasnoyarsk, Omsk and Tomsk (provincial architect A.P. Deev) [30].

Thus V.I. Heste worked as an expert for 20 years and during this period of work more than 70 architectural plans of cities was supremely confirmed. The administrative system of work organization allowed carrying out the assigned large-scale tasks by means of a clear division of responsibilities for compiling, coordination and confirmation of projects. He also completed the typification of all planning elements of the “regular” city plan by creating “exemplary” designs of facades, districts and squares.

The main principles that V.I. Heste applied to his work were not the introduction of a geometrically regular system of streets into the city structure, but the filling the city with vital elements – residential districts, squares and parks according to the albums and samples he created. He tried to be as attentive as possible to the existing housing stock, saved and partially regulated, if possible, the layout of the old parts of the city built up under 18th century architectural plans. In general, Heste took into account not only the composition of the planning solution, but also he had regarded to the local topography and certain economy and therefore the realism of his planning solutions implementation.

4. Discussion

It should be noted that in order to identify accurately the authorship of development schemes for a number of provinces it is necessary to study widely the funds of the late 18th and early 19th centuries at local archives. This is especially true for the documents of the second half of the 18th century as the copies of the general layouts to the “Commission ...” were not made, and after the confirmation they were sent to the provincial boards for execution. At the same time, drawing workshops that appeared after the Decree of 1775 under the provincial boards were often burnt down (Tobol drawing workshop was completely burnt down during the fire of 1786), this fact complicates the scientific research.

The first third of the 19th century is not an easy period of national historiography on studying issues: the changes in the system of administrative management of the Russian Empire led to the transfer of certain functions to various committees and ministries. Thus, the issues of urban planning were first under the responsibility of the Construction Committee, then they were transferred to the Ministry of Police, then to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and, finally, to the Ministry of Communication and Public Buildings. Moreover, the documents for the Supreme Confirmation could come from various departments: the Ministry of Police (later the Ministry of Internal Affairs), from the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armies, Konstantin Pavlovich (later the vicegerent of the Kingdom of Poland) or the Chief Head of the Imperial Office and military settlements, Alexey Andreyevich Arakcheev.

Another discussion problem is that it was recommended in the mentioned above “Memorandum” transmitted to the Minister of Police on December 5, 1811 the following: “On confirmation (the plans) to make double copies and bind them into books, and to store one of them in St. Petersburg and send the other to the Provincial City for execution”. It was the beginning of the collection and storage process of confirmed plans that resulted in the publication in 1839 of the annex to the Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire “Book of Drafts and Drawings. The Plans of the Cities”. The publication included the plans for 419 cities. 71 of them were approved during the period of urban planning work made by Heste from 1810 till 1832.

There is still the question if all plans that got the Supreme Confirmation were included in the special volume of the annex to the Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire “Book of Drafts and Drawings. The Plans of the Cities”. Working in the Russian State Historical Archive in St. Petersburg we found architectural plans confirmed by the Emperor, but they were not included in the
above mentioned edition and there were quite a lot of them. These are the town plans of Kiev, Arkhangelsk, Penza, Saratov provinces. The same group included the plans of large provincial cities, for example, Krasnoyarsk of 1828 [31] and Omsk of 1829 [32]. There is the question what principles of selection were used and whether there was any intent in it.

5. Conclusion
In general it can be stated that the process of centralized transformation of the city plans of the Russian Empire on a regular basis passed two stages: the first one is the period between 1762 and 1796 and the second one is the period between 1810 and 1832. During this time about four hundred development architectural plans were confirmed. Each stage has its own peculiarities both in the organization of the process and in the principles of project planning. At the same time, the similarity of both stages can be considered that the basic bulk of the development schemes was originally implemented at the local level by provincial architects or surveyors. The peculiarities in the late 18th century involve the zoning of the city territory tended to define districts with stone and wooden development. The projects of the early 19th century showed the zoning of the city territory into residential and industrial zones with a large number of specialized squares and districts. Residential districts were divided into plots “belonging to the local inhabitants” with a complex of buildings and a garden. Municipal gardens or green areas were necessarily designed in the city. The organization of the process differs in the second stage where V.I. Heste deliberately introduced the procedure of “adjustment” for the design consideration that on the one hand delayed the process, but on the other hand, the laid-in design consideration were checked in advance for their possible implementation.

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